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SOUTHWEST
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2017
**Legislative
Guide**



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DIVIDING A SHRINKING PIE

Solomonic decisions await



One of the many beauties of living in New Mexico?

If you know where to look, you can find a green chile apple pie.

One time at the Tesuque Village Market in Santa Fe, I asked for some green chiles on a piece of their delicious pie. Needless to say, it was a slice of heaven.

Slicing New Mexico's budgetary pie this session, however, will be a hellish task for our new slate of senators and representatives.

Perhaps the technology wizards at New Mexico Tech in Socorro can create a special laser blade to cut microscopically thin slices.

I don't mean to jest. The loss of revenues from the oil and gas industry has left New Mexico in a deep financial bind. The Legislature, the state, our cities, our schools, our counties, and other municipalities and governmental entities have already cut fat, muscle and bone. Now it's a matter of seeing what's left to cut.

Any way you slice it, the outcome will likely be painful.

As just one example, many counties have already seen a reduction in state funds to help them deal with DWIs. Our state's history with DWI problems runs deep and wide.

However, these funds, which have helped address both prevention and treatment, have helped us make real progress toward the problem.

More DWIs mean more expenses for our already overworked folks in law enforcement, courts and detention. Of course, the greatest cost is the potential loss of loved ones.

There are dozens of other examples where budget cuts will lead to painful backward steps for our state, which in many areas is already backed to the edge of a cliff.

It need not be all darkness. We have light in the 112 minds who make up our state legislature.

If they can combine their wisdom and experience with some creativity and collaboration, they might be able to create a recipe for a better outcome.

Already, lawmakers are exploring new and alternative revenue sources for our state. Perhaps some of them can prove beneficial and sustainable.

Challenges and conflict likely await, but it is critical work for the people of New Mexico.

It's not overstatement to say lives depend on some of the decisions our elected officials make in the next 60 days.

RICHARD COLTHARP
Publisher, Las Cruces Bulletin

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ABOUT THE LEGISLATURE

The New Mexico Legislature consists of the New Mexico House of Representatives and the New Mexico Senate.

The House of Representatives consists of 70 members who represent about 25,980 residents each, while the 42 members of the Senate represent around 43,300 residents. Legislators are unpaid for their work; however, they receive a daily living allowance for each day of official legislative work.

Legislators are elected from districts of

approximately equal population. Several counties with small populations, or parts of counties, may be combined to form a single district. Redistricting occurs every 10 years in line with the U.S. Census outcome.

There currently aren't any term limits for legislators, with House members elected every two years and Senate members elected every four.

The New Mexico Legislature meets for regular sessions the third Tuesday in

January. During even-numbered years the Legislature meets for 30 days and primarily focuses on the state's budget, while during odd-numbered years, it meets for 60 days.

Between regular sessions, legislators serve on interim committees that study a variety of issues.

For more information on the New Mexico Legislature, visit www.nmlegis.gov/lcs.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR YOUR VISIT TO NEW MEXICO'S STATE CAPITOL

HISTORY

The New Mexico State Capitol, known as the Roundhouse, opened in 1966. The building occupies 232,346-square-feet and was built at a cost of more than \$4 million. Its unique shape was designed to resemble the traditional Zia symbol when viewed from above.

There are four levels, each of which can be accessed by the elevators in the east and west lobbies or by the adjacent stairways.

The first floor is below ground. This is where the Senate and House chambers are located, as well as leadership and staff offices, including the mailroom.

The second floor is at ground level and is accessed through the main entrances and includes the public access to the House and Senate galleries, and some legislative offices.

The third floor contains more legislative offices as well as committee offices and meeting rooms.

The fourth floor is where the offices of the governor and lieutenant governor are located, both of which are accessible to the public.

The North Capitol Annex has additional legislator offices and the offices for the Secretary of State.

The rotunda is in the center of the main

Capitol building, rising three stories from the New Mexico travertine marble floor, embedded with a turquoise and brass state seal, up to a ceiling skylight of stained glass that is patterned after an American Indian basket weave that symbolizes sky and earth.

CAPITOL ART FOUNDATION

Established in 1991, the Capitol Art Foundation features contemporary pieces by a variety of artists who live and work in New Mexico. Artworks from up to 600 artists can be found among the four floors and along the walkway connecting the main Capitol building with the North Annex.

PARKING

An open visitors lot is available for early arrivers across the street (Old Santa Fe Trail) east of the capitol. This lot is usually filled by 9 a.m. when the legislature is in session. A new parking garage just west of the capitol building opened in 2009. Approximately 300 free parking spaces are available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis.

BUS SERVICE

For visitors who want to avoid the challenge of parking near the capitol, the state Department of Transportation runs free shuttle buses to and from the capitol along three routes throughout Santa Fe.

VISITOR GUIDELINES

1. Observe decorum. Visitors are advised not to applaud or jeer during the proceedings.
2. Daily agenda and office locations can be found on the tables in the East Lobby at the ground level.
3. Be patient. Expect meetings to begin later than their scheduled times.
4. Schedule an appointment with your legislator ahead of time by either calling or visiting the legislator's office to set up a time through administrative staff. Legislative switchboard: 505-986-4300.



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U.S. Senators



SEN. TOM UDALL

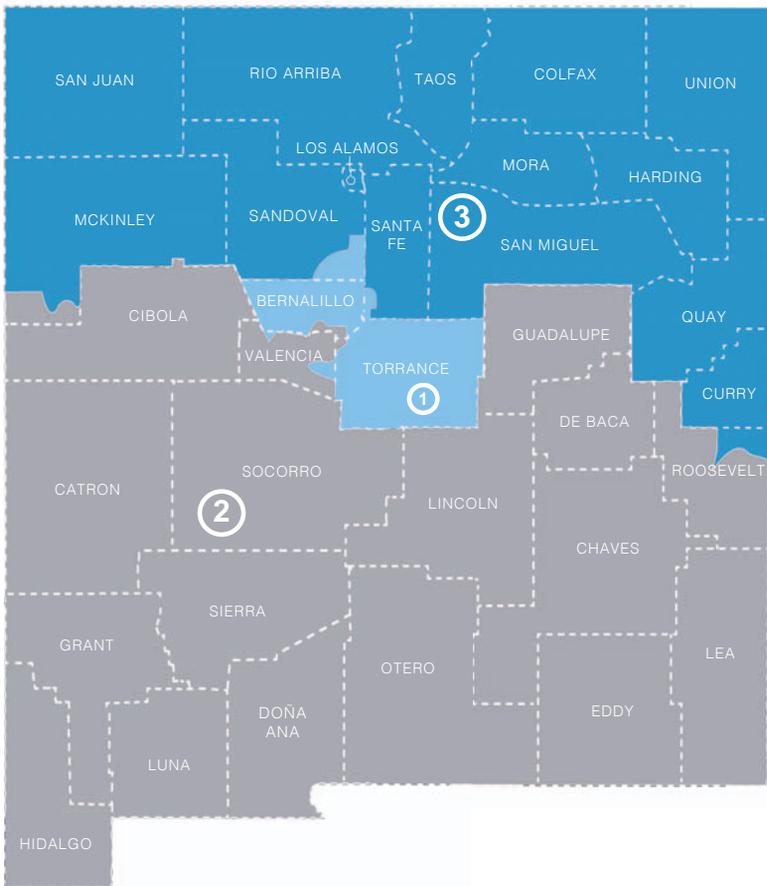
Democrat
 Address: 201 N. Church St., Suite 201B
 Las Cruces, NM 88001
 Phone: 575-526-5475
 Website: www.tomudall.senate.gov



SEN. MARTIN HEINRICH

Democrat
 Address: 505 S. Main St., Suite 148
 Las Cruces, NM 88001
 Phone: 575-523-6561
 Website: www.heinrich.senate.gov

U.S. Representatives



MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

Democrat, District 1
 Address: 505 Marquette Ave., NW, Suite 1605
 Albuquerque, NM 87102
 Phone: 505-346-6781
 Website: <http://lujangrisham.house.gov>



STEVE PEARCE

Republican, District 2
 Address: 570 N. Telshor Blvd.,
 Las Cruces, NM 88011
 Phone: 855-473-2723
 Website: <http://pearce.house.gov>



BEN RAY LUJAN

Democrat, District 3
 Address: 1611 Calle Lorca, Unit A
 Santa Fe, NM 87505
 Phone: 505-984-8950
 Website: <http://lujan.house.gov>

EL PRÓSPERO



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New Mexico Political Parties



Communist Party of New Mexico

Phone: 505-615-7537
 Email: nm@cpusa.org
 Website: www.cpusa.org

Democratic Party of New Mexico

Address: 322 Adams St. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87108
 Phone: 505-830-3650
 Fax: 505-830-3645
 Email: info@nmdemocrats.org
 Website: www.nmdemocrats.org

Libertarian Party of New Mexico

Address: 918 Ivory Road SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124
 Phone: Chair Martin Swinney, 575-648-4240
 Email: chair@lpm.us
 Website: www.lpm.us

Natural Law Party of New Mexico

Address: 25B Paseo Galisteo, Santa Fe, NM 87708
 Phone: 505-660-5288
 Email: baruch88@yahoo.com
 Website: www.natural-law.org

New Mexico Constitution Party

Address: P.O. Box 22088, Albuquerque, NM 87154
 Website: www.constitutionpartynm.com

New Mexico Green Party

Address: P.O. Box 22485, Santa Fe, NM 87502-2485
 Phone: 505-473-3621
 Email: info@greenpartynm.org
 Website: www.greenpartynm.org

Republican Party of New Mexico

Address: 5150-A San Francisco Road NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109
 Phone: 505-298-3662
 Email: contact@gopnm.org
 Website: www.gopnm.org

Unity Party of New Mexico

Email: mail@unityparty.us
 Website: www.unityparty.us/unity-new-mexico.htm

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How to pass a bill

1. INTRODUCTION AND COMMITTEE REFERRAL

A bill may be introduced in the House of Representatives or in the Senate. It is assigned a number, read twice by title, ordered, printed and referred to the proper committee.

2. COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

Committee meetings are usually open to the public. A bill may receive one of the following recommendations:

- Do pass
- Do pass as amended
- Do not pass
- Without recommendation
- Without recommendation as amended

3. ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE REPORT

Reports of committees are subject to adoption by the full House and Senate. When a favorable committee report is adopted, the bill is placed on the calendar, which is the list of bills

scheduled for third reading and possible final passage.

4. THIRD READING AND FINAL PASSAGE

This is the stage at which the fate of a bill is usually decided. Action may be to amend a bill, substitute one bill for another, send a bill back to committee, refer it to another committee or defeat it altogether.

5. VOTING ON A BILL

Following a sometimes-lengthy debate on a bill, a final and recorded vote is taken on whether it is to pass. There must be a quorum of the committee present and every bill requires at least a majority vote of the members present and voting in order to pass. A quorum is generally a simple majority of the members.

6. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The bill is sent to the other house and repeats much of the procedure outlined above. Both houses must agree on the final form of a bill. If either house

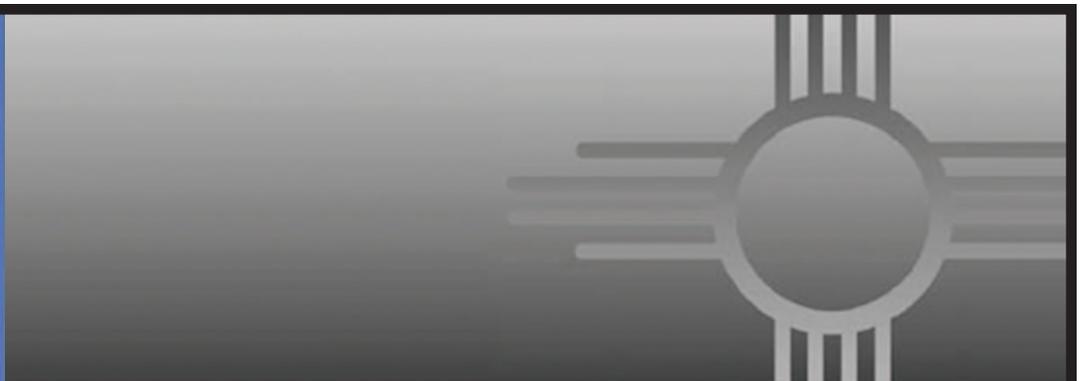
fails to concur with an amendment, the differences must be reconciled by a conference committee representing both the House and Senate. A compromise worked out in a conference committee is subject to approval by both houses.

7. ENROLLING AND ENGROSSING

After passage by both houses, a bill is carefully copied by the enrolling and engrossing staff of the house in which it originated, signed by the presiding officers of each house and sent to the governor.

8. GOVERNOR'S ACTION

The governor may sign a bill, veto it or, if it carries an appropriation, partially veto it. The Legislature may override the governor's veto by a two-thirds majority vote of each house.



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State cabinets and departments

Office of African American Affairs

Executive Director: Yvette Kaufman-Bell
Phone: 505-383-6222
Address: 310 San Pedro Drive, Suite 230, Albuquerque, NM 87108
Website: www.oaaa.state.nm.us
The African American Affairs Office sets out to positively affect the perception, education, health and development of African-Americans in New Mexico.

Aging and Long-Term Services

Secretary: Myles Copeland
Phone: 505-476-4799
Address: 2550 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Mailing address: P.O. Box 27118, Santa Fe, NM 87502
Website: www.nmaging.state.nm.us
Aging and Long-Term Services is dedicated to helping New Mexico lead the nation in healthy aging, and supporting older adults and adults with disabilities.

Department of Agriculture

Director: Jeff Witte
Phone: 575-646-3007
Address: 3190 S. Espina St., Las Cruces, NM 88003
Website: www.nmda.nmsu.edu
The New Mexico Department of Agriculture's responsibilities include ensuring a safe and secure food supply and a uniform and fair marketplace, protecting natural resources and the environment, and supporting domestic and international trade.

Children, Youth and Families Department

Secretary: Monique Jacobson
Phone: 505-827-7602
Address: P.O. Drawer 5160, Santa Fe, NM 87502
Website: www.cyfd.org
The New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department provides an array of prevention, intervention, rehabilitative and after-care services to New Mexico children and their families.

Corrections Department

Secretary: Gregg Marcantel
Phone: 505-827-8645
Address: 4337 State Highway 14, Santa Fe, NM 87508
Mailing address: P.O. Box 27116, Santa Fe NM 87502
Website: www.cd.nm.gov
The New Mexico Corrections Department is in charge of incarcerating nearly 7,300 inmates in six state-owned-and-operated prisons and five private facilities. It also monitors parole and probation, assisting in an offender's re-entrance into society.

Department of Cultural Affairs

Secretary: Veronica Gonzales
Phone: 505-827-6364
Address: 407 Galisteo St., Suite 260, Santa Fe, NM 87501
Website: www.newmexicoculture.org
The Department of Cultural Affairs represents New Mexico's dedication to preserving and celebrating the cultural integrity and diversity of the state. The department oversees a broad range of New Mexico's arts and cultural heritage agencies.

Economic Development Department

Secretary: Matthew Geisel
Phone: 505-827-0300
Address: 1100 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Mailing address: P.O. Box 20003, Santa Fe, NM 87504-5003
Website: www.gonm.biz
The New Mexico Economic Development Department is the state's main agency in recruiting businesses and improving the state's economy. The department also provides a variety of assistance to New Mexico businesses.

Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department

Secretary: Tony Delfin
Phone: 505-476-3200
Address: 1220 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Website: www.emnrd.state.nm.us

The Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department oversees the state's energy conservation, forestry, mining and minerals, oil conservation, state parks and the youth conservation corps.

Office of the State Engineer

Secretary: Tom Blaine
Phone: 505-827-6091
Address: Concha Ortiz y Pino Building, 130 S. Capitol St., Santa Fe, NM 87504
Website: www.ose.state.nm.us
The Office of the State Engineer is in charge of administering the state's water resources. The state engineer has power over the supervision, measurement, appropriation and distribution of all surface and groundwater in New Mexico, including streams and rivers that cross state boundaries. The state engineer is also secretary of the Interstate Stream Commission.

Environment Department

Secretary: Butch Tongate
Phone: 505-827-2855
Address: 1190 St. Francis Drive, Suite N4050, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Website: www.nmenv.state.nm.us
The New Mexico Environment Department is tasked with the responsibility of safeguarding the state's air and other natural resources as well as overseeing food, medical and workplace safety through inspections and enforcement. The department also monitors groundwater quality and waste disposal, including hazardous and nuclear waste.

Department of Finance and Administration

Secretary: Duffy Rodriguez
Phone: 505-827-4985
Address: 407 Galisteo St., Room 180, Santa Fe, NM 87501
Website: www.nmdfa.state.nm.us
The mission of the Department of Finance and Administration is to provide sound fiscal advice and problem-solving support to the governor and budget direction and fiscal oversight to state agencies and local governments to ensure a positive impact on the daily lives of all New Mexico citizens and ensure every tax dollar is spent wisely.

General Services Department

Secretary: Edwynn L. Burckle
Phone: 505-827-2000
Address: P.O. Box 6850, Santa Fe, NM 87502
Website: www.generalservices.state.nm.us
The New Mexico General Services Department is the "heart and soul of state government" and furnishes essential resources and services that support state agencies, public employees and their dependents, local public bodies, public schools and institutions of higher education, state employee insurance coverage and health benefits, facility design, construction management and printing and graphic design services.

Department of Health

Secretary: Lynn Gallagher
Phone: 505-827-2613
Address: Harold Runnels Building, 1190 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Website: www.health.state.nm.us
The mission of the New Mexico Department of Health is to promote health and sound health policy, prevent disease and disability, improve health-services systems and ensure that essential public health functions and safety net services are available to New Mexicans.

Higher Education Department

Secretary: Barbara Damron
Phone: 505-476-8400
Address: 2044 Galisteo St., Suite 4, Santa Fe, NM 87505-2100
Website: www.hed.state.nm.us
The Higher Education Department was created to provide New Mexicans with the support and advocacy needed to succeed in reaching their full potential through higher education. This is done through policies, programs and services.

Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Secretary: M. Jay Mitchell

Phone: 505-476-9600

Address: 13 Bataan Blvd., Santa Fe, NM 87508

Website: www.nmdhsem.org

The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is responsible for preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery at a state level. It helps to lead New Mexico's response to emergencies and disasters while providing for the safety and welfare of its citizens.

Human Services Department

Secretary: Brent Earnest

Phone: 505-827-7750

Mailing address: P.O. Box 2348, Santa Fe, NM 87504

Website: www.hsd.state.nm.us

The Human Services Department serves more than 800,000 New Mexicans by administering several large state and federally funded programs including health insurance for most low- and middle-income children and many elderly, disabled and poor adults. It also provides financial assistance, job training, food stamps and child support enforcement services.

Indian Affairs Department

Secretary: Kelly Zunie

Phone: 505-476-1600

Address: Wendell Chino Building, 1220 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Website: www.iad.state.nm.us

With a large population of American Indians residing in New Mexico, the Indian Affairs Department implements policies by working with communities to assist American Indians in improving health care, economic development, infrastructure and quality of life.

Information Technology Department

Secretary: Darryl Ackley

Phone: 505-827-0000

Address: 715 Alta Vista St., Santa Fe, NM 87505

Mailing address: P.O. Box 22550, Santa Fe, NM 87502

Website: www.doit.state.nm.us

The Information Technology Department strives to provide state government a strong technical foundation to better serve its citizens and to create more accountability and efficiency in the information technology arena.

State Personnel Office

Director: Justin Najaka

Phone: 505-476-7759

Address: 2600 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Website: www.spo.state.nm.us

The State Personnel Office provides to the State of New Mexico human resource leadership, direction, guidance and services to maximize state government's ability to better serve the citizens of New Mexico.

Public Defender Department

Chief Public Defender: Bennett J. Baur

Phone: 505-395-2888

Address: 301 N. Guadalupe St., Santa Fe, NM 87501

Website: www.lopdnm.us

The New Mexico Public Defender Department has offices throughout the state to provide defense counsel for those who cannot otherwise afford a private lawyer. The Chief Public Defender is charged with carrying out general administration of the entire department, which employs approximately 375 people statewide.

Public Education Department

Secretary: Hanna Skandera

Phone: 505-827-5800

Address: Jerry Apodaca Education Building, 300 Don Gaspar Ave., Santa Fe, NM 87501

Website: www.ped.state.nm.us

The Public Education Department oversees all public schools and its charters throughout New Mexico. The department strategically works to improve the quality of New Mexico's students.

Department of Public Safety

Secretary: Scott Weaver

Phone: 505-827-9000

Address: 4491 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87507

Mailing address: P.O. Box 1628, Santa Fe, NM 87504

Website: www.dps.state.nm.us

The New Mexico Department of Public Safety (NM DPS) protects human life and property through the detection and prevention of criminal activity and enforcement of state laws and regulations. Additionally, the NM DPS provides vital leadership, scientific, training, technical and operational support to the criminal justice community and public at large.

Regulation and Licensing Department

Superintendent: Mike Unthank

Phone: 505-476-4500

Address: Toney Anaya Building, 2550 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Website: www.rld.state.nm.us

The Regulation and Licensing Department licenses and regulates approximately 211,000 individuals and businesses in 35 separate industries and professions. RLD is responsible for examining and licensing qualified applicants in professional and industry occupations; issuing permits, charters and licenses; performing code inspections; and resolving claims in the construction industries. The RLD also licenses the sale, service and public consumption of alcoholic beverages; provides industry training and education on statutory compliance; prosecutes citations and otherwise enforces the provisions of the Liquor Control Act.

Taxation and Revenue Department

Interim Secretary: Jon Monforte

Phone: 505-827-0700

Address: 1100 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87504

Website: www.tax.newmexico.gov

The Taxation and Revenue Department, charged with the task of collecting tax dollars and distributing them according to state law, answers to the governor as part of the executive branch of state government. It also administers driver licensing and motor vehicle registration laws.

Tourism Department

Secretary: Rebecca Latham

Phone: 505-827-7400

Address: 491 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87501

Website: www.newmexico.org

The state Tourism Department promotes New Mexico as a tourist attraction by working with communities, travel agencies and individual businesses.

Department of Transportation

Secretary: Tom Church

Phone: 505-827-5100

Address: 1120 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87504

Mailing address: P.O. Box 1149, Santa Fe, NM 87504

Website: www.dot.state.nm.us

The Department of Transportation provides a safe and efficient transportation system for the traveling public, while promoting economic development and preserving the environment of New Mexico.

