

DINING | ARTS | OUTDOORS | HEALTH | BUSINESS | EDUCATION

2024-25 VISITOR & COMMUNITY GUIDE

Life is
Good
in Las Cruces

THE LAS CRUCES **Bulletin**



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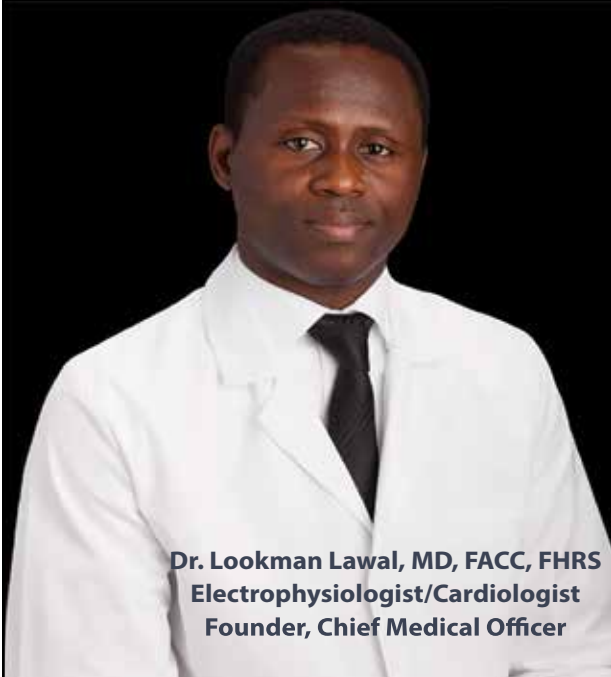
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Life is Good in Las Cruces

CONTENTS

LIFE IS GOOD

- Las Cruces City Map.....6-7
- Welcome from the Mayor.....8
- Las Cruces Bulletin staff.....8
- About the cover.....8
- From the Publisher.....9
- Historic districts of Las Cruces.....10

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Touring the Area.....13
- City Accolades.....13
- Las Cruces Census Quick Facts.....13
- Las Cruces area resources.....13-16
- New home for Boys & Girls Club.....17
- City libraries go big on outreach.....20

DESTINATION DOWNTOWN

- Farmer's and Crafts market.....22
- Chile Drop marks 10 years.....24
- History of city's 'tower'.....26

MESILLA

- Taylor-Mesilla Historic Property.....27
- Mesilla Eateries and Bars.....28
- Mesilla Landmarks.....28
- Mesilla in the 1800s.....29
- Experience film at the Fountain.....30
- Take a stroll through one of America's oldest markets.....31
- An artist moves to Mesilla.....32
- America's Best Restaurants features La Posta.....34

BUSINESS

- Business resources.....36
- 'Growing pains' for cannabis industry.....37
- New film studios could affect housing prices.....41
- Unity's final flight from spaceport.....43

HOTELS & VENUES

- Popular Wedding, Reception and Quinceañera Venues.....46
- Vado Speedway marks 5th year.....48

WINE & DINE

- Roasted Rooster elevates waffles.....49
- Coffee Houses and Bars.....50
- Wine & Dine trail map & list.....52-53
- Rethinking 'Red or Green?'.....54
- Day's closure darkens food scene.....56
- New billiard hall racks up.....58

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

- Tortugas Village pilgrimage, celebration.....62
- Annual Festivals & Events.....63

ARTS & CULTURE

- Public art on the rise in Las Cruces.....64
- Performing Arts Venues.....65
- Art Galleries.....65
- Valley Sessions gives voice to creative community.....66
- Art Organizations.....68
- Art celebrated every February.....69
- Denise Chávez releases new book to the world.....70
- Las Cruces Symphony ready for 66th season.....72

EDUCATION

- LCPS 'State of the District'.....74
- Hopping away from dissecting.....75
- Public, Private and Charter Schools.....76
- At Burrell, actors train doctors.....77
- Vamos Niños mobile children's museum...78
- Rebuilding Columbia Elementary.....79

OUTDOORS

- Tenth anniversary of Organ Mountain monument celebrated.....80
- Outdoor recreation.....82
- Outdoor Equity Fund grants support for Youth Programs.....83

GOVERNMENT & MILITARY

- WSMR museum redesigned.....85
- Veterans services/Area military.....86
- Guide to Las Cruces city hall.....87
- Government offices.....87
- Honoring Bataan.....89

KIDS & FAMILY

- New dinosaur named.....90
- Area Museums and Monuments.....90
- Las Cruces City Pools & Aquatic Center.....91
- Youth Organizations and Activities.....91

CRITTERS

- Treating rattlesnake bites.....92
- Dog safety in the desert.....93
- Pet Ordinances.....94
- Dog-Friendly Las Cruces.....94

WORSHIP

- 'The food comes from the earth'.....95

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- Major Health Care Facilities.....99
- Mobile crisis unit looks to future.....100
- Giving blood, a matter of life.....101

SENIOR LIVING

- City breaks ground on housing.....103
- Retirement and Assisted Living.....104
- Resources for Seniors.....104

106 Advertiser index



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PICACHO AVE.

WALNUT ST.

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DOWNTOWN

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AMADOR AVE.

SOLANO DR.

IDAHO AVE.

EL PASEO RD.

S. MAIN ST.

AVENIDA DE MESILLA



MESILLA



ATTRACTIONS

- 1 Branigan Cultural Center
- 2 Las Cruces Museum of Art
- 3 Las Cruces Museum of Nature & Science
- 4 Chile Pepper Institute at NMSU
- 5 Dripping Springs Natural Area
- 6 Farmers & Crafts Market
- 7 Fort Selden State Monument
- 8 & Leasburg Dam State Park
- 9 Las Cruces Railroad Museum
- 10 Mesilla Plaza
- 11 Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park
- 12 Mesilla Valley Mall
- 13 New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum
- 14 New Mexico State University Art Museum
- 15 Picacho Peak
- 16 Spaceport America
- 17 Veterans Memorial Park
- 18 White Sands National Park
- 19 Zuhl Geological Museum



SPORTS FACILITIES

- 17 Apodaca Ball Park
- 18 Burn Lake Soccer Field
- 19 Field of Dreams Football Stadium
- 20 Field of Dreams Softball Complex
- 21 Meerscheidt Recreation Complex: Harty Fields, Maag Park, Paz Park, Ron Galla T-Ball Fields, Soldanos Fields
- 22 High Noon Soccer Fields
- 23 Las Cruces Skate Park
- 24 Lions Tennis Courts
- 25 La Llorona Park
- 26 Provencio Van Dame Soccer Fields
- 27 Wild Chile BMX Track
- 28 East Mesa Recreation Complex



OTHER FACILITIES

- 29 Las Cruces Convention Center
- 30 Plaza de Las Cruces
- 31 Rio Grande Theatre
- 32 Visit Las Cruces



GOLF COURSES

- 33 New Mexico State University Golf Course
- 34 Picacho Hills Country Club Golf Course
- 35 Red Hawk Golf Course
- 36 Sonoma Ranch Golf Course



POOLS

- 37 East Mesa Bataan Memorial Pool
- 38 Las Cruces Natatorium
- 39 Las Cruces Regional Aquatic Center
- 40 Laabs Pool

ORGAN MOUNTAINS

DRUNNER PKWY.

14

36



9

25



NEW MEXICO FARM & RANCH HERITAGE MUSEUM

10

3



33



UNIVERSITY AVE.



NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

Life is Good in Las Cruces

--- MULTI-USE PATHS



WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR

iBienvenidos!

Welcome to Las Cruces!

As a Las Cruces native, I am truly excited, honored and humbled to serve as your mayor. I am committed to enhancing public safety by collaborating with law enforcement, first responders and residents to make Las Cruces a safer place to live and work. I recognize the importance of economic development and will work to support local businesses, attract new investments and create a thriving environment for entrepreneurs.

Also, my administration works to provide activities and programs for families as well as support systems to ensure a better quality of life for all residents. My vision for Las Cruces is one of unity, progress and community-driven transformation. I am happy to tell you that life is good in Las Cruces!

Eric Enriquez
Mayor, City of Las Cruces

THE LAS CRUCES Bulletin

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About the Cover



Students from Las Cruces Catholic School, including some of the first communion 4th grade boys, enjoy the water as it flows from the irrigation ditch into the fields at the New Mexico Farm & Ranch Museum. This event has been taking place for 20 years in the spring on the museum grounds welcoming the growing season.

Photo by Elva K. Österreich.

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Back in the Land of Enchantment

The month of May marked a full year since my return to Las Cruces after a seven-year absence. I always make the best of the places I land, but I could never escape the gentle whisper beckoning me to return to the Land of Enchantment. It was with great delight that I returned to this enchanted locale that I can once again call home. Much has changed. Much has remained the same. I cherish it all. To put it simply, I LOVE LAS CRUCES. My love for our community is what makes this magazine project so incredibly special to me.

Life is Good in Las Cruces is your ultimate guide to thriving in the heart of southern New Mexico. Whether you are a longtime resident or newly arrived in our vibrant community, this magazine is designed to be your go-to resource for everything Las Cruces. In these pages, you will discover insider tips on navigating our city, from local eateries and hidden gem attractions to the dynamic art scene, exciting community events as well as outdoor



adventures. We made it our mission to shine a light on the people, places and things that make the city so special.

Join us in celebrating the spirit of Las Cruces, where every page of this magazine is dedicated to making your experience of living here as enriching and enjoyable as possible.

Belinda Mills

Belinda Mills

Southwest Regional Group Publisher

LIFE IS GOOD
Life is Good

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The Historic Districts of Las Cruces

May is Historic Preservation Month in New Mexico, and Las Cruces is honored to have three historic districts listed in both the New Mexico Register of Cultural Properties and the National Register of Historic Places. All three deserve your visit.

STORY & PHOTOS BY SANDRA L. MARSHALL

Mesquite Historic District

The past is almost palpable as you walk through the Mesquite Historic District, one of the few enduring neighborhoods dating from the mid-19th century in the southwest. This birthplace of the city of Las Cruces was formally established in 1849 to ease crowded conditions in the village of Doña Ana. The area was surveyed using a braided rawhide rope to lay out parcels of land. One hundred and twelve settlers camped under a large tree in what is now Klein Park, while lots were drawn assigning ownership. Descendants of some of these first families still live in the neighborhood.

But Mesquite has a history dating back even further. Members of the Piro, Mansa and Tiwa peoples lived in the area, and their families, too, still live here. El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, the Royal Road of the Interior, ran approximately along present-day Mesquite Street. Between 1598 and 1882, trade goods were carried by ox cart over 870 miles between Mexico City and San Juan Pueblo in northern New Mexico. Although

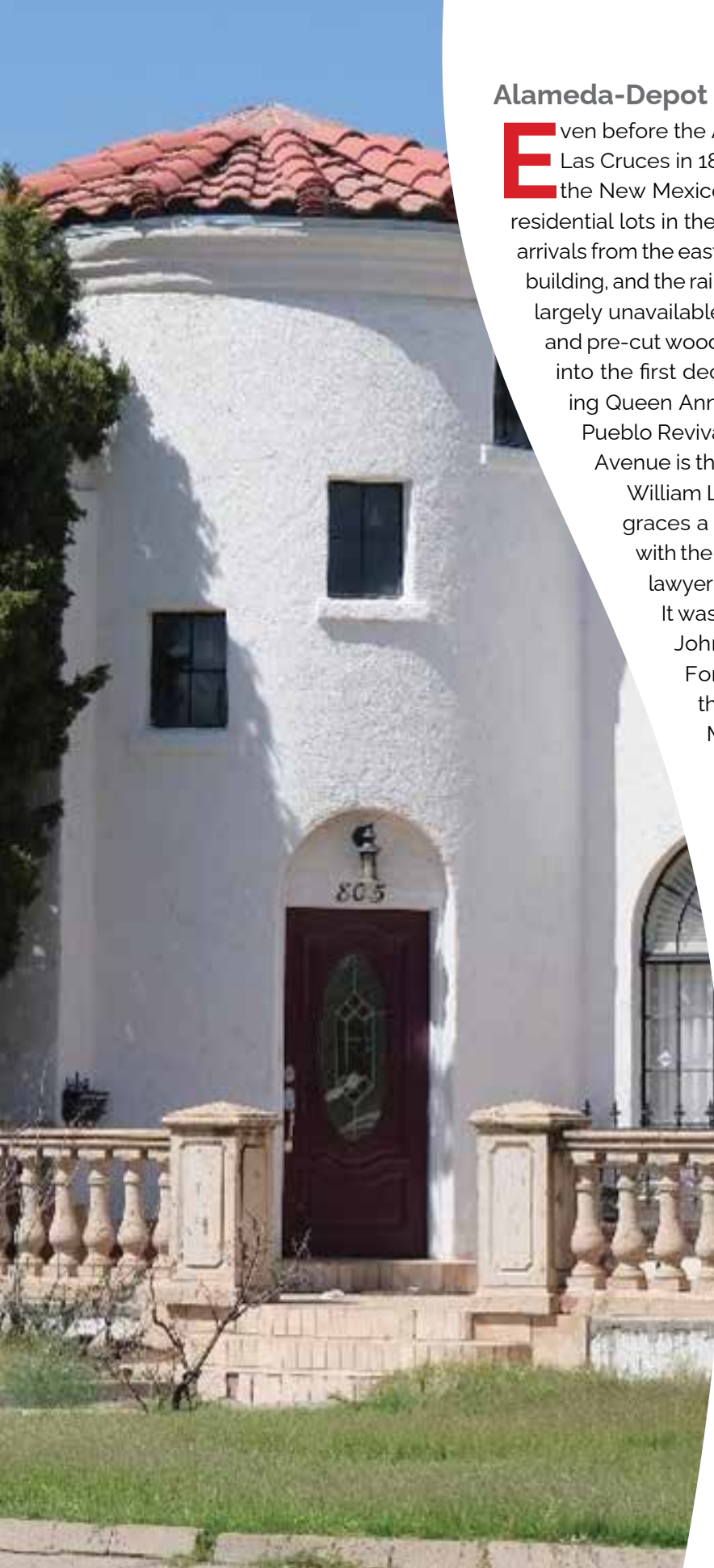
the streets are now paved and lined with sidewalks, by walking down Mesquite Street and using some imagination, you can sense the multiple layers of use by Mexican traders, indigenous community members and settlers of Spanish, African and Northern European descent.

Today the original townsite is half the size it once was, having lost the west portion to urban renewal in the 1960s and 1970s. Much of what remains is the real thing: houses, shops and churches constructed between the 1850s and 1930s. Traditional adobe homes line the street and, in the rear, placitas, once spaces for work and livestock, are now yards and gardens. Roofs are flat, often graced with an arched or pointed pediment. Vigas protrude just under the rooflines, and canales extend through the parapets, draining rainwater away from the adobe walls. Philips Chapel CME Church was completed in 1912 to serve the neighborhood's strong African-American community and doubled as a school beginning in 1924, during the time of forced segregation. The serene, white-plastered adobe church was restored by a diverse group of volunteers between 2010 and 2016 and services, open to anyone, are once again held there.

Today, Klein Park invites residents and tourists alike to rest in the shade, use the playground equipment or listen to a concert in the small outdoor theater.

Two of the best restaurants in the district are across the street and a third is only a few blocks away. In recent years, art galleries have moved into some landmark buildings, and once a month the historic district sponsors a First Friday Art Ramble. Visitors can amble along Mesquite Street or ride a free horse-drawn trolley, hopping out when they see something that catches their eye. Best of all is Christmas on El Camino Real, when the street glows with luminarias and, in Klein Park, Santa will hear a child's wish list.





Alameda-Depot Historic District

Even before the Atcheson, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad reached Las Cruces in 1881, a land development consortium calling itself the New Mexico Town Company began buying up and platting residential lots in the fertile farmlands to the west of downtown. New arrivals from the eastern states brought new and trendy ideas of home building, and the railroad gratified their desires by bringing in materials largely unavailable before: milled lumber, hardware, window glass and pre-cut wooden trim. Between the end of the 19th century and into the first decades of the 20th, a stylish suburb grew, boasting Queen Anne, Bungalow, Tudor Revival, Mediterranean and Pueblo Revival styles. One large adobe farmhouse on Picacho Avenue is the only remnant of the agricultural days.

William L. Rynerson, whose lovely Queen Anne house still graces a shaded lot on Court Street, came to Las Cruces with the California Column in 1862 and stayed to become a lawyer and a member of the New Mexico Town Company. It was he who shot New Mexico Supreme Court Justice John P. Slough dead in the billiard room of the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, and who later changed the venue of Billy the Kid's trial from Lincoln to La Mesilla, ensuring Billy's conviction for the murder of Lincoln County Sheriff William Brady.

On Griggs Street is the adobe Territorial style home of Sam Bean, Jr., whose brother, Judge Roy Bean, was the infamous "only law west of the Pecos." A bungalow on South Miranda housed Albert Bacon Fall, once United States Senator from New Mexico, then Secretary of the Interior, but topped this all off by being convicted of taking bribes in the infamous Teapot Dome scandal in the 1920s.

At the heart of the district is Pioneer Women's Park, a tree-shaded square block with a charming gazebo in the center. The park was created by the Las Cruces Woman's Improvement Association in 1896, purchased from the railroad with funds earned from renting out the town's first hearse. Their 1927 Mission Revival meeting house still stands across from the park on Raymond Street. The gazebo is a popular venue for concerts, rallies, and especially weddings. But on quiet afternoons the district, with its air of a late 19th century neighborhood, is ideal for a relaxed walk under the mature trees and along the avenues of eclectic period houses.



A little further west is a residential area where houses built from 1887 to the 1960s stand on large lots. The eclectic styles vary from Queen Anne through bungalows, Craftsman, Territorial and Pueblo Revival, to ranch houses. St. James Episcopal Church is a classic example of Gothic Revival. After the creation of New Mexico A & M College in 1890, now New Mexico State University, proximity to the campus attracted faculty and staff. Perhaps this interest in education prompted the community to open a one-room school for its children in 1901. In 1907, a Mission Revival style schoolhouse, designed by noted architect Henry C. Trost, opened. Over the years, additions kept up with the needs of the community until, eventually, a new elementary school was built. The original school was renovated and now serves as the Frank O'Brien Papen Recreation Center, a space where the community can come together for learning, sports and socializing.

Mesilla Park was annexed by Las Cruces in 1964, but still has an elegant and peaceful ambiance, with lovely places to walk, especially along the old acequias when the olean-der are in bloom.

Mesilla Park Historic District

Mesilla Park began in 1887 as a planned urban development, independent of Las Cruces, with its own post office and train station. It was laid out on formerly irrigated farmland. The irrigation ditches, acequias, still provide water to the mature trees that line the streets. Non-residential portions of the town were designated near the train depot. Main Street ran along the railroad tracks, and the commercial strip ran along the east side of Main Street. For the residents' convenience there was a grocery store, a Wells Fargo Express office, telegraph agent, icehouse, barber shop and livery stable. West of the tracks, beyond the train station, were warehouses, many owned by mail order businesses which flourished when the country was still primarily rural. Today, art galleries and entertainment venues, workshops and light industry use these buildings.

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Touring the area

TOUR COMPANIES AND SPECIALTY TOURS

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Full-service travel agency offering custom-tailored personally guided tours. 575-521-1400, AdventureTravelNM.com.

Final Frontier Tours

Official tour operator for Spaceport America. 575-267-8888.

Frontier Adventures

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La Morena Walking Tours

by Preciliana Sandoval
History, romance and ghost stories of Mesilla. 575-647-2639. facebook.com/LaMorenaWalkingTours.

NM Historic Sites

Explore history first-hand. 575-202-1638. nmHistoricSites.org.

Outdoor Adventures Bicycle Rental

& Mountain Biking Information
1424 Missouri Avenue, 575-521-1922.

Southwest Expeditions

Custom tours for four to 30 guests. Transportation is included. 877-808-6877. swexpeditions.com.

VIP Southwest Services – Transportation Services and Specialty Tours

575-525-1784. LasCrucesShuttle.com.

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Amtrak.com.

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Leasburg Dam State Park

Interstate 25, Exit 19, then take NM 157 to park entrance, 15 miles north of Las Cruces in Radium Springs.

KOA Las Cruces

From Interstate 10, Exit 135 onto U.S. 70E, 1 mile on right. From Interstate 25, Exit 6 onto Main St., west on Picacho Ave. five miles on the left, 814 Weinrich Rd., Las Cruces, 575-526-6555.

Siesta RV Park

Interstate 10 at Exit 140, 1551 Avenida de Mesilla, Las Cruces. 575-523-6816.
SiestaRVParkLasCruces.com.

El Paso West RV Park

Interstate 10 at Exit 162. 1415 Anthony Drive, Anthony, N.M. 575-882-7172.
ElPasoWestRVPark.com.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

(a partial list)

- **Tesla Destination Charger**
100 N. Main St., Las Cruces
- **Tesla Destination Charger**
700 N. Main St., Las Cruces
- **Tesla Destination Charger**
166 S. Roadrunner Pkwy., Las Cruces
- **Tesla Supercharger**
2702 W. Amador Ave., Las Cruces
- **ChargePoint Charging Station**
210 W. Boutz Road, Las Cruces
- **ChargePoint Charging Station**
101 E. Organ Ave., Las Cruces
- **ChargePoint Charging Station**
2651 E. Northrise Dr., Las Cruces
- **ChargePoint Charging Station**
680 E. University Ave., Las Cruces
- **ChargePoint Charging Station**
1501 E. Hadley Ave., Las Cruces
- **ChargePoint Charging Station**
411 N. Main St., Las Cruces
- **Green Office Building**
166 Roadrunner Pkwy., Las Cruces
- **Sisbarro Buick GMC**
1775 S. Valley Drive, Las Cruces
- **Staybridge Suites**
2651 E. Northrise Drive, Las Cruces

CITY ACCOLADES

2023

- Happiest Cities in America, No. 103; Happiest Cities in New Mexico No. 1, WalletHub.com
- 9 Most Underrated Cities in New Mexico, WorldAtlas.com
- Top 10 Best Places to Live and Work as a MovieMaker, MovieMaker.com
- 11 Best Ale Trails in the United States, Seeker.com
- Top 15 Best Cities in the Country to Raise a Family, Scholaroo.com

2022

- Ranked as the No. 7 best-run city in the U.S., and best-run city in New Mexico, WalletHub.com

2021

- Ranked as the No. 9 best-run city in the U.S., and best-run city in New Mexico, WalletHub.com

2020

- The City of Las Cruces Community Development Department has earned two awards from The New Mexico Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA). Elevate Las Cruces, first place, long-range planning; Active Transportation Plan, first place for excellence in public engagement, New Mexico Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-NM)
- Ranked as the No. 4 best-run city in the U.S., and best-run city in New Mexico, WalletHub.com

2019

- Planning Award for Innovation for Las Cruces Arts and Cultural District, (APA-NM)
- Heritage Organization Award, New Mexico's Cultural Properties Review Committee
- Creative Tourism Award "Best Strategy for Creative Tourism Development," Creative Tourism Network-Barcelona
- Las Cruces named one of 50 Nicest Places in America, Reader's Digest

2018

- One of Best Small Cities in the U.S. to live and visit, AFAR magazine 2018
- Safest Driving City in NM, Insurify 2018
- Season of Giving Award, Insurify 2018
- #15 in nation best Place to Retire, TopRetirements.com

PUBLIC SAFETY

Las Cruces Police Department

Chief: Jeremy Story
217 E. Picacho Ave.
575-528-4147
LasCruces.gov/2589/Police

Las Cruces Fire Department

Fire Chief: Jason Smith
201 E. Picacho Ave.
575-528-3473
LasCruces.gov/154/Fire

Las Cruces Fire Prevention Bureau

575-528-3473
LasCruces.gov/164/Fire-Prevention

Doña Ana County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff: Kim Stewart
845 N. Motel Blvd.