Veteran Services Department

Secretary Designate: Jack R. Fox

Phone: 866-433-8387

Address: 407 Galisteo St., Room 142, Santa Fe, NM 87504

Website: www.dvs.state.nm.us

The vision of the Veteran Services Department is to assist veterans, their widows and their children in establishing the privileges to which they are legally entitled.

Workers' Compensation Administration

Director: Darin Childers

Phone: 505-841-6000

Address: 2410 Centre Ave. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87125-7198

Website: www.workerscomp.state.nm.us

The New Mexico Workers' Compensation Administration provides many programs and services to employers, workers, insurance carriers and self-insured businesses, health care providers and related organizations.

Department of Workforce Solutions

Secretary: Celina Bussey

Phone: 505-841-8405

Address: 401 Broadway Ave. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87102

Mailing address: P.O. Box 1928, Albuquerque, NM 87103

Website: www.dws.state.nm.us

New Mexico provides a variety of services to help people find jobs and achieve their career goals. The statewide workforce system also connects businesses with skilled job seekers.



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SUSANA Martinez

Governor looks to tighten up spending

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Gov. Susana Martinez's Press Secretary Mike Lonergan said the governor will be continuing her 2016 goals in 2017.

"Gov. Martinez remains focused on maintaining fiscal responsibility, diversifying our economy, improving our schools and cracking down on violent repeat criminals," Lonergan said.

In an issued statement, Martinez explained her vetoes of some education cuts in Senate Bill 9 (from the September special legislative session); Martinez also talked about the state's economy, blaming budget challenges on the "steepest oil and gas price crash of our time."

In the statement, she said about one-third of New Mexico's revenues depend on oil and gas production and the personal income tax, gross receipts tax and corporate income tax collections that generate them. In fiscal year 2016, those tax revenues plummeted by as much as \$150 million in the state's oil and gas-producing counties.

Martinez said she called on state government agencies to reduce spending several times in 2016.

"New Mexicans expect that in times of fiscal difficulty, the state government will tighten its belt so that families and businesses don't have to," she said.

Pledging to continue focusing on reducing government waste, Martinez said that, while during the special session in September the Legislature passed measures that will help the state's financial position, they also left opportunities on the table.

"As I have said, we must consider every instance of excess, waste and inefficiency — the use of state general funds to subsidize local governments even as those double-dipping governments raise taxes; prevailing wage laws that inflate the cost of state infrastructure projects; duplicative and redundant health care

coverage models; and others," she said in her statement. "As we watch the oil and gas industry closely, we must be prepared to tackle some of these issues next session, and we must continue to maintain fiscal responsibility in all of state government."

"She will continue pushing reforms that give our students, teachers and schools the resources and tools they need to succeed," Lonergan said. "Among other initiatives, that means ending the failed practice of social promotion, which passes kids onto the next grade even when they cannot read."

In her statement, regarding a veto of a \$22 million cut to public school improvement programs, Martinez said the Legislature had not used "the balanced, thoughtful approach needed to address these difficult times."

Regarding mental and behavioral health services, Lonergan said the administration will continue to build on its progress.

"Under Gov. Martinez, more people than ever before are getting the behavioral health services they need," he said.

In response to capital outlay projects proposed in the 2016 regular session, Martinez explained her line-item vetoes of \$19.7 million in projects around the state.

"During this session, legislators grossly increased their pork barrel spending, chose to spend the money in a number of irresponsible ways, concealed their individual appropriation decisions from the public, slipped unapproved and unvetted projects into the capital bills, rejected reform of any sort to the capital outlay process, and ignored a problem that is going to lead to even less money being available for infrastructure projects in the future," Martinez wrote in a House executive message dated March 9, 2016.

The letter was 18 pages long.

GOVERNOR SUSANA MARTINEZ

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Six

AGE: 57

BIRTHPLACE: El Paso, Texas

EDUCATION: University of Texas-El Paso and University of Oklahoma School of Law

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Doña Ana County District Attorney, 1997-2011

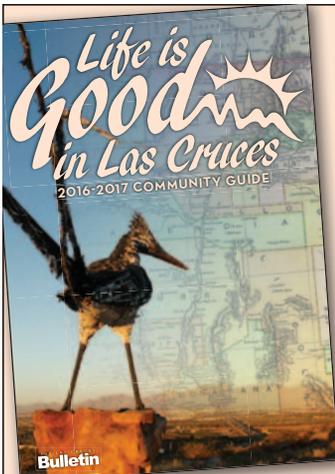
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JOHN Sanchez

Lt. Gov. is serious about job as ombudsman for the state

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Lieutenant Gov. John Sanchez hopes state legislators will “pass some common sense pro-business legislation that I think the state has been hungry for since statehood.”

He said the hope is to preserve the closing fund. And he is concerned that taking money from the Economic Development Act is the wrong message. Bringing the Facebook facility to Valencia County, Sanchez said, is an example of the tools that act uses.

“We will continue to use those tools as they are available,” he said.

Right-to-work issues are still at the top of the administration’s mind, he said.

“I believe that right-to-work is still incredibly important to New Mexico and other states throughout the country, which will work hard to see that right-to-work becomes law,” Sanchez said. “I think those are issues that will be on top of the agenda as we reconvene in Santa Fe.”

In regard to education, Sanchez said he has been visiting rural communities and they are telling him they want more local control and involvement with how they educate their children.

“At the end of the day, getting back to the fundamentals is critical,” he said.

He continues to support Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers testing, saying he knows it has been highly controversial but feels it gives us information about the state’s baseline.

“The PARCC testing is becoming more familiar and accepted,” he said. “We need an assessment as to where our students and our teachers are.”

He also said he and the governor will make it a priority that children in fourth grade don’t move on until they learn to read.

“If a child doesn’t learn how to read by the time they get to fourth grade, their ability in going forward is reduced,” Sanchez said.

He is hoping the Legislature will provide some incentives to ensure parents stay actively involved in their children’s education.

One of Sanchez’s special focuses is veterans’ issues. He sees mental health as a growing problem and said he has been working with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans Administration in Washington, D.C., to ensure veterans receive the health care and mental healthcare that is so important.

“I support the fact the U.S. should welcome and open to those in harm’s way,” he said. “But before we make any commitments to (refugees) or anybody else, the U.S. government must honor the promise and commitment to our veterans.”

He said he understands the behavioral health care system has been on some uncertain footing and that leads to homelessness and crime. He wants to find ways to get ahead of those things.

“There is not a family in this state that has not been touched by somebody who needs the help. We should be proactive ... it’s critical,” he said.

One of Sanchez’s commitments for 2016 was to visit all 23 Native American nations in New Mexico. He has been to about two-thirds and will continue this goal in 2017.

“Some had said they had never had a governor or lieutenant governor come to their pueblos,” he said. “They have the same concerns ... and they are committed to empower their youth with opportunities.”

As ombudsman of the state, Sanchez said it’s his job to help people who must interact with the state.

“For businesses, individuals, others who have to interface, my role is to make that effort as seamless as possible,” he said. “People know they can call the lieutenant governor’s office to help move the wheels of government a little bit faster, cutting through the bureaucracy.”



LIEUTENANT GOV. JOHN SANCHEZ

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Six

AGE: 54

BIRTHPLACE: Albuquerque, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Started own business after high school, Right Way Roofing. In 1993 it was named Small Business of the Year by the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce.

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

Councilman for the village of Los Ranchos from 1997 to 2000 and served in the New Mexico House of Representatives from 2001 to 2003.

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MAGGIE TOULOUSE
Oliver

New secretary of state vows to increase voter turnout

BULLETIN REPORT

Considering the robust New Mexico voter turnout in both the 2016 primaries and the presidential election, new Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver is already on track to succeed in her task of increasing voter turnout. Her plan to register people to vote automatically whenever they interact with a government agency makes it that much easier.

“People would have to opt out if they don’t want to be registered,” Oliver said, “as opposed to having to intentionally opt in under the current system.”

Secretary of state, whose duties include being New Mexico’s top elections administrator, doesn’t normally appear on the ballot on the same year as a presidential election. The 2015 resignation of Republican Dianna Duran, who was convicted of using campaign funds for personal use, led to the appointment of Brad Winter to the job, until Oliver was elected in November 2016. She’ll hold the seat for two years, and the position will return to its regular four-year cycle in 2018.

Oliver’s other initiatives include expanding mobile voting centers so that people in rural areas can vote more easily and developing a voter education and outreach program.

Previously, Oliver served for eight years as Bernalillo County’s clerk, the voting custodian for New Mexico’s largest county.



**SECRETARY OF STATE
MAGGIE TOULOUSE
OLIVER**

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year

AGE: 40

BIRTHPLACE: Albuquerque, New Mexico

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s degree in political science and Spanish and a master’s degree in political science from University of New Mexico.

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Toulouse Oliver was appointed to the position of Bernalillo County Clerk in 2007. She was elected to the seat in 2008 and re-elected in 2012.

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MATT Geisel

California native heads economic development

BY ALTA LECOMPTE

Matt Geisel, formerly Rio Rancho's economic development and business relations manager, became New Mexico's economic development secretary designee in October 2016.

Geisel came to the state economic development department fresh from playing a leading role in recruiting a Facebook data center to Los Lunas.

Facebook is making a \$250 million initial investment in the first phase of the project, according to Albuquerque Business First.

"Matt knows firsthand what it takes to bring new jobs and investment to our state," Gov. Susana Martinez said in a statement. "He was with me when we first met with executives from Facebook in the Bay Area; he's a proven leader who will continue to spread the message that New Mexico is open for business."

The Facebook recruitment saga began in August 2015, when the governor led an economic development team to northern California to meet with company executives, including Facebook, and highlight New Mexico's growing competitiveness for jobs and investment.

At the time, New Mexico wasn't even on Facebook's radar, according to Ben Cloutier, communications director for the New Mexico department of Economic Development.

"Two months after that meeting, Facebook called and we got to work. The state partnered with PNM and was able to present the most competitive offer," Cloutier said. "We came out on top of several states in the competition for the data center — beating out Utah as the other finalist."

Geisel has had a diverse career, serving in both the private and public sectors, Cloutier said.

He previously served as vice chair of the New Mexico Economic Development Partnership, the Economic Development Department's marketing arm.

"Matt held management sales and marketing positions with Pulte Homes and the Ford Motor Co.," he said. "Matt also served as a county manager for the Fritz Companies, overseeing operations in Mexico."

Geisel holds a bachelor's in economics and Spanish from the University of California at Davis and an MBA from the University of California at Los Angeles.

A California native, Geisel speaks fluent Spanish, having lived in Latin America for eight years.

In his new role, Geisel succeeds Las Cruces native Jon Barela, who held the cabinet secretary's post since Martinez took office in 2010.

Geisel said the Martinez administration in the past few years has consolidated efforts to make the state more competitive in recruiting and retaining businesses.

"We have a very strong program in place," he said. "It's important to protect and beef up programs like JTIP (Job Training Incentive Program), which regularly ranks in the top five nationally."

He also praised the administration's work to make the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) program viable.

"The governor inherited an empty pipeline and an empty LEDA fund," he said.

"I'm looking forward to continuing efforts to diversify New Mexico's economy," he said in a statement. "By building on our business-friendly environment through balanced and responsible regulations, lower taxes and targeted incentives, we'll be able to continue creating more quality jobs for New Mexicans."



MATT GEISEL SECRETARY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year

AGE: 46

BIRTHPLACE: Davis, California

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in economics, University of California-Davis; Master's of business administration in marketing and management, University of California-Los Angeles

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

Economic developer and business relations manager for the City of Rio Rancho

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JEFF Witte

Ag secretary focuses on silver linings

BY SUSIE OUDERKIRK

Secretary of Agriculture Jeff Witte always looks for a silver lining, especially in the rain-challenged high desert of New Mexico, which is in the throes of a growing drought.

And that silver lining, he said, “is that the farmers and ranchers in New Mexico continue to improve their growing practices and have been able to adapt over the years to the weather cycles,” which have not trended toward more rain and snowfall as was expected.

“(Last year,) the snow didn’t happen like we hoped it would or like it was forecast,” Witte said.

However, New Mexico did have a decent year in general.

“Late summer rains certainly helped the rangeland and aided in farm country as well.”

This year, the forecast is a little uncertain, but advances in technology and farming methods help combat the problem.

“The ability to use technology to monitor soil conditions and apply irrigation in a more timely manner is one method used today that wasn’t deemed as important in the past,” he said. “We are also seeing improved irrigation practices, things like expanded drip systems, which more directly supply needed nutrients and water to plants.”

“One must remember,” Witte said, “agriculture has been — and continues to be — a large economic driver in this state and that is a tribute to our producers.”

In an effort to speak more directly to the younger generation of farmers in the state, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) continues to provide outreach programs to keep up with advancing technology, information and mechanization — such as the AgriFuture Conference, Women in Agriculture Leadership and continued participation in the New Mexico Agriculture in the Classroom program.

Programs that encourage consumers to understand and appreciate the agriculture around them are growing in the U.S., and

New Mexico is no exception.

“We continue to see new opportunities to our agriculture producers to direct-market their products to consumers,” Witte said.

This year, for example, the United States Department of Agriculture worked with several restaurants to locally source products on a consistent basis.

Farmers markets continue to grow in popularity and the variety of locally produced foods continues to expand. Events such as the HomeGrown event in Las Cruces have become extremely popular for those who want to give New Mexico products for the holidays, Witte said.

But all agriculture is, ultimately, tied to the whims of Mother Nature, which is never lost on the secretary of agriculture. This year he hopes the state will get enough rain to keep “producers producing the food and meeting our consumer desire,” he said.

Also of concern to Witte is the condition of New Mexico’s watersheds.

“Our watersheds, especially in northern New Mexico, are overgrown and are impacting water supplies in many areas. There are a number of initiatives that are addressing these areas,” he said.

The Restore New Mexico program has treated more than three million acres of BLM land, he said, and New Mexico State Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service both have several projects to address the issue.

“Bottom line, everyone understands the urgency,” Witte said. “New Mexico cannot afford to have more wildfires in the state which will adversely impact the watersheds and economy for years to come.”

Witte’s silver lining is something he never wants to take for granted.

“New Mexico is a great agriculture state and our producers continue to be a major contributor, not only to our economy, but to the culture of our state. We are fortunate to be a part of the most diverse community of producers, both with what we grow and who we are, in the world,” he said.

SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE JEFF WITTE

YEARS IN OFFICE: Five and a half

AGE: 53

BIRTHPLACE: Santa Fe, New Mexico

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s degree in agriculture business management, master’s degree in agricultural economics and economics, New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

Public Service Commission, Director of Government Affairs for Farm & Livestock Bureau

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Balderas

HECTOR

Public safety remains attorney general's top priority

BY SUSIE OUDERKIRK

Attorney General Hector Balderas' top priority for his third year in office is public safety, including monitoring criminal justice legislation, fighting the exploitation of children, protecting law enforcement officers from crimes against them and preventing abuses of the public trust. Under Balderas's lead, the Special Prosecutions Division of the New Mexico Attorney General's Office has targeted violent criminals statewide in prosecuting homicides, rape cases and crimes against children.

Raised by a single mother in the small village of Wagon Mound, New Mexico, Balderas grew up in public housing and on food stamps, where he learned the importance of compassion and respect, and gained the conviction that everyone — no matter their background — deserves the same opportunities to succeed, according to the State of New Mexico Office of the Attorney General website. Through hard work and by overcoming financial hardship, Balderas earned degrees from New Mexico Highlands University and the University of New Mexico Law School. He became the first person from Wagon Mound to graduate from law school and become an attorney.

After law school, he turned down opportunities to work in the private sector and instead chose to pursue his passion for public service. He became a Bernalillo County Assistant District Attorney and quickly earned a reputation as a fierce advocate for fairness and justice.

On Nov. 4, 2014, he was elected the 31st Attorney General for the State of New Mexico.

During the last two years, Balderas has built a specialized unit of prosecutors and has added an attorney to the team of 12. The attorney general has increased prosecutions

for violent crimes while also increasing investigations and prosecutions of money laundering and public corruption cases. He built a human trafficking unit to investigate and prosecute human trafficking and to train law enforcement agencies on how to develop these important cases.

As chief law enforcement official for the State of New Mexico, Balderas actively monitors criminal justice legislation, with a focus on issues surrounding sexual exploitation of children, crimes against law enforcement officers and abuses of the public trust. The attorney general has supported and continues to support reforms that fill gaps in these areas, protecting vulnerable populations and promoting a safer, more prosperous New Mexico.

The Office of the Attorney General is actively litigating a court case — Texas v. New Mexico and Colorado, No. 141 Original — which addresses the crucial water issues facing the state.

The lawsuit was filed by the state of Texas in 2013 against New Mexico and Colorado. Balderas appointed a "special master" to assist the case on the part of the court. A special master is often designated to cases involving boundary disputes between states, and is appointed to resolve questions of geography or historical claims.

Balderas said he would aggressively work to protect the interests of all New Mexicans and the state's water.

Currently, Balderas lives in Albuquerque with his wife, Denise, and their three children. He is licensed to practice law in New Mexico and is a certified fraud examiner. In addition, he donates his time to promote financial literacy for at-risk youth and advocate for the special-needs community.



ATT. GENERAL HECTOR BALDERAS

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Two

AGE: 43

BIRTHPLACE: Denver, Colorado

EDUCATION: Graduated from New Mexico Highlands University before going to University of New Mexico School of Law, where he earned a Juris Doctor degree

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: State auditor for eight years; New Mexico House of Representatives

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AUBREY Dunn

Land commissioner proposes legislation to fund early-childhood education

BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

Aubrey Dunn assumed the position of state land commissioner in 2014. A former banker and businessman for 25 years, buying and selling more than a dozen ranches, land commissioner is the first political office he has held.

“Coming into political office and overseeing a government agency, I saw noticeable differences between private sector and public sector management practices,” he said. “Prior to my election, I had worked almost entirely in the private sector. I brought over 25 years of business experience with me to the State Land Office and have applied a new approach to management across the agency.”

The private sector tends to run more efficiently and with less bureaucracy. It is far more challenging to bring real change and enact common-sense policies in the public sector, Dunn said.

“I am lucky to work every day with career staff at the State Land Office who are deeply committed to continuous improvement and have taken on the challenge of working with a new commissioner and management team,” he said. “When it comes down to it, we are all working together to maximize revenues for our State Trust Land beneficiaries — including public schools.”

A graduate of Colorado State University’s Agriculture and Animal Science program, Dunn previously worked as a real estate agent at Hooten/Stahl Relators in Albuquerque, and as a banker and loan officer in Roswell, Alamogordo and Monte Vista, Colorado. From 2007 to the present, Dunn and his wife manage the 26,000-acre Gran Quivira cattle ranch in southern New Mexico.

Dunn said as land commissioner he is

committed to helping the state expand its revenue sources, to benefit agencies and programs that benefit from state-provided funds.

For the upcoming legislative session, Dunn is proposing the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Act, to create an early childhood education land grant permanent fund and an early childhood education land grant income fund.

“Any and all unleased subsurface mineral acreage beneath private land that is transferred from the federal government to the state after the legislature’s passage of the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Act would then be leased out by the state land office for the purposes of revenue generation, with all funds earned to be deposited to the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund,” Dunn said.

The federal government currently has about 6.5 million acres of unleased minerals beneath private land in New Mexico, Dunn said. The state land office, in fiscal year 2016, earned an average of \$32.29 per acre from mining, oil and gas extraction activities across its 13 million subsurface acres.

If the federal government were to lease its holdings to the land office, the acreage could generate between \$171 and \$210 million in annual royalties to the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund, Dunn said.

As opposed to being a “quick fix” solution, the ECE Land Grant Permanent Fund would grow over time and provide a long-term, sustainable endowment and funding stream for early childhood education in New Mexico, Dunn said.

LAND COMMISSIONER AUBREY DUNN

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Two

AGE: 60

BIRTHPLACE: Alamogordo, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Rancher

EDUCATION: Colorado State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:
2012 Republican candidate for District 39 of the New Mexico State Senate

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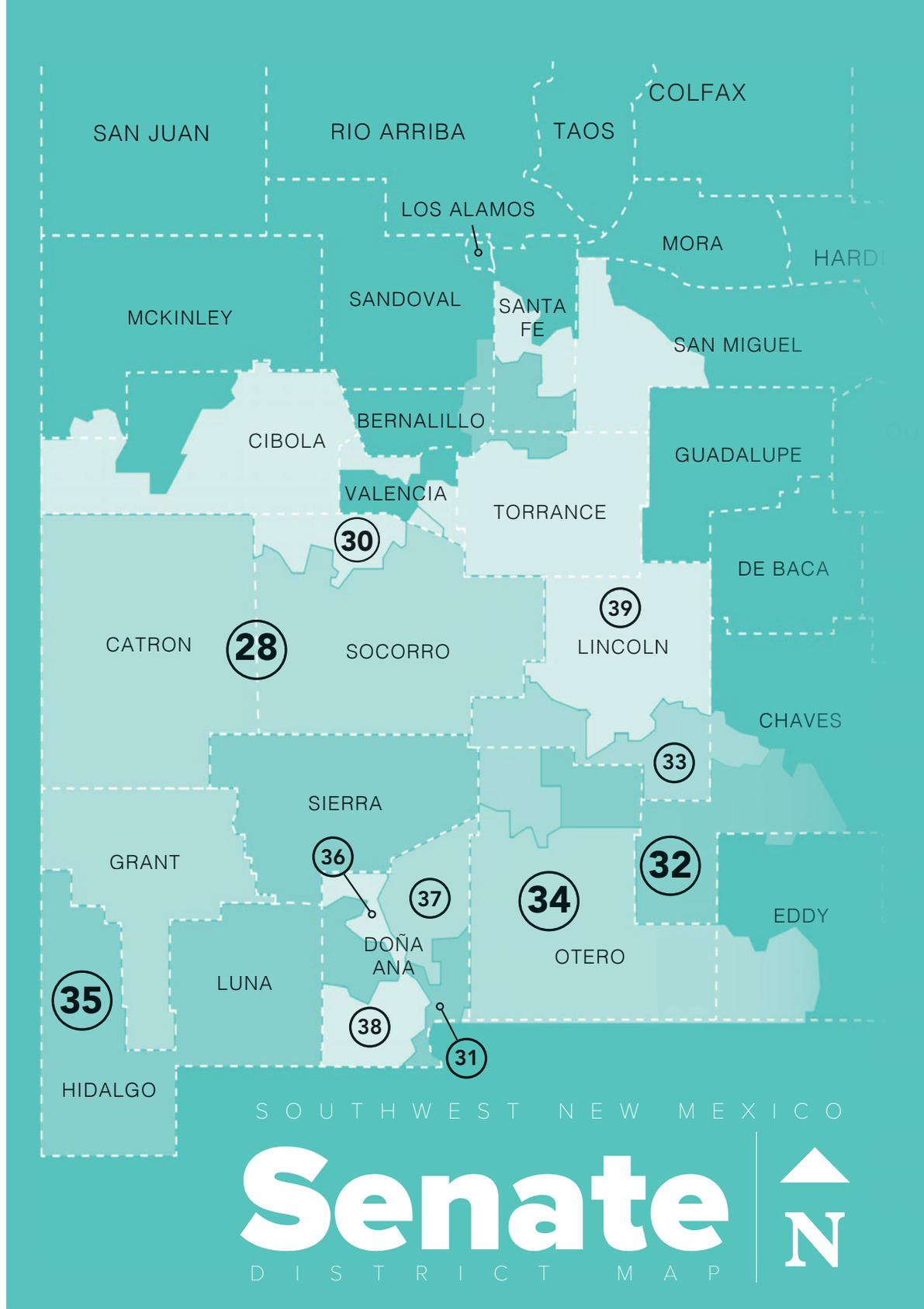
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- 3 JOHN PINTO
- 4 GEORGE MUÑOZ
- 5 RICHARD MARTINEZ
- 6 CARLOS CISNEROS
- 7 PAT WOODS
- 8 PETE CAMPOS
- 9 JOHN SAPIEN
- 10 CANDACE RUTH GOULD
- 11 LINDA LOPEZ
- 12 JERRY ORTIZ Y PINO
- 13 WILLIAM O'NEILL
- 14 MICHAEL PADILLA
- 15 DANIEL IVEY-SOTO
- 16 CISCO MCSORLEY
- 17 MIMI STEWART
- 18 BILL G. TALLMAN
- 19 JAMES WHITE
- 20 WILLIAM PAYNE
- 21 MARK MOORES
- 22 BENNY SHENDO JR.
- 23 SANDER RUE
- 24 NANCY RODRIGUEZ
- 25 PETER WIRTH
- 26 JACOB CANDELARIA
- 27 STUART INGLE
- 28 HOWIE MORALES
- 29 GREGORY A. BACA
- 30 CLEMENTE SANCHEZ
- 31 JOSEPH CERVANTES
- 32 CLIFF R. PIRTLE
- 33 BILL BURT
- 34 RON GRIGGS
- 35 JOHN ARTHUR SMITH
- 36 JEFF STEINBORN
- 37 WILLIAM "BILL" P. SOULES
- 38 MARY KAY PAPEN
- 39 ELIZABETH STEFANICS
- 40 CRAIG BRANDT
- 41 CARROLL LEAVELL
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HOWIE Morales

Senator heads into fourth term

BULLETIN REPORT

Democrat Howie Morales was elected in 2008 to the state Senate, representing District 28. He was re-elected in 2012 and again in 2016 to serve his fourth term after running unopposed.

Currently a member of the Senate Finance Committee, Morales has sponsored legislation to get compensation for people exposed to radiation, fund a transfer of water to Grant County, impose a tax increase on tobacco products, and a bill to promote truth in political advertising.

He is also a member of the Legislative Finance Committee, the Health and Human Services Committee, the Legislative Education Study Committee, former chairman of the Economic and Rural Development Committee, a member of the Public School Capital Outlay Oversight Task Force, the New Mexico Finance Oversight Committee, and the Disabilities Concerns Subcommittee.

On April 8, 2015, Gov. Susana Martinez signed his bill proposing protocols to be followed for emergency medical services programs to become accredited.

A graduate of Western New Mexico University and New Mexico State University, Morales has taught at WNMU since 2005.

From 2005 to 2008, he was Grant County's clerk, and in 2014 ran for governor before losing in the primary.

Currently a resident of Silver City, Morales has received the Bruce King Legacy Award, the District Attorney's Association Legislator of the Year Award, and the New Mexico Senate Milagro Award as the outstanding senator for the 2016 Legislative Session.

He was unavailable to discuss his plans for the 2017 legislative session.



HENRY "HOWIE" MORALES, DISTRICT 28

COUNTIES SERVED: Socorro, Grant, Catron

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Eight

AGE: 43

BIRTHPLACE: Silver City, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Educator

EDUCATION: Western New Mexico State University; Ph.D., New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Grant County Clerk, 2005-2008

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JOHN ARTHUR Smith

A balanced budget, jobs and bipartisan cooperation top senator's list

BY SUSIE OUDERKIRK

With more than a quarter century of political service, Sen. John Arthur Smith, a Democrat representing District 35, doesn't flinch when his colleagues call him "Dr. No." In fact, his staunch belief in getting things done while maintaining a balanced budget is one of the things he's most proud of in his political career.

"I've been ridiculed for saying 'no' to spending," Smith, who chairs the senate finance committee, said. "But we didn't have an option. There's a lot I'd like to fund, but we have to have a balanced budget."

In 2017, Smith begins his 29th year in the state Senate.

Smith's concerns about the state's dwindling reserves have come true, he said, and at this point, we can't show how we're going to pay our bills. The special legislative session in the fall of 2016 didn't alleviate the situation.

"We've used the special session one-time money to pay our bills and we're running out of it," he said.

The state's budget shortage in 2016 was "in the \$100 million-dollar range," Smith said.

"The first important thing we have to do for 2017-18 is to build reserves. But, when you do that you could impact spending, which the economy needs. We'll have to be real judicious about that and try to avoid layoffs and furloughs. It's not going to be a quick fix," he said.

The state can dig itself out, he said, but, "we'll have to go in and fix it and do additional cuts or find additional revenues," Smith said. "Typically what happens from an operational standpoint is we don't cut down any one branch of government, so virtually all branches and agencies have to step to the plate with ways to give more without furloughs if we can avoid it."

In addition to his work heading the Senate Finance Committee, Smith is proud of his success in pulling both parties together at the state level.

"At least on the Senate side, I've been able to work in a truly bipartisan way," he said, and the effects of that cooperation are coming to fruition.

"I'm proud of being able to cultivate a true bipartisanship," he said.



JOHN ARTHUR SMITH, DISTRICT 35

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana, Hidalgo, Luna and Sierra

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: 28

AGE: 75

BIRTHPLACE: Las Vegas, Nevada

PROFESSION: Real estate appraiser

EDUCATION: University of New Mexico

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Ran for District 2 House seat in 2002, won the primary but lost in the general election

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JOSEPH Cervantes

School calendar, jobs, water are top priorities

BY SUSIE OUDERKIRK

Although he ran unopposed in 2016 for his Senate seat in District 31, Joseph Cervantes wanted to be relevant during the election and already knew where he was going in 2017.

Cervantes continues to be committed to reforming the school calendar in New Mexico, which he feels will reconcile the current administration's insistence on testing. His plan to add 20 days to the school calendar is gaining in popularity.

"It's an idea that is increasingly greeted with greater enthusiasm. We're gathering support from teachers and teachers' groups, and administrators all realizing that when we have students scoring at the lowest levels in the country, that we can do nothing but gain by having them in school more days," he said.

Cervantes wants to expand a program called K-3 Plus, adopted a few years back, which adds additional school days to certain schools.

"As we've added more days to those schools, we've seen clear results and we know this works," Cervantes said. "I want to expand this all the way through high school and not just for targeted schools, but for all students."

Another of his concerns is job creation.

"We have not managed to create the jobs and the wages that we need to keep families together here and to keep young people from leaving. We have a stagnant economy that is not showing the vibrancy it should, given all the resources we have with the university, our proximity to the borders, our abundant natural resources," he said.

He said the Las Cruces community needs to make a conscious decision about its future.

"We have to decide as a community what we want," he said. "There are always some who do not want to see population growth or change in the local economy. There are others on the other side who do, and we have to make a conscious decision which of those two directions we want to move."

Cervantes is proud of his work that resulted

in the passage of legislation that opened all legislative committees to media, the Whistle Blower Protection Act and the Fraud Against Taxpayers Act. Cervantes said the Fraud Against Taxpayers' Act has "led to the recovery of in excess of \$100 million to state taxpayers."

He was less optimistic about job growth.

"The reality is that the unemployment rate is rising in New Mexico, so we're trending in the wrong direction," he said. "The idea of cutting taxes on large out-of-state corporations with the idea that they will move here is generally proven to never materialize. It's a popular hope which I have seen never work."

Cervantes said the community pays for those tax cuts by raising the taxes for everybody else. "The companies we're trying to attract are pretty sophisticated and they look at the total tax picture and they realize that while we may have cut their corporate taxes, if we're increasing the local taxes, it's a wash," he said.

Cervantes thinks corporate incentives for out-of-state companies, or a lack of them, is only part of the story.

"A lot of companies go to a place where it's not just about making money," he said. "They want to go to places where there's good schools for their kids, where the air is clean, water is pure, where there's a lot of opportunities and where we have crime under control. A good quality of life."

Water issues are a focus for Cervantes heading into the 2017 legislative session, and he is concerned about New Mexico's involvement in a lawsuit pending in the U.S. Supreme Court. Texas is claiming New Mexico is in violation of the Rio Grande Compact and the Rio Grande Project Act, which apportion water to Rio Grande Project beneficiaries.

"Texas has the upper hand in the U.S. Supreme Court," Cervantes said. "We're clearly looking at some very big changes in the way we manage water here locally, and that affects the whole economy."

JOSEPH CERVANTES, DISTRICT 31

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 55

BIRTHPLACE: Las Cruces, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Attorney

EDUCATION: Bachelor's in architecture, University of New Mexico; master's in architecture, California Polytechnic State University; juris doctorate, UNM

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Doña Ana County Commission, 1998-2001; member, New Mexico House of Representatives, 2001-12

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CLIFF PIRTLE, DISTRICT 32

COUNTIES SERVED: Chaves and Eddy

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

AGE: 31

PROFESSION: Farmer

EDUCATION: Roswell High School with honors

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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CLIFF Pirtle

Senator heads into fourth session

BULLETIN REPORT

A farmer and businessman who represents a fairly rural district, Sen. Cliff Pirtle represents District 32, covering southern Chaves County — including Roswell where he makes his home — and a small portion of Eddy County.

Pirtle is heading into his fourth legislative session — a regular 60-day session. Pirtle ran unopposed in the 2016 primary and general election.

In early November 2016, Pirtle told the Santa Fe New Mexican that he plans to introduce a bill that would keep New Mexico on daylight saving time in 2017. He was unavailable to discuss his plans for the upcoming legislative session.



WILLIAM Burt

Senator considers green-energy bill, tax changes

BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

William "Bill" Burt is the Republican senator for District 33. He was appointed to the position in 2011 and was re-elected to the position after running unopposed in 2016.

Serving the counties of Chaves, Lincoln and Otero, Burt said his district's biggest concern is the state's budget.

"Oil and gas revenues are dramatically down," Burt said. "They account for about 30 to 35 percent of our income every year."

Burt said the downfall of oil and gas revenues negatively affects his district's economic development and raises questions about the state's tax code.

While he had limited ideas regarding alternative funding sources for the state, Burt said good news is the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has agreed to cut down production.

"We hope that they hold to that," Burt said.

OPEC is made up of Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Qatar, Libya, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Nigeria, Ecuador, Angola and Gabon. Its mission "is to coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of its member countries and ensure the stabilization of oil markets in

order to secure an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to consumers, a steady income to producers and a fair re-turn on capital for those investing in the petroleum industry," says OPEC's website.

Burt said, to be profitable, New Mexico oil needs to be sold at about \$60 to \$65 a barrel. More recently, he said, it's been selling for anywhere between \$45 and \$52 a barrel.

Because of the state's budget cuts, Burt said it's going to be difficult to meet his district's capital outlay requests, such as improving county roads, courthouses, fire stations and parks.

For this legislative session, Burt said he is considering carrying a green energy bill that would keep a portion of green-energy production in the state. He said he's also open to bills that would significantly change the state's tax code, though he said he isn't sure whether he would propose them himself.

Speculating as to what other issues will be discussed, besides budget, Burt said he thinks other bills that will come before the legislature include decriminalization or legalization of marijuana, bills concerning water issues in the state, and perhaps bills pertaining to stricter requirements to buy firearms.

WILLIAM "BILL" BURT, DISTRICT 33

COUNTIES SERVED: Chaves, Lincoln, Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Five

AGE: 65

BIRTHPLACE: Deming, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Broadcaster

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in mass communications, New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

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CLEMENTE Sanchez

Senator doesn't think Facebook deal will be affected by budget crisis

BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

Sen. Clemente Sanchez, a Democrat from Grants, represents New Mexico Senate District 30, which includes Cibola County and portions of Socorro. He was re-elected in 2016 for a third term.

Prior to his work as a state senator, Sanchez worked as a staff member under former Sen. Joseph Fidel and worked as a lobbyist.

"What I'm proudest of is being a small-business Democrat," Sanchez said.

He said his time as state senator has focused on bringing in private industry to the state and helping to reduce the state's dependency on state and federal jobs.

"A lot of the legislation that I've done (relates to) (growing the private industry sector in the state and utilities management)," Sanchez said.

His work in economic development in his district and in the state as a whole was "instrumental" in bringing Facebook's newest data center to Los Lunas, Sanchez said.

Sanchez said he doesn't think the Facebook deal will be affected by the state's budget crisis.

"I think whatever incentives that we gave as a state have already been committed, so I think we'll have to honor those as a state," Sanchez said.

At the end of 2015, Sanchez retired from the Small Business Development Center at NMSU - Grants, having served as the center's director since 1991. The SBDC is a member of the New Mexico Small Business Development Center Network and with the U.S. Small Business Association. The SBDC offers free

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CLEMENTE SANCHEZ, DISTRICT 30

COUNTIES SERVED: Cibola and Socorro

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 59

BIRTHPLACE: Cubero, New Mexico (eastern Cibola County)

PROFESSION: Director, NMSU Grants, Small Business Development Center

EDUCATION: ENMU, New Mexico Highlands, Master's in Business Administration

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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RON Griggs

Oil and gas woes particularly bad in Griggs' district

BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

Republican Ron Griggs was re-elected as District 34 senator after running unopposed. This is Griggs' fifth year in a district that reaches from Doña Ana County to Alamogordo to Carlsbad.

"The southeast part of the state is really struggling because of the downturn in oil and gas," Griggs said.

Because his district's economy depends so much on the oil and gas industry as an oil-extracting region, the southeast part of the state's struggles are more acute than the rest of the state's.

"We've got to do some things, hopefully in this next session, that will encourage job creation and encourage people to consider our state for their business or for their personal life and come here," he said.

In a profile in the Carlsbad Current-Argus published in November 2016, Griggs said he thinks legalizing recreational marijuana "is certainly an option to generate revenues for our state" and make up some of the money missing from the state's budget.

"We must also debate the human costs that come with that revenue," he said. "The issue is still complex but it is an issue I believe the Legislature will have lots of debate on in the upcoming session."

Though he didn't say whether supports the legalization of recreational marijuana, Griggs

did vote in favor of a bill to decriminalize certain amounts presented to the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2015 by Sen. Joseph Cervantes, reported The Santa Fe Reporter.

Griggs said he has not currently sponsored or co-sponsored any bills to put before the legislature. Prefiling in New Mexico began in December, so no 2017 filing was available by press time.

Griggs had said he hoped the Nov. 8 election would result in more even numbers of Democrats and Republicans in the House and in the Senate, both of which previously had Democrat majorities. Finding a balance between red and blue, Griggs said, is essential to finding ways to address New Mexico's problems.

On what effect having Democrats take majority of seats in both houses in the 2016 election will have on New Mexico's future, Griggs did not comment.

Griggs worked for Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. in the 1970s. In 1979, he was hired by Texaco Inc. and worked for that company in Midland, Texas, and Denver, Colorado, until 1995.

Returning to Alamogordo, he and his wife purchased Alamogordo Title Company, which they sold in 2003. Griggs currently owns two businesses: ATC, Inc. and Griggs Holdings LLC.

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

management consulting, training course with nominal fees and government procurement assistance for western New Mexico business.

At the start of this year, Sanchez was appointed president and CEO of Bank of New Mexico, after serving on the bank's board of directors since 2008 and as its chairman since 2014. Bank of New Mexico, along with its affiliates in New Mexico and Colorado, has more than \$2 billion in assets.

Sanchez is also a board member for the New Mexico Economic Development Department, working as an economic developer.

Further, Sanchez is treasurer of the Enchantment Land Certified Development Company, which offers qualifying businesses construction loans, equipment loans and/or commercial real estate loans.

Sanchez said he is looking forward to the 2017 legislative session, to work with other lawmakers in fixing the state's budget, which will then help the state's education system, the economy and retain young people in the state.



RON GRIGGS, DISTRICT 34

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana, Eddy, Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 64

BIRTHPLACE: Portales, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Business

EDUCATION: Bachelor's in business administration from New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Alamogordo City Commission and mayor of Alamogordo

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JEFF Steinborn

New senator begins term after eight years in the House

BY MIKE COOK

State Rep. Jeff Steinborn, a Democrat representing Doña Ana County, garnered almost 60 percent of the vote in the 2016 general election, as he unseated incumbent Republican Lee Cotter.

“It feels good to win the election so that now we can move on and make good policy for the state,” Steinborn said on election night. “Now, we can hopefully put the politics behind us and make good things happen in the state.”

Steinborn, 46, has represented House District 35 since 2013. He previously represented House District 37 from 2007 to 2010.

In defeating Cotter, Steinborn returns state Senate District 36 to the Democrats. Mary Jane Garcia held the seat for 24 years before she was defeated by Cotter four years ago.

Steinborn said his victory was due in part to the fact that, like Cotter, he is an incumbent.

“I think I’ve got a solid record of making things happen over eight years (in the state House of Representatives),” he said.

Steinborn said he wants to “continue with creating good economic development opportunities,” and wants to work on education policies, ethics reform for the Legislature and helping “Doña Ana County become an even stronger leader in the state.”

President of Film Las Cruces (FLC), Steinborn said he will continue to work to bring film and television production to Las Cruces and southern New Mexico.

“I’m fighting hard to grow the film industry in Las Cruces,” Steinborn said Nov. 9, as FLC opened its new office at the WIA building in downtown Las Cruces.

Steinborn said FLC, a nonprofit that has a three-year memorandum of understanding with the City of Las Cruces to bring film and television production to Las Cruces, is working to “create a film studio in Las Cruces.”

He said Las Cruces is partnering with film studios in northern New Mexico on the project, and has almost \$1 million in state capital outlay funds to help pay for a local film studio.

“I’ve been working hard since I started the campaign a year ago to meet voters in the district and find out what they’d like me to be working on in Santa Fe,” Steinborn said.

Steinborn said his biggest accomplishments in the House include improving the transparency of state government and increasing state appropriations for children. Steinborn said he also has secured “funding for some awfully important projects” in Las Cruces.

Steinborn said his work on behalf of veterans and active-duty military has included sponsoring a bill that became law that exempts soldiers on military deployment from having to pay to disconnect or re-connect utilities.

Steinborn said he also led efforts to create the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument east of Las Cruces and to change state law so that about 1,000 17-year-olds could vote in the June primary election.

Steinborn said he also has a proven record of working with members of both parties in the Legislature and with the governor to get bills passed.

Steinborn said he heard from the people he met during his Senate campaign that state leaders should be “creating more opportunity in our community in terms of jobs and for kids.”

The most important thing elected officials can do is “make progress for our community and our state, and let the politics fall where they may,” Steinborn said.

JEFF STEINBORN, DISTRICT 36

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year in Senate

AGE: 46

BIRTHPLACE: Las Cruces, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Conservationist

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s degree in government from the University of Texas at Austin

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Eight years, New Mexico House of Representatives

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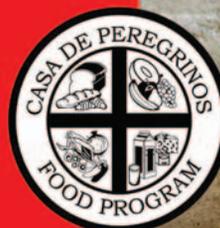
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WILLIAM 'BILL' Soules

Senator begins second term with focus on education, economy

BY MIKE COOK

Sen. Bill Soules, a Democrat representing District 37 in Doña Ana County, got more than 55 percent of the vote in his 2016 re-election campaign, and began his second term in the state Senate in January 2017.

Soules mounted an aggressive door-to-door campaign in his drive for re-election. He won the seat by about 800 votes in 2012 and by more than 2,200 votes in 2016.

"I had a great team that worked hard. It also shows that the people of District 37 recognize my work for children, schools and people with developmental disabilities," Soules said on election night. "I will continue to work for all of the people of New Mexico and economic development that invests in people."

Among the thousands of people he spoke with during the campaign, Soules said, education is the topic "easily 50 percent" of the time. People are concerned about their schools, student testing and "teachers not being respected at the state level," Soules said.

A lifelong educator, Soules served 29 years as a Las Cruces teacher and principal before retiring last year. He also was a member of the Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education.

The economy and jobs were also important election topics, he said, along with New Mexico State University and higher education.

In his door-to-door campaigning, Soules said one of the major differences between

today and when he ran in 2012 is that he begins the conversation by saying, "I am your state senator."

Soules said he has a lot more understanding of what's going on in Santa Fe after four years in the Senate, and is more knowledgeable about veterans, solar energy tax credits, the El Paso Electric rate case, the education budget and many other issues.

Soules said his priorities during the 60-day session of the Legislature will be passing a bill to allow restaurants holding beer and wine licenses to also sell liquor that has been distilled in New Mexico, setting a statewide minimum wage and controlling predatory lending practices.

Soules said he raised about \$120,000 for his re-election campaign and is "frustrated by the amount of money" a candidate has to raise to be competitive. The money, he said, would be "better spent on schools, on children. It's incredibly frustrating."

Soules is vice chairman of the Senate Education Committee and a member of the Senate Conservation Committee. He also is a member of the Senate's interim committees on Indian Affairs, New Mexico Finance Authority Oversight, Jobs Council, Legislative Health and Human Services, Public School Capital Outlay Oversight Task Force and Legislative Education Study Committee.

"I will continue to work for all of the people of New Mexico and economic development that invests in people."