575-525-1911
DonaAnaCounty.org/
departments/elected-officials/
sheriff

New Mexico State Police District 4

4055 Sonoma Ranch Blvd.
575-382-2500
dps.nm.gov/nmsp/uniform-bureau-and-district-offices

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

(U.S. Border Patrol)
3120 N. Main St.
575-528-6600
cbp.gov

Las Cruces Crime Stoppers

1-800-222-8477

Mesilla Valley Regional Dispatch Authority

911 Lake Tahoe Court
911 for emergencies,
575-526-0795, non-emergencies
mvrda.org

Las Cruces Codes Enforcement and Animal Control

550 N. Sonoma Ranch Blvd.
575-528-4100

Las Cruces Graffiti Hotline

311/Ask Las Cruces app

Las Cruces Public Works

575-528-3125

CENSUS QUICK FACTS

Las Cruces

Population
2022 estimate: **113,888**

Land area in
square miles: **76.93**

Residents
under 18 (2022): **23.7 percent**

Residents 65
and older (2022): **15.1 percent**

Women (2021): **50.6 percent**

Veterans (2021): **8,209**

College graduates
(2017-2021): **36.4 percent**

Median age (2021): **32.5**

Homeownership
rate (2021): **56.2 percent**

Median value of owner-occupied
homes (2021): **\$167,800**

SOURCE: WORLDPOPULATIONREVIEW.COM
AND U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

BANKS & CREDIT UNIONS

Bank of America

691 S. Telshor Blvd.
575-647-3700

Bank of the Southwest

1043 N. Main St.
575-527-5498

BMO Bank

201 N. Church St.
575-527-6200

PNC Bank

3800 E. Lohman Ave.
575-521-0000
225 E. Idaho Ave.
575-523-5920

Century Bank

141 S. Roadrunner Pkwy., Ste. 101
575-521-2400

Citizens Bank of Las Cruces

505 S. Main St.
575-647-4100
2841 N. Main St.
575-647-4136
3991 E. Lohman Ave.
575-528-6300
3030 W. Picacho Ave.
575-528-6363
4785 N. Sonoma Ranch Blvd.
575-647-4180
3065 E. University Ave.
575-647-6700

First American Bank

2145 E. Lohman Ave.
1553 Avenida de Mesilla
223 E. Idaho Ave.
800-289-6140

First Convenience Bank

Inside Walmart:
571 Walton Blvd.
1550 S. Valley Dr.
3331 Rinconada Blvd.
254-554-6699
800-677-9801

First New Mexico Bank

3000 E. Lohman Ave.
575-556-3000

First Savings Bank

2804 N. Telshor Blvd.
920 N. Motel Blvd.
575-521-7931

OneMain Financial

400 N. Telshor Blvd.
575-522-0058

Pioneer Bank

3831 E. Lohman Ave.
575-532-7500
705 E. University Ave.
575-532-7545
2900 Roadrunner Pkwy.
575-532-0639

Southwest Heritage Bank

220 N. Telshor Blvd.
575-521-8100

Sunflower Bank NA

421 N. Water St.
575-525-8907
2535 S. Telshor Blvd.
575-525-8910

U.S. Bank

277 E. Amador Ave., Ste. 100
575-647-7310
3790 E. Lohman Ave.
575-522-9660

Wells Fargo Bank

2505 El Paseo Road
575-541-9502
425 S. Telshor Blvd.
575-521-6800
2400 N. Main St.
575-523-3942

Western Heritage Bank/ Nusenda Credit Union

230 S. Alameda Blvd.
575-541-0058

WestStar Bank

555 S. Telshor Blvd.
915-532-1000

CREDIT UNIONS

First Financial Credit Union

901 E. University Ave.
505-766-5600

FirstLight Federal Credit Union

300 Foster Road
3791 E. Lohman Ave.
3105 Del Rey Blvd.
800-351-1670

Nusenda Credit Union

1715 E University Ave.
575-523-7750

OneSource

Federal Credit Union
1375 E. Boutz Road
575-523-5524

White Sands Federal Credit Union

2190 E. Lohman Ave.
2755 N. Main St.
575-647-4500



POST OFFICES

Doña Ana

5480 Ledesma Drive • 575-288-3336

Fairacres

3800 W. Picacho Ave. • 575-524-2195

Las Cruces

201 E. Las Cruces Ave. • 575-524-2903

Las Cruces

1180 Commerce Drive • 575-521-4953

Mesilla

2253 Calle de Parian • 575-524-1531

Mesilla Park

310 E. Union Ave. • 575-523-7088

Organ

15770 Padre La Rue St. • 575-382-5949

University Park

(NMSU Corbett Center)
1600 International Mall • 575-646-2019

GETTING CONNECTED

GAS, WATER, WASTEWATER AND SOLID WASTE

City of Las Cruces

City Hall (Utilities)
700 N. Main St.
575-541-2111
LasCruces.gov/180/Utilities

Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association

5535 Ledesma Drive
575-526-3491
After hours: 575-644-4027
dawater.org

Elephant Butte Irrigation District

530 S. Melendres St.
575-526-6671
ebid-nm.org

Moongate Water Co.

9301 Bataan Memorial West
575-382-7001
MoongateWater.com

Zia Natural Gas

3700 W. Picacho Ave.
575-526-4427
zngc.com

ELECTRICITY

El Paso Electric

201 N. Water St.
5195 Bataan Memorial West
915-543-5711
epelectric.com

COMMUNICATION SERVICES

DirecTV

855-940-6405
directv.com

Sky View Satellite Inc

2001 E Lohman Ave. Ste. 119
575-635-4164
SkyViewSatelliteInc.com/
locations/sky-view-satellite-
inc/

Fastwave Biz

555 S. Miranda St.
575-521-3000
fastwave.biz

La Tierra Communications/ ZiaNet

3530 Foothills Road, Ste. L
575-522-2681
la-tierra.net

CenturyLink

CenturyLink.com

Xfinity (Comcast)

2750 Mall Drive
Building 300, Unit 340
my.xfinity.com

DRIVING AROUND TOWN

If you are new to New Mexico, you are required to surrender your license from any other state and obtain a New Mexico driver's license once residency is established. Those applying for a first-time driver's license (which are compliant with REAL ID federal regulations), a license renewal or a license replacement are issued a temporary license while their regular license is being processed and mailed.

REAL ID DRIVER'S LICENSE

Documents needed to obtain a New Mexico driver's license:

- Proof of identification number (e.g., Social Security card)
- Proof of identification (e.g., passport, birth certificate)
- Two proofs of residency (e.g., rental agreement, mortgage statement, utility bill dated within 60 days) Learn more about Real ID requirements at realid.mvd.newmexico.gov.

Fees:

- \$18 for a four-year license
- \$34 for an eight-year license
- \$15 for DWI records check on all drivers moving from another state.
- Drivers age 79 years and older must renew their licenses yearly but are not charged renewal fees.
- Any person 25 years of age and older who has ever been convicted of DWI and who is applying for his or her first New Mexico driver's license must also submit evidence of having successfully completed New Mexico's approved DWI prevention and education program, None for the Road, or another state's equivalent program.

REGISTERING YOUR VEHICLE

To obtain a New Mexico vehicle title, registration and license plate, the following is required:

For a new vehicle:

- The original manufacturer's certificate of origin
- Dealer's invoice (original or certified copy) odometer statement

- Proof of insurance, including an insurance card, copy of the policy and a letter from the company verifying coverage
- Proof of identity and two proofs of New Mexico residency
- Application for registration

For a used vehicle:

- Certificate of title
- Odometer statement
- Proof of insurance, including an insurance card, copy of the policy and a letter from the company verifying coverage
- Proof of identity and two proofs of New Mexico residency
- Application for registration
- Note for out-of-state vehicles, a VIN inspection is required

Fees:

- \$27 to \$62 for a one-year registration
- \$54 to \$124 for a two-year registration

Truck registration ranges from \$38 to \$207 for one year and \$76 to \$414 for two years, depending on weight and model year.

CELL PHONE ORDINANCE

Use a hands-free method or device when talking or texting while driving, or risk getting a traffic ticket.

For more information about driver's licenses and vehicle registration, including accepted documents, visit mvd.newmexico.gov.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

ROADRUNNER TRANSIT

RoadRunner Transit is the public transportation system for the City of Las Cruces, offering residents eight city routes. LasCruces.gov/1314/RoadRUNNER-Transit 575-541-2500

BUS SERVICE HOURS

- Monday - Friday: 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.
- Saturday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- No service on Sundays

For the holiday service schedule, visit LasCruces.gov/1314/RoadRUNNER-Transit.

Bus Tracker:

RoadRunner Transit is integrated into the Passio Go app. It can be downloaded from Google Play or the Apple App Store. The web version is available at Roadrunner.passiogo.com.

CODES AND ORDINANCES

The following is information about

ordinances that may be common in day-to-day life in Las Cruces. For full details about City of Las Cruces codes and ordinances, visit LasCruces.gov/1298/Municipal-Codes.

NUISANCES

Weeds, trash, tall grass, noxious odors, unauthorized noise/vibration, stagnant water, unreasonable amounts of smoke/fumes/cinders, inoperative/dismantled cars and junk are considered nuisances and are prohibited in the city.

Weeds and tall grass should be pulled or cut down to ground level and removed or bagged for the Green Grappler to pick up. Weeds and vegetation may not interfere with walkways and sidewalks.

SIGNS

Signs, including those for yard sales or missing animals, must be placed on private property with the property owner's permission. Signs aren't permitted in or on road medians, shoulders, sidewalks or other city rights-of-way, light poles, stop

signs or other public property. Signs must be removed immediately when an event (e.g., a yard sale) is over.

WATERING

Effective year-round:

- No watering on Mondays
- Even numbered addresses water on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays
- Odd numbered addresses water on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays
- Summer rules effective April 1-Sept. 30: No watering between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. For information, call 575-528-3549.

NOISE

It is unlawful for any person to make, continue or cause to be made any loud or unusual noise which either annoys, disturbs, injures or endangers the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of others. Violations of this ordinance are evidenced by any noises heard or vibrations felt at a distance of 30 or more feet from the source.

RECYCLING AND SOLID WASTE SERVICES

RECYCLING

South Central Solid Waste Authority (SCSWA) oversees the collection contract for curbside recycling within Las Cruces city limits. Curbside residential recycling services are provided via a collection hauler, Friedman Recycling. Residents within city limits can utilize a 96-gallon cart for bi-weekly recycling service. Your blue recycling bin will be emptied every other week on your designated trash day.

Containers must be rolled out to a flat surface on the street, against the curb (not on the sidewalk) with the handles facing away from the street. Items in the blue recycling bin should not be bagged. The bins should be out for service by 6 a.m. and removed by 7 p.m., placed at least five feet away from other objects.

For a full list of what is excepted in the blue bin and to check your service day, contact SCSWA at 575-528-3800 or visit scswa.net/curbsiderecycling.

For information about Keep Las Cruces Beautiful and community cleanup opportunities, visit LasCruces.gov/1392/Keep-Las-Cruces-Beautiful.

GLASS RECYCLING

The city accepts glass (minus corks and bottle tops) for recycling at its two recycling drop-off locations: SCSWA, 2865 W. Amador Ave., and Sonoma Ranch Landfill, 555 Sonoma Ranch Blvd. The glass, which must be sorted by color, is ground up into different textures of cullet, and can be acquired for free for use in yards and decorative projects. The textures range from fine sand to pebble sized. The courser cullet is popular for landscaping, while the finer grounds can be used in potting soils.

SOLID WASTE PICKUP

Trash (brown bin) pickup is weekly. Containers must be rolled to a flat surface in the street, against the curb (not on the sidewalk) with the handles facing away from the street. All trash in the brown bin

must be bagged or tied without overfilling the bin, and the lids must be closed so trash doesn't fly away. Bins should be on the street by 6 a.m. and removed by 7 p.m., placed at least five feet away from other objects, including other trash or recycling bins.

GRAPPLER SERVICE

Large/bulky items that won't fit into your brown bin are picked up once a month on the same day as your trash service (the grapppler will not pick up construction material). To find your grapppler pickup day, visit LasCruces.gov/1377/Grapppler-Services. All items for the grapppler must be placed out by the curbside the night before or by 6 a.m. and five feet away from other objects such as bins, fences, walls, mailboxes and vehicles and away from overhead wires.

GREEN GRAPPLER

On the same day as regular grapppler service, the Green Grapppler will pick up residential yard waste (e.g., leaves bagged in clear bags, stacked tree limbs shorter than five feet) that will be turned into mulch available for residential use, rather than going to the landfill. For information, visit LasCruces.gov/1377/Grapppler-Services.



New home a 'game changer' for Boys and Girls Club

MIKE COOK

You can soon look for a sign in front of the old Video 4 movie theater on El Paseo Road: "Future Home of the Boys and Girls Club of Las Cruces."

With local, state and federal funding and support from Allen Theatres and other community partners, BGCLC bought the property at 1005 El Paseo Road in January. That will allow the nonprofit to expand to more than 30,000 square feet from its current 6,800 square feet in the 100-plus-year-old building it has occupied since 1965 at 330 W. Las Cruces Ave.

The goal is to break ground on renovations next January and raise \$10 million to complete construction by the end of 2025. Club CEO Ashley Echavarria (pictured above) said. Some interior demolition work will begin this summer, she said.

Thanks to \$1.4 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding from the city of Las Cruces, gifts from

private donors and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funding secured by U.S. Rep. Gabe Vasquez, D-N.M., Echavarria said the Boys and Girls Club has already reached nearly one-third of its fundraising goal.

"I first learned to use a computer and develop the skills to be successful thanks to the Boys and Girls Club," said Vasquez, who began working with Echavarria on the club's expansion plans when he was a member of the Las Cruces City Council. "The club provided me with opportunities and support that were instrumental in shaping my future. Now, as a member of Congress, I'm honored to have secured over \$1.6 million to ensure our youth have access to crucial programs, helping them thrive in the classroom and in their communities."

Echavarria credited Allen Theaters as "huge supporters of ours over the years." With an \$800,000 in-kind donation, the Allen family reduced the asking price on the theater property by more than 50 percent, Echavarria said, and



that was "a big part" of making the purchase possible.

The chair of BGCLC's Building Great Futures Capital Campaign, Abel Covarrubias, has donated \$100,000 to the project, which will give him naming rights to a room in the newly renovated building and the lobby, Echavarria said. Other large donors will also earn room-naming rights.

The new space will allow BGCLC "to triple the amount of youth served daily and is part of a city-wide initiative to revitalize the El Paseo corridor," Covarrubias, founder of Aprendamos Family of Services, said in a news release. "I wholeheartedly believe in planting seeds to support future generations and giving back to our community."

Other capital campaign committee members include honorary chair Barbara Hubbard, Mary Henson (who made the first donation) and former Las Cruces City Councilor Kasandra Gandara. Committee member Richard Haas and Desert Peaks Architects



BOYS & GIRLS | CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

have done extensive pro bono work for the project, Echavarria said.

The Boys and Girls Club currently provides services to about 200 children daily at the club and sites at five elementary schools plus Lynn Community School.

"We have waiting lists every summer," said Echavarria, who has been with Boys and Girls Club in three states over 20 years, including the last 11 in Las Cruces. "We're not doing enough."

Moving into the much larger Video 4 site will mean having "so many resources it's inevitable that kids are going to want to be there and parents are going to want to take their kids there," she said.

The new space will include a theater, meeting and office space, a STEM lab and learning center, music room, art room, kitchen, small – and large – group meeting rooms and a gym accessible from the outside.

It will be "a space the entire community gets to enjoy," Echavarria said.

And the large outdoor space – the property totals four acres – will allow for future expansion, she said, possibly including an outdoor courtyard, outdoor kitchen, a garden, green space for a playground and soccer field

and an art patio.

"It's a game changer," Echavarria said. "It's a dream come true."

Achieving the goal she has held for more than a decade is a big undertaking, Echavarria said. "It's scary; (but) "your dreams aren't big enough if they don't scare you. I know we'll get it done."

Donations are welcome at bgclLasCruces.org/building-great-futures-capital-campaign. Contact Echavarria at 575-526-1519 or ashley@bgclasruces.org.

"The club provided me with opportunities and support that were instrumental in shaping my future."

—U.S. Rep. Gabe Vasquez, D-N.M.

Together, we can make an impact!



For 35 years, your Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico has served as a vehicle for people to make a lasting impact in our region. At your Community Foundation, we are committed to improving the quality of life in southern New Mexico. This commitment is at the heart of all we do.

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City libraries go big on outreach

MIKE COOK

When you open the door to the Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, you are stepping into a world of possibilities: thousands of books on the shelves and thousands more e-books and audiobooks; newspapers and magazines in multiple languages; dictionaries and atlases; space for arts and crafts projects; art classes, supplies, shows and even an art collection; a 3D printer; podcasting equipment; computers and Wi-Fi; story time (which the library began in 1937); Dungeons and Dragons programs for teens and adults; book clubs; a chess club; digital streaming services; a seed library; the Lullaby Lounge, a new music program; Chair Laughter Yoga, movement and breathing exercise and Qigong; journaling workshops; classes to learn how to play the ukulele, guitar and bass; visitors' information and brochures; mahjong; and much more. You can print and make copies, reserve meeting and study rooms, conduct genealogical research and even get help with your taxes.

The key to unlock that door is a free library card, which you can get online (at LasCruces.gov/1724/Library-Cards) or in person at any of the library's three locations.

"We are here for you," said Outreach and Marketing Librarian Elizabeth Puckett.

With your library card, you can check out books and audiobooks, music CDs, genealogical materials, magazines, DVDs and Blu-rays and even art prints. Loan periods range from one to three weeks.



LIBRARY STATS

- TBML has had more than 110,000 visitors during the 2023-2024 fiscal year, according to library statistics.
- 46 percent of Las Cruces residents have a library card.
- The library has more than 127,000 physical and digital holdings.
- The library offered more than 1,000 programs in the 2023-2024 fiscal year, including more than 100 programs with nearly 1,400 people attending in a single month.

BRANCHES

The library has three branches: the main branch (575-528-4000), 200 E. Picacho Ave., open 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 1-5 p.m. Sunday; Munson Senior Center branch (575-528-3406), 975 S. Mesquite St., open 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Friday; and Sage Café branch (575-528-3154), 6121 Reynolds Drive, open 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Friday.

LIBRARY HISTORY

According to the city of Las Cruces website (LasCruces.gov/1767/History), the city's first library was started by the Woman's Improvement Association of Las Cruces, who kept a collection of 500 books in their homes. The books were moved to the WIA clubhouse when it was built in 1927, with various club members serving as librarians.

Alice Branigan was a WIA member. When she died in 1932, her estate included a large bequest to the city for a public library, which was named in honor of her late husband, Capt. Thomas Branigan. The new library opened in November 1935 at 106 W. Hadley St. (now 501 N. Main St., the home of Branigan Cultural Center). The library moved to its current location – nearly 40,000 square feet on six acres – at 200 W. Picacho Ave., in 1979, with a dedication held that Dec. 9.

In addition to the main library and two branch libraries, library staff "will meet you where you are," Puckett said. That includes regular visits to Las Cruces schools, the city's iMiral festival and the Farmer's and Crafts Market.

The library's partnership with Las Cruces Public Schools includes healing libraries with book kits that can help children deal with difficult topics like death and divorce, Puckett said. The library's teen department has recently undergone "a major facelift."

The library's most popular services include a summer reading program that began more than 50 years ago. This summer's programming, for all ages, begins June 1 and continues through mid-July.

The library regularly offers computer classes, covering topics like basic computer skills, email, internet basics and safety, Google and managing files and digital pictures. Check the library's online calendar for dates and times.

Bienvenidos y Welcome

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The City of Las Cruces is here for you!
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lascruces.gov
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Farmer's and Crafts Market

JUSTIN GARCIA

From humble beginnings, the Las Cruces Farmer's and Crafts Market has become one of the area's most notable features.

It offers a variety not seen anywhere else in New Mexico. Vendors stock fresh produce from local growers, crafted items from local creators, plants for a home garden and food for lunch or breakfast. But the point of the market is less about buying something than it is to experience it.

There's a remarkable hum to the market. It echoes out from the buskers playing for change, the chatter of a family on a Saturday morning stroll, the haggling between an over-zealous customer and a shrewd seller. The feeling permeates the body and soul of the marketgoers, something seldom experienced in the digital age.

Market Manager Karin Bradshaw said it's all by design. Rules governing what can be sold, where it is from, and who can participate are key to creating the feel that keeps people from Las Cruces, El Paso and

beyond coming back.

"We don't do politics," Bradshaw said. "We ensure that we are family-friendly and family-oriented. We are a community. Everybody here works together to ensure that the market is someplace that you want to be and you want to go."

Yet it wasn't always the downtown-spanning market it is today.

"It was a few farmers that apparently got together and started setting up under the metal awnings," Bradshaw said.

That was in 1971. Over the decade, the market grew steadily in popularity. Bread makers joined the market as a fixture, and groups like the Downtown Merchants Association, the New Mexico State University Extension Office, the League of Women Voters and the City of Las Cruces Parks and Recreation Department took a role in facilitating the market.

By 1981, the market had grown large enough that the city swallowed it into its Parks and Recreation Department. This was

the point at which crafts began emerging as a staple of the market. Still, it remained fairly informal, unlike the organism today.

In the 1990s, the market shifted toward a vendor-run model but remained under the city's umbrella.

"Among the vendors that were running it and overseeing things, there was apparently contention between them," Bradshaw said.





“Nobody could agree on anything.”

In 1999, Bradshaw said, the city appointed a market manager at the behest of the vendors. Around the same time, Las Cruces' downtown needed revitalization.

Like many small-town centers, economic forces beyond the city's control pushed commerce away from downtown. The city responded by establishing a special downtown zone called a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area, or MRA.

This allowed the city to use public money to invest in infrastructure projects, something Las Cruces is now experimenting with in other areas following the success of the MRA Downtown.

While it temporarily dislocated the market, by 2009 vendors returned to the area with “its now-familiar colorful canopies and open spaces for gatherings and entertainment,” as the market's website describes.

The market changed again in 2012, a year after celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2011 and being named “Number One Large Farmers Market in the Nation” by America's Farmland Trust.

“Basically, the city decided that they did not want to handle the operations of the market any longer. I know the process started in around 2011 (of) making the transition from the city to the vendor run,” Bradshaw said.

Today, the market is run as a nonprofit, a form that has brought stability for over a decade.

“We have a board of directors (comprising) both vendors

and community members. We have a lease agreement for the use of the downtown area that we find every year; we pay the city rent,” Bradshaw said.

Chile Drop marks 10 years

BY SYLVIA QUINTANILLA

Where to ring in the New Year can be a daunting task. If you are looking for live music, local food and drinks, entertainment for the whole family and answering the age old question of red or green? Look no further than Plaza de Las Cruces, home to the annual Las Cruces Chile Drop.

This year marked the 10th annual Las Cruces Chile Drop. Russ Smith has been there since the inception and has seen the event grow throughout the years. Smith is the planner for the annual event. He noted the entertainment presentation has gotten bigger from the stage to decorations, the addition of LED walls, improvements on sound and lighting. In his time working events at the Plaza de Las Cruces, he said the crowd energizes themselves.

"The crowd

at the Chile Drop is my favorite because of their engagement, because of their manifest effort to have a good time," Smith began. "As a city, in a city-wide event, they have come to adopt it as their own."

In 2023, Las Cruces Chile Drop was nominated by travel editors and voted on by readers as number 3 on the USA Today Top New Year's Eve Drop. The same year, CNN broadcasted from the plaza to showcase Las Cruces, the pride we take in our city and of course the love we have for Chile. Smith said Las Cruces was given the opportunity to shine at 11 p.m. and unexpectedly again at midnight.

"What makes it unique?



Chile. The chile industry, Southern New Mexico, New Mexico at large, but the pride that the community was showing on camera to those folks in New York who were trying to find the best fun time, that was a wonderful expression of perfection. Take it as our own civic pride," Smith beamed.

Yearly, the citizens of Las Cruces vote on what color the chile will be when it drops, red or green. Hoisted on a crane, the 19-foot chrome chile pepper shimmers in the night sky with over 2,400 LED lights.

In addition to the New Year's Eve energy, the Christmas tree is still standing tall in the plaza during the event and adds to the good cheer of the season.

Chris Faivre, Deputy Director of Economic Development for the City of Las Cruces, enjoys being a part of

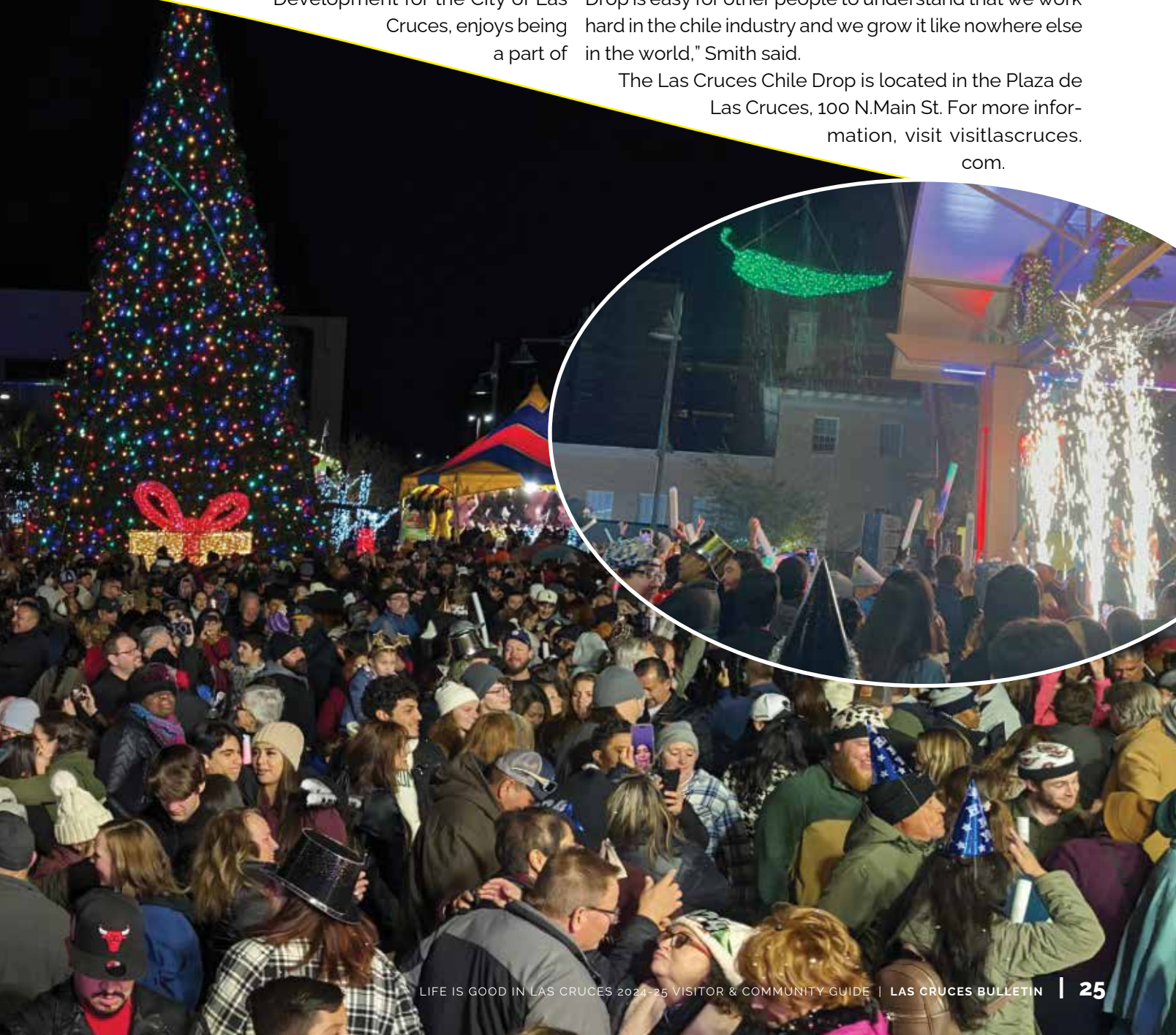
the chile drop.