WILLIAM "BILL" SOULES, DISTRICT 37

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 60

BIRTHPLACE: Las Cruces, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Retired teacher

EDUCATION: Bachelor's and master's in psychology; PhD in education and psychology, New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education

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MARY KAY Papen

Mother, grandmother, great-grandmother: Senator has an abundance of experience

BY SUSIE OUDERKIRK

Democrat Mary Kay Papen has been a public servant in New Mexico's 38th district for 15 years, and shows no signs of slowing down. The retired business owner, who is also a great-grandmother, plans to seamlessly continue the work on her pet projects during the next session in Santa Fe.

An area of growing concern that Papen has addressed for several years is treatment for people with mental health issues. She has carried legislation to fruition that "improves the lives of New Mexicans," she said. "I'm most proud of laws I helped pass that made mental health treatment better and more accessible for children and adults."

She said she'll continue to push for similar legislation this session.

In fact, Papen said, one of the main reasons she chose to run again for Senate is she feels her presence in Santa Fe truly helps and is important "for both society and for the people who suffer from mental health issues and substance abuse, and their families."

"There is so much work yet to be done for the people of our state," Papen said. "Though we are making some progress, our behavioral and mental health system of care is still in disarray, and needs improvement."

The first woman since 1940 to preside as Senate Pro-Tem, Papen serves on a number of volunteer boards in Las Cruces — including La Casa and Community of Hope. Recently, she helped raised \$6 million for the new facility at First Step Health Clinic, which serves women and children, she said.

Papen also chairs the Senate Committees' Committee, which assigns the chair, vice-chair and the ranking member of each standing committee, and she's a member of the Senate Corporations and Transportation Committee, the Senate Indian and Cultural Affairs Committee and the Committee on Compacts.

"My bills created and funded the

Colonias Infrastructure Fund," Papen said, which was created in 2010 and established the Colonias Infrastructure Board and dedicates 5 percent of the state's annual Senior Severance Tax Bond proceeds for a variety of infrastructure projects such as water and wastewater projects, solid waste disposal, road and housing projects and flood control in the colonia areas.

One of the senator's biggest concerns in District 38 is employment, which she feels is inextricably linked to education.

"We need to create more jobs in south central New Mexico," Papen said.

As co-creator of the NM Jobs Council, she is already working toward that goal.

Papen believes that job creation is closely connected to the high poverty in New Mexico, and wants to break the "cycle of poverty through high-quality education," she said. "For one thing, we should emphasize more vocational skills and trades, and retaining people in school all the way through college, university, and giving them the best education that we possibly can, because they're our workforce. We must also improve education by working with colleges to provide workers with the skills that employers are seeking today."

Further, she said, NMSU is such an important institution in our community that in these difficult budget times, it needs strong support.

She also would like to review the state's tax structure and re-evaluate credits to ensure it works for everyone.

Never soft on crime, Papen was instrumental in enacting "Katie's Law" in 2010, which gives law enforcement a powerful new tool to put violent criminals behind bars, she said. Katie's Law, also known as the Katie Sepich Enhanced DNA Collection Act of 2010, is a federal law to provide funding to states to implement minimum and enhanced DNA collection processes for felony arrests.

MARY KAY PAPEN, DISTRICT 38

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana County

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: 15

AGE: 84

BIRTHPLACE: El Paso, Texas

PROFESSION: Retired business owner

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in horticulture and post-graduate studies, New Mexico State University

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ELIZABETH 'LIZ' Stefanics

Stefanics makes unusual comeback to state Senate

BY MIKE COOK

Santa Fe County Commissioner Elizabeth T. “Liz” Stefanics got a great birthday present this year. Stefanics turned 67 on Nov. 9, the day after she defeated incumbent Republican Ted Barela in the race for New Mexico State Senate District 39.

Stefanics, a Democrat, won the race against Barela by 367 votes out of nearly 18,800 cast in the race, claiming victory with a margin of 51 to 49 percent. The largely rural district includes parts of Torrance, Lincoln, San Miguel, Santa Fe, Valencia and Bernalillo counties.

For Stefanics, it will be a return to the state Senate after more than 20 years. She won the District 39 Senate seat in 1992, but lost the 1996 Democratic primary by 54 votes to former Santa Fe City Councillor Phil Griego.

Griego resigned from the seat in March 2015. Gov. Susana Martinez appointed Barela to replace him.

Stefanics narrowly lost the Democratic primary for the District

3 seat on the state Public Regulatory Commission in 1998, and lost a rematch with Griego for the Senate seat in 2000. She was elected to the Santa Fe County Commission in 2008 and re-elected in 2012.

“I felt confident,” Stefanics said about this year’s campaign. “Campaigning is quite a bit different now than 20 years ago. A lot of it is digital, a lot of it is statistical; the rhetoric is much nastier than 20 years ago.”

Regarding the condition of the state budget, Stefanics acknowledges it is a big issue. In her district, she said, “looking at the needs of small communities, and that could include how small business can get up and running,” is important, along with restoring human services to residents and “looking at education and what could help children and their families and their teachers.”

“Reading is very important,” Stefanics

said.

Teachers should be “satisfied with their jobs, and I want the parents to be involved,” she said.

Water is also a crucially important issue, Stefanics said.

“The governor has really made her position well known on increasing taxes,” she said, but the Legislature might consider an adjusted gasoline tax that rises and falls with the price of oil to help bring additional revenue to the state.

Stefanics said the state also needs to begin “looking at all the tax rebates, deductions

and credits that are on the books and seeing which ones of those could be eliminated or phased out.” That, Stefanics said, could generate hundreds of millions of dollars in additional revenue.

Having the Democrats back in control of both houses of the Legislature will “help identify an agenda that can help the people of the State of New Mexico,” she

“I, myself, do not believe that poverty is being addressed in our state. (Until we address it), I don’t think we can really move on to make our state greater.”

said.

“I myself do not believe that poverty is being addressed in our state,” including its root causes, like alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence, economic stability and jobs,” she said.

Until poverty is addressed, Stefanics said, “I don’t think we can really move on to make our state greater. It’s not just up to the Legislature,” she said. “There’s a lot of community and city and county responsibility in this as well.”

During her previous four years in the state Senate, Stefanics co-chaired the Health and Human Services Interim Committee. She previously served as director of the New Mexico Health Policy Commission, and spent three years as deputy secretary of the state Human Services Department.



ELIZABETH T. “LIZ” STEFANICS, DISTRICT 39

COUNTIES SERVED: Santa Fe, San Miguel, Torrance, Valencia, Bernalillo, Lincoln

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year

AGE: 67

BIRTHPLACE: Dayton, Ohio

PROFESSION: Santa Fe County commissioner

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s degree from Eastern Kentucky University; master’s in resource management from the University of Wisconsin; doctorate in administration and law from the University of Minnesota

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Four years, New Mexico State Senate; Eight years, Santa Fe County Commission

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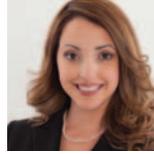
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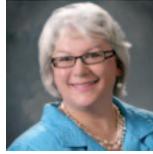
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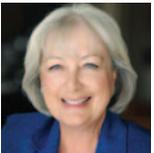
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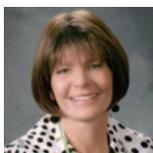
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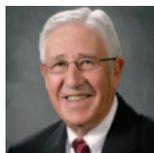
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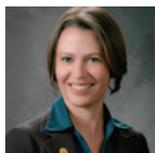
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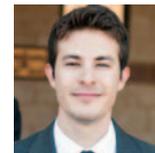
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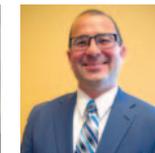
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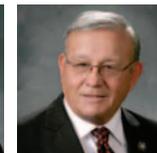
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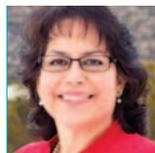
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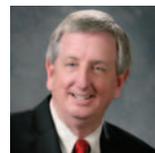
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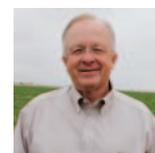
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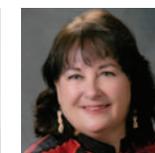
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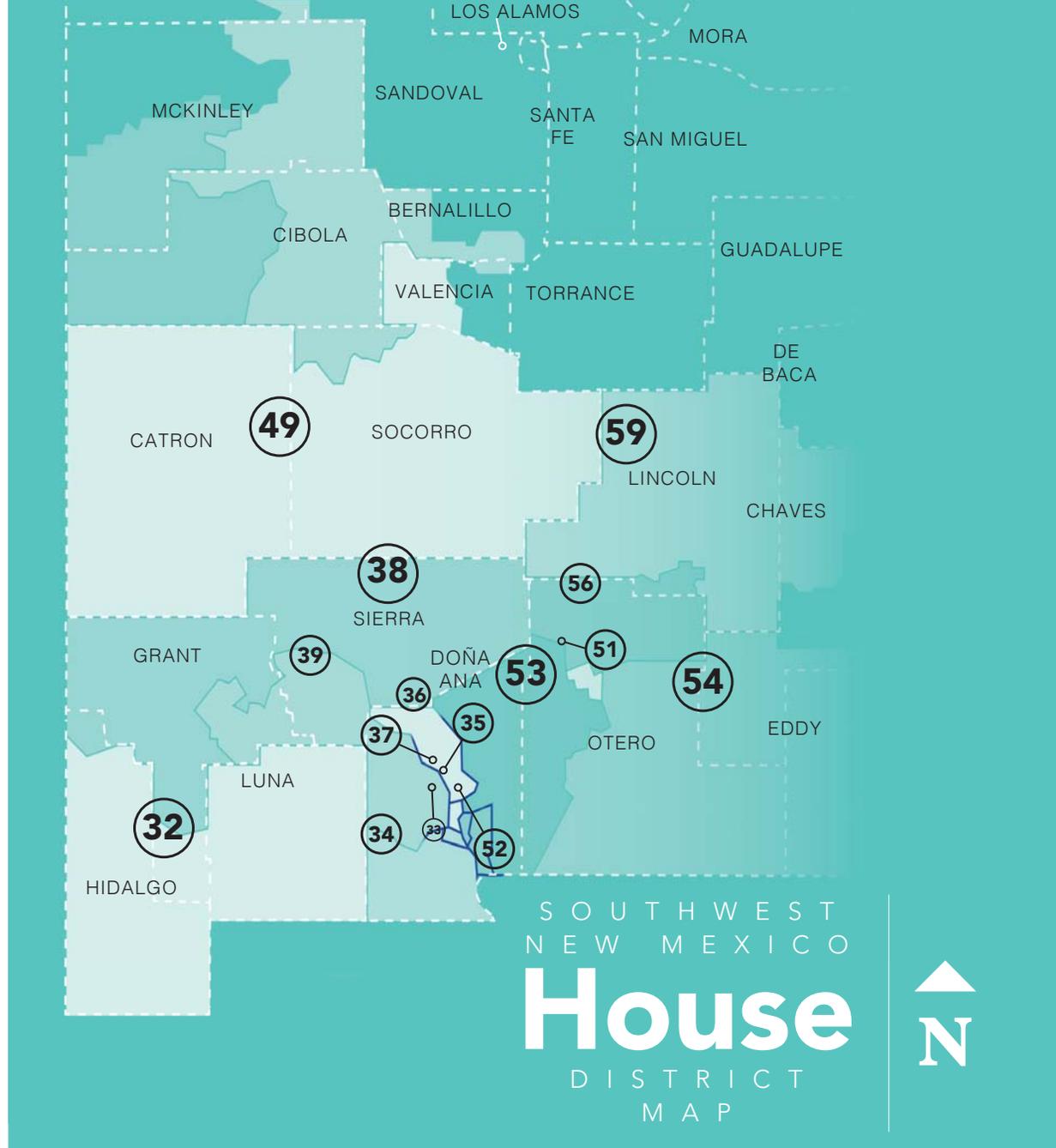
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- 6 ALCON, ELISEO LEE
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- 13 ROYBAL-CABALLERO, PATRICIA
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- 16 MAESTAS, ANTONIO "MOE"
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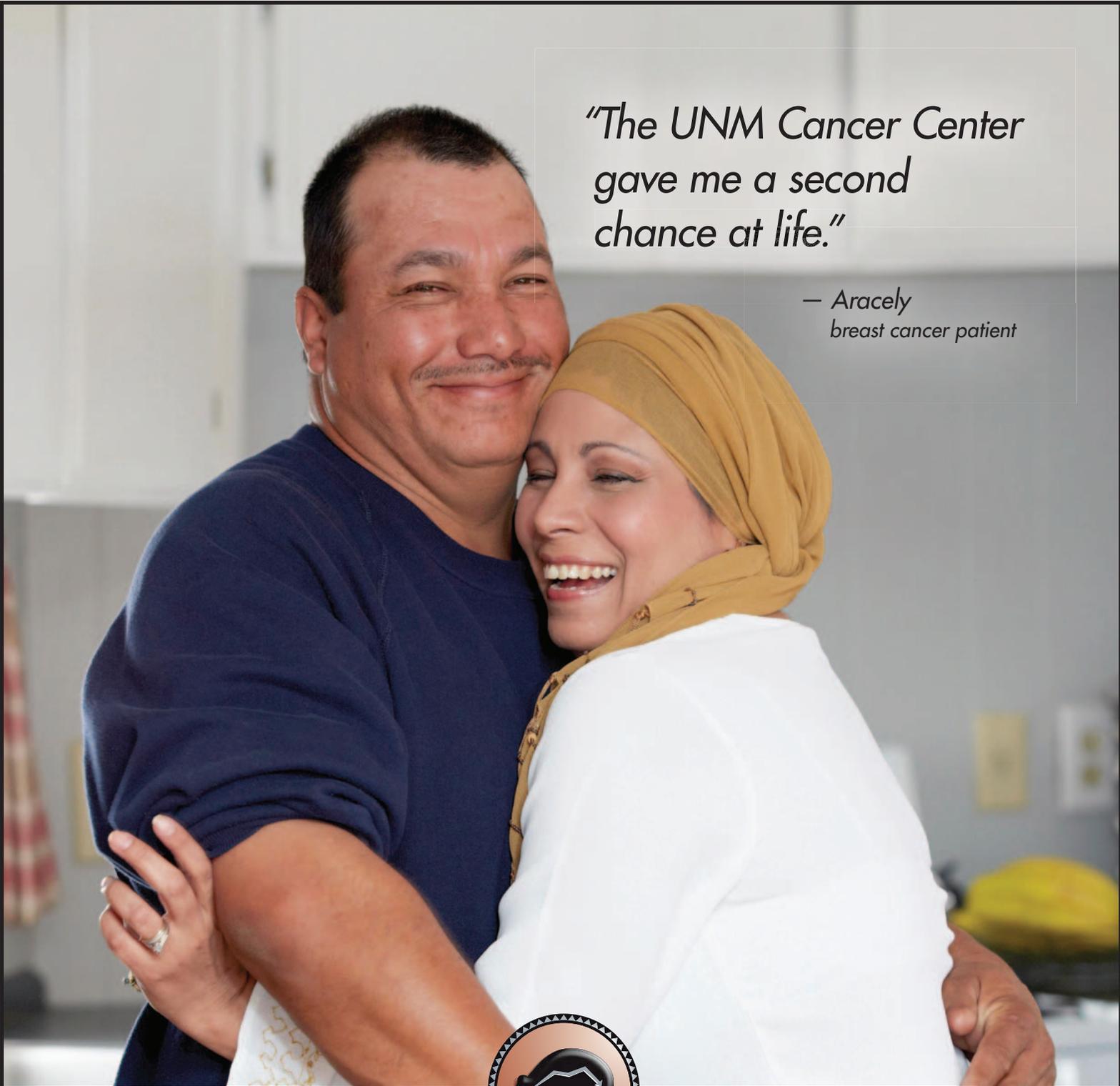
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CANDIE Sweetser

First-time rep's district transcends lines

BY SUSIE OUDERKIRK

Native New Mexican Candie Sweetser has sampled all New Mexico offers. A Democrat representing District 32, she'll work to fill the shoes of retiring 17-year-veteran Dona Irwin. Sweetser has lived in Albuquerque, Placitas, Moriarty, Portales, Las Cruces and Deming, where she's lived since 1990.

"I understand that representing the needs of District 32 transcends lines – political party lines, socioeconomic lines, ethnicity lines, industry lines, age and gender lines, religious lines and ability lines," Sweetser writes on her website, candiesweetser.com.

She decided to run for office "to help improve our communities — strengthen our schools, promote public safety and enhance the economic future of the region," she said.

Sweetser's district encompasses New Mexico's "bootheel," made up of Luna, Hidalgo and Grant counties, an area with an enviable history of cooperation between city and county governments, which should ease the first-time rep into her new role.

"As a freshman legislator, this will certainly be a learning session," she said. "I hope to introduce at least a few pieces of legislation that will benefit residents and businesses in Luna, Hidalgo and Grant counties," and she's considering carrying a bill to create an independent ethics commission.

Sweetser works as a managing partner at Luna County Broadcasting Co. (KDEM-FM and KOTS-AM) and teaches public speaking for WNMU in Deming and Lordsburg, and her family farms and ranches in District 32.

Without a doubt, the biggest issue facing the district is high unemployment, Sweetser said. Topping her list of solutions is making New Mexico "employer-friendly" to entice businesses to locate here. Additionally, she will "work on creating a positive business atmosphere, which will attract industry to the area," she said.

"I guess if it were easy, it would already be done," she said.

With the budget being a pressing issue, Sweetser acknowledges that "the situation is reaching a critical level." The Legislature will "have to look at both cutting expenses and increasing revenue. We can no longer depend on the volatile oil and gas industry to rescue the state's budget," she said.

Another hot-button issue Sweetser suspects will rear its head in the 2017 session is the status of the minimum wage. "I expect increasing the minimum wage to be hotly debated," she said.

As an advocate for agriculture who believes in small business, Sweetser said on her website, "Small businesses are the

heart of our rural economies—they contribute to the uniqueness of our communities while providing stable, good-paying jobs. Revitalizing our downtowns and promoting local small businesses must become a priority if our towns are to remain viable."

“Southwestern New Mexico is an area rich with culture, heritage and history. I am looking forward to serving my constituents to the best of my abilities and will work hard to be worthy of their confidence in me.”

She believes that New Mexico needs to change direction on education and "get back to the basics: allowing teachers to teach," her website says. "Too much emphasis on testing and paperwork is interfering with our teachers' abilities to do their jobs. Unfortunately, it is our children who are paying the price."

Sweetser appreciates the uniqueness of the region's agricultural and mining roots, its relationship with neighboring Mexico, military history and desert beauty.

"Southwestern New Mexico is an area rich with culture, heritage and history. I am looking forward to serving my constituents to the best of my abilities and will work hard to be worthy of their confidence in me," she said.

CANDIE G. SWEETSER, DISTRICT 32

COUNTIES SERVED: Luna, Hidalgo and Grant

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year

AGE: 54

BIRTHPLACE: Albuquerque, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Managing partner at Luna County Broadcasting Co.

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in radio/television broadcasting from Eastern New Mexico University; master's degree in communication studies from New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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BILL McCarmley

Economy, cannabis and education top rep's list

BY SUSIE OUDERKIRK

Incumbent Democrat Bill McCarmley, state representative for District 33, has a lot of which he's proud. His work as a county commissioner on Spaceport America, the FAA-licensed spaceport located 35 miles southeast of Truth or Consequences, was critical to its development, which is now starting to pay dividends, he said. He was also part of the negotiated agreement that allowed development at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry, located 47 miles southeast of Las Cruces, which created "thousands of jobs for people in our area," he said.

He's also proud to be part of the team that sped up the decision to allow for marriage equality in New Mexico.

He handily won re-election to a third, two-year term in 2016. McCarmley's decision to run again for representative of his district came from his concern about the state's course when it comes to the economy and the future, he said.

"We need a sense of urgency about our state's problems. This 'Land of Mañana' attitude cannot continue if we are going to reverse our state's course when it comes to our economy and future. I truly believe this," he said.

State budget issues will, of course, influence what legislators will focus on during the session, McCarmley said.

"You can't just slash and burn the budget and still have a good outcome for New Mexican families," he said.

His example: The state Children, Youth and Families Department.

"To say our social workers are underpaid and overworked does not even begin to describe the situation," he said, "yet we ask them to care for the most vulnerable among us. We ask our social workers to take care of more families than they can."

McCarmley calls the current, trickle-down system "antiquated." The trickle-down system simply hasn't worked, he said.

"We've had massive tax cuts and seen no data-driven results from that. We need a tax that is fair. S-corps should pay their fair share."

McCarmley plans to address his concerns about District 33, and consequently the rest of the state, in several ways during the 2017 session. He'll continue to push for legalization and regulation of cannabis, which could

bring in \$60-70 million, he said.

"We should get rid of the capital gains tax cut. That's \$50 million a year and it's proven not to work," McCarmley said.

Education has been an important issue during McCarmley's legislative tenure, and he's just as passionate about it as he was at the beginning of his political career.

"We need to stop over-testing in our schools, and I will continue to introduce legislation to limit the amount of testing schools are allowed to give," he said.

His proposal to adopt less-stringent science and math requirements in the schools was vetoed by the governor last year, but he'll continue to push for computer science classes to be accepted as science and/or math credit, and for New Mexico schools to begin using "Next Generation" standards for science curriculum, which stresses hands-on experimentation and small group work, McCarmley said.

His work with septic tank abatement in the district has enjoyed some success.

"The City of Las Cruces and the (Town) of Mesilla have moved forward on plans to extend sewer lines to neighborhoods that currently have septic tanks," he said.

However, because gas and oil prices are still so low, McCarmley knows there will be less money available for the sewer line project.

The most critical thing for McCarmley is to build the economy.

"We need more jobs, and I will continue to work on building infrastructure at NMSU, the aerospace community, and border economic groups to create an economy that works for everyone," he said. "We invest money in our schools and universities, and our young people take that education away to Houston, for example. We need to keep them in New Mexico."

During his third term, McCarmley, who anticipates serving on several committees, and possibly chairing one, will concentrate on being judicious with his time to get everything done that's on his to-do list.

His take-away message is simple: "Any candidate that tells you they agree with you on everything is a liar. I promise to work really hard, listen to everybody deeply and thoughtfully, and always tell the truth."



BILL MCCAMLEY, DISTRICT 33

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

AGE: 38

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

BIRTHPLACE: Busan, South Korea

PROFESSION: Sunspot Solar Energy Systems

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in government from New Mexico State University; master's degree in public policy from Harvard University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Doña Ana County Commissioner, 2005-08

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BEALQUIN GOMEZ, DISTRICT 34

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Two

AGE: 71

BIRTHPLACE: Roswell, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Retired New Mexico State University agricultural economist

EDUCATION: Bachelor's and master's degrees in agriculture economics and business from New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: New Mexico Tourism Commissioner for five years

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BEALQUIN 'BILL' Gomez

Rep looks to continue progress, legalize industrial hemp

BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

Bealquin "Bill" Gomez is District 34's representative, having won re-election in November after running unopposed.

This will be Gomez's second term in the seat, and he said he has accomplished much in the past year.

"I've been really involved in trying to take care of community issues," he said.

He's currently on a board in Sunland Park and Santa Teresa that's working to develop better sewage systems, he said. He has set aside capital outlay funds for La Clinica de Familia to continue renovating its new office located in Downtown Las Cruces.

He's also working to improve safety along rural roads in Mesquite and he's working with residents there to improve their road.

"It's a private road, so you can't use state money," he said.

In La Union, Gomez said, he's helped the people sell water pipes they bought themselves but never got money for from the district in order to install underground.

"By Nov. 26, we'll have some money to help them improve their water system," he said.

In Gadsden, Gomez worked with the school superintendent to install air conditioning systems in the buildings before summer classes started.

"The rooms were extremely hot," Gomez said. "So the teachers are much happier, students are too."

At the beginning of October, he said, he was trying to help La Mesa organize a health fair, so residents could get flu shots, start a coat drive for children for the winter, as well as disseminate more information regarding health services the state provides.

He said he's working with Sen. Mary Kay Papen to set aside money for Mesquite, San Miguel and Chamberino to renovate their parks.

In October, he attended a presentation by the people of La Union to discuss their ideas to improve the colonia's flooding and drainage problems, Gomez said.

He said he's interested in continuing his work in legalizing industrial hemp. An industrial hemp bill was vetoed by Gov. Susana Martinez during last year's Legislature, "which is unfortunate because Colorado now has 175

“Legalizing industrial hemp would give farmers in the Mesilla Valley a new crop to grow, which they are sorely in need of.”

commercial farmers growing industrial hemp for sale," Gomez said. "Which puts (New Mexico) way behind quite a few other states that are just going full-bore because they understand how valuable a crop (hemp) is." Legalizing industrial hemp would give farmers in the Mesilla Valley

a new crop to grow, which, Gomez said, they are sorely in need of. He said the alfalfa and hay crops are no longer profitable because both can be bought much cheaper from Mexico.

Gomez was born in Roswell and grew up in Hagerman on his family's farm. He is the youngest of 10 children.

He attended the New Mexico Military Institute after high school, then moved on to New Mexico State University, where he eventually received his bachelor's and master's degrees in agriculture.

Gomez has worked with the New Mexico Vine and Wine Society, the New Mexico Alfalfa Hay Growers Association, the New Mexico Food Producers and Processors Association, the New Mexico Chile Growers Association, the New Mexico Wine Growers Association and the Western Pecan Growers Association.

Overall, he said, he has a lot to do in his second year as District 34 representative.

"I do a lot more than most of the legislators ... because I listen to people," he said.

ANGELICA Rubio

Rep eyes transparency, education during first trip to House

BY BROOK STOCKBERGER

Angelica Rubio has worked in Washington, D.C. as an intern to Sen. Jeff Bingaman, and she went to graduate school and worked as a community organizer in Los Angeles.

Yet the Lake Arthur, New Mexico native decided to return to the Land of Enchantment to grow her roots.

A first-time politician, Rubio, a Democrat, won the House Rep. District 35 seat in 2016. She replaces Jeff Steinborn who represented the district since 2012.

“I have an ongoing relationship with politics,” said Rubio.

In 2015 she managed the successful campaign for first-time Las Cruces City Councillor Kasandra Gandara.

Rubio said she enjoys trips back to D.C., but admits the city lives “in a bubble.” She likes being out in the rest of the country.

“This was a real opportunity for a woman of color to jump into this race,” Rubio said.

She said state representatives must listen to the people they serve.

“Power comes from the bottom up,” she said.

“It’s exciting and a privilege to be in this position. Both of my parents are immigrants. Would they have thought one of their children would help run the state of New Mexico?”

“I believe that with this opportunity of an open seat in District 35, now is the right moment to step into public life and be the leader that my community wants and needs,” she said.

She wants to be part of a return to a good working environment in Santa Fe.

“The state Legislature is super polarized,” Rubio said. “I don’t look at issues based on politics. Some of my best friends are Republicans.”

One of the most important subjects right out of the gate for Rubio is transparency.

“That’s a big issue to me,” she said. “Jeff Steinborn did a great job championing that. We need to be as transparent as possible.”

Rubio has worked as an advocate for a raise

in the minimum wage, voters’ rights and was a supporter of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.

She advocated the raise of the minimum wage to \$10.10 by 2019.

“People forget that wages hadn’t increased much in a long time,” Rubio said. “It became such a polarizing issue and people made it about politics. Everybody deserves a fair wage.”

She said it is important on such an issue, though, to also build a relationship with the businesses that will have to increase wages.

She said she has been an advocate for higher education and knows elementary and secondary education are at the forefront of people’s minds.

“We better invest in young children throughout the state,” Rubio said. “We don’t want to compromise at their expense.”

Rubio was born and raised in New Mexico and holds a bachelor’s degree in government from New Mexico State University, as well as a master’s degree in Latin American studies from California State

University Los Angeles.

After earning her degree at NMSU, she worked in Washington, D.C., both on and off Capitol Hill. She then moved to East Los Angeles to pursue a graduate degree, as well as an education in community organizing, and she became an advocate for consumer protection. She worked with Housing and Urban Development to help people find ways to keep their homes and/or find housing.

Rubio then returned to Lake Arthur and worked with the Alliance for Peace and Justice to engage and organize her community around local issues directly impacting the Latino population.

In 2013 she made her way back to Las Cruces and joined Comunidades en Acción y de Fé (CAFé) as a lead organizer for the local ballot initiative to raise the minimum wage. In addition to directing Gandara’s campaign, Rubio now works for herself as a consultant.

“I believe that with this opportunity of an open seat in District 35, now is the right moment to step into public life and be the leader that my community wants and needs.”



ANGELICA RUBIO, DISTRICT 35

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year

AGE: 37

BIRTHPLACE: Lake Arthur, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Consultant, community organizer

EDUCATION: New Mexico State University, California State University Los Angeles

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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NATHAN Small

First-time legislator plans to work on student success, eyes ethics commission

BY MIKE COOK

Nathan Small, 34, a Democrat, a conservationist and a former Las Cruces city councillor, took the District 36 house seat with a convincing victory over incumbent Andy Nuñez, 81, Republican, retired lobbyist and the mayor of Hatch, claiming more than 54.5 percent of the 9,600 votes in the race. He defeated Nuñez by more than 1,300 votes.

District 36 includes northwestern Las Cruces and part of the East Mesa and stretches to the county's northern border with Sierra County, taking in the Village of Hatch.

Small was born in Albuquerque and grew up in Grants. He is part of a third-generation New Mexico family of educators and ranchers, according to www.nathanpsmall.com.

Small was first elected to the city council in 2007 at age 25 and re-elected in 2011. He chose not to seek re-election in 2015.

While on the council, Small chaired the city's Economic Development Committee and is a past board chair for the Animal Services Center of the Mesilla Valley.

Among his accomplishments on the council, Small cited redevelopment of the Amador Proximo neighborhood and Valley Drive west of downtown and energy savings through the development of new technologies.

He also was an advocate for the creation of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.

"The best thing I've ever learned to do is listen," Small said.

"So many challenges (came) through loud and clear" during the campaign for House District 36, Small said.

Election results showed "a strong

desire for a fresh and better way forward," Small said. "We never took anything for granted, but we're very encouraged by the belief in bringing ethics and accountability reform, on really focusing on good jobs with wages to support families, the message of more time for teachers to teach and less time on standardized teaching - all those things resonated throughout the campaign. It's very exciting

and humbling to have this result."

"I will be working very hard when it comes to economic policy, education policy and student

"... On ethics reform and accountability, we might be looking at a moment of real opportunity."

success first," Small said. "And on ethics reform and accountability, we might be looking at a moment of real opportunity."

The state needs an independent ethics commission to monitor legislators' behavior, Small said, and it needs to stop the "revolving door" that allows retired legislators to become lobbyists and lobbyists to become legislators with no "cooling off" period in between.

New Mexico is one of only eight states without an ethics commission, Small said, and one of only 20 states without a revolving-door policy.

The state needs to return to a focus on the "small businesses that are the life blood," along with value-added agriculture and renewable energy, Small said.

Small said a greater focus on early childhood education should be part of the state's education reform efforts. New Mexico needs to "focus on a ground-up approach that recognizes our people as the most important resource we have," he said. The state should "approach the budget from that perspective," he said.

NATHAN SMALL, DISTRICT 36

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year

AGE: 34

BIRTHPLACE: Albuquerque, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Conservationist

EDUCATION: Bachelor's in English and philosophy from the College of Wooster in Ohio

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

8 years, Las Cruces City Council

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JOANNE Ferrary

Third time is charm for new representative

BY MIKE COOK

The third time was the charm for newly elected Rep. Joanne Ferrary.

Ferrary, 63, a Democrat, defeated incumbent Republican Dr. Terry McMillan in the Nov. 8 general election to claim the New Mexico House District 37 seat. It's the third consecutive time she's run against McMillan, losing four years ago by eight votes and two years ago by 409 votes. In 2016, she won by more than 700 votes, collecting more than 52.5 percent of the more than 14,200 votes cast in the race.

District 37 includes eastern Las Cruces, and lies mostly east of Interstate 25 and south of U.S. Highway 70, although small portions of the district stretch north across 70 and west across I-25.

Ferrary said she is "looking forward to making up for the lost time" of those last four years, and said she will focus on education, health care and the environment in the New Mexico House of Representatives.

"We have a great southern New Mexico representation (in the New Mexico House) that will help turn the tide for New Mexico," she said.

In the House, Ferrary said she will seek seats on committees dealing with education, health care and labor to help grow jobs and protect the environment. Ferrary said she also plans to serve on three or four interim committees of the House "to hear what the concerns are so that people have a voice."

"I will be engaged, working on ... interim committees (for) education, health care and economic development year-round," she said.

Education, Ferrary said, is the single most important issue facing the state, and "making sure our kids are going to be successful from cradle to career."

"We have such a wonderful place to live and work. We need to build on the assets we have. We're not doing that," Ferrary said.

During the 2016 campaign, Ferrary said she knocked on about 150 doors a week to meet voters in District 37, including the more than 1,500 newly registered voters in the district, she said.

Ferrary said improving early childhood education "so all kids are ready when they get to kindergarten" is one of her most important goals. She also wants to increase the high school graduation rate and provide more vocational and college opportunities for students.

"We have such a wonderful place to live and work. We need to build on the assets we have. We're not doing that."

"Cradle to career" health care and education are essential to New Mexico children, Ferrary said.

Funding cuts to some state agencies will impact children's safety, she said.

"People's lives depend on enforcement of children's programs," like the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department, Ferrary said.

Additional funding cuts to universities will mean more people leaving the state.

The state also needs "a workforce to attract companies or entrepreneurship from within," she said.

Tax reform is important to attracting new business to the state, Ferrary said. And New Mexico must lessen its dependence on the oil and gas industry.

New Mexico should expand animal spay and neutering services, raise the minimum wage statewide in incremental steps and pursue renewable energy development to create more jobs.

Ferrary said she also is an advocate for DWI prevention and providing health care services in all parts of the state, including rural areas.



JOANNE FERRARY, DISTRICT 37

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: First Year

AGE: 63

BIRTHPLACE: Canton, Ohio

PROFESSION: Retired

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in individualized studies and master's degree in business administration, New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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REBECCA Dow

New state representative looks to address poverty, economy in Sierra County

BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

Rebecca Dow is the newly elected Republican state representative for District 38.

Though she has no prior political experience, Dow said she is no stranger to working on social problems.

“I’ve been working on poverty issues, serving children, in Sierra County,” said Dow.

She said she decided to enter politics to address issues of poverty and to boost economic development in her district.

“I’m going to continue to advocate for the work we’re currently doing in the county with the state Department of Health, the Public Education Department, Children, Youth & Family Services, things like pre-K home visiting, delinquency prevention programs, strengthening families,” Dow said.

Dow said she will also address issues such as barriers to small businesses.

State and local regulations often interfere with a small business’ ability to recruit employees, expand payroll and/or interact with its community, Dow said.

“I’m hoping that I can do more outside of legislative time,” she said. “Facilitating conversations between businesses and our municipalities and removing barriers without having to create more laws.”

For the upcoming legislative session, Dow said she is optimistic and excited, though she said she anticipates challenges ahead, given Republicans lost the majority in the state House.

“I have a good history of working with Democrats and Republicans alike,” she said.

Dow has served on commissions, councils and task forces for Democrat and Republican governors, including Susana Martinez’s Business Friendly Task Force, CYFD and Health & Human Services transition teams. Dow currently serves on the Early Learning Advisory Council.

Dow has an associate’s in early childhood education from Tulsa Community College and a bachelor’s in business management from Oral Roberts University.

She founded AppleTree Educational Center, based out of Sierra County, which offers K-12 private schooling, college and career prep services. AppleTree was awarded the Excellence in Education award from Educate New Mexico by former state Lt. Gov. Diane Denish.

Dow serves as the policy chair of the New Mexico Child Care and Education Association, a statewide trade association for licensed childcare

providers. She is also a founding member of the New Mexico Early Childhood Alliance, the founder of the Boys and Girls Club of Sierra County, the founding chair of the Sierra County Juvenile Justice Advisory Council, and represents the state on the National Early Childhood Education Consortium.

In 2008 Dow received the Governor’s Award for Outstanding New Mexico Woman.

“I’m going to continue to advocate for the work we’re currently doing in the county with the state Department of Health, the Public Education Department, Children, Youth & Family Services, things like pre-K home visiting, delinquency prevention programs, strengthening families”

REBECCA DOW, DISTRICT 38

COUNTIES SERVED: Grant, Sierra, Hidalgo

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year

AGE: 43

BIRTHPLACE: Truth or Consequences

PROFESSION: Early childhood educator

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s in business administration, Oral Roberts University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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RODOLPHO ‘RUDY’ Martinez

Rep calls for change to current approach to job, economy and education

BY MARTY RACINE

Democrat Rodolpho “Rudy” Martinez returns to the House of Representatives in 2017 following a narrow victory in November over his longtime Republican rival John Zimmerman.

The two have faced each other three times since 2012, with Martinez winning twice. His latest margin was 209 votes out of nearly 10,000 cast.

Martinez’s political career began in Bayard, where he was a city councillor and mayor. He was the chair of the Grant County Commission and served 10 years as District 7 director of the New Mexico Municipal League. He’s a Vietnam veteran and volunteer first-responder.

He decided to again run in District 39, which includes a western slice of Las Cruces and extends to Sierra County and Grant County in the west, “because we need to seriously re-evaluate our educational system, our economic plans and our tax structure,” he said.

Education is a key for his district, Martinez said.

“Unfortunately, our district faces the same problems that we see in the rest of the state. Our educational system is currently focusing too much on testing instead of teaching. We must reduce class sizes, and our early childhood education programs are extremely underfunded.

“New Mexico’s budget provides 44 percent for K through 12, 14 to 16 percent for higher education and very little on early childhood education. I feel strongly that, in order to move things forward and fix the situation, we need to invest in and expand early childhood education.

“Also, the third-grade retention issue is discriminatory against English as a Second Language (ESL) students and those with disabilities. Before we talk retention, we need to talk intervention through support of after-school programs and family health care programs, to name a few,” he said

Martinez also wants to invest in infrastructure.

“We have billions of dollars allocated for capital improvements sitting unspent,” he said. “We need to put this money to work ... invest in high-speed internet connections throughout New Mexico, invest in renewable energy.”

Health care is also a priority, Martinez said.

“Behavioral health care services are crucial for those in need,” he said. “We must make local provider accessibility less difficult for the patients. I will work with my fellow legislators to provide necessary funding, when available, to improve and create healthier and safer communities.”

He also favors ethics reform.

“We must create a strong independent ethics commission with tough penalties for corrupt politicians and jail time for misusing taxpayer funds,” he said.

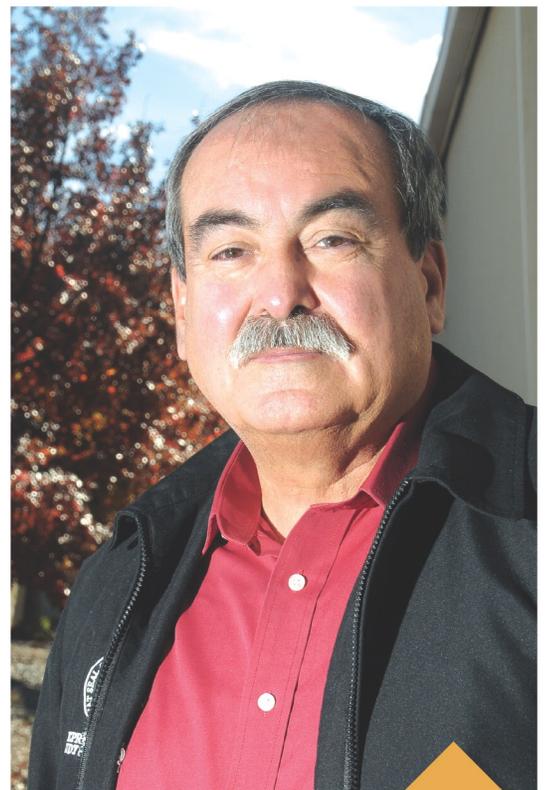
Among his achievements in Santa Fe, Martinez cites the 2013 session, when seven of 13 bills he introduced were passed by the House and Senate.

“These pieces of legislation provided rural and urban hospitals with the opportunity to seek bonds, and provided financial assistance for expanding or (starting) new businesses,” he said.

It doesn’t hurt his cause that Democrats have retaken majority control of the House.

“It is a new day for New Mexico,” Martinez said. “You may hear me talk about a couple of topics over and over again but I cannot stress enough that we need to make changes in our current approach to jobs, the economy and education. Time is running out. We need to make a difference in the lives of New Mexicans by working together, reaching across the aisle and doing what is best for New Mexico.”

“We must create a strong, independent ethics commission with tough penalties for corrupt politicians and jail time for misusing taxpayer funds.”



RODOLPHO “RUDY” MARTINEZ, DISTRICT 39

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana, Grant and Sierra

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year

AGE: 68

BIRTHPLACE: Bayard, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Employed at Chino Mines for 33 years; NM licensed journeyman and member of IBEW Local 611

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s degree in business, Western New Mexico University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: State representative, District 39, 2007-2014; mayor and councillor in Bayard; chair, Grant County Commission

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DON Tripp

Rep heads into 18th year as state legislator

BULLETIN REPORT

Entering his 18th year in the Legislature, Rep. Don Tripp held the position of speaker of the House for two terms — the first Republican to hold the position since 1956. Tripp represents District 49, which encompasses parts of Catron, Socorro and Valencia counties.

Tripp was born in Pasadena, California in 1946 and moved to New Mexico in 1960. He received his bachelor's degree from New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology in 1969, and became a businessman owning a jewelry business, a self-storage facility and a construction firm, as well as owning farms near Socorro, where he resides.

Tripp also served on the board of directors for State National Bank, as director of Association of Commerce and Industry, as a

regent of Western New Mexico University and as director of New Mexico Educational Assistance Foundation.

Tripp serves on the Health; Safety and Civil Affairs; and Rules and Order of Business committees. He also serves on several interim committees.

In the 2016 legislative session, he successfully co-sponsored NM HB 177 with Sen. Mary Kay Papen (D-Doña Ana) to create the Solo-worker & Out-of-state Revenue Program, which encourages solo worker job creation and increases the commercial revenue deriving from out-of-state sources. He sponsored more than 20 pieces of legislation in the 2016 session.

He was unavailable to discuss his plans for the upcoming legislative session.

DON TRIPP, DISTRICT 49

COUNTIES SERVED: Catron, Socorro, Valencia

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: 18 **AGE:** 70

BIRTHPLACE: Pasadena, California

PROFESSION: Jeweler, contractor, farmer

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in history, New Mexico Tech

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Senior Programs



The Network Volunteer Center

The Network connects individuals age 18 and older to volunteer positions at 20+ sites throughout the City of Las Cruces. For information please call 528-3000.

Senior Nutrition Program

Meal programs offered at our Senior Program sites. No income or residency requirements to participate. For registration information please call 528-3000. Home delivered meals offered to qualified homebound seniors. For intake or information please call 541-2451. Offering meals to those 60 years of age or older. There is a suggested donation to help defray the cost of food and preparation.

Long-Term Care Services

Assessments for meals and for home based services including home delivered meals, homemaker services, respite care, case management and resource and referral. Please call 541-2451 for information.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program

Open to grandparents 55 years of age or older who are raising their grandchildren. Please call 541-2457.

Recreation & Education

Offering arts and crafts, fitness classes, games, lifelong learning classes, support groups and much more. Activities and programs at the centers are open to individuals 50 or older. For information please call 528-3000.



SENIOR CENTERS



Munson Senior Center
975 S. Mesquite Street
(575) 528-3000



Benavidez Community Center
1045 McClure Rd.
(575) 541-2005



Eastside Community Center
310 N. Tornillo
(575) 528-3012



Frank O'Brien Papen Center
304 W. Bell
(575) 541-2455 for meal registration



Sage Café
6121 Reynolds Dr.
(575) 528-3151

YVETTE Herrell

Rep takes a big-picture approach

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

District 51 Rep. Yvette Herrell is hoping former House Speaker Don Tripp's leadership changes will continue into the next legislative session. She said the structure he implemented helped things proceed more efficiently than in her previous terms.

"Under speaker Tripp's leadership, we have seen a lot of good things, saved money and had a dependable schedule," Herrell said.

There are many issues facing the state right now, especially with the budget, she said. It is up to the Legislature to start looking at real solutions.

"We are going to have to do some stuff to make it better," she said. "We have to start making tough decisions that will put New Mexico into a marketable position in terms of business, education, regulatory reform."

In education, Herrell said, the schools' cash balance must be protected because that is the money with which they have discretion to do what they need. The one-size-fits-all budget doesn't work for school systems in the state, she said.