"Personally, I live for the holidays. The first half of the year for me is a countdown for the holidays. Chile Drop is like the exclamation point on my holiday season," Faivre stated.

Taking the guesswork out of how to celebrate the New Year is what keeps the event going. The demographic ranges from all ages from families with children excited to be up past their bedtime to couples young and old spending the holidays together. New Year's Eve is a time for reflection and hope. To see the crowds increase at the plaza year to year makes it all worthwhile.

"We are proud to be demonstrating our chile industry pride. We're proud to be showing it to the world. Chile Drop is easy for other people to understand that we work hard in the chile industry and we grow it like nowhere else in the world," Smith said.

The Las Cruces Chile Drop is located in the Plaza de Las Cruces, 100 N.Main St. For more information, visit visitlascruces.com.



History of city's 'tower'

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

There is a single "skyscraper" in southern New Mexico and it towers over Las Cruces, sending its good 1960s vibes across the city.

Although healthcare technology company Electronic Caregiver bought the naming rights to the building in early 2018, the Las Cruces Tower at 506 S. Main St. in Las Cruces has gone through several names, from the First National Bank Tower to the Wells Fargo Tower.

Four-term state senator Frank Papen was a banker, born in 1907, died in 1996, who was very influential in the city in 1960s. He owned a lot of land and was the founder and president of the First National Bank of Las Cruces, which later went through several other names, according to his nephew, John Papen, in a 2018 Bulletin interview.

John said Frank built the tower because the area's two delegates to Washington were trying to entice NASA to come to southern New Mexico. Once Frank got the NASA idea in his head, he wouldn't let go.

"Mr. Papen never quit, and he would call and say 'where's NASA, where's NASA?' And they said, 'NASA won't come to Las Cruces because there is no office space,'" John said. "In 1967, he built the tower."

The building itself was designed as a seven-story building but, John said, Frank was talked into making it a 10-story building. Completed in 1968, John said Frank kept the building empty for two years except for a couple of tenants on the first floor.

"At the time, a 10-story building was a big deal," John said. "They got so tired of him calling, they finally got NASA to come and they never rented one foot from him."

John worked for Frank for 40 years at the bank.

"We had eight branches. It was worth \$550 million when we sold it," John said. "I went to work for him in 1958."

After being owned for a while by a Canadian corporation, the building was purchased by Lane Gaddy and investors in May 2018. Gaddy is an El Paso developer with a penchant for purchasing large historical properties and renovating them. He said he saw an opportunity to invest in the neighboring Las Cruces area and support the community.

Renovations are ongoing at the tower, bringing all the systems there up to current safety codes and comfort levels. Other tenants – apart from Electronic Caregiver, which takes up the 10th floor – include the federal public defender's and state of New Mexico public defender's offices; Abraham's Bank Tower Restaurant, a diner on the fourth floor; and, recently, the Las Cruces Bulletin.

"We moved into the tower a few months ago," said Belinda Mills, southwest regional publisher for the Las Cruces Bulletin. "We have really enjoyed our space filled with natural light and lovely views of the downtown area."



Taylor-Mesilla Historic Property

LAS CRUCES BULLETIN

Located on the historic plaza in Old Mesilla, the Taylor-Mesilla Historic Property embodies the history and heritage of the southwest borderlands. The property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and consists of two storefronts and a large residence in the rear. Since 1953, the three adobe buildings were home to the late J. Paul and Mary Daniels Taylor and their family. The Taylors had an extraordinary collection of Spanish Colonial, Mexican and New Mexican artwork and textiles from all over the world.

The historic property offers an exceptional setting for visitors to understand the history, culture and architecture of Mesilla and the southwest. The story of the home reflects the experiences of a multicultural family and community and serves as a reminder of a time in the 19th century when Mesilla was the center of political, commercial and social activity in southern New Mexico. The people who lived in the structure over time represent the cultural diversity of the community and were witnesses to important historic events that took place within the region.

The architecture, design and décor of the buildings provide authentic examples of different architectural styles and traditional adobe construction. The home has been a model for adobe preservation efforts in Mesilla and the surrounding communities. The Taylors were life-

long collectors of furnishings, art and artifacts which provide exceptional educational opportunities to bring New Mexico's culture and traditions to life. They also used their home and collections to help others understand and respect their own cultural traditions and to support arts education.

J. Paul and Mary Daniels-Taylor and their family lived in the home for more than 60 years and it retains the features, furnishings and décor associated with their values, lifestyle and active participation in politics, education, religion, history and the arts. Mary was an award-winning writer, photographer and researcher. J. Paul was a well-known New Mexican who worked for many years as an educator, legislator, community leader and patron of the arts, making many selfless contributions on behalf of the people of New Mexico. The donation of their precious home aligns with their stated desire to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the history, culture and architecture of New Mexico.

While Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site is currently closed to the public, New Mexico Historic Sites is working on opening the Visitor Center in the fall of 2024. Taylor-Mesilla's complete grand opening is scheduled for the fall of 2025. For more information call 575-202-1638 or visit nmhistoricsites.org/taylor-mesilla.



MESILLA EATERIES & BARS

¡Andele! Restaurant
1950 Calle del Norte
575-526-9631
AndeleRestaurante.com

¡Andele's! Dog House
1983 Calle del Norte
575-526-1271
AndeleRestaurante.com

The Bean at Josefina's
2261 Calle de Guadalupe
575-652-3337

The Bean Café of Mesilla
2011 Avenida de Mesilla
575-527-5155
TheBeanCafeMesilla.com

Café de Mesilla
2190 Avenida de Mesilla
575-524-0000
CafeDeMesilla.com

Café Don Felix De Mesilla
2290 Calle de Parian
575-222-0876
DonFelixCafe.com

Chala's Wood Fire Grill
2790 Avenida de Mesilla
575-652-4143

D.H. Lescombes Winery & Bistro
1720 Avenida de Mesilla
575-524-2408
LescombesWinery.com/locations/las-cruces/.

Double Eagle Restaurant/Peppers Café
2355 Calle de Guadalupe
575-523-6700
DoubleEagleOnline.com

El Patio Bar and Cantina
2171 Calle de Parian
575-526-9943

Hacienda de Mesilla
1891 Avenida de Mesilla
575-652-4953
HaciendaDeMesilla.com

La Posta de Mesilla
2410 Calle de San Albino
575-524-3524
LaPostaDeMesilla.com

Luna Rossa Winery
1321 Avenida de Mesilla
575-526-2484
LunaRossaWinery.com

NM Vintage Wines
2461 Calle de Principal
575-523-9463
nmVintageWines.com

Paisano Café
1740 Calle de Mercado
575-524-0211
PaisanoCafe.com

Palacio Bar
2600 Avenida de Mesilla
575-525-2910

Salud de Mesilla
1800 Avenida de Mesilla
575-323-3548
SaludMesilla.com

Spotted Dog Brewery
2920 Avenida de Mesilla
575-650-2729
SpottedDogBrewery.com

Thai Delight
2184 Avenida de Mesilla
575-525-1900

Wild West Express-O
2385 Calle de Guadalupe
575-523-5562

MESILLA LANDMARKS

Basilica of San Albino Roman Catholic Church
2280 Calle Principal
575-526-9349
SanAlbino.org

Billy the Kid Gift Shop/County Courthouse and Jail
2385 Calle de Guadalupe
575-523-5562

Double Eagle Restaurant
2355 Calle de Guadalupe
575-523-6700
DoubleEagleOnline.com

El Patio Bar and Cantina
2171 Calle de Parian
575-526-9943

**Fountain Theatre
Mesilla Valley Film Society**
2469 Calle de Guadalupe
575-524-8287
MesillaValleyFilm.org

Gadsden Museum
1875 Boutz Road
575-526-6293
GadsdenMuseumMesilla.com

La Posta de Mesilla
2410 Calle de San Albino
575-524-3524
LaPostaDeMesilla.com

Mesilla Plaza and Historic District
Calle Principal

Mesilla School House/Mesilla Community Center
Henry C. Trost, architect
2251 Calle de Santiago
HenryTrost.org/buildings/mesilla-park-school-house

Palacio Bar
2600 Avenida de Mesilla Ave.
575-525-2910

Taylor-Mesilla Historic Property
Calle de Principal
575-202-1638
nmHistoricSites.org/taylor-mesilla



Mesilla in the 1800s

• **The river shifted:** Mesilla was founded in 1848, and the Rio Grande actually flowed between Mesilla and Las Cruces. Travel between the cities meant a barge ride. The river changed course in 1863 and again in 1885 to its present location.

• **Butterfield Overland Stage stop:** From 1857 to 1861 the stageline carried mail and passengers between St. Louis, Missouri and San Francisco, California, via the Ox Bow Route, covering 2812 miles in a harrowing 23 to 25 days. Mesilla was almost the midpoint of the route. Where La Posta de Mesilla now exists – at the corner of Calle de Guadalupe and Calle de Parian – was a stage stop for feeding and shoeing horses, and rest and refreshment for driver and passengers.

• **Bloody politics:** On Sunday, Aug. 27, 1871, members of the Democratic and Republican parties held rallies on the plaza, both parties agreeing to meet in different areas, the Democrats on the plaza and the Republicans in front of a nearby residence. Wanting to close their respective meetings by marching around the plaza, the two processions met on the west side of the plaza. Angry outbursts lead to fights and shots being fired. Nine men were killed, and 40 to 50 wounded.

• **Outlaws and Confederates:** Dutch Hubert, Nicolas Provencio and Billy the Kid hung out at bars and dance halls in town. At the jail and courthouse on the southeast corner of the plaza, Billy the Kid was tried and sentenced to hang in 1881. In the summer of 1861, Colonel Baylor raised the Confederate flag in Mesilla, calling the area the Territory of Arizona, and naming Mesilla as its capital. The Battle of Glorieta in March of 1862 forced Confederate troops to retreat to Texas, ending the Civil War conflict in New Mexico.



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Experience film at the Fountain

LAS CRUCES BULLETIN

The Fountain Theatre, located one-half block south of the historic plaza in Mesilla, is the oldest movie theater in New Mexico. The theater seats about 100 people and has a public entrance at 2469 Calle de Guadalupe and a private entrance from La Posta de Mesilla restaurant next door.

The building was purchased in 1905 by Albert Fountain Jr., son of Col. Albert Jennings Fountain, who painted the theater's iconic indoor murals, depicting scenes of his father's arrival into the Mesilla Valley. He completed them in 1924.

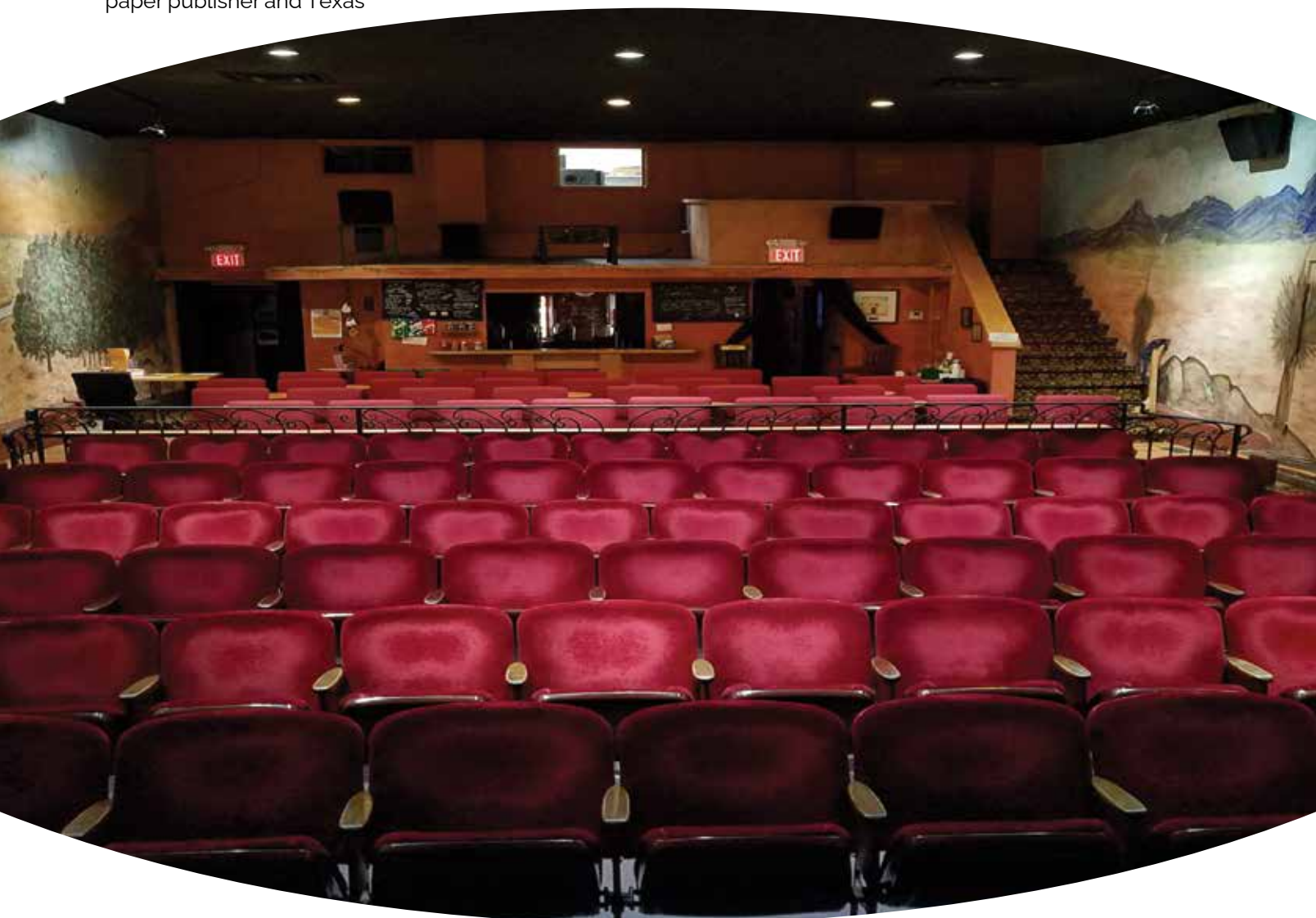
Colonel Fountain was well-known in southern New Mexico as a lawyer (Billy the Kid was his most famous client), legislator, judge, assistant district attorney, newspaper publisher and Texas

lieutenant governor. His 1896 disappearance with his 8-year-old son, Henry, still sparks debate.

Today, the Fountain Theatre is home of the Mesilla Valley Film Society, a volunteer-based organization, which has been presenting independent, foreign and documentary films there since 1989.

Present owners Tom and Jerean Hutchinson, who also own La Posta de Mesilla, renovated the theater in early 2014, updating the building and restoring the theater's murals. The Film Society has also added new seating, digital projection and assisted listening devices for hearing-impaired patrons. For a film schedule and showtimes, visit mesillavalleyfilm.org.

The theatre is available for evening and weekend rental through the Film Society, 575-524-8287, and weekdays, 575-524-3524.



Take a stroll through one of America's oldest markets

Beginning in 1857, the Old Mesilla Farmers and Crafts Market is one of the oldest markets in America. The market takes place where it originally began – on the Mesilla Plaza.

Visitors can peruse the more than 40 vendors that line the plaza twice a week, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. In the summer, the market on Friday extends into the evening to coincide with the town's Summer Music Series, from 7 to 10 p.m. on the plaza.

The event regularly attracts about 300 to 400 people on Friday and more on Sunday, including visitors from El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico.

Visitors to the market will find handcrafted items made by local artists, as well as items sold by local farmers and growers.

"It's a very tranquil environment and every vendor given the venue has an opportunity to be showcased individually," said Irene Parra, special events coordinator for the Town of Mesilla.

Visitors can take their time, stopping in at nearby Mesilla shops while exploring the market. For information, visit mesillanm.gov.



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An artist moves to Mesilla

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Page Coleman came to Mesilla from Albuquerque in 2018, buying a historic building in Mesilla and completely renovating it. The working artist had no space to work as her place was being renovated, so she channeled her energy into creations of wire and found bits and pieces.

"I just cranked out critters," she said.

As she walks around her gallery showroom space at 2424 Calle de Parian, Coleman's energy is palpable. She talks about her critters like they are alive and this brings them to life in the eyes of the viewer.

"I swear they get around," she said. "And these are a little different. I started doing little nasties - if you walk by, they will grab you. And the other ones are these shrubs and bushes."

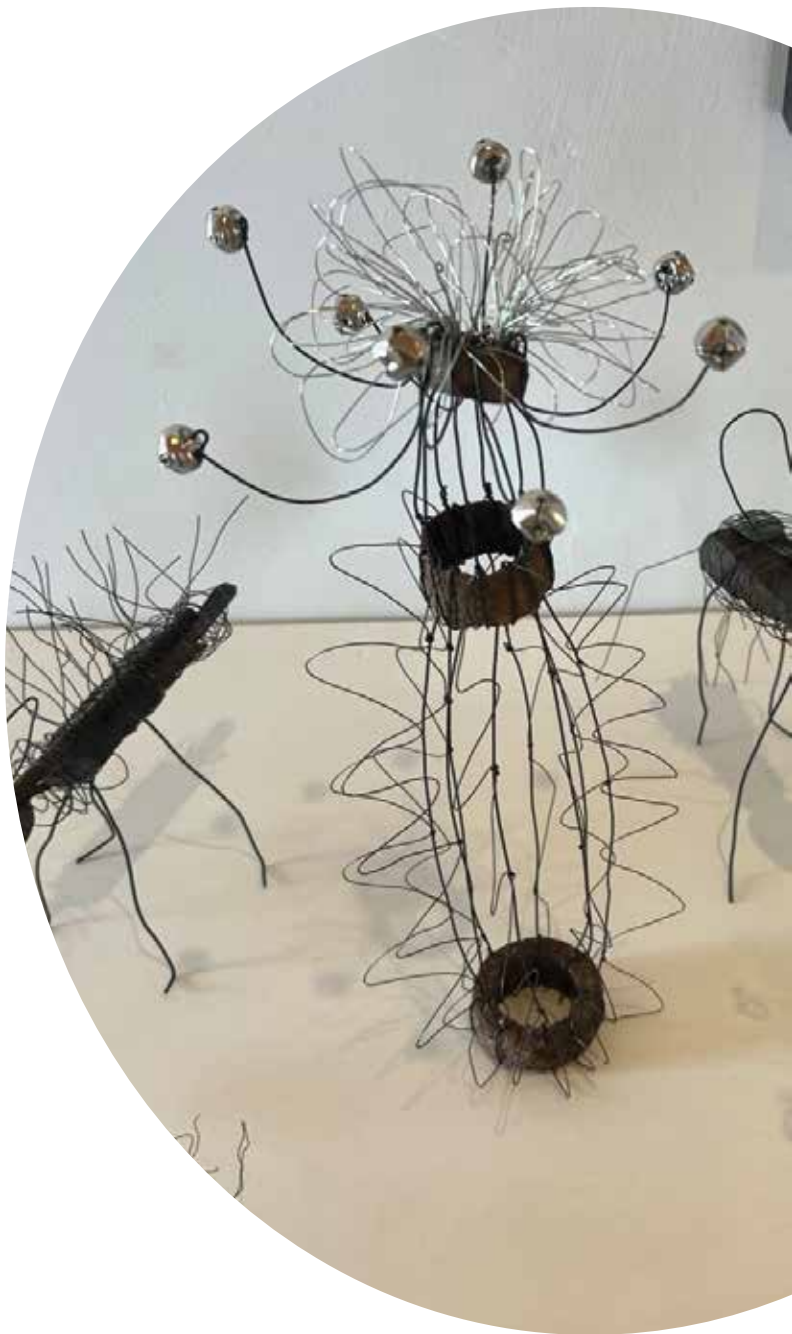
She imagined her critters moving through the shrubs and bushes, then moving right up into the drawings that hang above them.

In direct contrast to her active, busy critter creations,

Coleman's paintings are minimal and striking. There are glowing orb landscapes and stark, naked trees. Her paintings are glowy and calm - "landscapery," she said.

Gallery Page Coleman opened last fall with an open house. Since then, visitors access the gallery by appointment. The work on display features Coleman's artwork spanning 40-plus years, including new charcoal drawings and lots of wire critters.

Born and raised in Greeneville, Tennessee, Coleman earned her art degrees in Virginia and Wisconsin, eventually ending up in Albuquerque in 1982. She worked in



the arts there until moving to Mesilla.

"I had never heard of Mesilla and a friend of mine was living here so I drove down," she said. "I thought it was great."

Having gone from managing small to bigger and bigger gallery spaces with many artists in Albuquerque, Coleman finally said enough was enough and downsized, moving to Mesilla. She just wasn't enjoying the business anymore.

"I really just wanted to quit from that and move down to this little town," she said. "I thought it was just charming."

So now she has her space, with adobe shapes, a rock wall and art creatures hanging around corners to be discovered next to fences and hanging in windows. Her little studio is full of found items with which she builds her critter structures and thinks about her next paint series.

Her work can be found on her website, PageColeman.com.



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America's Best Restaurants features La Posta

ALGERNON D'AMMASSA

As it approached its 85th anniversary of operations, La Posta de Mesilla was featured on an episode of the America's Best Restaurant Roadshow in 2024.

ABR showcases selected restaurants across the country, conducting interviews with owners and filming on location to present popular dishes and the unique settings presented at the eateries. The company filmed at La Posta in January.

The show featured interviews with owners Jerean and Tom Hutchinson. Jerean Hutchinson's great aunt, Katy Griggs Camuñez, opened the restaurant in 1939 and devised some of its unique dishes, including its tostada compuesta. The Hutchinsons have operated the restaurant since 1996.

On its website, ABR said restaurants may be nominated by customers or restaurants can nominate themselves. In an interview, Tom Hutchinson said he and Jerean were surprised when ABR contacted them, saying they were intrigued by the restaurant's long history in Mesilla and its cuisine.

"It sounds like a pretty neat opportunity to tell our story," he said. "We get so many visitors from out of town and from all over the country, you never know how they hear about you."

For top dishes to be showcased on the program, Hutchinson selected La Posta's pancake-style red enchilada with egg on top — "You don't see that in New York or California!" he remarked — and the compuesta, consisting of a corn tortilla cup with red or green chile, meat and frijoles with slaw or garnish.

He added that the ABR team sampled La Posta's gourmet sauces, rubs and salsas.

"Mexican food, by its nature, is very colorful," he said. "You're pleasing the eye even before you take the first bite."

Along with the food and its large selection of tequila, La Posta comes with a story. The kernel of its adobe building was constructed in the 1840s and later housed the Corn Exchange Hotel. The site is included in the National Register of Historic Places. The building now includes shops as well as multiple dining rooms, a courtyard, cantina and novelties such as a piranha tank and a large cage for exotic birds.

In 2021, the restaurant was among 25 restaurants deemed culturally significant and awarded grant funds by American Express and the National Trust for Historic Preservation for building improvements, a measure intended to give the awardees a boost after COVID-19-pandemic restrictions hit the industry hard in 2020 and 2021.





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575-541-2000
LasCruces.gov/2133/Economic-Development

Downtown Las Cruces Partnership
211 N. Water St.
575-525-1955
DowntownLasCruces.org

Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance
277 E. Amador Ave., Ste. 304
575-525-2852
mveda.com

SCORE
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lascruces.score.org

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2121 Summit Court
575-532-0233

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OlympianAcademy.edu

LAS CRUCES AREA CHAMBERS

Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce
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575-524-1968
LasCruces.org
President/CEO:
Debbi Moore

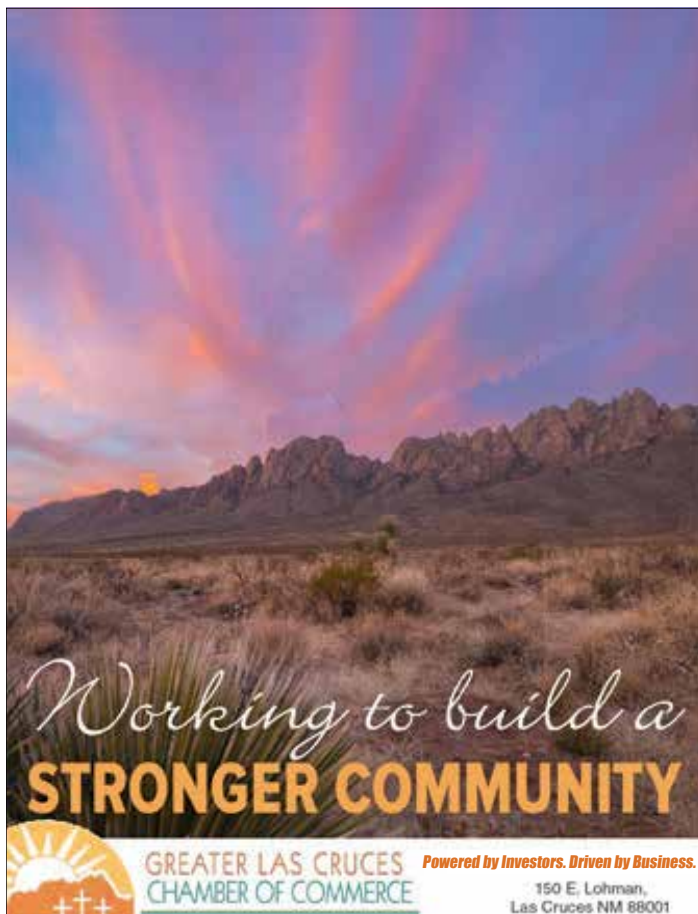
The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce was established more than 60 years ago and represents all businesses in the region, including more than 750 investors and more than 27,000 employees. It is the only four-star accredited chamber in the state of New Mexico.

Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
277 E. Amador Ave., Ste. 305
575-524-8900
LasCrucesHispanicChamber.com
President/CEO:
Curtis Rosemond

The Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, with more than 300 members, assists and promotes Hispanic-owned or operated small and large businesses with resources for growth and expansion, while also reaching out to the entire Las Cruces business community.

Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce
221 N. Main St.
575-323-1575
LocalLasCruces.com
CEO: Carrie Hamblen

Since 2012, the Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce has brought the unique Triple Bottom Line approach to running a business, one that addresses a company's responsibilities toward financial, social and environmental bottom lines while supporting changes benefiting the community for years to come. The Green Chamber also advocates for shopping locally.





'Growing pains' for cannabis industry

ALGERNON D'AMMASSA

The Southwest Cannabis Trade Association, a nonprofit supporting cannabis and cannabis-adjacent businesses in the region, held its second annual industry convention in Las Cruces in June 2024.

The group – founded in 2021 by Nicole Fuchs, Robert Duran and Glen Astrove – meets bimonthly and typically hosts a presenting speaker. The convention featured speakers and panels on cannabis advocacy, “cannabis wellness” and a presentation on the “growing pains” of establishing a cultivation business.

The 2024 keynote speaker was Brian Vicente, a Denver-based attorney who played a leading role in drafting Colorado's 2012 constitutional amendment legalizing cannabis for adult use. He had previously led the nonprofit Sensible Colorado, which advocated for the medical cannabis industry in that state. In an interview, Vicente said he was involved, in some capacity, with current legal issues affecting the industry in several states, including New Mexico.

Vicente spoke to New Mexican entrepreneurs about Colorado's legalization law and how it influenced New Mexico and other states.

New Mexico legalized cannabis for adults not by amending its constitution but through legislation signed into law by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham in 2021. Medical cannabis had been authorized in the state since 2007. The new law legalized non-medical possession and use by adults at least 21 years old and called for an elaborate new regu-

latory framework for commercial production and sales, which opened for business in April 2022.

In March, state officials cheered as cumulative sales

CANNABIS | CONTINUED ON PAGE 39

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★ SPOTLIGHT ON PROGRESS

New Fire Station #2

Our local heroes are now even better equipped to serve and protect our community. With the addition of Fire Station #2 in Anthony NM, we are enhancing safety and response times across Doña Ana County.

Emergency Management

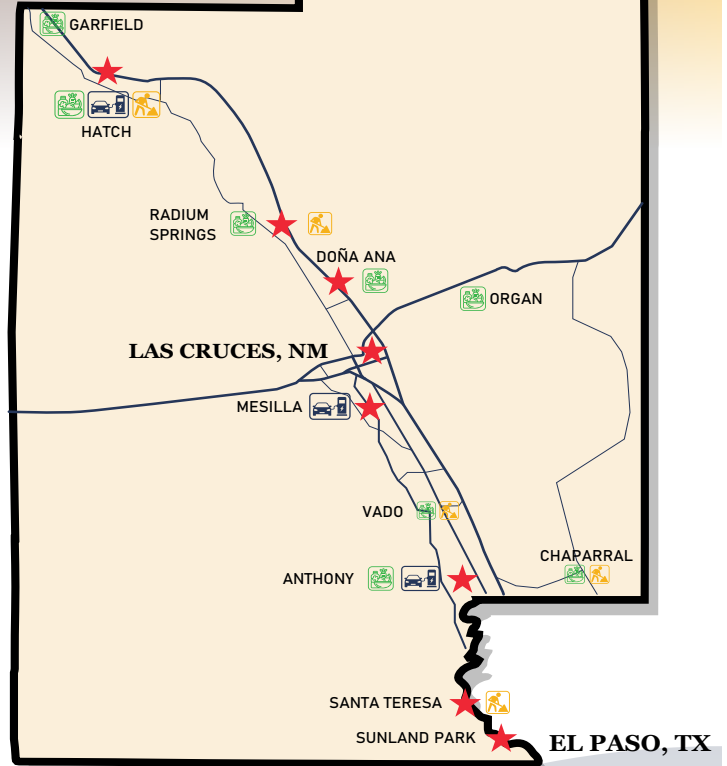
The new Office of Emergency Management administrative facility is moving into formal design, ensuring we are prepared for any situation and ready to safeguard our residents when disaster strikes.

Elections Warehouse

The new Elections Warehouse (to be located next to the Government Center) is set to enhance the operations of the Doña Ana County Clerk's Office, ensuring smooth, transparent, and efficient elections for all our residents.

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Summer Meals Program

Ensuring our youth have access to nutritious meals, our summer program runs at various community centers, supporting healthy growth and happy summers.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

New level 3 community fast chargers are coming online at key locations, including the Government Center in Las Cruces, Anthony substation, and Hatch Admin office. Charge up and go green with us!

Road Projects

From the northern to the southern parts of the county, our road projects are making travel safer and smoother for everyone. Stay tuned for more infrastructure updates!

Mental Health Resources

CONNECT Doña Ana is a referral system connecting residents to health care and social services while working to prevent individuals from slipping through the gaps in the system.



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topped \$1 billion. New Mexico's approach has been criticized, however, for an over-saturated marketplace, prices too high to compete with the non-regulated "illicit" market and lax protections for medical cannabis products as enrollment in the program declined.

Additionally, in 2024 Border Patrol agents at southern New Mexico checkpoints began cracking down on the movement of legal cannabis product by growers, who have seen their supplies confiscated. Cannabis remains prohibited under federal law, even as the federal government has moved toward loosening restrictions on the plant. In a two-month span, the reported value of cannabis seizures amounted to \$300,000. Navigating the conditions for the industry at the U.S.-Mexico border is among the topics the Southwest Cannabis Trade Association aims to address, as does the New Mexico Cannabis Chamber of Commerce in Albuquerque and others.

Vicente said data showing growth in the adult-use market, meaning sales of the plant through licensed



dispensaries, indicated that more buyers were moving out of the underground market into regulated businesses. Besides assurance of product safety, Vicente said dispensaries offer better consumer choice: "if I walk into a store, I can buy 30 strains and I can get beverages ... 10 to 50 types of vaporizers, everything's there. So I think ultimately we're seeing a pretty big uptake of people transitioning into the (recreational) market in New Mexico."

Vicente noted that states have taken unique approaches not only in how they legalized cannabis but how their state industries are regulated. New Mexico, for instance, eschewed license caps, maintained low barriers of entry for people entering the market and also limited local governments' authority to impose restrictions that could effectively ban cannabis in their jurisdictions.

"That has led to a lot of businesses opening up, and I do think the state is going to see some sort of correction as folks realize that this is a pretty tough business to run," he said.

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New film studios could affect housing prices, study shows

JUSTIN GARCIA

It's Friday morning, and outside a Las Cruces home, a film crew calls "action" at a pop-up movie set on a neighborhood street.

Maybe the crew is filming a car chase or a shootout for an action movie. Or perhaps a luckless man who's done everything wrong professes his love with a boombox, hoping a grand gesture erases 90 minutes of missed cues and near kisses.

It's a sight Las Cruces could experience more often as officials funnel public funds toward rounding out a budding film industry.

Public investment in 828 Productions – which has been promised over \$6 million in incentives to build out a permanent film studio in Las Cruces and hire 100 people – and the Creative Media Technology building – an \$11.2 million building at New Mexico State University Arrowhead campus – signal local government's efforts to grow Las Cruces film.

However, the efforts could have unforeseen consequences on the Las Cruces housing market, particularly in neighborhoods abutting film studios.

A 2022 study by Velma Zahirovic-Herbert, a researcher at the University of Memphis, and Karen Gibler, a researcher at Georgia State University, investigated how film studios affected housing prices in Atlanta, Georgia.

In their paper, "The effect of film production studios on housing prices in Atlanta, the Hollywood of the South," published in the academic journal *Urban Studies*, Zahi-

rovic-Herbert and Gibler found that homes near studios tended to sell for higher rates. They also found that those neighborhoods saw more transitions as residents moved

FILM STUDIOS | CONTINUED ON PAGE 42

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away and new people came in.

"(The Atlanta metro area) has a number of large studios, but it also has smaller ones," Zahirovic-Herbert said in an interview with the Las Cruces Bulletin. "They might have supporting roles, or maybe they did animation."

Zahirovic-Herbert said all studios increased housing prices, but the larger ones had a greater effect. She also pointed out that many of the Atlanta studios – which typically fit into areas zoned for industrial use – were near neighborhoods targeted for revitalization. She also pointed out that her research depended on relatively new studios studied over a short period.

In Las Cruces, the most significant potential film investment of 828 Productions plans to build a large campus adjacent to the Alameda Depot neighborhood and the neighborhoods adjacent to North Valley Drive and West Picacho Avenue.

George Pearson, Alameda Depot Neighborhood Association, said the association supports the 828 Productions campus moving in.

"We see the benefits of the movie industry in our neighborhood. While not all movie activities are conducted by

828, we know that their presence in Las Cruces attracts and facilitates other production companies to spend money in our neighborhood and Las Cruces," Pearson said. "Personally, I've seen productions happening both across the street and next door to my house."

Steve Montañez, owner and qualifying broker at New Mexico Properties and a Las Cruces Bulletin contributor, said the growing presence of industrial film production is still not something on his radar. Since the studios – particularly 828 – remain unbuilt, Montañez said that more traditional factors still dominate pricing.

Montañez said the area abutting 828's future presence, the Alameda Depot Neighborhood, is already a well-performing area.

"Those trees are very mature. Those homes, the characteristics of the homes, there's larger backyards, they're built on larger lots, and so there's still this southwestern charm that that people really love."

Montañez said he predicts that the long-term effects will be positive for prices.

"I think a studio, especially a big studio, I see the effect being positive," Montañez said.

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Unity's final flight from spaceport

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

"Release, release, release." The order to separate Eve and Unity, sending the latter to 54.4 miles above the earth, leaving the mothership behind, has happened for the last time.

VSS Unity, a spaceship that flew 32 flights in total for Virgin Galactic, is being pulled off duty as the Delta class of VG spaceships begins to take shape. Galactic 07 was Unity's 12th spaceflight to date, seventh commercial flight and the second space flight of the year.

Sometime in late 2025, the Delta class ships are planned to begin their flights, for which some 700 individuals have paid between some \$250,000 and \$500,000 each.

Virgin Galactic president of operations Mike Moses said plans have changed due to economic factors. Previously, Unity was supposed to continue serving for two missions a month until Delta class was rolled out. The Delta spaceships are not very different externally from Unity but they will be a production ship, Moses said. They are being manufactured at the supplier's locations and will be assembled in Phoenix, Ariz., come to Spaceport America for testing and, finally, take to the air. These ships will have the capacity to fly several times a week, possibly even several times a day.

Mothership Eve will continue to launch the ships, he said.

While several private astronauts flew on the Saturday, June 8, one Turkish researcher, Tuva Atasever, aka Astronaut 027, had a special role.

"Tuva was the most important payload for us," Axiom Space chief astronaut Michael Lopez-Alegria said. "He conducted seven experiments, three of which were carry-overs from AX-3 (a previous private space mission to ISS). He also had an Axiom experiment involving an insulin pen, to accurately dispense and dose an amount in space."

Atasever said he was able to carry out all the experiments he was carrying with success. One experiment looks at how blood dynamics change in the prefrontal cortex area of the brain. Data was collected on breathing and heart rate at various times.

"I'm really looking forward to seeing the results," he said. "One of the things the Beacon Experiment is looking into has to do with the overview effect of how the brain changes. How the prefrontal cortex, which is the abstract thinking portion of the brain, conceptualizes the experience."

The Galactic 07 autonomous rack-mounted research payloads included a Purdue University experiment designed to study propellant slosh in fuel tanks of maneuvering spacecraft, as well as a University of California

FINAL FLIGHT | CONTINUED ON PAGE 44



FINAL FLIGHT | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43

Berkeley payload testing a new type of 3D printing.

Virgin Galactic has flown payloads for NASA's Flight Opportunities program since the company's first space flight in 2018 and was recently selected by NASA as a contracted flight provider for the next five years.

In addition to Atasever, three private astronauts were on the flight: Andy Sadhwani, Irving Izchak Pergament and Giorgio Manenti, who are now Virgin Galactic's 28th, 29th and 30th astronauts.

Moses called the 32nd flight of Unity a bitter-sweet moment.

"It ends a really incredible chapter," he said. "This vehicle is really revolutionary. (The commercial flight program) really took off when we came to New Mexico."

Going forward, Atasever said he will need much more time to process his experience in suborbital space.

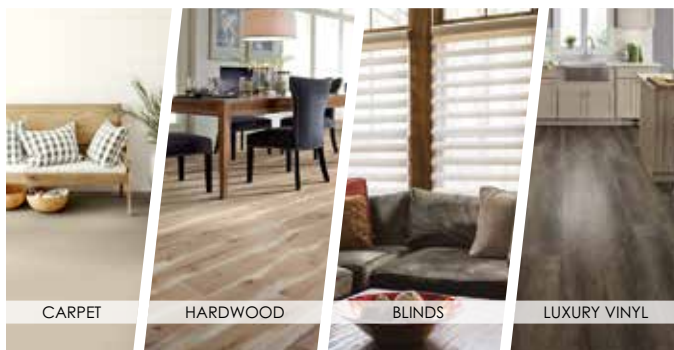
"Words will not do it justice because it is experiential," he said. "You feel it in the guts."



Casey Carpet

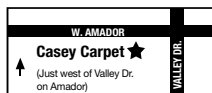
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BlueDoorVenue.com

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575-524-2408
LescombesWinery.com

Dickerson Group Catering and Event Services
3920 W. Picacho Ave.
575-644-0778
DickersonGroupLC.com/catering

Double Eagle
2355 Calle de Guadalupe
575-523-6700
DoubleEagleOnline.com

Fort Selden Winery
1233 Fort Selden Road
575-571-6657
FortSeldenWinery.com

Grapevine Plaza and Picacho Peak Brewing Co.
3900 W. Picacho Ave.
575-650-7973
GrapevinePlaza.net

Hacienda de Mesilla
1891 Avenida de Mesilla
575-652-4953
HaciendaDeMesilla.com

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575-522-0900
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575-522-4300
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Vado Speedway marks 5th year

SYLVIA QUINTANILLA

Celebrating their fifth anniversary, Vado Speedway Park, located at 15900 Stern Drive in Vado, south of Las Cruces, has cemented itself as a first-class race track. Born from the legacy of Southern New Mexico Speedway, Vado Speedway Park was upgraded with not only a new location, but with 16 suites, concession stands and the capacity to hold around 5,000 new and seasoned race fans. The races feature drivers with stock cars, modified cars, sprint cars, super trucks and more.

Walking into the concourse, you are greeted with a beautiful view of the mountains. Getting to your seats is easy, starting from the top with no need to climb bleachers to watch the action.

"It's such a nice facility. Each week we try our best to get more fanatics in there and letting people know what it is. Everybody thinks it's a dirt track, it's a nasty grimy little hole in the wall. Royal Jones has changed that completely," Mike Garcia, general manager of Vado Speedway Park, said, referring to owner Royal Jones.

Garcia is a former driver himself who won the first Super Truck Championship in 2019 in Vado. He has seen the dirt track from its original roots at the Southern New Mexico State Fair and Rodeo grounds to the newer digs in Vado.

The clay surface track is home to several annual events, including the Wild West Shootout which kicks off the race season in January. The event brings in national drivers from across the country for a six-race mini-series. This year, 2021

NASCAR Cup Series Champion Kyle Larson came to Vado and won his first Wild West Shootout.

"It is such a state-of-the-art track that you won't find a nicer one this side of the country at all. We've had Kyle Larson, the NASCAR Champion come in here. We've had Kenny Schrader, NASCAR racer, come in here and race. And they said it's a NASCAR track on dirt," Garcia stated.

Garcia noted that bringing in NASCAR drivers has elevated the track to be featured on NASCAR and dirt track social media accounts and shown what their track is capable of.

Race season begins in January and runs until late November. Throughout the year, the speedway's events include Meet the Drivers nights, Doña Ana County Night, First Responder Night, Open Practice, Fall Nationals, Winter Meltdown and specialty nights for Mother's and Father's days. The week after July 4th, the track hosts a Fireworks Night that fills the stands almost to their capacity each year to take in the spectacle. A full list of events is available at the speedway's website.

Not only has Vado Speedway Park brought great racing and opportunity to local drivers, but it is also family friendly. Oftentimes, Garcia mentioned that children enjoy sliding down the grass hills. Attendees come from all walks of life, from the lifelong race fans in their vintage race shirts and jeans to couples dressed up for a night out.

Being not only friendly, but knowledgeable about the track and sport is something the Vado staff pride themselves on.

"You will not be disappointed with a regular weekly race show for \$15. You get three hours of complete entertainment and racing," Garcia said.





Roasted Rooster elevates waffles

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 Roasted Rooster Coffee and Waffles, 2702 W. Amador Avenue, 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 Roasters.

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

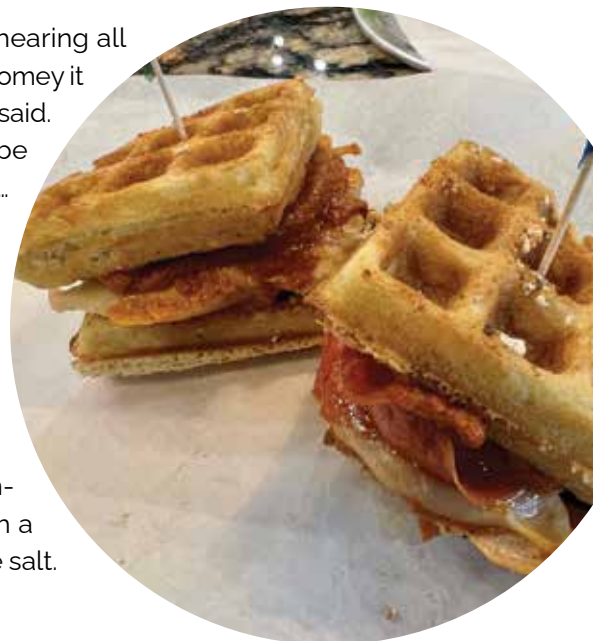
that two weeks after opening in 2023, most of the clientele were local and there are already quite a few regulars getting something to go or dining in.

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.”

In the meantime, 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, a s s u m i n g grandma likes locally roasted coffee or cucumber limeade with a dash of red chile salt.



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 MilagroCoffeeNM.com

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 575-222-0081
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Picacho Coffee Roasters
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 575-520-5366
 picacho.coffee

Roasted Rooster Coffee & Waffles
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 RoastedRoosterNM.com

Saturdays Coffee
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 SaturdaysCoffee.com

Scooter's Coffee
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WINE & DINE TRAIL

MAP OF RESTAURANTS, BREWERIES AND WINERIES

WINE & DINE

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EATS & TREATS

- 1 Amador Patio Bar & Grill**
302 S. Main St., Ste. B
- 2 Double Eagle**
2355 Calle de Guadalupe, Mesilla
- 3 FARMesilla**
1840 Avenida de Mesilla, Mesilla
- 4 Hacienda de Mesilla**
1891 Avenida de Mesilla, Mesilla
- 5 La Posta de Mesilla**
2410 Calle de San Albino, Mesilla
- 6 Bite of Belgium**
741 N. Alameda
- 7 Le Rendez-vous Café**
2701 W. Picacho Ave., Ste. 1
- 8 El Sombrero**
363 S. Espina
- 9 Lorenzo's Italian Restaurant**
1753 E. University
- 10 Milagro Coffee Y Espresso**
1733 E. University Ave.
- 11 Peppers Café**
2355 Calle de Guadalupe, Mesilla
- 12 Salud! de Mesilla**
1800 Avenida de Mesilla, Mesilla

- 22 Spotted Dog Brewery**
2920 Avenida de Mesilla, Mesilla
- 23 Truth or Consequences Brewing Co. - Las Cruces**
2001 E. Lohman Ave., Ste. 115

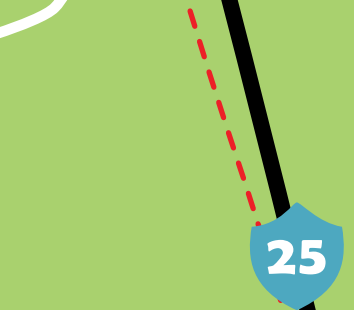
WINERIES

- 24 Amaro Winery**
402 S. Melendres St.
- 25 D.H. Lescombes Winery & Bistro**
1720 Avenida de Mesilla
- 26 Heart of the Desert Pistachios & Wines**
2350 Calle Principal, Mesilla
- 27 La Viña Winery**
4201 NM Hwy 28, Anthony, NM
- 28 Luna Rossa Winery & Pizzeria**
1321 Avenida de Mesilla
- 29 Mesa Vista Winery & Tasting Room**
3200 NM Hwy 28, Anthony, NM
- 30 NM Vintage Wines**
2461 Calle Principal, Mesilla
- 31 Rio Grande Vineyard & Winery**
5321 NM Hwy 28
- 32 Sombra Antigua Vineyard & Winery**
430 La Viña Road, Anthony, NM
- 33 Zin Valle Vineyards**
7315 Canutillo-La Union Road, Canutillo, Texas

DISTILLERS & BREWERS

- 13 The Amador: Broken Spoke/Jax/575**
302 S. Main St.
- 14 Bosque Brewing Co.**
901 E. University Ave., Ste. 3A,
2102 Telshor Court
- 15 Dry Point Distillers**
1680 Calle de Alvarez, Ste. C2
- 16 Elephant Ranch**
3995 W. Picacho Ave.
- 17 Highway 28 Brewery**
10092 NM Hwy 28
- 18 Icebox Brewing Co.**
2825 W. Picacho Ave.
3231 N. Main St.
139 N. Main St.
2260 S. Locust St.
- 19 Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery**
119 N. Main St.
- 20 Pecan Grill and Brewery**
500 S. Telshor Blvd.
- 21 Picacho Peak Brewing Co.**
3900 W. Picacho Ave.

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Rethinking 'Red or Green?'

RICHARD COLTHARP

In 2023, the New Mexico legislature passed a memorial making roasting green chile the state's official aroma.

Years ago, the legislature made the state question official: Red or green?

However, it's time that question is revisited.

The question refers to what type of chile you want with your food order. For example, if you order cheese enchiladas, and you fail to identify your chile, the server will ask, "Red or green?" Perfectly logical.

But sometimes people use the question outside of a meal setting to ask which you like better.

"What do you like better – red chile or green chile?"

"It depends."

"No, you can't cop out like that. You've got to pick."

This deeply underestimates the power and subtlety

of chile in New Mexico. It is quite possible, indeed very probable, your answer to the question will vary greatly.

For example, almost every New Mexican loves a green chile cheeseburger. There are some restaurants and New Mexico cooks who create a red chile cheeseburger; but they are few and far between, and the concepts are so different it's nearly impossible to compare.

Even if you narrow it to just green chile cheeseburgers, the variety makes it difficult to make a unilateral decision. Take the green chile cheeseburger at **Spotted Dog Brewery** (2920 Avenida de Mesilla). The patty is thick and juicy. The green chile is generous and it melts with the cheese. The bun does not feel store-bought. Then look at the green chile cheeseburger at **Whataburger** (multiple locations), one of the best burgers at a chain restaurant (and also the best fries). The patties are thinner and less juicy, which means it's best if you get double meat. Unlike some chains, Whataburger definitely understands green chile, so it's good. The cheese stands more by itself, and the buns are more traditional. Both are good burgers, but it's a different experience.

Let's talk enchiladas.

Many in Las Cruces consider **Nellie's Café** (1226 W. Hadley Ave.), established in 1963, to be the best place in Las Cruces for red enchiladas. The red chile is bright red, almost orange. And nice and hot. The cheese on both the inside and on top is thoroughly melted. If you get onions on top, maybe even a fried egg, you're having a classic, real New Mexican moment. That's why the hours and days are very limited, and the lines are typically long.

Lucy's Café (1155 S. Valley Drive, 575-523-5619), located in the home of the longtime former Las Cruces staple, Old Town, has a strikingly different red enchilada. The red chile is very dark and almost pasty compared to many more liquidy red chile sauces. The cheese is less melty. This is also a delicious New Mexican experience, yet totally different from Nellie's.

Then consider **Paisano Café** (1740 Calle de Mercado). The food there is more central





old Mexico than southern New Mexico. The red chile is bright like Nellie's, but more pasty, like Lucy's. The tortillas are prepared differently and the experience feels lighter than the other two. Yet, also a wonderful dining experience. Also, Paisano has one of the most unique chips-and-salsa presentations, and mole that will make you a mole fan.

So, three different reds, and three different great meals. Now let's look at green enchiladas.

iAndele! Restaurant (1950 Calle del Norte, Mesilla) is the favorite of many Las Crucens. Southern New Mexico expatriates routinely make the obligatory Andele stop when they come back into town. It's hard to describe the thick, creamy, green sauce Andele's uses on its enchiladas, and this is a case where almost everyone gets the chicken enchiladas.

The Shed (810 S. Valley Drive) has a wonderful blue corn tortilla green enchilada plate that emphasizes the green chile, and the shredded cheese inside has a wonderfully non-goopy texture.

Hacienda de Mesilla (1891 Avenida de Mesilla, Mesilla) presents an even different take. The unique blue corn, blue crab, green chile enchiladas are, as far as we could tell, unique in Doña Ana County. If you're old enough to remember the 1958 novelty song about the one-eyed, one-horned, flying purple people eater, you'll realize you can sing "blue corn, blue crab, green chile enchiladas" to the same cadence.

So, you see, there is no easy, clear way to answer the question "Do you prefer red or green?"

And if you want to get the full lesson on southern New Mexico green chile, you need to take the beautiful drive down Highway 28 and visit the amazing experience that is **Chope's Town Bar and Café** (16145 NM Hwy. 28, La Mesa). Its roots go back to 1909, and it's where you get true chile rellenos, true green chile queso (where the star is the green chile, not the cheese), and true chile verde.