"A school the size of Alamogordo Public Schools is very different in terms of needs than Albuquerque Public Schools — or a smaller school like Carrizozo," she said.

She said the third-grade retention bill will come up again in the session and she supports it.

Herrell said they should be looking hard at every state government department and identify fraud and duplication that could be eliminated.

"We probably need to stop funding programs that are underperforming or not performing," she said. "We might need to start looking at shrinking the size of government in Santa Fe. We have a very large percentage per capita of state workers as compared to other states in our region."

One example of duplication is background checks, she said. Various state agencies require background checks. Often, the results are not shared with other agencies nor do they accept clearance letters from each other. To initiate secure ways to share information could potentially result in cost savings.

She said they also need to look at regulatory reforms. With a lot of talk about bringing new companies in and producing a workforce, she said the state must support the existing small businesses that have shouldered the

burdens, kept people employed and paid corporate income tax.

They will also need to talk about tort reform, recruiting and retaining good physicians, and right to work.

"There are things we can do in terms of making New Mexico a better place to look at bringing children, bringing business and retirement," she said.

For example, the state needs regulatory reform, she said. It takes a long time for licensing and inspections in construction.

"In New Mexico, a licensed handyman is limited to making \$7,200 a year," she said. "I don't even know how that came to be."

She also said the regulations the state is putting on private pre-K facilities is extreme.

"We lost 10 daycares in Alamogordo because of regulatory reform CYFD is implementing," she said. "We (New Mexico) are not really open for business if we are going to continue to overregulate some of our private sector businesses out of business. There is just too much regulation."

One thing close to Herrell's heart this session is a bill to protect seniors and other fragile adults from fraud in their retirement accounts and homes. She said this is an underregulated area.

"There is a lot of fraud," she said. "People go in and befriend elderly (people) — getting money out of retirement accounts and selling their furniture. One of my priorities is to bring a bill to put some of these protections in place to at least protect against seniors being stolen from."

Herrell continues to support and promote bills involving mental-health issues.

"We have to do more for mental health; it should be a priority," she said. "People don't know how to talk about it and people don't want to."

Going forward, Herrell said one of the big challenges is that gas and oil prices haven't rebounded.

"We need to look at ways to diversify our revenue streams coming into New Mexico and I think we have many natural resources here," she said. "We need to be looking at our ag industry, protecting them from frivolous lawsuits. We really have to look at how we can diversify what's going on in the state."



YVETTE HERRELL, DISTRICT 51

DISTRICT: 51

COUNTIES SERVED: Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Six

AGE: 52

BIRTHPLACE: Ruidoso, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Self-employed in real estate

EDUCATION: Legal administration, ITT

Technical Institute; business courses, New Mexico State University and River College

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Political campaign work, served as legislative assistant to Dianne Hamilton and Nora Espinoza

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DOREEN Gallegos

Third-term representative's top concern is the state budget

BY MARTY RACINE

Entering her third term in the House of Representatives, and nominated as House majority whip, Democrat Doreen Gallegos has become a fixture in District 52, a narrow north-south corridor that clips the New Mexico State University campus, follows Interstate 10 southward, picks up the Rio Grande at San Miguel and runs almost to the Texas state line.

In 2012, her first try for office, the Las Alturas resident easily defeated the Republican candidate with 64 percent of the vote. In 2014 and 2016, she ran unopposed in both the primary and general election.

Her second term was capped by a special session in October 2016 that grappled with a state budget deficit due, in part, to falling oil and natural gas revenues.

“My biggest concern now is the state budget,” Gallegos said, after returning from Santa Fe following a special session on budget. “We had to make some hard decisions and I didn’t agree with all of them.

“The bad news is that we will probably have to continue to make cuts for the next few years. We have to make sure we make smart cuts and not wholesale, across-the-board cuts that hurt our schools and businesses and ultimately set the entire state back.”

Gallegos graduated from NMSU with an undergraduate and master’s degree in social work. For the past 20 years, she has served as executive director of Mesilla Valley CASA, a nonprofit that advocates for abused and neglected children.

She feels the experience helped prepare her for the political arena.

“I saw running as a way to bring my business skills and knowledge of how to

make a budget work to the Legislature,” said Gallegos, who serves on the House Appropriations and Finance Committee and said she has brought nearly \$1 million in capital outlay funding to her district.

“It also was an opportunity for me to serve vulnerable populations in District 52,” she said. “I saw it as a way to continue my work in helping families. They deserve good representation, access to affordable health care and a quality education for their children.”

Gallegos has sponsored numerous children’s advocacy bills. Most were postponed, but in 2015 her measure increasing penalties for assault and battery on employees of the Children, Youth & Families Department passed the House 55-0.

Gallegos feels particularly connected to the social fabric of rural southern Doña Ana County.

“My grandparents lived down there, my family; my mother has lived down there for years, and I go down there and see bars on the windows,” she said. “Gang violence, crime rate, no work. It was depressing. I love that community and the gentleness of the people and the culture and I want them to do well. I see all that potential. I’m invested in them.

“The thought that so many people have gone to the polls and voted for me makes me feel humble and grounded. I have to do everything I can to represent my constituents every day in the best possible way.”

“I saw running as a way to bring my business skills and knowledge of how to make a budget work to the Legislature.”

DOREEN GALLEGOS, DISTRICT 52

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 47

BIRTHPLACE: El Paso, Texas

PROFESSION: Executive director, Mesilla Valley Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s and master’s degrees in social work, New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Democratic State Central Committee and finance work

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RICK Little

Three-time rep aims to take care of unfinished business

BY MARTY RACINE

On the night of Nov. 8, 2016, Rick Little attended a Republican watch party at La Posta de Mesilla. Scanning the large-screen TV, he mingled with the party faithful and kept abreast of the presidential race as well as his own, for District 53 in the state House of Representatives against Democrat Willie Madrid.

He won his third term in four tries since 2010.

“There is a lot of unfinished business,” Little said of his decision to run again. “A lot has been accomplished in the last two sessions, and we need to continue in the right direction.”

His agenda might prove more difficult, he said, with Democrats again controlling the House, but he’s hopeful.

“I believe we were heading in the right direction as a business-friendly state bringing jobs, economic prosperity, smaller government and better education,” he said.

Three Little-sponsored bills in 2016 passed the House: reinstatement of the death penalty, a Three Strikes law and stiffer child abuse penalties. He has served on two committees: Safety & Civil Affairs and Business & Employment.

The experience, he feels, has given him “a well-balanced overview of our state government, departments, bill formation, Legislative Council service and the needs of the state and people as a whole.”

Little joined his father years ago, in the construction and trucking industries, rescuing, moving and repurposing old buildings. He owns R Little Enterprises, Inc., citing that as an additional plus in Santa Fe.

“As a small-business owner, I work with budgets, employees, taxes, regulations, utility companies and government bureaucracy, which is what I deal with in the Legislature,” he said.

Little cites job growth as an overall state priority.

“Making New Mexico a business-friendly state by shrinking government, lowering taxes and getting rid of overbearing regulations will bring jobs and extend the tax base for education and infrastructure,” he said.

That, in turn, would theoretically benefit the educational and infrastructure needs of his district, which includes Doña Ana and Otero counties.

“This is an urban-rural district where quality-of-life issues like sidewalks, curbs and bicycle paths are not requested because flood control, water, maintained roads, sewer, natural gas, and sheriff, ambulance and fire response are the issues,” Little said.

As for education, money is not the only answer, he said.

“There is little doubt that good funding creates good schools — smaller class sizes, better teachers and computers in the classroom are just a few benefits that money brings.

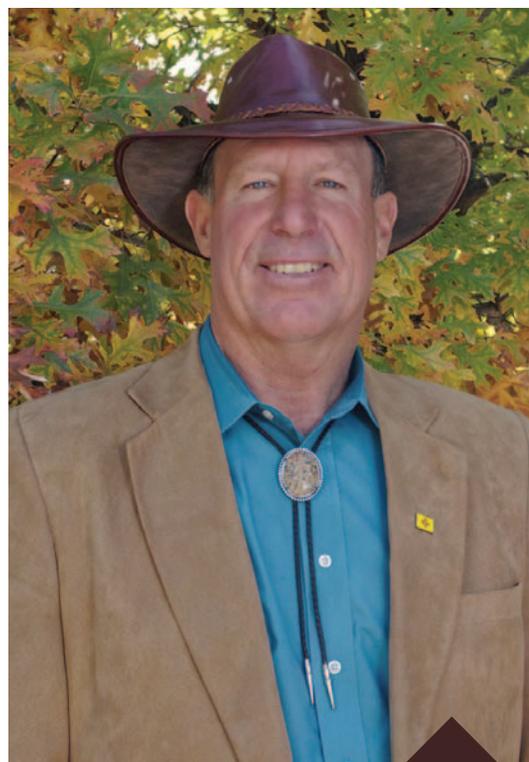
“But the truth is that New Mexico has spent huge sums of our tax money on

education and our schools still rank near the bottom in drop-out rates and academic achievement. Clearly, it’s going to take more than just money to solve our education problems,” he said.

On his website, Little calls for more local control of public education.

“Well-intentioned regulations have backfired by creating an educational system that’s overly dependent on one-size-fits-all test scores to get state and federal funding — where our teachers are forced to teach to the test, rather than developing flexible, creative ways to teach our children critical thinking skills and keep them engaged with school and learning,” Little said. “We need to get out of the way and let local schools — and teachers — get the job done in ways that work for them.”

“As a small-business owner, I work with budgets, employees, taxes, regulations, utility companies and government bureaucracy, which is what I deal with in the Legislature.”



RICK ‘RICKY’ LITTLE, DISTRICT 53

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana, Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 61

BIRTHPLACE: Fort Bliss, Texas

PROFESSION: Structural mover, general contractor, small business owner

EDUCATION: Howard Payne University at El Paso

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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JAMES Townsend

Taxes, regulations and jobs are rep's priorities

BY TRACY ROY

Heading into his second term as representative for District 54, Republican James Townsend is poised to sharpen his influence.

"I think the more time you spend in the Legislature, you more proficient you become," he said.

He describes his district, which covers portions of Chaves, Eddy and Otero counties, as diverse, citing industries such as oil and gas, ranching, tourism, potash mines and dairies.

He keeps a critical eye on taxes, regulations and jobs.

"When you create good jobs, you solve a lot of issues," Townsend said. "You basically build a tax base. You cure a lot of family and social issues when families are able to provide for their families in a meaningful way."

Creating jobs, providing affordable energy and only allowing meaningful oversight of industry are solid paths to solving some of the state's problems, he said.

When it comes to the state budget, Townsend believes efficiency is key.

"My perspective has been that we should utilize what we have more efficiently before we ask the people (of New Mexico) for more money," he said.

He cited the New Mexico Public Works Minimum Wage Act (NMAC) as an example of how the state could spend the taxpayers' dollars more wisely. NMAC calls for a base wage to be paid for construction projects, rather than having companies compete for a job through a bidding process.

"It costs New Mexico taxpayers, on average, between a 12 and 20 percent premium" to pay the prescribed wages, Townsend said. "When you build something or buy a car, you try to get the most for your money. And I think New Mexico taxpayers should require that we do the same thing — that we get the most for our money."

As counties rank their priorities for capital outlay projects and legislators decide which to try to get funded, Townsend said he'll push for the projects

his constituents want.

If right-to-work legislation is introduced in the session, he said he'd support it, though he felt it had a diminished chance of being pushed through due to Democrats nabbing a majority of seats in the House and Senate in the 2016 election.

Other items he thinks may make it onto the docket this year include a push for legalizing

recreational marijuana,

implementing a gasoline tax and raising minimum wage.

Despite the challenges facing the state, no matter what legislation may come into play this session, Townsend has an overarching criterion for the Legislature's effectiveness.

"We have to remember that in the process of legislation, we have to create jobs," he said. "We have to create a platform so that New Mexican families can prosper. If we're not doing that, we're not doing our jobs."

“We have to remember that in the process of legislation, we have to create jobs. We have to create a platform so that New Mexican families can prosper. If we’re not doing that, we’re not doing our jobs.”

JAMES TOWNSEND, DISTRICT 54

COUNTIES SERVED: Chaves, Eddy, Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Two

AGE: 61

BIRTHPLACE: Carlsbad, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Retired senior vice president of Holly Corporation

EDUCATION: New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Lobbied in Santa Fe and Washington for 15 years

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ZACHARY Cook

Rep wants to incentivize company relocation, focus on small-business creation

BY MARTY RACINE

Rep. Zachary Cook's political career is made in the image of House District 56, which includes Ruidoso in Lincoln County and the northern tier of Alamogordo in Otero County.

The area is staunchly Republican, and Cook has easily carried the GOP banner in Santa Fe the past eight years. He ran unopposed for a fifth term in 2016.

An attorney and chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Cook is focused on criminal justice system reform.

"We need to ensure public safety but at the same time better manage our resources and taxpayer money," he said. "There's so much spent on corrections and public safety that it's an area that needs to be evaluated frequently. Also, we need to get people the help they need. People who spend time in jail might need behavioral health services and maybe jail isn't the appropriate place for them."

During his tenure, Cook has also targeted economic development. He has sponsored bills to improve banking regulations in the state, he said, and he is a strong proponent of right-to-work legislation that he feels would enable New Mexico to better compete with neighboring states for corporate relocation and small-business creation.

Right-to-work laws forbid unions and employers from requiring employees to join a union and pay dues to get or keep a job. Twenty-five states, including Arizona, Texas, Utah, Nevada and Oklahoma, plus some heavily unionized

Rust Belt states such as Wisconsin and Michigan, have right-to-work laws. New Mexico does not.

"From what I hear, when companies look to move to other states, they have checklists of things that are just basic incentives," Cook said. "If a state is not right-to-work, then they don't even bother looking at it. Whether or not it really makes that big of a difference to their bottom line, it's questionable. I don't really know, but from what I've been told, there are basic checklists companies go through, and right-to-work is an issue.

"If we're not right-to-work, and our

"If we're not right-to-work, and our neighbors are, that just knocks us out of the competition. We've got to become more competitive. We need to create an environment that would make them want to come here rather than to our neighboring states."

neighbors are, that just knocks us out of the competition. We've got to become more competitive. We need to create an environment that would make them want to come here rather than to our neighboring states."

Despite perennial opposition from Democrats in both houses of the Legislature, Cook predicts the right-to-work movement will continue to receive an airing in Santa Fe.

"I think it will be an issue in 2017," he said.

New Mexico is among 43 states with a state income tax

(among neighboring states, Texas does not). Cook is not sure if the tax hurts New Mexico economically, but he favors some tax reform to help encourage business development.

"Tax issues are very complicated," he said. "But in talking with my colleagues, the way our entire tax system is set up makes us less attractive for out-of-state corporations."



ZACHARY COOK, DISTRICT 56

COUNTIES SERVED: Lincoln, Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Eight

AGE: 44

BIRTHPLACE: Denver, Colorado

PROFESSION: Attorney

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in English and Spanish, University of New Mexico; master's degree in international management, Thunderbird School of Global Management; juris doctorate, University of New Mexico

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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GREGORY NIBERT, DISTRICT 59

COUNTIES SERVED: Chaves, Lincoln

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: First year

AGE: 59

BIRTHPLACE: Roswell, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Lawyer, with a specialty in oil and gas law

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree from the University of New Mexico and a juris doctorate cum laude, from Pepperdine University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

Former Chaves County commissioner, eight years; former chair of the Chaves County Republican Party

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GREGORY Nibert

Freshman legislator wants to see state get its finances in order

BY TRACY ROY

At top of mind for freshman legislator Greg Nibert (R-Chaves, Lincoln), is the state's fiscal crisis. He said we need to focus on getting "our house — our finances — in order."

Nibert plans to spend his first year in the Legislature "to really learn the process, understand the rules and not get too excited about introducing a bunch of bills because, number one, I'm in the minority side of the House, and number two, I'll be a freshman at that."

"What I would like to do is team with my fellow legislators in southeast New Mexico and help them to carry the bills that they've traditionally carried and have supported," he said, which includes Candy Spence Ezzell's right-to-work bill.

On the state budget's dependency on oil and gas revenue, Nibert thinks we have a structure in dire need of repair.

"I think it is foolish for the state to prepare multi-year budgets based on high prices of a commodity," he said. "We know that the price is going to move up and down. We need to be careful how we budget, particularly when we have half or at least 30-40 percent tied into oil and gas revenue."

He suggests that a hard look at how much government the state can afford should be done in tandem with finding alternative sources of income.

"How many governmental services can we provide? We need to look at that as well as the revenue," Nibert said. "Maybe we need to look at trimming some of the government we have, as well as looking at how to bring things in ... Alternative funding sources are asking for the citizens of the state to pay more. Do New Mexicans have more disposable income to contribute to the growing needs of the state? Do we have citizens pay more? Or do we trim the budget?"

He wants the Legislature to stop

talking about being business friendly and start being business friendly. Legislatively, that means implementing legislation that encourages business growth and taking laws off the books that are an impediment. A too-heavy regulatory burden hampers business, he said.

"In southeast New Mexico, we feel like we want to grow," Nibert said. "We want to create new jobs. We want to create real opportunities for our children. It gets really frustrating, particularly down here, when we see what goes on in Santa Fe, Albuquerque and maybe even Las Cruces, that hampers our ability to do what we need to do to help our area of the state."

He's learning the ins and outs of the capital outlay process, having listened to capital outlay proposals for Chaves County, and at press time, had planned to meet with Lincoln County in December 2016. He plans to be in contact with fellow legislators for the counties he represents to determine which capital outlay projects should be funded now and which can wait.

Nibert believes that capital outlay funds should be used for infrastructure projects that have long-term benefits and provides opportunities, such as expanding municipalities, water projects, sewer lines and road projects that provide jobs and bring in taxes.

"We have got to do something to bring jobs and opportunity to New Mexico," he said. "We really have got to do something to provide opportunities for our children to stay in the state of New Mexico, earn a living and be productive citizens in the state. We have this tremendous investment in these kids and the only opportunities that they see available to them are in neighboring states. It tears my heart out."

Voters overwhelmingly approve four GO bond questions

BY MIKE COOK

New Mexico voters overwhelmingly approved four general obligation bonds that will allocate more than \$186 million statewide for senior citizen centers, libraries, universities and colleges and public safety improvements.

Bond C was of interest to Las Cruces and Doña Ana County residents because it included \$22.5 million for the construction of a new Department of Art building and University Art Gallery on the New Mexico State University campus.

The new art building, near the intersection of University Avenue and Solano Drive, will be constructed in the Spanish renaissance style that characterizes many of NMSU's buildings, NMSU Chancellor Garrey Carruthers said.

The NMSU Department of Art serves students, staff and the community and "is going to be good for recognizing that art is a major industry in New Mexico," Carruthers said.

An August 2014 report from the University of New Mexico's Bureau of Business Economic Research said "arts and culture facilities, programs and services support a \$5.6 billion cultural industry annually in New Mexico, which accounts for one in 10 jobs in the state amounting to \$2.2 billion in salaries."

The bond also includes \$5 million for "infrastructure replacement and upgrades" at NMSU's community colleges in Las Cruces, Alamogordo, Carlsbad and Grants. Doña Ana Community College in Las Cruces would receive \$1.5 million of that total.

Bond C will allocate a total of \$142.365 million for college and university projects statewide. Because it gets the lion's share

of the GO funds approved on Nov. 8, it's not surprising that Bond C drew the most voters — just over 698,000 of them — and the most "no" votes among the four GO bonds on the ballot. Even so, it passed with a healthy 63.35 percent in favor and a margin of more than 185,000 votes.

Bond A passed with 68.5 percent of voters approving out of about 694,000 votes cast. It will allocate about \$15 million for senior citizen facilities, including improvements, construction and equipment acquisition projects. It includes 109 projects at senior centers across the state.

Bond B, which passed with almost 65 percent approval out of about 693,500 votes cast, will allocate about \$10 million to pay for academic, public school, tribal and public library resource acquisitions. It includes \$3 million for 81 nontribal public libraries statewide, \$750,000 for 19 tribal libraries in eight counties across the state, \$3.25 million for academic libraries statewide and \$3 million at public school libraries across the state.

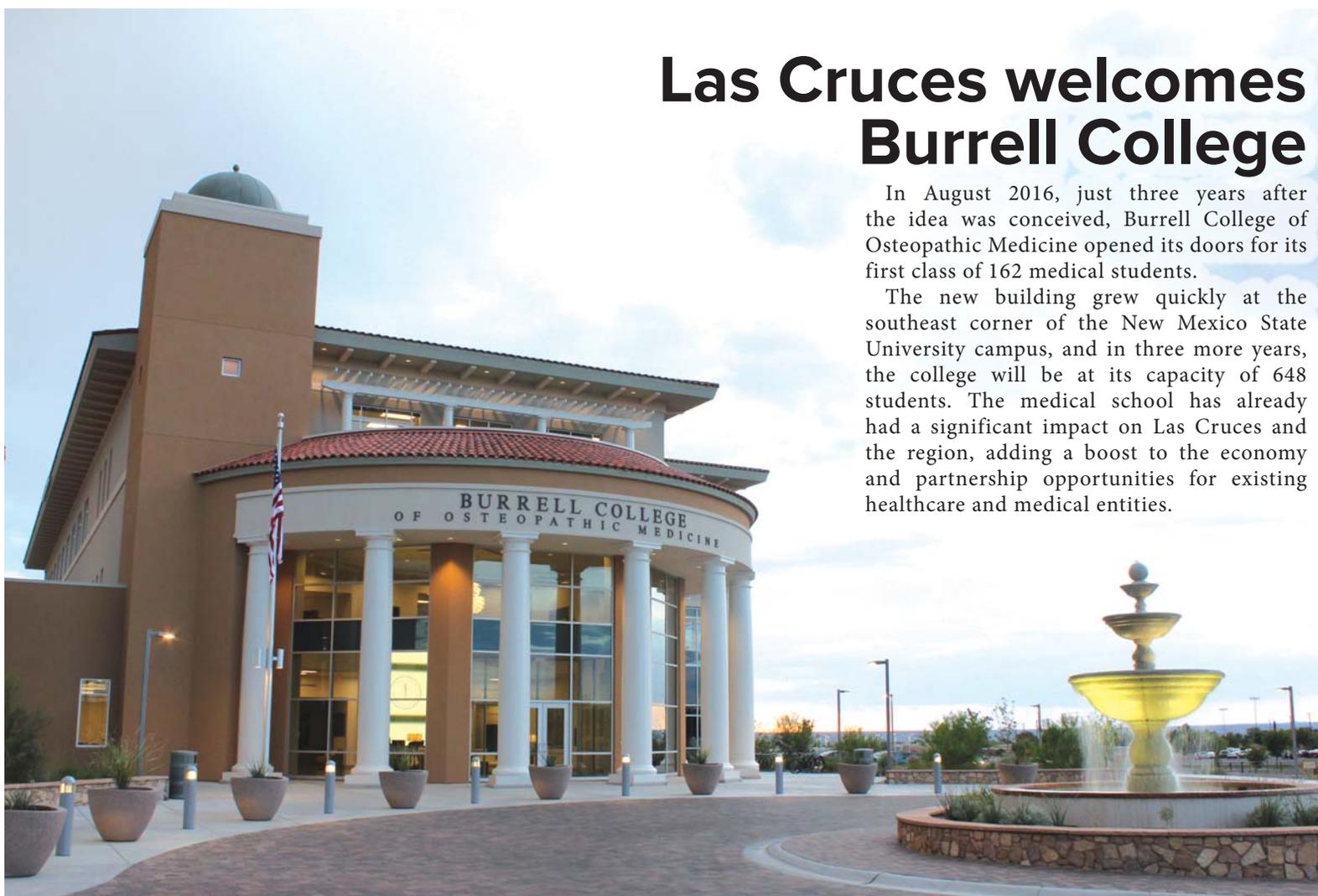
Bond D, which will authorize the spending of almost \$18.2 million for state police, public safety communications and National Guard facilities around the state, passed with more than 66 percent of the approximately 693,600 who voted on the bond question.

You can read the bill and many of the specific projects the GO bonds will pay for at www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/16%20Regular/final/SB0122.pdf.

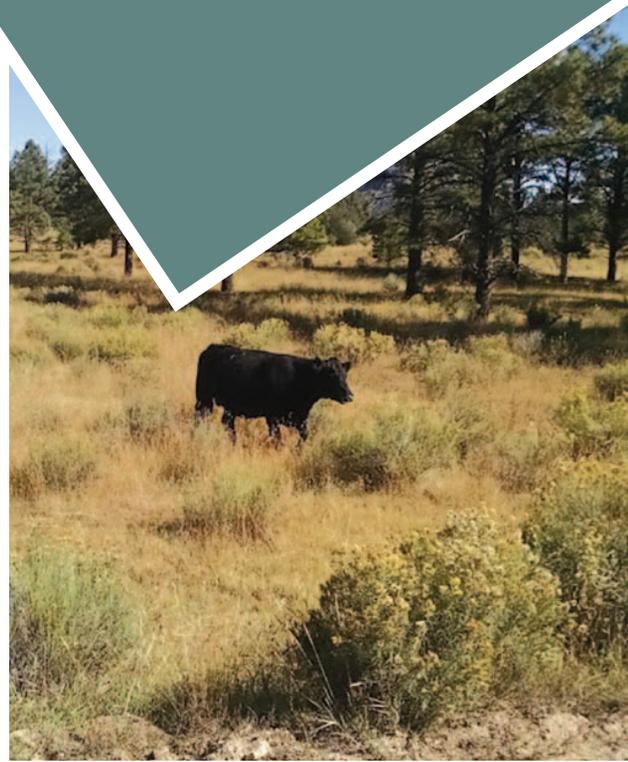
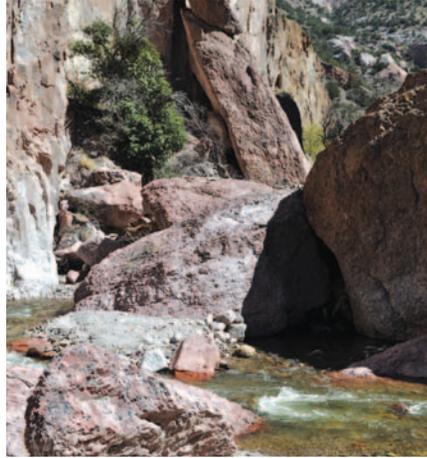
Las Cruces welcomes Burrell College

In August 2016, just three years after the idea was conceived, Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine opened its doors for its first class of 162 medical students.

The new building grew quickly at the southeast corner of the New Mexico State University campus, and in three more years, the college will be at its capacity of 648 students. The medical school has already had a significant impact on Las Cruces and the region, adding a boost to the economy and partnership opportunities for existing healthcare and medical entities.



Catron



CATRON COUNTY COMMUNITIES

APACHE CREEK

Census-designated place
Population: 67

Seven miles south of Aragon is the village of Apache Creek where the creek of the same name joins the Tularosa River. This is also the junction of State Highway 12 and State Highway 32.

ARAGON

Census-designated place
Population: 94

Aragon is an old Spanish settlement with about 20 ranch and farm homes scattered along State Highway 12 that continues along the Tularosa Valley.

CRUZVILLE

Census-designated place
Population: 72

Visitors may notice a curious thing about the fence posts near Cruzville, located in the Apache National Forest. Some posts have a piece of wood about an inch thick and six inches square nailed flat on top of the posts. These were used to support luminarias during Christmas or other special celebrations.

DATIL

Census-designated place
Population: 54

This picturesque little town was named for the yucca seedpods resembling dates ("datil" is the Spanish word for "date"), and was established in 1884. Today, life centers on the Eagle Guest Ranch, a café, motel, general store, gas station and RV park that acts as the general meeting place for the community and surrounding area.

GLENWOOD

Census-designated place
Population: 143

Glenwood is a quaint village located in southern Catron County on U.S. Highway 180. Glenwood has motels, restaurants and other services and is the jumping-off place for several Catron County features.

LUNA

Census-designated place
Population: 158

Luna is a sleepy historical village near the Arizona border that was settled in the 19th century by a sheep rancher and powerful political force in New Mexico named Solomon Luna. The area was later settled by Mormon ranchers from Utah. However, the Hough Ruin (pronounced HUFF) is just a reminder these early settlers were but newcomers, as the Hough Ruin dates back 700 years.

PIE TOWN

Census-designated place
Population: 186

In the 1900s a day's ride by horseback west of Datil along what is now U.S. 60 led to a small unincorporated community on the Continental Divide (elevation 7,979) originally known as Norman's Place. Clyde Norman owned the town's only gas station and café, and when he began selling pies in the 1920s the community became known as Pie Town. An annual Pie Festival is held the second Saturday of September.

QUEMADO

Census-designated place
Population: 228

Quemado is the Spanish work for "burned." In 1880 a settler by the name of Jose Antonio Padilla noticed the brush had been burned by the local Indians and named the settlement Rito Quemado.

RESERVE

Census-designated place
Population: 289

The first settlements around Reserve, which sets along the San Francisco River, were called Upper Frisco Plaza, Middle Frisco Plaza and Lower Frisco Plaza. Sometime during the 1870s Milligan's Plaza was established just north of Upper Frisco Plaza. Then, when forest lands were set aside as National Forest Reserves, the name of Milligan's Plaza was changed to Reserve. Today, Reserve is the Catron County seat.



CATRON COUNTY COMMISSION

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Glyn Griffin

District 2, Commission Chairman
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Van J. "Bucky" Allred

District 3
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CATRON COUNTY QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

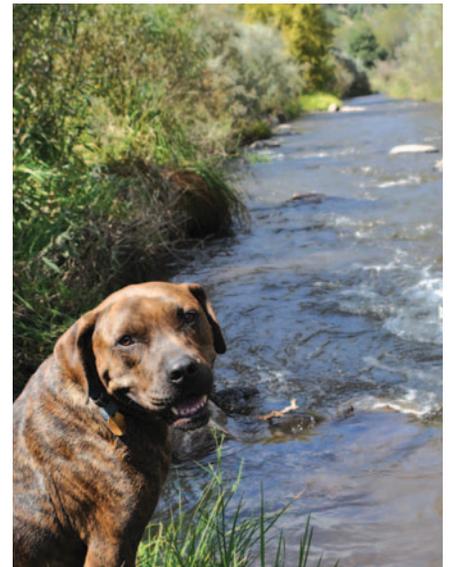
Population: 3,456 (2015 estimated)
Households: 3,280 (2014)
Median household income: \$39,342 (2014)
Persons below poverty level:
22.2 percent (2014)

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 56 (2014)
Total employment: 362 (2014)
Non-employer establishments: 363 (2014)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 6,923.69
Persons per square mile: 0.5



EDUCATION IN CATRON COUNTY

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Quemado Independent Schools

P.O. Box 128, Quemado, NM 87829-0128
575-773-4700
575-773-4645
www.quemadoschools.org

Reserve Independent Schools

24 Mountaineer Road, Reserve, NM 87830
575-533-6242
<http://reserve.schoolblocks.com>



Doña Ana

County concerned with doctors, infrastructure, flooding

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Las Cruces is a good place to live and do business, said Billy Garrett, District 1 Doña Ana County commissioner.

"We need to build on the infrastructure in order to keep the county working," he said.

The county needs to be able to invest in road infrastructure and improvements.

"The thing is, with the work that's done, it's not just about money but sometimes about policy and laws to help us clear away obstacles and keep moving," he said.

Garrett said he is concerned because in the 2016 special session, cuts were made to local DWI programs.

"I am hoping they will not cut them anymore," he said. "And I am hoping they will revisit the cuts they made," he said.

Assistant County Manager Chuck McMahon said the county commission has identified four capital outlay projects and three non-capital outlay projects for the county to focus on for the 2017 legislative session.

At the top of the non-capital outlay issues is the reimbursement rates for physicians.

"Reimbursement rates for physicians are lower than in the northern part of the state; that makes it harder to attract doctors," McMahon said. "New Mexico has the oldest average of doctors in the country. As they retire, there are fewer and fewer and they are harder to attract."

Garrett also said the reimbursement for physicians is not being handled in a fair way.

"That's important in terms of mental health issues and services for mental illness," he said.

Interest rates and fees for non-bank lenders is one of the concerns the county has, McMahon said.

New Mexico should be consistent with the federal government. There is a proposal to bring interest fees to no more than 36 percent.

"There are situations in New Mexico where they are much higher," he said.

A third thing McMahon talked about for the Legislature to consider is a request to create a single statute in regards to Industrial Revenue Bonds rather than two. Currently there are separate statutes for municipalities and counties and there are some significant differences.

IRBs are tax-exempt loans issued by state or local governments to finance a private company's expansion, construction or acquisition of manufacturing facilities and equipment.

For capital outlay requests, McMahon said the county wants to fund a crosswind runway at the Doña Ana County International Jetport in Santa Teresa.

"Currently we have a single runway," McMahon said. "(The new one) would be perpendicular. We are seeking \$350,000 in design money to submit the proposal to the FAA and allow us to get us on their calendar."

Once the design is approved and the money in place, the resulting project, \$30 million, would be 90 percent federally funded.

With industrial growth in Ciudad Juárez, customs expansion, and increased business activities the jetport is becoming a hub. With the benefits of its proximity to rail and highway access, the additional runway is just part of the plan.

"We see increased business activity and we are forecasting that we will see a growing demand for air cargo and continue to grow that industrial area," McMahon said.

Also in Santa Teresa, the county is seeking \$400,000 to continue work on the fire station. Phases 1 and 2 are being completed and now Phase 3 will take care of the office and kitchen facilities, he said.

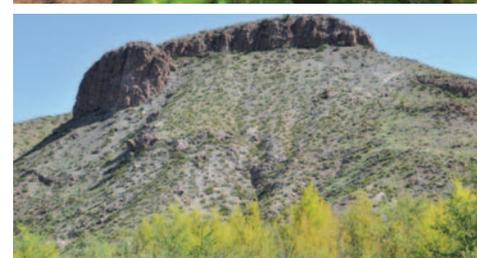
The fire department's hazardous materials station is on the jetport property and thus can respond to the jetport as well as other hazmat situations.

The county is looking for money to improve Dragonfly Channel on the East Mesa for channeling storm water in Barman Channel from the mountains to Isaac Lake, McMahon said.

The county is requesting \$250,000 for infrastructure improvements for the county fairgrounds.

"The fairgrounds are used year-round for concerts, rodeos, and other activities in addition to the Southern New Mexico State Fair," he said. "The place goes back to 1952 when it was an Air Force installation. There is quite a bit of infrastructure that needs to be upgraded."

The county received \$250,000 last session for the facility and is hoping to receive more in increments to replace the old waterlines, etc. to have the facilities that people need," McMahon said.



LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

- Supporting legislation for fair reimbursement to physicians
- Legislation controlling interest rates for non-bank lenders
- Consolidating statutes for industrial revenue bonds
- Funding for a new runway at the county International Jetport
- Funding for work on the Santa Teresa fire station
- East Mesa flood control funding
- County fairground infrastructure improvements



Here's to a great 2017!

As Mayor of Las Cruces, my fellow members of City Council and I look forward to working with Governor Martinez, our southern New Mexico delegation and lawmakers from across the state this legislative session. Las Cruces is a dynamic city and together we can continue to enhance its many great qualities.

Ken Miyagishima, Mayor of Las Cruces

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City of Las Cruces[®]
PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE



MVEDA looks west — and east

BY ALTA LECOMPTE

From Azerbaijan to Los Angeles, the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA) is on the lookout for companies that would feel right at home in Doña Ana County — or companies with a market for products originating in the county.

MVEDA's marketing outreach, however, is far from random. It targets companies in specific sectors, including aerospace, agriculture/food processing and manufacturing and logistics, each of which needs the assets this region can offer.

As for greater Los Angeles, it is a strong logistical hub linked to the port of Long Beach, MVEDA President and CEO Davin Lopez said. Its industrial base is growing.

What can Doña Ana County offer?

Southern New Mexico is tied to the port of Long Beach by rail, but has lower operating costs for manufacturing and logistics companies.

"We have lower operating costs, lower real-estate costs, a more favorable regulatory environment and lower taxes," Lopez said.

He said MVEDA is working with BNSF and Union Pacific railroads to gather intelligence on West Coast opportunities and is getting southern New Mexico's message to the coast by making prospect trips and attending trade shows.

As for Turkey and Azerbaijan, Lopez said New Mexico Senate Pro-Tem Mary Kay Papen led a statewide trip to Turkey because it is the

country of origin for CN Wire, a major manufacturer in Santa Teresa, New Mexico.

"Azerbaijan was an added benefit of the trip to gain exposure to an international market we hadn't previously exported to," he said. "It's an oil state. We talked with them about drone monitoring of pipelines — what we have in UAV. ... They are a large, 100 percent organic agricultural market. We talked with them about NMSU-developed organic pesticide technology."

"The biggest challenge now — and for the last couple of years — is the growing lack of facilities," Lopez said.

He said MVEDA "works with the tools it has," such as New Mexico's Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) fund, which can be used to renovate existing facilities to the specifications of companies interested in locating in the county.

"We've finally gotten strong tools in place to use to attract, recruit businesses to New Mexico," he said, noting legislators have written LEDA funds into the budget so they can be counted on.

"We use LEDA to fill in the gaps, like infrastructure," he said citing as examples upgrading a Santa Teresa warehouse for CN Wire and customizing an abandoned space in Mesilla Park for New Mexico Greenhouse.

MVEDA also is working with New Mexico State University and the City of Las Cruces to pre-design industrial-sized buildings, which could be available quickly for companies to occupy, Lopez said.

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Matt Dyer, PE, Office Manager

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2017 CITY OF LAS CRUCES LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

A connected set of priorities will continue to ensure that the city meets both current and future needs for a safe, growing community.



CAPITAL OUTLAY

- 1) **\$260,000** – to plan, design, and construct Telshor/Spruce intersection improvements;
- 2) **\$100,000** – to plan, design, and construct parking lot, drive pads and aprons, for Las Cruces Fire Department, Station #2;
- 3) **\$140,000** – to purchase a new, one-ton chassis squad vehicle equipped with a custom box to accommodate firefighting and EMS equipment;
- 4) **\$105,000** – to purchase and install 30 replacement mobile data terminals in police units;
- 5) **\$40,000** – to purchase additional body cameras for uniformed officers;
- 6) **\$100,000** – to plan, design, remove, construct, equip, renovate, and install playground equipment improvements; and
- 7) **\$100,000** – to plan, remove, dispose of asbestos and replace ceiling at Branigan Cultural Center.



POLICY

Comprehensive Tax Reform – The State needs comprehensive tax reform to remove the unpredictable nature of Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) to provide balance, equity, and financial stability to municipal governments.

Supplemental Public Securities Act – Allows the State and local governments authority to delegate debt issuance authority to certain officers with terms and conditions outlined within the Act.

Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) Data Sharing – Modifications to the existing GRT data sharing between the State and local governments would allow for better economic analysis and supply chain connections and marketing for exporting businesses.

Funding for Attorney General's Office - Texas v. New Mexico & Colorado – Las Cruces supports continuing adequate funding for the Attorney General's office related to protecting New Mexico ground water interests south of Elephant Butte Reservoir.

Limit rate cases by publicly regulated utilities – Support legislation that limits utilities from introducing new rates within three years of the settlement of a previous rate case, to protect rate payers interest and public funds.

Extended Jurisdiction of Municipal Police Officers – Support of New Mexico Municipal League Resolution 2016-31 – Would amend the statute to allow certified police officers to conduct investigations outside their jurisdiction within conditions adopted by the local government, without requiring cross-commissioning agreements.

Financial & operational feasibility of crime lab in Southern New Mexico – Determine, in partnership with the State, the financial and operational feasibility of expanding the services of the Las Cruces crime lab.

Review enforcement of existing regulations related to Physician Reimbursements – Existing regulations are not being enforced related to reimbursement rates that would assist the local health care community in the recruitment and retaining of qualified physicians.

Conduct analysis of Physician Reimbursement Rates Statewide – The New Mexico Legislature needs to analyze the differing physician reimbursement rates across the state to maintain financial viability for the ability to retain and recruit new physicians.

Financial & operational feasibility of behavioral health hospital to serve Southern New Mexico – Determine, in partnership with the State, the financial and operational feasibility of a mental health hospital in Southern New Mexico.

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Investors expect business uptick to continue

BY ALTA LECOMPTE

Santa Teresa and Las Cruces have what it takes to attract 21st century manufacturers — and 2016 proved it's happening.

Santa Teresa, due north of the super factories of Chihuahua, Mexico, began a growth spurt in 2014 following the opening of the Union Pacific multi modal facility.

Among recent industrial expansions in Santa Teresa is MCS, the largest manufacturer of picture frames in the United States. The company outgrew its original Santa Teresa home and built an \$11.1 million, 215,000-square-foot facility in Santa Teresa's newest industrial park, Westpark Logistics Center.

MCS also moved its distribution center to the park and relocated its printing facility from Pennsylvania.

Also new in Westpark is a FedEx Ground facility.

Most recently, the Las Cruces-based Valley Cold Storage broke ground in Westpark in late 2016 for a 105,000-square-foot cold storage facility.

EL PASO EYES SANTA TERESA

Growth in Santa Teresa is likely to continue, according to El Paso Inc., which wrote El Paso investors are buying up land across the state line

One such investor, Lane Gaddy, CEO of El Paso-based W Silver Recycling, told El Paso Inc. he had invested \$10 million in Santa Teresa and was working on three more deals worth \$50 to \$60 million. Gaddy said the first 50 acres were pre-leased.

"It's more than I ever thought I would do in Santa Teresa, and it is happening at a faster pace than I ever anticipated," he said.

He cited Union Pacific as a catalyst for the boom. Investors also told El Paso Inc. Santa Teresa's industrial parks are full and the market for industrial space in El Paso is tight, increasing the need for new industrial buildings.

DEMAND EMERGES IN LAS CRUCES

Industrial expansion has been slower and less dramatic in the northern half of the county.

In 2016, however, new manufacturing came to the city-owned West Mesa Industrial Park.

ARCA, an aerospace manufacturing company, has moved to 725 Leonard Bryan Alley. Following ARCA, X2nSat is building a new 15,000-square-foot data center in the West Mesa Industrial Park.

X2nSat CEO Garrett Hill described Las

CONTINUED ON PAGE 60 ■

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■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 59

Cruces as the perfect location. It's in the far south, dry and storm free, with an available workforce, affordable building costs and proximity to New Mexico State University, he said.

Gov. Martinez' administration — at the October jobs announcement by X2nSat — touted the growth of the state's closing fund and cuts in business taxes as reasons businesses are taking a hard look at what the state has to offer.

According to MVEDA, X2nSat will receive \$300,000 in state LEDA funds for its new building and utilities, and additional LEDA support from the city.

Adding to the attractiveness of the area for health-related businesses was the 2016 opening of the Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Wayne Savage, executive director of Arrowhead Park on the NMSU campus, is championing efforts to build a health-industry cluster and was himself involved in the recruitment of X2nSat. The newly recruited company sells wireless communication services to clients in several sectors, including health care.

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS REBOUND

Other sectors of the economy showing greater strength in 2016 included retail and construction.

"In 2016 we saw some — albeit very limited — retail of significant size, including Sportsman's Warehouse on Telshor (Boulevard) and the Neighborhood Walmart Market," said Kary Bulsterbaum, associate broker with Steinborn & Associates.

He said prior to 2015, Las Cruces was glutted with vacant big box stores, creating an opportunity to fill existing space.

Noting that the space has been occupied, he said: "Now we've got to turn the corner."

Bulsterbaum said further commercial development will depend on residential development.

"Population and demographics has been our biggest impediment in the last seven to 10 years," he said.

New housing permits bottomed out in 2014, rose a bit in 2015 and continued to rise in 2016, Bulsterbaum said.

"We'll benefit from growth on the west side of El Paso," Bulsterbaum added.

"2017 should be a great year," said local developer Bob Pofahl. "I think 2016 is a good year, but signs of economic recovery were slow to come to Las Cruces. The momentum seems to be growing — people started to make commitments in 2016."

Pofahl said it's not just his projects — many local businesses are becoming energized.

"Everybody tells us sales are up, activity is up," he said.

He expects the momentum to continue, in part because mortgage rates as well as inflation in the construction industry remain low.