Day's closure darkens food scene

RICHARD COLTHARP

Since people heard about the closing of Day's Hamburgers everyone, it seems, has a story about the restaurant that's been a fixture in Las Cruces since 1932.

The restaurant closed its doors last summer and the familiar spot by the corner of Main St. and Las Cruces Ave. downtown remains vacant, a reminder of what has been lost.

"It's been great hearing all the stories," said Denev-Rae Evans, the fourth-generation owner of Day's. Her great-grandmother Mary-Ann Day started the burger-and-burrito operation 92 years ago.

There are lots of pieces to Evans' own story, and why she closed the restaurant. Many are financial, some are practical, and one is physical: She was simply burned out.

Rents, road construction, parking lot issues, rising interest rates, high and fluctuating food costs. All of these have been hurdles in addition to staffing.

Those are the bad things.

Then there are the good things.

The day I visited Evans and her team on their last day of business, I met Rosie Armendariz, who has worked at Day's for more than 40 years. She was making patties

-- just as Mary-Ann Day did back in the day -- from fresh ground beef. Armendariz worked from a 10-pound package of beef, rounding it into future Great Day burgers.

"How do you know how big to make them?" I asked.

"Well, you do something for 40 years, you get the hang of it," Armendariz said. "Just like meatballs for spaghetti."

I looked and, indeed, they all looked exactly the same size. She knocked out that bag in just a few minutes.

Next up the line was Verina Matruino, who took Armendariz's perfect meatballs, plopped them on the griddle, and mashed them flat with a spatula. Matruino also gave me the secret of the green sauce that adorns a proper Great Day burger.

And my Day's story?

Well, there was the time I ate seven Day's burgers at one sitting. Yes, it was part of a burger-eating contest in the parking lot. And, yes, the burgers were slightly smaller than the Great Day. And, no, I did not win the contest.

It was part of the Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce's Construction Comadres y Compadres campaign a few years ago, which featured entertaining events at local businesses adversely affected by multiple construction projects.

My friend George Vescovo won the contest. He only ate six, but he did so before the buzzer went off, when I was only on burger No. 5. Everybody congratulated George, but I stayed at the table, because there were still two Day's burgers in front of me. One by one, everyone left, leaving me alone, finishing off those incomparable Day's burgers.

I hope I get the chance to have some more again. But maybe I don't need seven.



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New billiard hall racks up

ALGERNON D'AMMASSA

An era ended in downtown Las Cruces when My Brother's Place, the popular restaurant and billiard hall that had been in operation on Main Street for over 40 years, closed in 2016. Q Time, adjacent to 10 Pin Alley on Amador, shut down along with the rest of facility in 2018. Options for a game of pool, especially downtown, abruptly seemed to be getting scarce.

In 2020, Lucky Dog Billiards opened its doors on E. Lohman, but was plagued with setbacks dealt by the Covid-19 pandemic on top of the routine pitfalls of launching a new business, ultimately closing last August. But now a new outfit has restored pool and darts at the location.

Marci Dickerson, owner of restaurants The Game and Game 2 in Las Cruces, opened The Game Billiards at the former home of Lucky Dog. The new enterprise features a full bar, a menu featuring pizza and wings, 12 pool tables, shuffleboard, dart lanes and a small outdoor patio.

Dickerson's Catering and Event Services, which she considers her primary business, marks its 25th anniversary in 2024. The Game (established in 2008) and Game



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2 (2016) operate near the New Mexico State University Las Cruces campus and on Northrise Drive, respectively.

The restaurant industry is challenging, and the difficulties multiply with the addition of managing a bar. Dickerson said for female entrepreneurs, this kind of business — requiring attention at night and weekends, and subject to emergency calls — is harder still.

“One of the biggest challenges is that women are, historically, the predominant caregivers for the children the majority of the time,” she said. “Most restaurants and bars are run in the evenings; they’re not run when the children are in school. That causes a problem for a lot of people, and a lot of sacrifices must be made of that time with the children to run them.

“I was very blessed and able to do because, the entire time I’ve been in business, my mother has been the primary caregiver for my kids. She has been the one that has been there making sure the homework is done, they’re at all their practices and all those things. Because of her role in my company, I was able to go do all of these things.”

Dickerson added that her mother had been a restaurateur herself, operating a business open for breakfast and

lunch only, allowing her to be a full-time mother while running her enterprise.

The restaurant-and-bar business, she said, remains male dominated, among vendors as well as other bar owners, and upon entering the field at the age of 23 she soon toughened up.

She now sits atop an organization of over 100 employees including managers across several businesses, including two bar-and-grills that open seven days a week and a catering operation that she said sometimes operates for stretches of 21 consecutive days.

But how is her break shot? She grinned and admitted she is not a pool player, but would be willing to learn.



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Tortugas Village pilgrimage, celebration

LAS CRUCES BULLETIN

Every year, members of the village of Tortugas and La Corporación de los Indígenas de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe celebrate the Our Lady of Guadalupe Fiesta on Dec. 10, 11 and 12 in a signature area event honoring local Indigenous history along with the saint's feast day. The 113th celebration was held in December 2023.

The heart of the fiesta, open to the general public, is the Tortugas village located near Stern Drive. The three-day celebration opens with an evening candlelight procession and vigil in the village's Casa del Pueblo. There are also performances by Indigenous dance groups.

At sunrise on Dec. 11, people gather in the village for a pilgrimage to the top of Tortugas Mountain, also known as "A" Mountain – a physically demanding event that draws thousands statewide and from around the world, beginning with a blessing merging Roman Catholic and Indigenous American traditional blessings. On the route up the mountain, some engage in acts of penitence while others walk in silence or converse with loved ones. The observance culminates in a Catholic mass on the mountaintop overlooking Las Cruces.



ANNUAL FESTIVALS & EVENTS

2024-2025



JANUARY

- New Mexico State University spring semester begins

FEBRUARY

- For the Love of Art Month, throughout Las Cruces
- The Museum ROCKS! Gem & Mineral Show, New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum

MARCH

- Las Cruces International Film Festival, various locations
- Bataan Memorial Death March, White Sands Missile Range
- Cowboy Days, New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum
- Las Cruces Arts Fair

APRIL

- La Viña Spring Wine Festival, La Viña Winery, La Union
- Las Cruces Space Festival
- Trinity Site Tour, White Sands Missile Range
- ¡Mira! Festival, Plaza de Las Cruces

MAY

- Blazin' Brew Fest (over age 21)
- Cinco de Mayo, Mesilla
- Las Cruces Ukefest
- Las Cruces Wine Festival (Memorial Day Weekend), Southern NM State Fairgrounds
- Music in the Park Series begins (May-August), Young Park
- National Day of Prayer, City Hall and throughout Las Cruces
- Mayor's Jazz Fest

JUNE

- San Juan Turtle Fiesta, Tortugas
- Movies in the Park Series begins (June-August), Young Park
- Spaceport America Cup

JULY

- 4th of July Electric Light Parade, Celebration and Fireworks, NMSU
- Tequila, Taco & Cerveza Fest, Main Street Downtown
- City of Las Cruces Movies in the Park

AUGUST

- Las Cruces Comic Con, Las Cruces Convention Center

SEPTEMBER

- Diez y Seis de Septiembre Fiesta, Mesilla Plaza
- Franciscan Fine Art Festival (Labor Day Saturday & Sunday) Holy Cross Retreat Center
- Hatch Chile Festival (Labor Day Weekend), Hatch
- Las Cruces Harvest Wine Festival (Labor Day Weekend), Southern NM State Fair Grounds
- Mesilla Valley Corn Maze
- Monuments to Main Street, various locations
- La Viña Harvest Wine Festival, La Union
- Southern New Mexico State Fair & Rodeo, Southern NM State Fairgrounds
- White Sands Music and Balloon Festival, White Sands National Park

OCTOBER

- Mesilla Jazz Happening, Mesilla Plaza
- Mesilla Valley Corn Maze, Picacho Avenue
- Trinity Site Tour, White Sands Missile Range
- Zombie Walk, Downtown Las Cruces

NOVEMBER

- Dia de los Muertos, Mesilla
- Giving Tuesday at NMSU
- Las Cruces International Mariachi Conference
- Renaissance ArtsFaire, Young Park
- HomeGrown: New Mexico Gift Show and Food Market

DECEMBER

- Our Lady of Guadalupe fiesta, Tortugas
- City of Las Cruces Christmas Tree Lighting, Plaza de Las Cruces
- Old Mesilla Christmas Tree Lighting
- Christmas Carols and Luminarias on the Plaza, Mesilla Plaza
- Noche de Luminarias, NMSU
- Toys for Tots Parade
- Chile Drop for New Year's Eve, Plaza de Las Cruces



Public art on the rise in Las Cruces

DAVID SALCIDO

Look around you. If you've been paying any attention at all, you may have noticed an upsurge in public art displays going up all across the city. Colorful murals, fantastic sculptures and whimsical assemblages proliferate, lending an air of unprecedented cultural sophistication.

As in many cities undergoing cultural revivals, these changes didn't happen overnight.

Iconic pieces, like Anthony Pennock's water tank murals, the large wooden Navajo giant in Apodaca Park, by Peter Wolf Toth and Olin Caulk's Recycled Roadrunner at the rest stop overlooking Las Cruces on Interstate Highway 10, are easily recognizable. Individual pieces popping up in parks and public buildings across the valley are perhaps less so. Most depict historical events or make use of cultural iconography with a richness and diversity that is perfectly in keeping with Las Cruces' roots.

According to Las Cruces Public Art Coordinator Ceci Vasconcellos, there are over 65 pieces of public art in the city right now. That number is growing due to a grassroots movement over the last decade or so, which resulted in a city master plan to accentuate the arts. As of late 2021, each qualified general obligation bond the city adopts provides a 2 percent allowance to go toward public art. This is great news for art lovers.

"In this GO bond cycle, we received \$340,000 for public art, so we are in the process of spending that money," Vasconcellos says. "Right now, the GO bonds are supporting a new fire station, along with projects for parks and recreation, and the east mesa, too." (A GO bond page on the city's website shows the breakdown, for those who are curious.)

The desire is to place at least one piece of public art in every district by the year 2026. Plans also include installations at some of the fire stations that have been around since before the master plan and putting plaques on all of the public art pieces that already exist. A recent assessment of the existing public art revealed that some are badly in need of repair. To that end, the Public Art Department has been setting money aside in their general fund to take care of these needs.

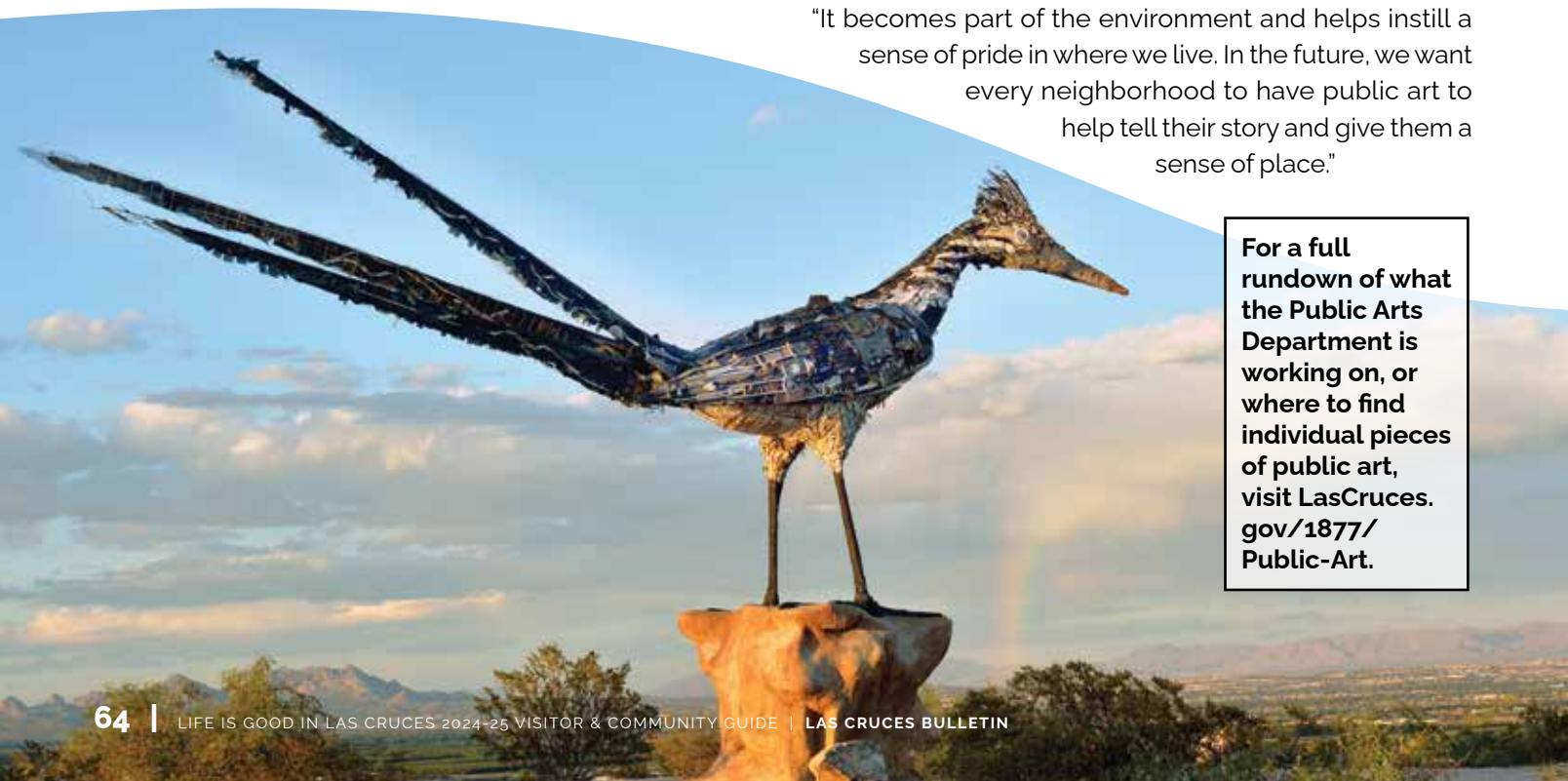
According to Vasconcellos, public art not only shows a vested interest by the city to beautify our living space, but also offers opportunities for the many artists who call Las Cruces home.

"We'd like to see more public artists who live here get the opportunity to create pieces that they can be proud of, right here where they live," she said.

Among those already represented are world-renowned homegrown creatives like Stephen Hansen, Virginia Marie Romero, Glenn Schwaiger and Bob Diven.

"I think sometimes people don't really understand that art is an important part of community," Vasconcellos said. "It becomes part of the environment and helps instill a sense of pride in where we live. In the future, we want every neighborhood to have public art to help tell their story and give them a sense of place."

For a full rundown of what the Public Arts Department is working on, or where to find individual pieces of public art, visit [LasCruces.gov/1877/Public-Art](https://www.lascruces.gov/1877/Public-Art).



PERFORMING ARTS VENUES

Amador LIVE

302 S. Main St.
575-541-7417
AmadorLive.com

ASNMSU Center for the Arts

1000 E. University Ave.
575-646-4515 (box office)
theatre.nmsu.edu

Black Box Theatre

430 N. Main St.
575-523-1223
no-strings.org

Edith & F.E. Atkinson Recital Hall

New Mexico State University
1075 N. Horseshoe Drive
575-646-2421
music.nmsu.edu

Fountain Theatre • Mesilla Valley Film Society

2469 Calle de Guadalupe, Mesilla
575-524-8287
MesillaValleyFilm.org

Las Cruces Convention Center

680 E. University Ave.
575-526-0100
MeetInLasCruces.com

Las Cruces Community Theatre

313 N. Main St.
575-523-1200
lcctnm.org

New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum

4100 Dripping Springs Road
575-522-4100
nmFarmAndRanchMuseum.org

NM Vintage Wines

2461 Calle de Principal, Mesilla
575-523-9463
nmVintageWines.com

Pan American Center

1810 E. University Ave.
575-646-1420
panam.nmsu.edu

Project in Motion

430 N. Compress Road
575-208-4413
ProjectInMotion.com

Rio Grande Theatre

211 N. Main St.
575-541-2290
RioGrandeTheatre.com

ART GALLERIES

Aa Studios

2645 Doña Ana Road
575-520-8752
By appointment only.

Agave Artists Cooperative Gallery

2250 Calle de San Albino
575-339-9870
AgaveArtists.com

The Hood

3206 Harrelson St.
575-494-7256
TheHoodNewMexico.com

Big Picture Digital Image Experts and Gallery

2001 E. Lohman Ave., Ste. 109a
575-647-0508
BigPicts.com

Branigan Cultural Center

501 N. Main St.
575-541-2154
LasCruces.gov/1528/
Branigan-Cultural-Center

Camino Tattoo and Fine Art

400 S. Compress Road
575-523-1012
CaminoTattooStudio.com

Casa Camino Real Book Store and Art Gallery

314 S. Tornillo St.
575-649-9173

Doña Ana Arts Council Arts & Cultural Center

230 S. Water St.
575-523-6403
daarts.org

Galeria on the Plaza

2310 Calle de Principal
575-526-9771

Gallery 925

925 N. Mesquite St.
Gallery925NM.com

Las Cruces Museum of Art

491 N. Main St.
575-541-2137
LasCruces.gov/1542/
Museum-of-Art

Lundeen Inn of the Arts

618 S. Alameda Blvd.
575-526-3326
InnOfTheArts.com

Mas Art

144 Wyatt Dr.
575-526-9113
masartllc.com

M. Phillip's Fine Art Gallery

221 N. Main St.
575-525-1367
MPhillipsGallery.com

The Mandrake Fine Art & Botanica

501 E Hadley Ave.
575-224-6760

Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery

2470-A Calle de Guadalupe
575-522-2933
MesillaValleyFineArts.com

Mesquite Art Gallery

340 N. Mesquite St.
MesquiteArtGallery.com

New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum

4100 Dripping Springs Road
575-522-4100
nmFarmAndRanchMuseum.org

New Mexico State University Art Museum

1308 E. University Ave.
575-646-2545
uam.nmsu.edu

New Mexico State University Museum

Kent Hall
1280 E. University Ave.
By appointment only
575-646-5161
univmuseum.nmsu.edu

Nopalito's Galería

326 S. Mesquite St.
NopalitosGaleria.com

Picture Frame Factory Outlet

382 S. Walnut St.
575-526-4048
pffolc.com

The Potteries

2260 Calle de Santiago
575-524-0538
ThePotteriesMesilla.com

Rio Grande Theatre Gallery

211 N. Main St.
575-541-2290
RioGrandeTheatre.org

Tombaugh Gallery

Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces
2000 S. Solano Drive
575-522-7281
uuChurchLC.org/about-us/
our-art-gallery

Trails End Gallery & Studio

1732 N. Mesquite St.
575-649-2951
TrailsEndGallery.net



Valley Sessions gives voice to creative community

DAVID SALCIDO

Music is an important part of any community, and Las Cruces is no exception. Though the city now supports more music venues than it did even a decade ago, it can still be difficult to know who the individual players are – musicians young and old who rely on live venues to get their work out. A group of enterprising young filmmakers and sound engineers have set out to change that.

Calling their project Valley Sessions, they have created a safe place for serious musical artists to show off their talent, for little or no cost, through a series of beautifully curated diegetic – or live performance – videos dropping every month on the project's YouTube page. Since January of 2023, 20 videos have been made and there is no indication that the group is slowing down anytime soon.

Season one consists of 12 sparkling performances, each set in a different location across the city. Some rely on multiple camera shots, like the six used for the Stoney Blue Fish video. Compare that to the incredible single take one shot used for the Papayas con Chile video, and the innovation becomes clear. Bathe them with expert lighting and you've got a series of masterful productions that showcase the incredible talent to be found here.

Among the other performers appearing in season one are local musicians Era Snow, Nick Brower, Taylor Paul, Desirae Price, Jenna Ivey, C.W. Ayon, M.qu, Anibal and Tucson-based band Female Gaze. Through word-of-mouth, Valley Sessions finds its reach expanding to include acts either passing through town, or who come here specifically to shoot with them. To date, season two consists of performers from Arizona, Wyoming, Nashville, Albuquerque and El Paso.

The brainchild of Ryan M. Robson, Kent Harkey, Zane Chaffee and Aaron Walterscheid – all products of Las Cruces' burgeoning film scene who were looking for projects to fill their downtime between film projects – Valley Sessions has grown to encompass other willing volunteers from film, music, photography and other artistic pursuits. The result is a richness of visual splendor that reveals far more than musical prowess.



"I wanted to have something that local filmmakers and creatives can devote their time and energy to that would reflect back on the community," Robson said. "I like the idea of giving information and experience to people who are just trying to make a living here. Not just to students, but to anybody who wants to know how the industry works."

Chaffee, lead singer for Stoney Blue Fish and a music producer in his own right, agrees.

"Being able to record on set is something I had never done before," he admits. "It's a new challenge each time and though it is difficult, it's also really rewarding. And now I have people contacting me to do recording and sound mixing for them."

Robson has also taken his project into the classrooms at local high schools, in order to share the wealth.

"A lot of those kids are very interested in volunteering with us to learn more about how this stuff works. There are so many aspects of this project to learn about, including film, music, photography, set dressing, lighting, sound, and they can learn them on the job from people who do this for a living."

The results, he said, have been very rewarding all the way around. The first performer ever filmed by the group, Era Snow, used her video to get into a songwriting competi-



tion. Local bluesman C.W. Ayon got an entire tour booked, based solely on the video created for him. Stoney Blue Fish used theirs to get into a battle of the bands show in El Paso, which netted them second place. The testimonials go on and on. It has also added a new list of invaluable credits to the filmmakers and sound engineers working on the videos.

Eventually, Robson and his crew would love to be able to put the music they have recorded up on Spotify and Apple Music, to further spread the word about Las Cruces' hidden talents. But that takes money, which is in short supply. Until they can find grants or even sponsors to help them, they'll keep on creating fresh content, and counting on the community to help get the word out.

The videos can be viewed online at ValleySessions.com, and if you have an interest in working with Valley Sessions, or recording your own video, hit them up. They're always looking for new talent.

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ART ORGANIZATIONS

A Children's Theatre of the Mesilla Valley (ACT)
575-571-1413
achildrenstheatre.org

American Southwest Theatre Company (ASTC)
New Mexico State University
Theatre Department
575-646-5122
theatre.nmsu.edu

ArtForms Artists' Association of New Mexico
nmartforms@yahoo.com
artslascruces@gmail.com
artformsnm.org

Artists of Picacho Hills
artistsopicachohills.com

The Border Artists
borderartists.org

City of Las Cruces Museums
575-522-3120
lascruces.gov/1523/Museums

Doña Ana Arts Council
575-523-6403
daarts.org

Doña Ana Lyric Opera
New Mexico State University
575-646-2067
music.nmsu.edu

Farmers & Crafts Market of Las Cruces
575-201-3853
farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com

Foundation for Las Cruces Museums
foundationlcm.com

Friends of Thomas Branigan Memorial Library
libraryfriendslc.org

Henry C. Trost Historical Organization
henrytrost.org/new-mexico-buildings

Las Colcheras Quilt Guild
LasColcherasQG@gmail.com
lcqg.org

Las Cruces Arts Association
lascrucesarts.org

Las Cruces Chamber Ballet
lascruceschamberballet.org

Las Cruces Civic Concert Association
505-225-1094
lascrucescca.org

Las Cruces Community Theatre
575-523-1200
ticketor.com/lcct/

Las Cruces International Mariachi Conference
575-680-3123
lascrucesmariachi.org

Las Cruces Symphony
575-646-3709
lascrucessymphony.com

Mesilla Valley Film Society
575-524-8287
mesillavalleyfilm.org
Mesilla Valley Jazz and Blues Society
mvjazzblues.net

Storytellers of Las Cruces
575-640-6867

New Mexico Watercolor Society-Southern Chapter
nmwatercolorssociety.org

No Strings Theatre Company/Black Box Theatre
575-523-1223
no-strings.org

Potters Guild of Las Cruces
pottersguildlc.org

Scaffolding Theatre Company
scaffoldingtheatrecompany@gmail.com
scaffoldingtheatrecompany.com

Sin Fronteras/Writers Without Borders
sinfronterasjournal.com

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Las Cruces, NM 88001
Business hours:
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www.daarts.org
575-523-6403

ARTS FAIR



Art celebrated every February

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Once a year, Las Cruces artists come together and flow apart to show their love of their craft by celebrating for a whole month, For the Love of Art Month. February became a month of activity and studio tours about 25 years ago, ArtForms president Karen Conley said.

"The original ArtForms people started by picking a month and celebrating art all across the city with open studio tours and more," she said. "At the beginning there were events like flamenco dancers. Covid squeezed the life out of a lot of groups and now we are back in full. I think we have 39 studio tours and it's pretty spread out across the city."

Today there are new artists and those who have done it before, she said. A comprehensive guide of month-long events and studio tour guide available which can be picked up at locations across the county during the month.

"We highlight a lot of other art events," Conley said. "This is a celebration – an organized month-long event highlighting our local artists that live and work here."

Conley, an artist herself, said art brings a lot to each person's life.

"Art is enrichment," she said. "I believe art is another language that can help people in their life. It helps us understand things that are going on in the world."

Having been a special education teacher with autistic students Conley knows first-hand art can be a key to communication.

When she was a child, her aunt was a regional artist and her grandmother always had pencils and paper. She said she learned to appreciate nature and beauty and the fine things and those rubbed off on her. After retiring from Army, Conley felt compelled to go to art school. She went to New Mexico State University and started painting.

"The education did open up my world," she said. "It really helped me a lot. I felt drawn to create after 28 years in a left brained environment.

The mission of ArtForms is to support the Las Cruces creative community and partner with other organizations to promote the region as an arts and cultural destination, the organization said in a press release.

"For the Love of Art Month is a vital community celebration of the arts," said Rebecca Courtney, a longtime member and participating artist. "Artists, galleries, local businesses, schools and citizens of all ages come together in February to embrace the power of creativity. Art provides income to families, attracts tourists, builds community pride and establishes our identity as a community. This annual endeavor is truly for the love of art and for the pride we have in the Mesilla Valley."

For more information, visit artformsnm.org,



'Street of Too Many Stories' Denise Chávez releases new book to the world

"Here's to all literature, the power of women's stories and our ancestors, all those women who have come before our mothers." — Author Denise Chávez

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Author Denise Chávez said if there are running motifs in her work – and there are many – they are about mercy, forgiveness, healing of families and looking at the people in our lives that have served us.

Chávez is a well-known Latina author and born-in-Las Cruces resident. She was cofounder and director of the Border Book Festival, a 20-year international event that ended in 2015.

In her new book, "Street of Too Many Stories," Chávez has woven the lives of four families intersecting in the New Mexican town Encantada and living on Encantada Street.

"Encantada Street is about the intersection and healing of families," she said, "and about the people that help serve them – the gardeners; Pasajero, a dog; and Sammy, a cat."

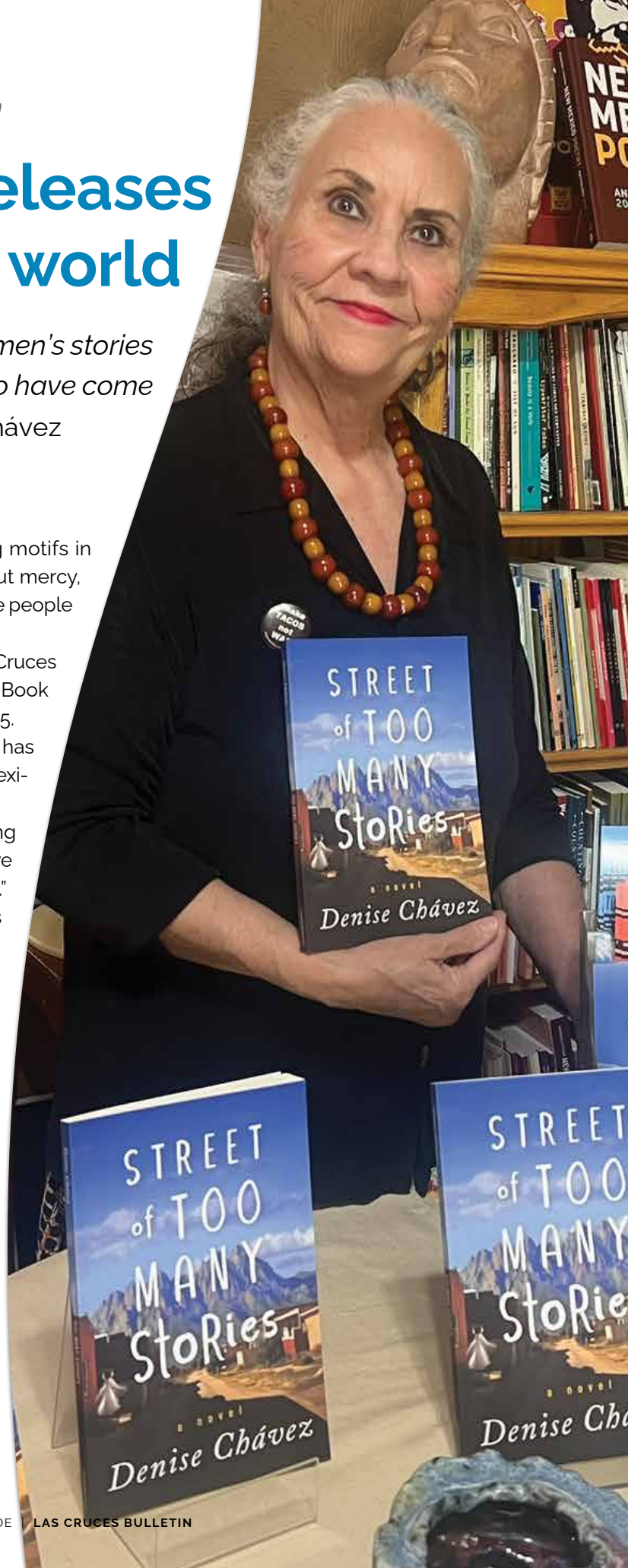
The book's cover presents powerful images with hints about the stories inside, Chávez said: A wedding dress, a piñata, a dog and a cat.

"Initially I thought the streets are old and battered," she said. "If you are driving down the streets, they are cracked. You look at the mountains. There is something about the image."

People will see familiar pieces of our lives in the cover but while they may look like the Organ Mountains, Chávez said, "It's the mountains in the book, but its reminiscent of where we come from because if you drive around here you will see the power of the mountains and of the neighborhoods."

The characters, too, are reflective of the people around us. For example, one of the characters in the book lives shuttered in her house. She's from Mexico, never learned English, never learned how to drive, never shopped. Her husband did everything.

"This is reminiscent of my aunt, who never drove,



never bought groceries, never did anything herself," Chávez said. "My uncle did everything for her. She sewed, she had a life with her children. She was shuttered."

Chávez said she was looking at her first novel, "Face of an Angel," and realized she had worked on it for seven years. It came to 600 pages. She worked on "Street of Too Many Stories" for seven years and it is 163 pages.

"I think as writers we become more concise, more distilled, more mature," she said. "I'm older and it's interesting to see the growth."

She described the process as an evolution of consciousness.

"I really feel this book is a hard book, but it's a powerful and merciful book," she said. "You have this street, these families, but sometimes the street has a voice too. It speaks. It remembers when it was in the antediluvian days, when all of this was under water and this was an ocean. It remembers when the Camino Real was here and the carts were going through."

But also sometimes, Chávez said, the ancestors will come out from that place wherever they live and look in the houses to see how the people are doing, checking in on them.

She said there is something of magical realism in this book, but it's also very much a border story. The whole story is told in the introduction itself – but not really. "You really have to go the voice," she said. "This book is an opera of sounds and words. It's very theatrical."

She can see it done as spoken word theatrical piece because it compiles voices of the different people: the elderly man in his rented hospital bed; young people struggling; the cat's story, too. "It's voice-driven and character-driven, which I really think is my strength," Chávez said. "I think my drama background really helped with voice. There are a lot of interesting characters."

The book is available at Casa Camino Real Bookstore and other book platforms, including Conocimientos Press at ConocimientosPressLLC.com. For more information contact Chávez at comezon09@comcast.net or 575-649-9173.



Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery

Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery is a cooperative gallery including artists from southern New Mexico and western Texas. It has been in business since 1994, making it one of the longest continuously-operating co-op galleries in New Mexico!

The gallery showcases various media: oil, acrylic, pastel and watercolor paintings; drawings, photography, wood turning, gourd art, ceramics, mixed media, stained glass, jewelry and fiber art. Note cards, prints, and gift certificates are available.

You're invited to drop in to visit with one of the artists tending the gallery, and see the artwork for sale by all of the gallery's talented artists.



2470-A Calle de Guadalupe, Mesilla, New Mexico  Find us on Facebook

Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily • (575) 522-2933 • www.mesillavalleyfinearts.com



Las Cruces Symphony ready for 66th season

MIKE COOK

The Las Cruces Symphony Orchestra is gearing up for its 66th season, which begins in September and continues through spring 2025 with live performances in Las Cruces of beloved popular and classical music, including the world premiere of a brand new work.

It will be “a wonderful and varied season,” said Music Director and Conductor Ming Luke, in his third year with the symphony.

The symphony enjoys “an outpouring of support” from the community it serves and the 12-member Symphony Association Board of Directors, Luke said.

The 76-member symphony comprises professional musicians from Las Cruces, El Paso and throughout the region “who have been part of the music scene for years,” he said, including professors and students from New Mexico State University along with world-class guest artists and conductors.

LCSO has recently added a youth orchestra and a junior orchestra, which provide students of all economic backgrounds with the opportunity to learn to play musical instruments and to perform in concert, including performances alongside LCSO. The orchestras are also an important pipeline for the symphony and its “very bright future,” Luke said.

The Junior Orchestra, for area middle school students, is conducted by Douglas Poff, director of El Paso’s Brown

Middle School Orchestra and former director of two middle schools in Las Cruces. The Youth Orchestra, for high school students in the area, is directed by Michael Mapp, Ph.D., director of bands at NMSU.

The junior and youth orchestras “blow it out of the park” in the quality of their performances, said LCSO Interim Executive Director Carmen Rustenbeck.

LCSO members are outstanding professional musicians,



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144 Wyatt dr. / www.masartllc.com

Association Board President Michael Chang said, but they are also down-to-earth people who play music everyone can enjoy. It is perfectly appropriate to wear jeans to a symphony performance, Chang said. The important thing is to go.

Attending a LCSO performance "can move you," he said. "It's almost a spiritual experience. Just come one time – you'll be hooked."

LCSO has kept ticket prices down – even reducing the lowest ticket prices – "to be inclusive of our community," Chang said.

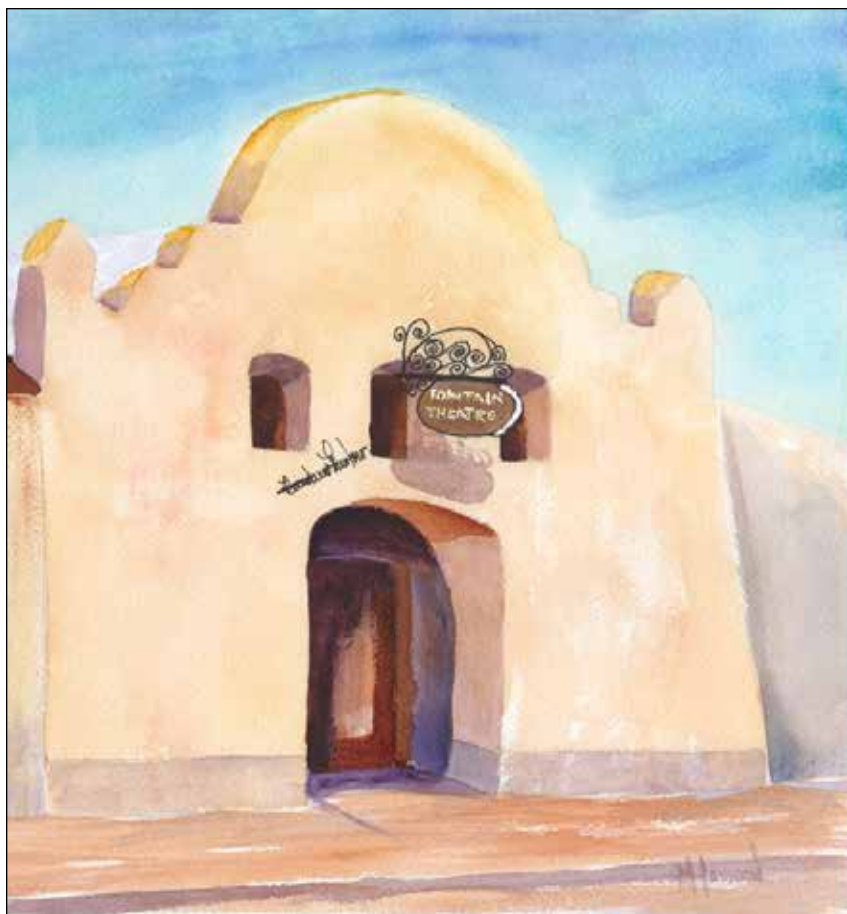
The symphony was founded in 1958 when New Mexico State University professor Oscar Butler "gathered Las Cruces resident-musicians to perform Brahms's Requiem," according to the LCSO website.

LCSO performs in Atkinson Recital Hall in the NMSU Music Building, 1075 N. Horseshoe St.

For individual performances, season tickets and more information, contact Rustenbeck at 575-646-3709 or executivedirector@lascrucessymphony.org. Visit LasCrucesSymphony.com and click on the "Join Us" link for more information on the youth and junior orchestras.

LCSO'S 2024-25 SEASON

- **Classics 1 Concert**, Saturday-Sunday, Sept. 28-29, "Pictures at an Exhibition," French composer Maurice Ravel's (1875-1937) arrangement of Russian composer Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky's (1839-81) 1874 suite.
- **Classics 2 Concert**, Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 26-27, "Danse Macabre," Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev's (1891-1953) arrangement of the "tone poem" by French composer Charles-Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921).
- **LCSO Candlelight Quartet concerts**, Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024, and Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 15-16, 2025.
- **Holiday Pops Concert**, December 2024 date to be announced.
- **Classics 3 concert**, Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 18-19, 2025, German composer Johannes Brahms' (1833-97) "Academic Festival Overture Opus 80 Symphony No. 4," featuring the winner of LCSO's first ever Concerto Competition for LCSO Youth Orchestra members.
- **Classics 4 Concert**, Saturday-Sunday, March 29-30, 2025, "Earth and Space," featuring American composer Christian Kriegeskotte's 'The Wind Is Causing the Stars to Sway,' which will have its world premiere with the LCSO performance; composer and pianist Heather Pinkham (a California native who lives in the Netherlands) will perform her piano concerto "No Where and No-When"; NMSU trumpet professor and composer Jacob Dalager's "3futures"; and Czech composer Antonín Dvořák's (1841-1904) "New World Symphony." LCSO will perform with the Youth and Junior orchestras.



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The Mesilla Valley Film Society presents classic, independent, foreign, and documentary films in an intimate historic setting. Southern New Mexico's only independent theatre, operated by a non-profit, volunteer-led community organization. See films you can't see anywhere else and get involved today!

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MESILLAVALLEYFILM.ORG

LCPS 'State of the District'

ALGERNON D'AMMASSA

Las Cruces Public Schools Superintendent Ignacio Ruiz announced student proficiency rates, budget data and future goals in a "State of the District" address on May 29, 2024, at the Las Cruces Convention Center.

Ruiz, who joined LCPS in 2023, shared the stage with keynote speaker Richard Carranza, a former chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, as well as current student and alumni speakers and a performance by Mariachi Tierra del Encanto.

Modeled on the traditional "State of the Union" address presidents deliver to joint sessions of Congress, it was the first event of its kind at Las Cruces Public Schools.

Las Cruces school board president Teresa Tenorio presented the district's updated strategic planning document, including commitments to uphold "equity, sustainability and respect" for the student body throughout school settings.

Jamila Gilbert, a Las Cruces High School graduate and product of Sierra Middle School's science magnet program, now works for Virgin Galactic and has flown to space on one of its missions. She shared her experience of that flight and how Las Cruces schools had set her on a course to view Earth from above.

An hour into the presentation, Ruiz took the podium. "Las Cruces Public Schools proudly educates over 23,000 students. We have close to 5,000 highly trained professionals including over 1,600 of the most dedicated educators in the country across our 40 schools," he said as he introduced his report.

The proficiency data Ruiz presented, the most recent available based on student testing, measured performance during the 2022-23 school year, before his arrival at the district.

According to those results, LCPS students in

grades 3 thru 8 and grade 11 averaged 38 percent in reading proficiency, while math proficiency scores in those grades were 23 percent.

The attendance rate for students attending at least 90 percent of school days district-wide was 61 percent, while 39 percent of the students were chronically absent.

The district's graduation rate continued to top the New Mexico rate, although it has pulled closer to it since 2020. For 2022-23, the LCPS graduate rate was 81.5 percent of students compared to 76.2 percent statewide.

The data only tells part of the district's story, Ruiz then said, with respect to student success, what it means and how it is achieved. His presentation included a breakout of department functions and presentations about various educational and athletic activities, and tracking of graduates' post-secondary success, with three major themes: Safety and dignity for a diverse student body, equity in services for all students and respect for the various constituencies represented by LCPS.

During his first school year in Las Cruces, Ruiz said he pursued an entry plan that included extensive meetings with the community and staff, addressing organizational changes and communicating with the district and its constituents about those efforts.

The new superintendent pledged that as he began his second year on the job, "I am committed to regularly communicate and disseminate information and updates on the work to ensure that everyone is clear on the goals and action steps. Here at LCPS, all of us are accountable for every single student."

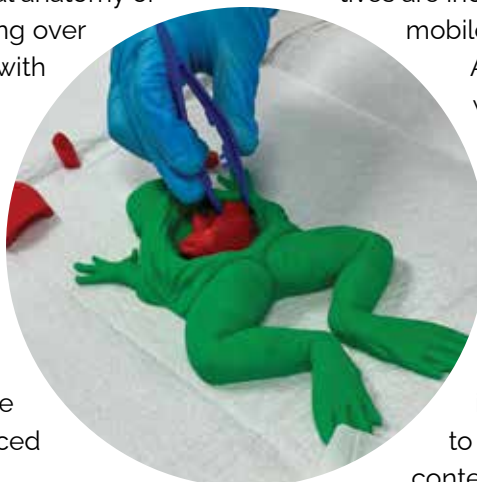


Hopping away from dissecting

ALGERNON D'AMMASSA

Lauren Apodaca's classroom at Vista Middle School was buzzing with conversation as students working in groups focused on the internal anatomy of frogs on the table before them, turning over heart, liver and other internal organs with forceps.

If you have memories of dissecting frogs or other animal specimens in science class, you probably remember the smell of formaldehyde and other chemicals used to preserve the specimens. That distinct odor is absent Lauren Apodaca's classroom at Vista Middle School. The frogs on the tables and their innards are all produced in the classroom on a 3D printer.



New Mexico has been a "dissection choice" state since 2005, when the Public Education Department ruled that classrooms engaging in dissections "shall provide

virtual dissection techniques as alternative activities for any student who is opposed to real dissections for ethical, moral, cultural or religious reasons."

While artificial specimens are nothing new, the alternatives are increasingly sophisticated, particularly in mobile technology.

At one table in the classroom, students worked not with a plastic frog but a black cube with codes embedded on it. Viewed through a camera on a mobile electronic device, what appeared on screen was a detailed illustration of a frog with interactive displays of its anatomy.

Apodaca said the technologies are inexpensive and allow their students to meet all of the instructional goals and content standards without the liabilities of handling animals, preservatives shown to be harmful to health or the stresses of performing surgery on a dead creature.

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Fall 2023 enrollment

21,797 system-wide
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Undergraduate: 12,113

Graduate: 2,666

(Per OIA.nmsu.edu)

2024-25 tuition and fees - undergraduate

Full-time resident: \$8,504

Full-time nonresident: \$26,830

2024-25 tuition and fees - graduate

Full-time resident: \$5,778

Full-time nonresident: \$18,621

More information: FA.nmsu.edu/cost-of-attendance.

PO BOX 30001
Las Cruces, NM 88003
575-646-0111
nmsu.edu

New Mexico's Opportunity Scholarship allows New Mexico residents to have an opportunity for free college. If qualifications are met, students will be able to attend all New Mexico schools for free. Information about the opportunity scholarship and about qualifications can be found here: ReachHigherNM.com.



CAMPUSES AND LEARNING CENTER

East Mesa Campus

2800 N. Sonoma Ranch Blvd., Las Cruces

Espina Central Campus

3400 S. Espina St., Las Cruces

Chaparral

Learning Center
755 Prescott Anthony Drive, Chaparral, N.M.

Gadsden Center

1700 Ohara Road, Anthony, N.M.

Sunland Park Center

3365 McNutt Road, Sunland Park, N.M.

Workforce Development Center

2345 E. Nevada Ave.,
Las Cruces

LAS CRUCES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Superintendent: Ignacio Ruiz

505 S. Main St.

575-527-5800

LCPS.net

PRIVATE AND CHARTER SCHOOLS

Alma d'Arte Charter High School

402 W. Court Ave.

575-541-0145

almadarte.org

Principal: Adam Amador

Cornerstone Christian Academy

5301 Cortez Drive

575-532-0902

cornerstn.org/cornerstone-christian-academy

Desert Springs Christian Academy

210 S. Nevarez St.

575-571-7709

dscalions.org

Headmaster: Jennifer Krol

J. Paul Taylor Academy

402 W. Court Ave., Bldg. 2

575-652-4006

jPaulTaylorAcademy.org

La Academia Dolores Huerta

400 Bell Ave.

575-526-2984

ladh.org

Head Administrator: Sylvy Galvan de Lucero

Las Cruces Academy

1755 Avenida de Mercado

575-521-9384

LasCrucesAcademy.org

Head of School: Lou Ellen Kay

Las Cruces Catholic Schools

1331 N. Miranda St.

575-526-2517

lccsonline.org

Principal: Windy Drake

Las Montañas Charter High School

1405 S. Solano Drive

575-527-5916

LasMontanasHigh.com

Principal: Caz Martinez

Mesilla Valley Christian Schools

3850 Stern Drive

575-525-8515

mvcsonline.com

Head of school: John Foreman

Mission Academy

1730 Tierra de Mesilla

575-449-4796

actonlascruces.com

Head of School: Anna Emerick-Biad

Mission Lutheran School

2752 N. Roadrunner Pkwy.

575-532-5489

mlschool.net

New America School

207 S. Main St.

575-527-9085

lcnas.org

Principal: Margarita Porter

Raíces del Saber Xinachtli Community School

2211 N. Valley Drive

575-222-0538

RaicesDelSaber.org

Head administrator: Maria Artiaga



At Burrell, actors train doctors

MIKE COOK



I remember it so vividly: Sitting across the desk from the young man in the white coat and hearing that I had a terminal brain tumor and would be well advised to get my affairs in order.

To my great good fortune, the young man in the white coat was a student doctor at Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine in

Las Cruces, and I was (and am) what is called a “standardized patient,” pretending to have a medical condition to assist with the training of first- and second-year medical students at Burrell.

That particular scenario was among the most intense I have experienced in nearly two years as an SP at Burrell. I have also “had” diabetes, high blood pressure, a stroke, hip pain, bronchitis, cancer, Cauda Equina Syndrome (leg weakness and numbness), wrist pain from a fall, anxiety, seizures, depression, meningitis, abdominal pain, back pain, allergies, high cholesterol, costochondritis (inflammation of the rib cartilage), tennis elbow and tooth pain, among other health conditions and illnesses to act out following a detailed script provided by the college.

I have pretended to be a three-pack-a-day smoker, an alcoholic, a cannabis user and an opioid addict and I have even had a few bruises and skin conditions expertly applied by Burrell staff.

As an SP, I have learned the names and functions of many prescription medications, like fexofenadine (for allergies) and Atorvastatin (high cholesterol).

One of the defining features of being an SP is wearing a hospital gown for most of the training sessions. Nothing else I have found truly captures the vulnerability a patient feels like wearing one of those gowns that closes in the back (sort of) with only shorts and underwear on underneath (female SPs also wear sports bras). I know the gown is central to the student doctor’s training experience as

well – much like the white coat.

Students perform real-time cardiac, musculoskeletal and abdominal exams on SPs, using stethoscopes, reflex hammers and other medical implements. I have also participated in ultrasound sessions where students looked at my heart, lungs, gallbladder, prostate, etc. All exams are non-invasive.

All of this is not even a patch on some of my fellow SPs who have been actors since the first class at Burrell in 2016.

For almost all scenarios, there is an experienced medical doctor in the room, monitoring the student’s performance and giving feedback after he or she has interviewed and/or examined the SP.

It can be nerve wracking for both participants: the student remembering all the questions that must be asked and procedures performed; the actor remembering his or her character’s name, medical condition, family history and prescriptions. (I always have a note card with the drugs written on it because I cannot remember the multisyllabic or even generic names of most medications.)

Because I am an amateur actor in local theatre, I regularly remind myself that what I am doing at Burrell is training, not theatre. I am helping a medical student learn how to become a doctor, not vying for an Oscar.

It is a richly rewarding experience I am very grateful for and hope to continue. I get to interact with amazing students from across the country, and with long-time doctors who have incredible insights into medical exams and patient interaction. What an SP helps a student learn could impact his or her entire career as a medical practitioner, it’s been hugely educational for me. It’s fun and I get paid for it.

“The SP program provides great learning opportunities for both student doctors and standardized patients,” Burrell SP Program Director Ben Matkin told me. “Students get to experience a realistic scenario of what they’ve been learning about during the semester and SPs learn about medical conditions and medications and see how hard student doctors work. We have a great group of SPs in our current pool and accept new applications throughout the year. As we have openings, we invite a number of those applicants to attend an orientation and join the program. We look for individuals who are relatively healthy, available during daytime hours and have the students’ best interest in mind.”

For more information, contact Matkin at bmatkin@burrell.edu or 575-674-2380. (Tell him Mike said “hi.”)



Vamos Niños mobile children's museum

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Vamos Niños - Play to Learn Mobile Children's Museum - is hitting the road with a focus on serving rural and remote communities. The museum is set to make a lasting impact on childhood education throughout the region and our most rural communities.

"It's been a long time coming," said communications coordinator Sommer Mitchell. "The museum that we have now has exceeded all of our initial expectations."

The mobile museum started rolling April 6 in Anthony, N.M. and is available by request to locations across the county. The museum is a product of Ngage New Mexico and the Success Partnership, starting from a seed question: "How do we get resources to the families in the rural parts of Doña Ana County?"

Mitchell said Ngage New Mexico has several focuses in its effort to build capacity for non-profits and be a catalyst for change.

"Education needs to be thought of in a holistic point of view as far as the health of the family including mental health, early child education and physical health," she said. "Whatever is happening, children can't learn in fight or flight mode. (We decided) we should do a museum and it has got to be accessible to people in rural communities."

The idea is to take a caravan of services to locations families can go and engage with their children in meaningful ways and gain access to early childhood development.

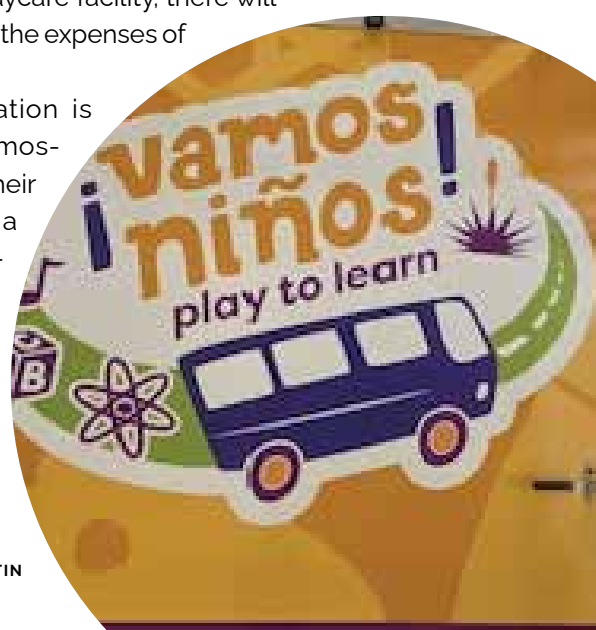
Michelle Simon, part of the museum team, said the museum includes indoor and outdoor exhibits including a bubble table, giant blocks for building structures, a video microscope and much more.

"It's a place for parents to engage with their children," she said. "No parents on cell phones."

The exhibits are designed for 3-5-year-olds, "but really we saw kids in there under a year enjoying the sensory things and 8-year-olds were having a blast," Simon said.

When the museum travels on its regular stops across the county, including Hatch and Anthony, it is a free resource for the community, she said. If there is a special visit, maybe to a school or daycare facility, there will be a fee to cover the expenses of travel and time.

More information is available at Vamos-Ninos.org and their social media channels, [facebook.com/vamosninosnm](https://www.facebook.com/vamosninosnm) and [instagram.com/vamosninos](https://www.instagram.com/vamosninos).

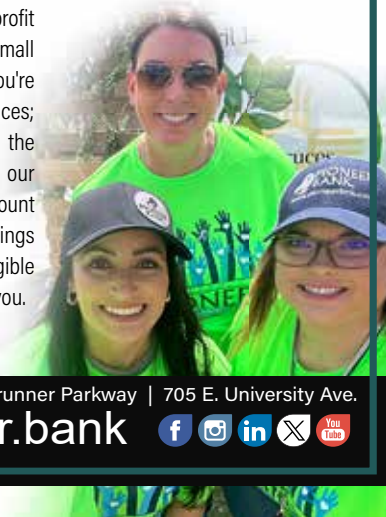


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Rebuilding Columbia Elementary

ALGERNON D'AMMASSA

Children were front and center when the community marked the groundbreaking of the new Columbia Elementary School in January.

The entire student body of Columbia was present, many of the girls in colorful ballet folklorico dresses and all wearing small construction helmets colored orange, yellow, blue, pink, gleaming in the sun like a field of Easter eggs.

The original school, built in 2003 on Elks Drive in northern Las Cruces, was abruptly closed in September 2018 over persistent and severe mold. In a single day, the entire elementary school shifted to the campus of Centennial High School, 10 miles away, and has remained there since.

The school building was torn down in 2022 with plans to construct a new building retaining the original name, at a different spot on the

same property. The estimated cost of the project is \$64 million.

The new school building will be larger than the original, at more than 103,000 square feet, enough to accommodate 752 students, with specialized classrooms serving pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade and modern computer technology and labs and spaces for art, music and science instruction. The campus will include an offsite retention pond to protect the grounds from runoff.

The district plans to have it ready for the 2025-26 school year.

"The facility is not just a structure," LCPS Superintendent Ignacio Ruíz said in a speech. "It's a bright beacon of our commitment to nurturing the minds and hearts of our students."



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Tenth anniversary of Organ Mountain monument celebrated

MIKE COOK

The people of Las Cruces and surrounding communities have “a deep pride and a shared ownership” in the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument and its cultural and economic impacts for the region have far exceeded all expectations, U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., said as hundreds of stakeholders, elected officials and outdoor enthusiasts gathered at the Las Cruces Convention Center to celebrate the monument’s 10th anniversary on May 18, 2024.

President Barack Obama signed federal legislation creating the monument on May 21, 2014 at the White House, praising Heinrich and former New Mexico U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Jeff Bingaman, “who were instrumental in preserving this treasured landscape,” Obama said.

The nearly 500,000-acre monument, located less than 30 minutes east of downtown Las Cruces on Dripping Springs Road, includes five mountain ranges; hiking, biking and horseback-riding trails; thousands of archeological sites, including Kilbourne Hole (volcanic crater) National Historic Landmark, the Aden Lava Flow Wilderness and 22 miles of the historic Butterfield Stagecoach Trail; the Chihuahuan Desert habitat and its unique wildlife and landscape; training sites for Apollo astronauts; bombing sites used to train World War II pilots; and “some of the most

strikingly beautiful places on earth,” Heinrich said at the celebration.

The monument also includes 10 wilderness areas added in 2019, as the “strong and broad coalition of local supporters” that helped to create the monument “keep building on what we achieved in the designation,” Heinrich said.

Heinrich singled out the late David Soules during his keynote speech at the celebration, saying the Las Cruces author and New Mexico Game Commission member’s “eye for detail (and) behind-the-scenes work” were vital in mapping OMDP’s natural wonders, cultural resources and historic sites.

Soules’ brother, state Sen. Bill Soules, D-Las Cruces, attended the celebration, along with former Las Cruces city councilor Kasandra Gandara, to whom he is married. Also attending were new Las Cruces City Manager Ikani Taumoepeau and state Sen. Jeff Steinborn, D-Las Cruces, who is executive director of Outdoor New Mexico and was a leader in establishing the monument.

“It is your monument, not the government’s, not the BLM’s (U.S. Bureau of Land Management, which manages OMDP),” said state Sen. Carrie Hamblen, D-Las Cruces, who, as president and CEO of the Green Chamber of Commerce of Las Cruces, was also a strong voice in support of monument designation.

The economic impact of the monument has “exceeded

our initial predictions by 51 percent," Hamblen said. Many local businesses were created because of the monument's designation and have not only reaped its economic benefits, but also have become "thoughtful stewards" of OMDP, which is celebrated in Las Cruces, Mesilla and other communities with a cocktail, a cupcake and a host of other specialties – and businesses – named in its honor.

Visitation to the region has tripled since pre-monument 2012, Heinrich said. A study commissioned by the Green Chamber and published last fall estimated the total economic impact at \$234 million over ten years.

"I am so proud of how far we've come in a decade," Heinrich said, and "even more excited about where we will go."

"The work never stops," said Patrick Nolan, executive director of the nonprofit Friends of Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks, which hosted the 10th-anniversary celebration. The monument's continuing mission includes creating "the next generation of public lands stewards," Nolan said, protecting more land in southern New Mexico and ensuring public access to protected areas for current and future generations.

Las Cruces city councilor Johana Bencomo was the evening's master of ceremonies. Bencomo and Nolan, who is also a member of the Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education, are married.

The celebration included live and silent auctions, along



with Nolan's recognition of five local public lands champions: Mesilla Valley Search and Rescue, Doña Ana Search and Rescue, Organ Mountain Technical Rescue Squad, Las Cruces Fire Department and Visit Las Cruces, the city's tourism and visitors' bureau.



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575-646-3219
golf.nmsu.edu

Picacho Hills Country Club

6861 Via Campestre
575-523-8641
PicachoHills.com

Red Hawk Golf Club

7502 Red Hawk Golf Road
575-373-8100
RedHawkGC.com

Sonoma Ranch Golf Course

1274 Golf Club Road
575-521-1818
SonomaRanchGolf.com

NATURE PARKS

Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park

The 935-acre park encompasses a section of the Doña Ana Mountains northeast of Las Cruces.
56501 N. Jornada Road, Las Cruces.
575-524-3334
asombro.org

Leasburg Dam State Park

Camping, picnicking and bird watching, with fishing, canoeing and kayaking on the Rio Grande offered mid-May to mid-October.
12712 State Park Road, Radium Springs.
575-524-4068
emnrd.state.nm.us

Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park

The park is 52 acres of floodplain known as the “Old Refuge.” With 945 acres of wetlands and Chihuahuan Desert, the park offers ranger-led nature walks, bird watching tours and children’s activities.
5000 Calle del Norte, Mesilla.
575-523-4398
emnrd.state.nm.us

BIRD WATCHING

Aguirre Spring Recreation Area and Campground

\$5 vehicle entrance fee,
\$7 camping fee (cash only).
575-525-4300

Dripping Springs Natural Area

\$5 vehicle entrance fee (cash only).
575-522-1219

Leasburg Dam State Park

\$5 vehicle entrance fee, camping fees from \$8 to \$18 (cash only).
575-524-4068

Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park

\$5 vehicle entrance fee, camping fees from \$8 to \$18 (cash only).
575-523-4398

Tellbrook Park

4290 E. Winchester Road
Picnic tables, fitness stations and a playground. Up to 136 species seen in this park.

HORSEBACK RIDING

Armstrong Equine Service

575-202-0080

Miller Horse Farm and Riding Academy

575-618-7577
MillerHorseFarms.com

MOUNTAIN BIKING TRAILS

There are 82 miles of mountain-biking trails in and around Las Cruces for both beginners and experts. Many are incorporated into Bureau of Land Management lands or national monument locations that offer riders breathtaking vistas.

BLM-managed land in Doña Ana County

All-Trails-Lead-to-Gnome (easy)
Cathedral (intermediate)
Chutes-n-Ladders (intermediate)
Desert Dance (easy to intermediate)
Doña Ana Trail (intermediate)
Figure Eight (intermediate)
Greenrock Trail (intermediate to difficult)
Rock Garden (intermediate to difficult)
Sternal Crack (difficult)
Twister (intermediate)

Doña Ana Mountains

Cerro Jornada (southern mountains, more than 16 miles, all skill levels)
NADAS (western mountains, intermediate)
Standard DAs Loop 2 (intermediate)

Las Cruces

La Lloroña River Park Trail (north Las Cruces to Calle del Norte Road)

Monumental Loop

(Difficult)
This is a 305-mile loop route from Las Cruces through the Doña Anas, Las Uvas and Robledos, with a southern loop into Texas.

Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument

La Maria Trail (easy to intermediate)
Monumental Loop (connects all four Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks units)
Sierra Vista Trail: Dripping Springs Road to Soledad Canyon Road (easy to intermediate)
Sierra Vista Trail: Soledad Canyon Road to Peña Blanca (easy to intermediate)
Sierra Vista Trail: Peña Blanca to Franklin Mountain State Park (intermediate)

Picacho Peak Recreation Area

Over 15 miles of mountain biking trails
Prehistoric Trackways National Monument (Robledo Mountains)
SST Trail (extremely difficult)

Tortugas Mountain

Recreation Area (A-Mountain)
A-Mountain Connector (easy to intermediate)
A-Mountain Spur (intermediate)
Devil’s Crotch Bypass (intermediate)
Geothermal Connector (easy)
Jump Track (intermediate)
Observatory Road (intermediate to difficult)
Switchbacks (intermediate to difficult)
TortugaS Trail (intermediate to difficult)
Source: mtbproject.com, blm.gov

PICKLEBALL COURTS

Apodaca Park

801 E. Madrid Ave.
575-541-2000

East Mesa

5589 Porter Road
575-541-2454

Lions Park

701 W. Picacho Ave.
575-541-2550

Meerscheidt Recreation Center

1600 E. Hadley Ave.
575-541-2563
OrganMountainsPickleballClub.com



Outdoor Equity Fund grants support for Youth Programs

LAS CRUCES BULLETIN

New Mexico's Outdoor Recreation Division announced \$1 million in Outdoor Equity Fund grants to 30 organizations and public agencies around the state, and five tribal communities, on Dec. 26.

The fund was created by the state legislature in 2019 and has been disbursed \$5 million to 211 organizations since, according to the state Economic Development Department. The grants support outdoor programs fostering "stewardship and respect for New Mexico's land, water and cultural heritage."



programs fostering "stewardship and respect for New Mexico's land, water and cultural heritage."

"The organizations and communities receiving funding for their youth programs are not only fostering the next generation of outdoor leaders by introducing new experiences but also planting the seed of the possibility of a career in outdoor recreation," acting EDD Secretary Jon Clark stated in a news

release. "These 30 programs actively

introduce 6,498 young New Mexicans to the outdoors through day hikes, hunting and tanning, bike rides, ecosystem monitoring, adaptive equine camps, fly fishing, acequia cultural preservation and more."

The awards, announced the day after Christmas 2023, were the second round of awards from the OEF, totaling

\$1,052,347, with grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$40,000. The recipients are expected to contribute matching funds totaling \$722,301.50.

In southern New Mexico, the grants include:

- Animas Public Schools (Hidalgo County): \$40,000 for environmental and climate education and field trips.
- Gila Resources Information Project (Grant County): \$20,000 for the Silver City Watershed Keepers Nature Discovery Summer Camp, a week-long program for children in grades 4 thru 6.
- New Mexico Youth Conservation Foundation (Grant County): \$33,680 for nonprofit organization providing outdoor programming for schools, nonprofits and others.
- Public Lands Interpretive Association (Doña Ana County): \$40,000 for the Whiptail Trails Club, providing in-class visits and field trips for middle school students in Title I schools and in rural areas.

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ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE-
TECHNOLOGY CENTERS

WSMR museum redesigned

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

After more than two years of design and refurbishing work, the White Sands Missile Range Museum reopened with a flourish in 2023. On Thursday, May 4, the doors of the completely renovated facility opened on a journey through time.

Beginning with the natural history at White Sands, through the early human residents, battles with Apache at the Hembrillo Basin and through to the Manhattan Project, early rocketry and the space program there is enough information and display for several hours of wandering through history.

Guests can experience an interactive Science Technology Engineering Mathematics Center tailored to grade school educational standards. The exhibit has twice as much text as other larger museums due to the nature of the topics covered, such as how rockets work and nuclear fission.

"As caretakers of the Tularosa Basin, we must tell the

story of the rich and diverse history, so it is preserved and shared," Museum Curator Darren Court, said as the renovated museum opened. "The Army has had a long and diverse history in New Mexico dating back to when it was part of the northern territories of New Spain, and we hope to spark an interest in that story."

Court expanded on the concept of the museum, saying they have the responsibility to tell the story, both good and bad.

"It's not just walking through missiles. We have the responsibility to tell the story of the history that occurred in the Tularosa Basin," he said. "If the Army did something stupid, we're going to tell you they did something stupid. We don't do apologetic history."

While closed, the museum continued to modify and adjust exhibits and content, including moving the archival holdings into a new archival research center.

The museum is open to the public 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily except for Sundays. For more information visit WSMRmuseum.com.



VETERANS SERVICES

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS

(Call for meeting information)
American Legion Post 10, Joe Quesenberry
 1185 E. Madrid Ave., Las Cruces.
 575-526-9139

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) 10
 1185 E. Madrid Ave., Las Cruces
 575-339-3526

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) 38
 1661 Hickory Loop, Las Cruces
 575-405-6747

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) 25
 332 E. Lisa Drive, Chaparral
 575-824-0442

Honor Flight of Southern New Mexico
 P.O. Box 14017
 Las Cruces, NM 88013
 844-697-1590
 HonorFlightNM.org

Marine Corps League
 El Perro Diablo
 Detachment 478
 P.O. Box 7322
 Las Cruces, NM 88001
 575-526-4060

Mesilla Valley #2004 Military Order of the Purple Heart
 1185 E. Madrid Ave.
 PurpleHeartLasCruces.com

Military Officers Association of America, Mesilla Valley Chapter
 Current or prior commissioned officers
 P.O. Box 743
 Las Cruces, NM 88004
 575-382-8421
 nmmoaa.wordpress.com

New Mexico Department of Veterans Services
 2024 E. Griggs Ave.
 Las Cruces, NM 88001
 575-644-6869
 nmdvs.org

Remember Bataan Foundation
 575-644-4935
 Bonnie Schurtz, President

United Military Women of the Southwest
 P.O. Box 2534
 Las Cruces, NM 88004
 umwsww.weebly.com



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Mesilla Town Hall, Fridays 10-12

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9:00 a.m. Meeting
Golden Corral

For information contact Kevin Dasing
575-640-7173
P.O. Box 13011, Las Cruces, NM 88013

Area Military at a Glance

Holloman Air Force Base
 Branch: Air Force
 Established in 1942 as
 Alamogordo Army Airfield
 Land Area: 59,639 acres
 Website: www.holloman.af.mil

White Sands Missile Range
 Branch: Army
 Established in 1945
 Land Area: 3,200 square miles,
 spanning five counties.
 Largest military installation in the US.
 Website: www.wsmr.army.mil

Fort Bliss
 Branch: Army
 Established as Military Post of El Paso in 1848.
 The post's first troops arrived in 1849.
 In 1853 the installation relocated and it
 was officially renamed Fort Bliss in 1854.
 Land Area: 1,700 square miles.
 The Army's second largest installation.
 Website: home.army.mil/bliss

GUIDE TO LAS CRUCES CITY HALL

City Clerk's Office

575-541-2115

The Office of the City Clerk conducts city elections. General questions about running for office or voting can be directed to the City Clerk's Office. The Clerk's Office is also in charge of the city's official records and records requests.

City Council

575-541-2066

City Hall houses the offices of the mayor and the six city council members. City council meetings are held on the first and third Monday of each month, and council work sessions are held on the second and fourth Monday of each month.

Community Development

575-528-3059

The Community Development Department provides community planning, building and development services to property owners, residents and businesses.

Economic Development

575-541-2425

The Economic Development Department provides targeted business, tourism and support services to businesses, residents and visitors.

Housing Services

575-528-3022

Housing services is under Community Development and addresses the needs of low- and moderate-income residents by addressing housing issues with regard to affordable housing, public service funding and public infrastructure programs.

Human Resources

575-528-3100

The Human Resources Department at City Hall hires and handles the City's workforce.

Public Works

575-528-3333

Public Works is responsible for construction and maintenance of public buildings, service facilities, gas and water lines, along with the city's roads and streets.

Risk Management

575-528-3665

Risk Management's ultimate responsibility is safety. It processes any claims against the city and workers' compensation claims as well as addressing safety concerns.

Utilities

575-541-2111

The city of Las Cruces provides gas, water, sewer and solid waste services within city limits. You can get connected at City Hall, pay your bill or transfer services if you move.

GOVERNMENT OFFICES

City of Las Cruces City Hall

700 N. Main St.

575-541-2000

Doña Ana County

Government Center

845 N. Motel Blvd.

575-525-7200

Mesilla

Mesilla Town Hall

2231 Avenida de Mesilla

Mesilla, NM

575-524-3262

IRS Tax Assistance Office

200 E. Griggs Ave., Ste. 116

844-545-5640

Las Cruces Police Department Headquarters

217 E. Picacho Ave.

575-528-4200

New Mexico Department of Health

1170 N. Solano Drive

575-528-5001

New Mexico State Police

4055 Sonoma Ranch Blvd.

575-382-2500

New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division

Loretto Town Centre

505 S. Main St., Ste. 357

575-524-6215

3291 Del Rey Blvd., Ste. 10

575-647-2044

New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division

3861 N. Main #A

575-524-6215

mvd.newmexico.gov

MVD Express

3961 E. Lohman Ave., Ste. 20

575-219-1295

mvdexpress.com/locations

New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department

2540 El Paseo Road, No. 2

575-524-6225

New Mexico Workforce Connection

226 S. Alameda Blvd.

575-524-6250

N.M. Human Services Department

655 Utah Ave.

2121 Summit Court

800-283-4465

U.S. Postal Service

201 E. Las Cruces Ave.

(Downtown)

1180 Commerce Drive

(East Mesa)

3800 W. Picacho Ave. (Fairacres)

1600 International Mall

(NMSU)

800-275-8777

U.S. Social Security Administration

2141 Summit Court

866-563-9294

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MESILLA MUNICIPAL COURT



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Honoring Bataan

LAS CRUCES BULLETIN

Thousands of people took part in the 35th Annual Bataan Memorial Death March on March 16, 2024. White Sands Missile Range hosts the annual event to honor service members who defended the Philippine Islands during World War II, and were forced to march 65 miles to confinement camps.

In 1945, U.S.-Filipino forces recaptured the Philippines and freed the captive soldiers who were suffering in the confinement camps. These soldiers would be impacted by the poor conditions of the camps and the mistreatment by their Japanese captors. About one-third of the prisoners died from health complications after they were freed.

Others were wounded or killed when unmarked enemy ships transporting prisoners of war to Japan were sunk by U.S. air and naval forces.

During the Bataan Death March, approximately 10,000 men died. Of these men, 1,000 were American and 9,000 were Filipino.

This had a huge impact on New Mexico families. Of the 1,816 200th and 515th Coast Artillery men identified, 829 men were to never return home,

losing their lives in battle, in prisons or after liberation.

The Army ROTC



Further information on the march can be found at BataanMarch.com.

Department at New Mexico State University began sponsoring the Bataan Memorial Death March in 1989.

The event was the idea of NMSU ROTC cadet Ray Pickering, now a retired Lieutenant Colonel, and it has continued to be a significant event in southern New Mexico.

The memorial march was to mark a page in history that included many native sons and affected many families in the state. In 1992, White Sands Missile Range and the New Mexico National Guard joined in the sponsorship and the event was moved to the White Sands Missile Range.

Since its inception, the Bataan Memorial Death March's participation has grown from about 100 to about 9,600 marchers from around the world. Participants choose between a 14.2-mile and a 26.2-mile course.

Marchers participate in the Bataan Memorial Death March for many reasons: personal challenge, the spirit of competition, or to foster esprit de corps in their unit. Some march in honor of a family member or a particular veteran who was in the Bataan Death March or who was taken as a prisoner of war by the Japanese in the Philippines.

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New dinosaur named

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

In front of a gaggle of school children and various officials, paleontologists gathered Thursday, Jan. 11 to unveil a dinosaur jawbone discovered almost 40 years ago.

"They found a big toothy thing," Dr. Anthony Fiorillo, executive director of The New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science said during the event, held in Santa Fe and shared remotely.

When the fossils were found on the east side of Elephant Butte Reservoir in 1983 by members of the Rio Grande Sailing Club out of Las Cruces, it was thought to be part of a Tyrannosaurus rex.

In 2013, when then-student Sebastian Dalman began a restudy of a found horned dinosaur, it forced a broader rethink of the dinosaurs from western New Mexico.

"I started working on this project with co-author Steve Jasinski and soon we started to suspect we were on to something new," Dalman said.

Dahlman said as he was looking at the

bones back in 2013, he noticed some significant differences between the find and T. rex. He confirmed it was a new species and invited the others to join in the work.

A team of scientists from New Mexico; Pennsylvania; Washington DC; Utah; Ontario, Canada; and Bath, United Kingdom was assembled to study the animal, going through the skeleton bone by bone. In each case, they found subtle differences between the specimen and the dozens of T. rex skeletons that had been found before. Because T. rex is so well-known, it became possible to show the New Mexico tyrannosaur was something new.

Now that team has published their study (in the Journal Scientific Reports) recognizing a new subspecies, *Tyrannosaurus mcraeensis*.



AREA MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS

Austin's Ring Museum

230 E. Idaho Ave.
575-525-3340
AustinsJewelry.com

Branigan Cultural Center

501 N. Main St.
575-541-2154
LasCruces.gov/1528/Branigan-Cultural-Center

Fort Selden Historic Site

1280 Ft. Selden Road, Radium Springs
575-526-8911
NMHistoricSites.org/fort-selden

Gadsden Museum

1875 Boutz Road, Mesilla
575-526-6293
GadsdenMuseumMesilla.com

Paul W. Klipsch Museum

New Mexico State University
College of Engineering, 1060 Frenger Mall
575-646-5247

Las Cruces Museum of Art

491 N. Main St.
575-541-2137
LasCruces.gov/1542/Museum-of-Art

Las Cruces Museum of Nature and Science

411 N. Main St.
575-522-3120
LasCruces.gov/1608/Museum-of-Nature-Science

Las Cruces Railroad Museum

351 N. Mesilla St.
575-528-3444
LasCruces.gov/1624/Railroad-Museum

New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum

4100 Dripping Springs Road
575-522-4100
nmFarmAndRanchMuseum.org

New Mexico State University Art Museum

1308 E. University Ave.
575-646-2545
uam.nmsu.edu

New Mexico State University Arthropod Collection

Skeen Hall W168
575-646-5552
arthropods.nmsu.edu

New Mexico State University Museum - Kent Hall

1280 E. University Ave.
By appointment only.
Requests to: museum@nmsu.edu

Space Murals Museum & Gift Shop

12450 Hwy. 70 East
575-382-0977
SpaceMurals.net

Veterans Memorial Park

1251 N. Roadrunner Pkwy.
LasCruces.gov/1726/Veterans-Memorial-Park

White Sands Missile Range Museum

575-678-2250
wsmrMuseum.com

Zuhl Museum

775 College Drive
575-646-4714
ZuhlMuseum.nmsu.edu

LAS CRUCES CITY POOLS & AQUATIC CENTER

LAS CRUCES NATATORIUM

1405 E. Hadley Ave.
575-541-2782

LAABS POOL

750 W. Picacho Ave.
575-541-2782

EAST MESA BATAAN MEMORIAL POOL

6141 Reynolds Road
575-541-2782

AQUATIC CENTER

1401 E. Hadley Ave.
575-541-2782



YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

LITERACY/READING

Children's Reading Alliance

3880 Foothills Road, Ste. A
575-522-3713
ChildrensReadingAlliance.org

Doña Ana County Head Start

575-646-8910
headstart.nmsu.edu

Dyslexia Institute of Southern New Mexico, Inc.

506 S. Main St.
575-650-6820
disnm.org

Literacy Volunteers of Doña Ana County

3400 S. Espina St.
575-527-7641
ReadWriteNow.org

Thomas Branigan Memorial Library

200 E. Picacho Ave.
575-528-4000
LasCruces.gov/1617/Libraries

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

4-H Youth Development
Doña Ana County Extension Office
DonaAnaExtension.nmsu.edu/4h.html

Big Brothers Big Sisters Mountain Region

129 S. Main St., Ste. B
575-523-9530
bbbsMountainRegion.org

Boys & Girls Club of Las Cruces

330 W. Las Cruces Ave.
575-526-1519
bgcLasCruces.org

Scouting America Yucca Council

yuccabsa.org

Cruces Gymnastics Academy

1442 Certified Place
575-527-9113
cgaGymnastics.org

Enrich The Kids Inc.

575-571-7734
EnrichTheKids.org

Girl Scouts of the Desert Southwest

225 E. Idaho Ave., Ste. 9
575-526-2532
gsdsw.org

Gym Magic

2341 Entrada del Sol
575-523-1616
GymMagic.com

Junior Amigos Ambassadors

277 E. Amador Ave., Suite 305
575-524-8900
LasCrucesHispanicChamber.com/junior-amigos

Junior Leadership Las Cruces

150 E. Lohman Ave.
575-524-1968
LasCruces.org/junior-leadership

City of Las Cruces After School Programs

575-541-2550
LasCruces.gov/1515/after-school-program

New Mexico FFA

575-646-3036
nmffa.org

Elevate Gymnastics & Athletics

3030 Harrelson St.
575-525-4222
elevate-gymnastics.com

ARTS

A Children's Theater of the Mesilla Valley

575-571-1413
aChildrensTheatre.org

Las Cruces School of Dance and Music

1390 N. Main St.
575-525-5670
NewMexicoDanceAndMusic.com

Michele's Dance Academy

1195 E. Madrid Ave.
575-527-1893
MichelesDanceAcademy.biz

Verdi Academy of Dance

519 E. Boutz Rd.
575-522-3147
VerdiAcademyOfDance.com



Treating rattlesnake bites

JASON K. WATKINS

When treating venomous bites from our local rattlesnakes, both in people and pets, the list of what not to do is longer than the list of what to do.

Experts agree that three pre-hospital actions can save lives:

- 1) immediately seeking medical care or calling 911;
- 2) removing watches and jewelry, collars or reins, or anything else that restricts blood flow, and;
- 3) keeping the affected area at the same level or above the heart.

"It's the sound you DO NOT want to hear: you're on an evening walk in the wash and you let your dog off leash," said Dr. Sarah Carotenuto, DVM, DABVP (CF). "He sticks his nose in a bush, yelps, and as he runs back, you hear that characteristic, gut-wrenching rattle and note two punctures on his muzzle, which start bleeding."

When treating bites from rattlesnakes and other pit vipers, experts agree you should not apply suction, heat, pressure or tourniquets, and you definitely should not administer Benadryl, aspirin, steroids, or antibiotics. Electrical stimulation treatments (car batteries) don't work and cutting into the bite can lead to infection and permanent tissue damage.

The four major venomous reptiles in our region that pose a risk to humans and pets are the western diamond-back rattlesnake, Mojave rattlesnake, prairie rattlesnake and Gila monsters.

"Antivenom can be costly, so budgeting for a venomous snakebite or getting pet insurance are good ideas for anyone who lives in areas where snakes are common," said Kimberly Wyatt, a doctoral student in herpetology and biology. She is a member of the National Snakebite Support organization, which provides snake identification and treatment advice.

"Venomous snakebites are medical emergencies," Wyatt said, "and pets are more likely to suffer fatal outcomes than humans, especially if they don't receive medical treatment. Antivenom is the only thing that can neutralize venom."



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Dr. Lauren Reyes

Dr. Cassandra Rucks



ZIA VET CLINIC

(405)808-8769

Dog safety in the desert

LAS CRUCES BULLETIN

There are a handful of vitally important tips for keeping dogs safe in our desert wilds, climates and on burning-hot streets.

Heat and Paws

The pads on dogs' feet are very sensitive. When temperatures soar, cement sidewalks heat up approximately 50 degrees hotter than the air temp. Arizona and New Mexico have the hottest sun and UV rays in the United States.

If you see your dog hopping or doing anything akin to what locals call "the cat dance" or "too-hot-to-trot dance," it means your dog's feet are burning. Dog owners should stay aware of changing ground temperatures. Sand, dirt or asphalt, any hot surface can damage your dog's feet.

Veterinarians recommend that anyone with dogs in the southwest during hot weather have them wear Paw Booties, especially on sidewalks. Wearing dog shoes is particularly important for small dogs and puppies. There are also preventative stick-ons for the bottom of your dog's paws. No dogs like booties, but they will adapt to them with patient training.

Parking lots hold a second danger. Any open space can have a carpet of nasty thorns that have flown there from our intense spring winds. There are countless cactus stickers that are so tiny they are nearly invisible. If even one of these thorns gets caught between your dog's toes, it will be excruciating for them. Vets suggest carrying tweezers or pliers in case you need to remove stickers. Check in-between your dog's toes as well as their pads after any outdoor activity.

Dogs in cars

Dogs should never be left alone in cars on hot days. Cars heat up quickly. If it is 80 degrees outside, the average car heats to 99 degrees in 10 minutes and rises to 114 degrees in 30 minutes. When the outside temp is 85, the inside of a car soars to 104 degrees in 10 minutes and to 119 after 30 minutes. Imagine if it is one of our common 90- to-100-degree days.

Veterinarians emphatically warn to never leave pets in a car in any outside temp above 60 degrees. If your dog's body temp goes to 104 or higher, they will be in immediate danger of a life-threatening heat stroke.

Leash your dog

In the city or even when hiking in the southwest, there are many reasons to keep your dog leashed or very close

to your side.

This helps prevent unhappy encounters with other people, their pets or (as on a hike) wild animals like snakes, fire ants, coyotes, mountain lions, bears, foxes and javelina. There is valley fever in the soil and hantavirus carried by rodents, usually left in urine with its alluring smell to exploring dogs. Foxes, skunks and raccoons carry rabies.

Snakes

Many resident pet owners have had the experience of having their dog come nose-to-nose with a rattlesnake. The beautifully colored, black, red and yellow coral snake also makes his home here, usually hidden in thick brush. Coral snakes have the most potent, deadly venom of any snake in the USA.

As for our many other very ecologically helpful, non-poisonous snakes, large to small— they still bite.



PET ORDINANCES

VACCINATIONS

At the age of three months or older, a dog or cat in the city must be properly vaccinated against rabies (with a certificate and a collar tag documenting it) and must have an implanted working identification microchip.

RABIES SHOTS AND CONTROL

Any dog, cat, domestic ferret or other animal, for which there is a state-approved rabies vaccine, older than 3 months must have a rabies vaccination. Every animal bite must be immediately reported to Animal Control at 575-528-4100 or a state field health office.

PERMITTED PETS

Pets that are permitted include:

- Up to three dogs, cats or rabbits per home, or up to seven with a kennel license issued by Las Cruces Animal Control.
 - Up to a total of six chickens and/or ducks with a special permit. Roosters, however, are permitted only on properties zoned for keeping livestock.
 - Community cat colonies with permit.
- Any amphibians, reptiles, caged birds, aquarium fish, caged rodents or caged ferrets maintained within the confines of a dwelling unit, except as prohibited/restricted

by federal or state law regarding those species listed as threatened, endangered or as prohibited/restricted by the City Codes Enforcement Department.

RESTRAINING ANIMALS

All animals must be kept on the owner's property following municipal guidelines for proper shelter. If an animal is restrained on the premises of its owner, the tether must be no shorter than 12 feet. Dogs may not be tethered to a stationary object for more than two hours in any 12-hour period or more than four hours in any 12-hour period to a running line, pulley or trolley system. A tether may not weigh more than one-eighth of the animal's body weight. In all cases, a tethered animal must be able to reach a container of water. While on the street or in public, the animal must be kept on a leash of suitable length so as to enable the handler to maintain control of the animal.

WASTE PICKUP

Every owner of a dog or cat should be aware that animal defecation is prohibited on property other than that of the owner. Owners of animals are responsible for removing and disposing of animal waste right away.



NUISANCE

An owner can't allow an animal to persistently bark, howl or make noise that is audible for more than 10 minutes. If a complaint is filed, Animal Control may provide seven-day notice to the pet guardian to resolve the issue, after which it may investigate, issue citations or a criminal complaint. Under some circumstances, officers may impound an animal.

For more City of Las Cruces Municipal Codes regarding animals, view Chapter 7 at LasCruces.gov/1298/Municipal-Codes.

DOG-FRIENDLY LAS CRUCES

ANIMAL GROUPS

ACTion Program for Animals

537 N. Solano Drive
Education and Adoption:
575-571-4654
Info line: 575-644-0505
APALasCruces.org

Animal Services Center of the Mesilla Valley

3543 Bataan Memorial West
575-382-0018
ascmv.org

Broken Promises SW

575-640-7372
Nonprofit offering spay/neuter assistance and education

Cat's Meow Adoption Center

2211 N. Mesquite St.
575-639-3036 or 575-640-0011
TheCatsMeowLasCruces.com

Cherished K-9

575-496-6085
CherishedK-9.com
Nonprofit all-breed rescue

City of Las Cruces Animal Control

575-528-4100
LasCruces.gov/1270/Animal-Control

Doña Ana County Animal Control

845 N. Motel Blvd.
575-525-8820
DonaAnaCounty.org/departments/community-services/animal-control-code-enforcement

Doña Ana County Humane Society

424 N. Main St., Ste. 800
575-647-4808
dachslc.org

Las Cruces Dock Diving & K9 Event Center

335 S. Valley Dr.
575-323-1250
DockDivingLC.com

Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary

575-805-5338
shaspets.com

Safe Haven Thrift Store

840-D El Paseo Road
575-541-4942

Spay and Neuter Action Program (SNAP)

2405 W. Picacho Ave., Ste. 103
575-524-9265
SnapNewMexico.org

LAS CRUCES DOG PARKS

430 N. Hermosa St.
3551 Bataan Memorial West
1855 W. Amador Ave. (Burn Lake)
LasCruces.gov/2627/Dog-Parks

SHOPPING

Better Life Natural Pet Foods

315 Telshor Blvd.
575-522-0115

Cross City Exotics

1414 S. Solano Dr.
575-652-4059

Horse N Hound Feed N Supply

208 N. Motel Blvd.
575-644-3857
HorseNhoundFeed.com

Petco

3050 E. Lohman Ave.
575-532-5200
petco.com

PetSmart

2200 E. Lohman Ave.
575-523-1154
petsmart.com

'The food comes from the earth'

At farm and ranch museum, the fields are blessed

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

The drums are first – thump thump-thump thump! – as members of Tortugas Pueblo lead the 24th annual Blessing of the Fields at New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum on May 17.

The voices of the pueblo join their drums with resonant sing-chanting. The sound of many feet moving out onto the bridge to cross to the animal enclosures follows. People are chatting as they walk, children are laughing. Birds talk back from the arroyo under the bridge.

The voice of Bishop Peter Baldacchino of the Diocese of Las Cruces can be heard telling the Las Cruces Catholic School students accompanying him, "If somebody feels a little bit weak, look for shade. Ask for water before you get dizzy."

The drums get a little more distant, then stop for a minute as Baldacchino pauses to talk about San Isidro Labrador, also known as San Ysidro, and his wife, Maria Torribia (known as Santa Maria de la Cabeza), who were farm workers known for their piety toward the poor and animals.

"God loves them as he loves each and every one of us and they loved the land they worked on and loved the animals that

were part of the land, so let us pray," the bishop intones. "Help us to love and care for all you have created."

We follow this procession, which includes a wooden statue of San Ysidro, around the grounds of the museum as Baldacchino pauses at various pens to bless the different animals there, the cows and bulls, the sheep, horses and burros.

The first communion girls in their white dresses and the first communion boys, who accompany the girls holding umbrellas against the sun over them, are closest to the bishop as he sprinkles holy water at the animals and sometimes, to their delight, over the children.

They arrive at the head of a field, where a ditch full of water awaits release to signify the beginning of the growing season. The girls line both sides of the water entryway and the bishop blesses the water. He touches the cool wave as it releases, still mumbling the blessing and the girls toss rose petals into the water as it moves to spread across the field.

Fourth grader Marcelle Chiffolleau tells me, "Blessing the fields helps the cows and helps crops grow."

"Water gives things life, helps plants grow," adds Eric Ray, another student.

"They are blessing the fields, the cows and the sheep, the water in honor of – I can't pronounce his name – San Ysidro," Marko Benigni, also a fourth grader, chimes in.

At the end of the event, the crowd goes back to the beginning, with Balda-

BLESSING | CONTINUED ON PAGE 96



BLESSING | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 95

cchino blessing homemade bread to be shared. Everyone, with the children going first, files past to share in the bread and leave happy, nibbling on their slices.

There is clapping, music with children singing, then pattering out back to the parking lot.

Sister Mavis, who works with Las Cruces Catholic School, is fairly new to the area. 2023 was her first year experiencing the blessing event. She has served in Zimbabwe, Italy and Bangladesh yet she said she has never seen anything like this.

"I think it's a very important event," she said. "When we get through the blessing of the water, it's so crucial here, magnified, in this area.

"In our world today, in our culture here, many times we are removed from our sources of our food. This is not only for the children, but the adults to remember the food comes from the earth; so the blessing of those things is crucial."





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Mobile crisis unit looks to future

JUSTIN GARCIA

Project LIGHT wears its mission in its name. The acronym LIGHT stands for “Lessen the Incidence of Grief, Harm and Trauma.” The title belongs to a unique Las Cruces Fire Department team of paramedics and licensed social workers who respond to people in a mental health crisis.

The project launched in 2023 to reduce the frequency of grief, harm and trauma in Las Cruces. In year one, city officials feel it has achieved that goal.

The project received international attention in its debut year. The team responded to 940 calls in its first year, averaging about three calls per day. According to data from the LCFD, about half were strictly mental health related. About 40 percent required multiple interventions such as mental health and medical. Most calls ended with transportation to a mental health provider or the patient receiving treatment on-scene.

“The LIGHT teams have been a resounding success,” Las Cruces Police Department Chief Jeremy Story said during a city council presentation in August 2023. “They’ve enabled the police department to focus on safety while the mental health professionals focus on providing the best care possible and plugging people into resources they need.”

Matthew Hiles, a battalion chief with LCFD who oversees Project LIGHT and the

department’s Mobile Integrated Healthcare Program, said Project LIGHT has two goals for the future.

First, build a place for Project LIGHT to call home. The Project LIGHT teams operate out of Fire Station 1, the main headquarters on Picacho Avenue across from the Thomas Brannigan Memorial Library. Hiles said a new building for Project LIGHT and the Mobile Integrated Healthcare Program would improve outcomes.

“It’s also going to give some space for our teams to have a moment and decompress,” Hiles said. “Right now, there’s really nowhere to do that.”

Second, fill that new space with more employees. “Definitely, adding personnel down the road is going to be beneficial for the public,” Hiles said.

Las Cruces is one of many cities in America to implement a non-police crisis intervention team. But some other cities rely on a “crisis now” model of care.

The Crisis Now model works like this: A person experiencing a crisis or a person adjacent to a crisis will call the crisis team directly, or their call will be routed via 988. Then a team like Project LIGHT will arrive on the scene and treat or transport the person. Typically, there are no police or other traditional first responders at the scene.

That’s not how Las Cruces’ Project LIGHT works. Instead, Project LIGHT operates alongside a cadre of first responders. When someone calls 911 with a crisis, it’s up to the 911 dispatcher to call on Project LIGHT or the police officer responsible for securing the scene to request Project LIGHT’s presence. This practice falls under the category of the co-responder model.

The major criticism of the co-responder model involves incarceration. Because police officers participate in the response, many outcomes can lead to someone experiencing a crisis ending up in jail. In 2023, about 20 percent of Project LIGHT’s interactions ended with the person being jailed, according to statistics presented last summer.

Hiles said he feels that LCPD officers effectively use the teams at the correct times to ensure good outcomes.

“It’s helping them out tremendously with de-escalating situations that maybe could have gotten a little out of hand,” Hiles said. “They’re also requesting the LIGHT teams preemptively, even sometimes before they get them on the scene.”



Giving blood, a matter of life

ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Everybody thinks someone else will give blood, so they don't need to, said Monique Hilverding, a Las Cruces manager with Vitalant Blood Donation.

"They don't realize nobody likes needles," she said. "But it's so important and really not that bad. After a moment of discomfort, I think most people feel a sense of pride."

Hilverding said five years ago the company brought together blood service entities across the nation, like United Blood Services in New Mexico to form a united whole under Vitalant. The nonprofit was founded in 1943 and Hilverding herself has been part of the company in Las Cruces for 17 years.

"I love this community," she said. "It really is an amazing thing to be doing."

The need in the area is to collect 125 units of blood a day. This is done through blood drives both large and small as well as collection in the local office at 1200 Commerce Drive in Las Cruces.

"We are always looking for new places," she said. "We always need volunteers and donors. There are a lot of ways for the community to get involved. We struggle, nationally. Three percent of people give blood."

Vitalant's goal is to have a five-day supply of blood going out to the 19 southern New Mexico and El Paso hospitals that use the service, she said.

The number one reason she identified to explain why people don't choose to give is fear of blood or needles and the fear of passing out.

Hilverding said many people think blood is mostly needed when major events occur, but everyday personal

things happen all the time.

"Everyday someone is dealing with something – car accidents, cancer, premature babies, surgeries," she said. "I do it as often as my body will let me, three times a year. If everyone who donates did three times a year, we wouldn't have a shortage."

To give blood, she said, you need to feel well and healthy. Take your ID and eat something; prepare to receive a mini-physical. You can take a short questionnaire on the vitalant.org website or just go in and they will ask you the questions.

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"It (acupuncture) was the last resort, with the best results." -Bob Hoskins



Dr. Janet Quintanilla, DOM, Dipl.OM

Patients find relief with fewer pills with Breakthrough new clinic in Las Cruces.

Those battling with pain but unable or unwilling to alleviate their condition with potentially addictive pills can feel as if they're on pins and needles waiting for a solution.

However, for some suffering from pain, pins and needles ARE the solution.

Dr. Janet Quintanilla, who trained in China, practices Acupuncture at Sonoma Acupuncture Integrative Health, said a lot of the pain management field is skittish about prescribing pain medication.

Quintanilla said almost all of her patients cannot, or prefer not to take medications to assuage their conditions.

"I've been maxed out of nerve pain meds, and all the doctors said to just live with it." said **Bob Hoskins of Virginia**. "It (acupuncture) was the last resort, with the best results."

Hoskins began to see Quintanilla in October for lingering effects from a 30 foot fall he took from a tree in 1998.

"**I think she does a heck of a job,**" Hoskins said. "I'd fallen and put my hip through the pelvic socket." Additionally, **Hoskins** had injured his ribs, vertebra, and tailbone.

"I hate pills. If at possible, I'd rather not take them." **Hoskins** said.

Dr. Ralph Becker, pain management physician for Mayo Clinic recommends acupuncture and said **Hoskins's** comments are common.

"Patient's today realize that in 2024 there are non-invasive options out there and want to avoid surgery if possible." **Becker** said.

Becker who's been practicing 20 years, said he learned about acupuncture during his fellowship and has enthusiastically recommended it to his patients for years. "If people ask me, I encourage them to try it. Our saying is, "Can't hurt, often helps," **Becker** said.

Becker says, he has found acupuncture helps many of his patients with chronic pain and neurological conditions.

"You give them less medication, there are less uncomfortable side effects."

Becker said **"They get more active."**

For others struggling with pain management and staying independent, such as **Betty Hicks of Deming**, pills are not an option.

"I have nerve damage in my toes from when I broke my ankle." **Hicks** said. "They all told me, there's nothing they can do."

Hicks said the sensation in her extremities was painful and felt like "burning needles in her shoes."

"Sometimes, I'd be up all night because of the hurting." **Hicks** said.

Dr. Quintanilla said initially she had told **Hicks** she could not be accepted as a patient, because she was skeptical that acupuncture could help her neuropathy (nerve damage).

Hicks said her pain has largely abated and she's able to do the hobbies she was used to doing since she began seeing Quintanilla in October. She said she did not expect the treatment to work, but is delighted it has. Quintanilla says that **Hicks** is an inordinately fast responder. Dr. Quintanilla says, "While we see these seemingly miraculous results day in and day out, Mrs. Hicks is an unusually fast responder. Typically, I expect patients to take a few more weeks to report these kinds of changes. But I'm very happy for her and all of us here at Sonoma Acupuncture are excited to see this look of amazement on our patients faces."

"I tell all my friends. I don't have the pain in there and rarely use my cane." **Hicks** said. "My husband doesn't have to rub my feet anymore."

City breaks ground on housing

JUSTIN GARCIA

The city of Las Cruces broke ground on two affordable housing projects in 2024 which aim to benefit senior citizens as well as low-income families.

The projects – one located at El Paseo Road and Farney Lane and the other at 130 N. Walnut Street – are part of Las Cruces' efforts to alleviate an affordable housing crisis that prevents residents from finding affordable places to rent or buy a home for the first time and causes people to become homeless.

The city broke ground on the Pedrena Apartments in March at the northeast corner of El Paseo Road and Farney Lane.

The 80-unit apartment complex is reserved for residents 55 or older. Like the Three Sisters Apartments, Pedrena Apartments are reserved for residents making no more than about \$30,000, or 60 percent of the area's median income. The city expects the apartments to be completed in the summer or early fall of 2025.

"Pedrena Apartments is expected to be 100 percent occupied by December 2025," a news release said.

Thomas Development Co., of Boise, Idaho, is the lead developer.

Earlier in 2024, the city broke ground on the Three Sisters Apartments on N. Walnut St. That project will be a 70-unit housing complex for families with children. The units will be reserved for families who make no more than about \$30,000, or 60 percent of the area's median income.

Chelsea Investment Corporation – a California-based company that's done business in New Mexico before this project – is the developer. The city sent about \$3.4 million to the project.

"The project boasts a range of amenities tailored to its residents' needs, including a community space, laundry facilities, a computer center, BBQ and picnic area, a dog park, and two playgrounds," the city said

in a news release.

The residents of Las Cruces approved a \$6 million General Obligation Bond in 2022.

The federal government defines affordable housing as rent or mortgage that costs less than 30 percent of the combined income of everyone living in the unit.

According to a review of Las Cruces income data from the U.S. Census Bureau and available data about average rental and mortgage prices, more than half of all residents in Las Cruces could not afford over half of the available units.

Additionally, the city estimates that Las Cruces would need 5,600 more units to meet demand.

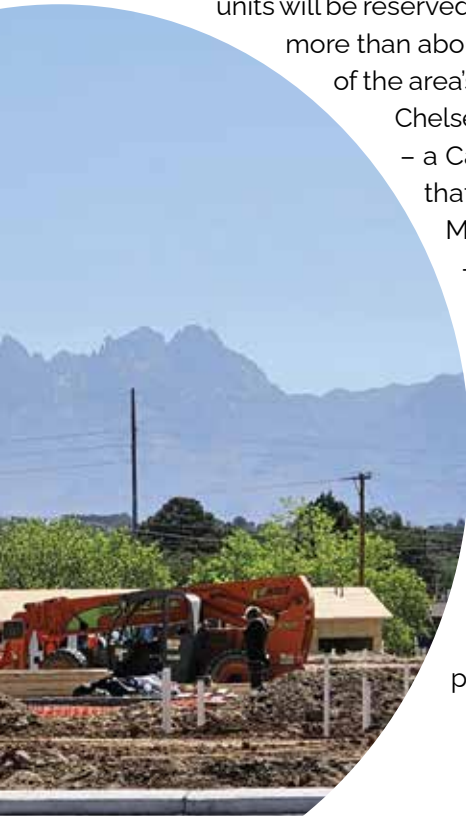
A recent report commissioned by the city noted that New Mexico State University and the various U.S. military installations in the area create additional demand. The report also found that only 20 percent of units in Las Cruces were suited to be easily rentable as a single-family attached unit (commonly known as a "mother-in-law casita") or multifamily housing such as apartment complexes.

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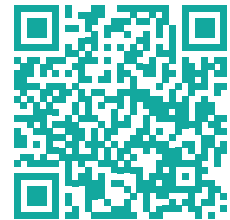
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A	Allen Theaters	67	La Posada Assisted Living	101	
	ASC of the Heart Institute.....	3	La Posta de Mesilla.....	33	
	Ashley Furniture Homestore	2	La Posta Chili Company.....	29	
	Austins Fine Jewelry.....	19	Las Cruces Awning	83	
B	Big Mesa Realty.....	42	Lorenzo's Italian Restaurant.....	60	
	Bite of Belgium.....	51	M	Mas Art	72
C	Casey Carpet.....	44	Memorial Medical Center.....	5	
	Citizen's Bank.....	50	Merlins Magical Market.....	37	
	City of Las Cruces.....	21	Mesilla Valley Film Society	73	
	Coalition for Conservatives in Action	44	Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery	71	
	Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico	18	Mesilla Valley Hospice & Palliative Care	103	
	Conflict and Dispute Resolutions of the Southwest.....	40	Milagro Coffee y Espresso	58	
D	Desert Peaks Architects	41	N	New Mexico Museum of Space History.....	84
	D.H. Lescomes Winery & Bistro	59	New Mexico State University.....	107	
	Disabled American Veterans.....	86	Nusenda Credit Union.....	35	
	Doña Ana Arts Council.....	68	P	Pioneer Bank	78
	Doña Ana County.....	38	R	Rio Grande Winery.....	57
E	The Emporium	23	S	Sonoma Acupuncture	102
	Evolve Federal Credit Union.....	45	T	Taste of India	56
F	First American Bank	99	'Tis the Season de Mesilla.....	32	
	First Financial Credit Union.....	75	Tresco.....	88	
	First Light Federal Credit Union	97	Trust Properties	108	
	Flowerama.....	89	U	University United Methodist Church	96
G	The Game	61	W	Warren & Law Dental.....	98
H	Hacienda de Mesilla.....	31	White Sands Federal Credit Union	81	
I	Insta-Copy Imaging	39	Z	Zia Mobile Vet Clinic.....	92
L	La Esquina Plaza.....	47			

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