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

ANTHONY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mission: To serve members not only in Anthony, New Mexico and Anthony, Texas, but for all the communities between El Paso and Las Cruces that do not have their own Chamber of Commerce. It currently serves both Anthonys, the Village of Vinton, Chaparral, Canutillo, Vado, Berino and others.
Website: anthonychamberofcommerce.com

HATCH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mission: To advance the economic, industrial, educational, professional, cultural and civic conditions and standards for the Hatch Valley through networking, creating dialogue and capturing goals which individual members support and the organization pursues.
Address: P.O. Box 568, Hatch, NM 87937
Phone: 575-519-4723
Email: hatchchamber@gmail.com
Website: www.villageofhatch.org/links/chamber_of_commerce

GREATER LAS CRUCES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mission: The mission of GLCCC is to provide services for its members, enhance and sustain the economy, promote the community and serve as the leading voice and public policy advocate for business in the Greater Las Cruces region.

CEO/President: Debbi Moore
Address: 505 S. Main St., Suite 134, Las Cruces, NM 88001
Phone: 575-524-1968
Fax: 575-527-5546
Email: relo@lascruces.org
Website: www.lascruces.org

LAS CRUCES GREEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mission: To promote socially and environmentally responsible businesses and to build a vibrant and successful local economy based on the Triple Bottom Line. Members believe in the power of the Triple Bottom Line — that investing in people; protecting our air, land and water; and promoting profit through sustainable business practices will build a thriving community for today and for generations to come.
CEO: Carrie Hamblen
Address: 221 N. Main St., Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001
Phone: 575-323-1575
Website: locallascruceres.com

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Address: 4950 McNutt Rd.,
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Phone: 575-882-6200
Website: www.gisd.k12.nm.us

Hatch Valley Public Schools

Address: 204 Hill Street, Hatch, NM 87937
Mailing address: P.O. Box
790, Hatch, NM 87937
Phone: 575-267-8200
Website: www.hatch.k12.nm.us/
Home/tabid/67873/Default.aspx

Las Cruces Public Schools

Address: 505 S. Main St. Ste.
249, Las Cruces, NM 88001
Phone: 575-527-5800
Website: http://lcp.s.k12.nm.us

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Cornerstone Christian Academy

Address: 5301 Cortez Dr.,
Las Cruces, NM 88012
Phone: 575-532-0902
Website: www.cornerstn.org

Las Cruces Academy

Address: 1755 Avenida de
Mercado, Mesilla, NM 88046
Phone: 575-521-9384
Website: http://lascrucesacademy.org

Las Cruces Catholic Schools (Holy Cross

School and St. Mary's High School)
Address: 1331 N. Miranda St.,
Las Cruces, NM 88005
Phone: 575-526-2517
Website: www.
lascrucescatholicsschool.com

Mesilla Valley Christian School

Address: 3850 Stern Drive,
Las Cruces, NM 88001
Phone: 575-525-8515
Website: http://mvsconline.com

Whitley Montessori

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Website: www.almadarte.org

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Phone: 575-526-2984
Website: www.academianm.org

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2, Las Cruces, NM 88012
Phone: 575-652-4621
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Address: 1405 S. Solano Drive,
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Phone: 575-636-2110
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Doña Ana Community College

– Central Campus
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Phone: 575-527-7500
Website: https://dacc.nmsu.edu

Doña Ana Community College

– East Mesa Campus
Address: 2800 N. Sonoma Ranch
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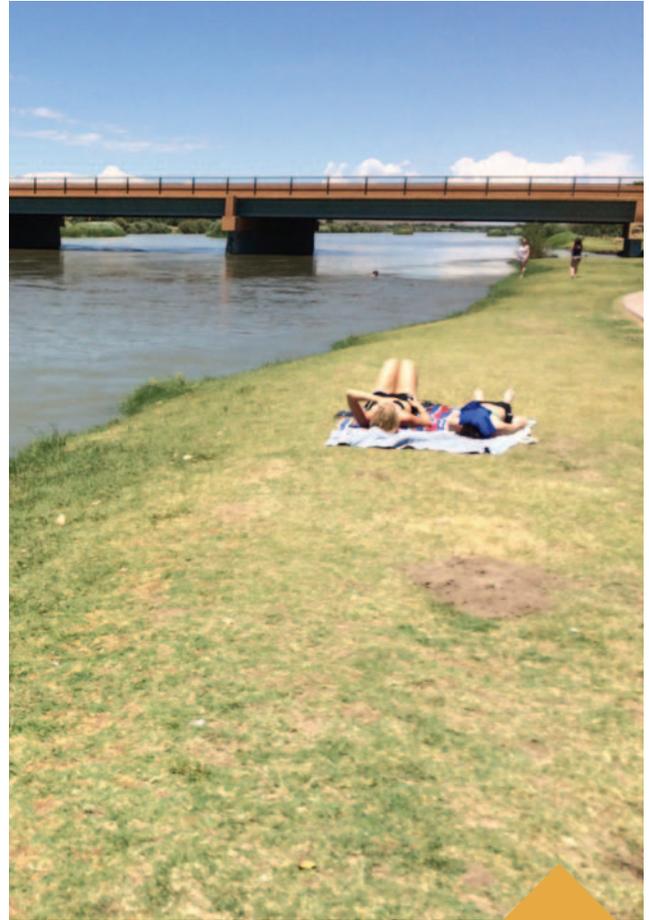
Doña Ana Community College

– Sunland Park Center
Address: 3365 McNutt Road,
Sunland Park, NM 88063
Phone: 575-874-7780
Website: https://dacc.nmsu.edu

UNIVERSITIES

New Mexico State University

Address: 1780 E University Ave.,
Las Cruces, NM 88003
Phone: 575-646-0111
Website: http://nmsu.edu



QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 214,295 (2015)
Households: 74,623 (2014)
Median household income: \$38,426 (2010-14)
Persons below poverty level:
27.9 percent (2010-14)

BUSINESS

Private, nonfarm establishments: 3,546 (2014)
Private, nonfarm employment: 50,861 (2014)
Non-employer establishments: 12,134 (2014)
Total firms: 16,298 (2014)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 3,807 (2010)
Persons per square mile: 55 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov



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DOÑA ANA COMMUNITIES

ANTHONY City

Population: 9,318 (2014 estimate)

Incorporated in July 2010, Anthony straddles the New Mexico-Texas border, approximately 27 miles south of Las Cruces and 24 miles north of El Paso.

BERINO

Census Designated Place

Population: 1,441 (2010)

Established in the early 1900s and composed of a land area of only .93 square miles, Berino lies 22 miles south of Las Cruces.

CHAMBERINO

Census Designated Place

Population: 919

Located 26 miles south of Las Cruces, Chamberino is an unincorporated community that was established with the installation of a post office in 1880.

CHAPARRAL

Census Designated Place

Population: 14,631 (6,965 in Doña Ana County)

Chaparral is uniquely located as it shares its southern border with the Texas state line, and straddles Doña Ana and Otero counties. It is considered a bedroom community for nearby El Paso, Ft. Bliss and White Sands Missile Range.

DOÑA ANA

Census Designated Place

Population: 1,211 (2010)

The first county seat and the oldest permanent settlement in the Mesilla Valley, Doña Ana was founded in 1843. The community lent its name to Doña Ana County upon its establishment in 1852.

FAIRACRES

Census Designated Place

Population: 824 (2010)

Considered a suburb of Las Cruces, Fairacres has a land area of 2.11 square miles and lies on the west bank of the Rio Grande.

GARFIELD

Census Designated Place

Population: 137 (2010)

Likely named for assassinated president James A. Garfield, Garfield lies 50 miles northwest of Las Cruces. Its post office was established in 1896.

HATCH

Village

Population: 1,601 (2014 estimate)

Mayor: Andy Nuñez

Originally settled as Santa Barbara in 1851, the Village of Hatch was incorporated in 1928. Hatch is known as the Chile Capital of the World, and holds an annual Chile Festival. It is located 40 miles northeast of Las Cruces on I-25.

LA MESA

Census Designated Place

Population: 737 (2016 estimate)

Located approximately 17 miles south of Las Cruces, on state highway 28, La Mesa is believed to be named after a nearby lava flow, known as Black Mesa. It is home to local favorites Chope's Town Café and Bar, and Stahmann Farms.

LA UNION

Census Designated Place

Population: 1,124 (2016 estimate)

Created by and named for the combining of two early settlements, Los Ojitos and Los Amoles, La Union is located 34 miles south of Las Cruces on state highway 28. It is home to New Mexico's oldest winery, La Viña.

LAS CRUCES

City (County seat)

Population: 101,643 (2015 estimate)

Mayor: Ken Miyagishima

The second-largest city in the state, and the Doña Ana county seat, Las Cruces is home to New Mexico State University, Virgin Galactic headquarters and Spaceport America's corporate offices. It sits at the center of the Mesilla Valley, both geographically and economically.

MESILLA

Town

Population: 1,880 (2014 estimate)

With its rich history, Mesilla was once the economic and social center of the Mesilla Valley. It was an important stop for both the Butterfield Stage and El Camino Real. Mesilla was also the capital of the short-lived Confederate territory of Arizona during the civil war and the site of Billy the Kid's trial in 1881. The historic plaza, with its quaint shops and restaurants, is a major tourist attraction.

MESQUITE

Census Designated Place

Population: 1,112 (2010)

Located 13 miles south of Las Cruces, on state highway 478, Mesquite is a small farming community established in 1882. It was named by railroad executives for the many mesquite bushes that grow there.

ORGAN

Census Designated Place

Population: 323 (2010)

Originally established as a mining camp, Organ is an unincorporated community 14 miles northeast of Las Cruces. It is an active community housing residents who work in Las Cruces and at White Sands Missile Range.

PLACITAS

Census Designated Place

Population: 576 (2010)

Considered a colonia, or suburb, of Hatch, Placitas has a land area of .14 square miles. It lies 1.5 miles west of Hatch on State Road 26.

RADIUM SPRINGS

Census Designated Place

Population: 1,888 (2016 estimate)

Once known as Fort Seldon Springs, Radium Springs derives its name from free-flowing mineral hot springs that contain enough radium per liter to inspire its current name. It lies 17 miles north of Las Cruces.

RINCON

Census Designated Place

Population: 271 (2010)

Briefly known as Thorn following the establishment of its first post office in 1881, Rincon was a major business and trading center due to the railroad switching station located there. It is now a colonia of Hatch, which lies 5 miles to the east.

RODEY

Census Designated Place

Population: 388

Located on the southeast border of Hatch, Rodey has a land area of .56 square miles. It has been credited as the oldest village in the area and was once valued as a defense against Apache raids.

SALEM

Census Designated Place

Population: 942

Originally known as Plaza, Salem is a small farming community located 5 miles northwest of Hatch. In 1908 a group of New Englanders from Salem, Mass., established a post office, renaming the community after their home.

SAN MIGUEL

Census Designated Place

Population: 1,153 (2010)

Established in 1850, San Miguel lies 10 miles south of Mesilla on state road 28. They host an annual festival in September in honor of St. Michael to raise funds for the town's Catholic church.

SAN PABLO

Census Designated Place

Population: 836 (2016 estimate)

With 1.22 square miles of land area containing slightly more than 800 citizens, the small community of San Pablo ranks in the upper quartile for population density for the state of New Mexico. It lies nearly 3 miles southeast of Mesilla.

SAN YSIDRO

Census Designated Place

Population: 194 (2014 estimate)

A popular name in rural New Mexico, San Ysidro shares its name with at least three other communities in the state. It is located 4 miles northwest of Las Cruces.

SANTA TERESA

Census Designated Place

Population: 4,258 (2010)

Recent growth, brought about by a Union Pacific rail facility and its proximity to the New Mexico Port of Entry, has placed Santa Teresa center stage for economic development. The community is currently seeking incorporation.

SUNLAND PARK

City

Population: 15,400 (2014 estimate)

Located on the southernmost end of Doña Ana county, Sunland Park was named for the Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino.

UNIVERSITY PARK

Census Designated Place

Population: 4,192 (2010)

Part of Las Cruces, University Park owes its existence to New Mexico State University. Its land area is 1.55 square miles bound by University Avenue, I-10, and I-25.

VADO

Census Designated Place

Population: 3,194 (2010)

Located 19 miles from Las Cruces, on I-10, Vado was once New Mexico's only predominantly African-American community.

WHITE SANDS

Census Designated Place

Population: 1,651 (2010)

Consisting of the main residential area for the White Sands Missile Range, White Sands is located on the east side of the Organ Mountains.



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South Doña Ana



In Santa Teresa, growth is everybody's business

BY ALTA LECOMPTÉ

An explosion of growth in southern New Mexico is a lot like the instant stardom of an aspiring actor who has flipped burgers for 13 years while waiting for a break.

Among those who have been laying the groundwork for Santa Teresa's big break is Jerry Pacheco, CEO of the Border Industrial Association (BIA).

Pacheco has been promoting his vision for a booming manufacturing economy and residential community for more than 15 years through the BIA, a private economic development organization consisting of more than 100 member companies.

Also working to fulfill southern New Mexico's promise as a booming logistics, manufacturing and residential center are Jon Barela, the new CEO of the Borderplex Alliance, and Bill Mattiace, executive director of the New Mexico Border Authority.

Unlike the BIA, which directs most of its resources to recruiting industry to southern New Mexico, the Borderplex Alliance takes a regional view that incorporates the economic development aspirations of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez/Chihuahua, as well as those of southern Doña Ana County.

The New Mexico Border Authority's role in economic development stems from its responsibility for infrastructure at New Mexico's ports of entry, including Santa Teresa. It was established as a state agency in 1992 to coordinate the operations of New Mexico's ports of entry at Santa Teresa, Columbus and Antelope Wells.

WHAT'S WORKING

Since Union Pacific opened its \$400 million intermodal facility in 2014, logistics companies and manufacturers have been moving in or expanding their operations in Santa Teresa's four industrial parks, where the vacancy rate hovers near zero.

Both the BIA and the Border Authority championed the creation of the commercial overweight zone, which granted truckers the right to haul 96,000 lbs of a reducible load within a 12-mile radius of the Santa Teresa and Columbus Ports of Entry.

Twelve companies are using or intend to use the border overweight zone championed by both the Border Authority and the Borderplex Alliance. Those companies have created 606 jobs, Pacheco said.

State exports rose 30 percent in 2015, 16 percent in 2016, he said.

"The interesting thing is the majority of this growth is happening in Santa Teresa," Pacheco said. "We're now responsible for 46 percent of New Mexico's exports to any part of the world. If this keeps up at this rate, we will surpass Albuquerque as the largest export base in New Mexico."

"As we keep growing and recruiting, we are rapidly becoming the largest export based in New Mexico," Pacheco said.

He said there's a misperception that Santa Teresa is just a logistics hub.

"We have companies doing copper wire, plastic injection, telecommunications technology and auto seats," he said. "When you look at the overall, Santa Teresa jobs are 75 percent industrial-based."

In addition, he said, 1,200 residential lots are under development in Sunland Park and Santa Teresa.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Infrastructure and workforce education are priorities for the organizations as they look to extend southern New Mexico's winning streak.

New Mexico State University Chancellor Garrey Carruthers, co-chair of the Borderplex Alliance, said the organization receives \$2.2 million a year in contributions and should be well positioned to move forward. "If I would ask (Barela) to do one thing, it would be to develop an internationally competent workforce. If you do it, they will come."

Pacheco said one of the big issues he faces when recruiting companies to southern New Mexico is workforce development.

"We need to up the skill set base in southern New Mexico," he said.

He said the BIA has established an industrial internship in cooperation with Doña Ana Community College to do outreach and create customized training in the skills companies need.

The BIA also continues to focus on infrastructure.

"In economic development, our goal is to infrastructure ahead of growth," Pacheco said.

He said the organization is asking for \$1.8 million to fund a water well in Sunland Park.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 68 ■

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Santa Teresa: N.M.'s Economic Engine

New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez spends a lot of time attending ground breakings, ribbon cuttings and grand openings for new and expanded businesses in the southern Doña Ana County industrial hub of Santa Teresa.

Santa Teresa is high on her radar, because it is the state's shining star of job creation and enhanced interstate and international trade for the State of New Mexico.

All of that growth is good for every corner of the state, and it is critical that the New Mexico Legislature dig deep to continue funding infrastructure investments that will allow the growth to continue unabated.

The elected officials and management team of Doña Ana County are committed to shepherding Santa Teresa toward its full potential. To do that, we need help from the Legislature to make improvements to major arterials that are enabling ever-growing heavy truck traffic.

We need commitments to help us build out the Doña Ana County International Jetport at Santa Teresa to accommodate more frequent

and longer-range cargo movement. And we need the state's assistance to ensure that Union Pacific's massive \$413 million transit hub continues to grow and create good-paying jobs for New Mexico residents.

We realize money is tight, and the temptation will be to cut back on capital projects. To do so in Santa Teresa will have an immediate and far-reaching adverse effect on the undeniable economic momentum that is underway with the power of a locomotive.

We implore the 2017 New Mexico Legislature to join us in continuing to invest in Santa Teresa and its promise for the state. From enhanced GRT revenue to job creation and explosive trade growth, Santa Teresa keeps proving that every dollar invested there has a positive outcome for New Mexicans of every political affiliation.

The engine of economic prosperity and eventual self-sufficiency is humming loud and clear in Santa Teresa. Working closely together, we can make it sing!



■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 66

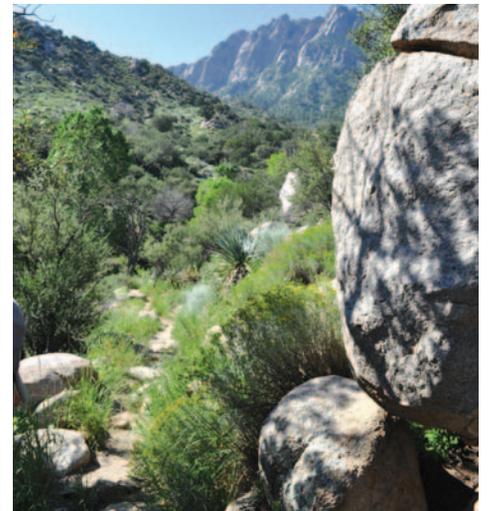
Like a precocious kid astute enough to know its unwise to ask for too many gifts from Santa, Pacheco is keeping his wish list for the 2017 Legislature to a minimum.

The goal for 2017 is to ensure funding already approved by the Legislature is available to flow into road construction and wastewater processing projects, he said.

“\$8.2 million for roads (Airport Road and Industrial Boulevard improvements) should not have an issue,” he said. “In June it went into the design phase.”

Currently, the New Mexico Border Authority is bringing together resources that will build a railroad bypass from Chihuahua, Mexico, to northern Doña Ana County, which could move freight more quickly by avoiding the congestion of rail traffic through El Paso and Juarez.

The Border Authority also plans and advocates for airport and highway construction and maintenance, with its current focus on upgrading Santa Teresa’s main arteries, Airport Road and Domenici Highway.



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Union Pacific workers set bar

BY ALTA LECOMPTE

Although jobs created by construction of Union Pacific's Intermodal Facility in Santa Teresa ended more than two years ago, the company continues to create high-paying jobs and energize the economy of southern Doña Ana County.

"In total, 434 new jobs have been created, with 303 as Union Pacific employees and 131 as facility contractors," said Jeff DeGraff, Union Pacific Railroad director of corporate relations and media.

"The average annualized salary of the 303 UP employees at this site is more than \$89,000, which is double the New Mexico average salary as estimated by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics."

He said UP is proud to invest in its employees as they provide top-notch service to customers and keep the network running safely and efficiently.

Most are train conductors and locomotive engineers.

"Their jobs are to safely and efficiently transport our trains to destinations throughout New Mexico and the Southwest," DeGraff said. "We also employ locomotive and rail car mechanics and repair personnel, administrators, supervisors and myriad others."

DeGraff said UP is proud of its facility and "what it means for our customers and the impact it has had on the surrounding area's economy."

The Santa Teresa Intermodal Facility covers 2,200 acres and has an annual lift capacity of 225,000.

"As we continue to move forward, we look to maximizing production and customer service to meet that capacity," DeGraff said.

In addition to the direct employment opportunities created by the Santa Teresa terminal, the location has become a catalyst for economic development and job creation, he said.

More than 900 additional jobs have been created in Doña Ana County, in part due to the UP terminal and the efforts of the Border Industrial Association.

As well as the Santa Teresa project, from 2011-15, Union Pacific invested more than \$538 million in strengthening its New Mexico rail infrastructure, "helping ensure that New Mexico can count on a world-class rail network as it continues to grow," DeGraff said.

"Union Pacific is constantly engaged with local and regional economic development professionals to ensure mutually beneficial relationships," he said. "Our investments in southern New Mexico and throughout the state highlight our commitment to future growth."

As of June 2016, UP had invested more than \$350 million constructing the fueling and intermodal facility.

Four nearby commercial/industrial parks are now at capacity. Among companies building in the 1,300 acre Santa Teresa Intermodal Park is Omega Trucking of Sunland Park.

In addition, the railroad company maintains a relationship with Doña Ana Community College, hiring DACC graduates and supporting the college through the UP Foundation.

DAC Legislative Coalition sets 2017 priorities for county

BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

The Doña Ana County Legislative Coalition's legislative priorities include maximizing funding for public and higher education, improving county infrastructure, promoting economic development to create jobs, and creating a diversified workforce to take those jobs.

One of the coalition's concerns for last year's session was securing \$25 million in general obligation bonds to renovate D.W. Williams Hall on the New Mexico State University. Voters overwhelmingly approved this funding on Nov. 8.

Heading into the upcoming session, the coalition hopes to continue making progress in the county.

LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

- \$250,000 for upgrades and reconstruction at Doña Ana County Jetport
- Repeal NMSA 1978, § 4-59-15 (IRB Protest Provision)
- Interest and fee caps on non-bank lending institutions
- \$250,000 for Doña Ana County Fairground improvements
- \$675,000 for new-facility equipment at La Clinica De Familia
- \$1.6 million for NMSU-DACC infrastructure upgrades
- Revise PERA rules for retirees re-entering the workforce
- \$3 million for competitive pool enclosure in Las Cruces
- \$570,000-\$3.5 million for septic tank remediation in Las Cruces
- \$1 million for Las Cruces road improvements
- \$1 million for Las Cruces traffic-signal synchronization plans
- Tax policy overhaul
- \$2.8 million for operational funding, license authorization at Spaceport America
- \$500,000 for center for education innovation center



Grant



Quality of life in Grant County faces economic and environmental concerns

BY BONNIE SCHRANZ

Life for rural New Mexicans is a double-edged sword; it calls for maintaining a beautiful environment and ensuring land and water security, while simultaneously dealing with growing economic challenges. This is especially true for the almost 29,000 residents of Grant County.

The Gila National Forest, City of Rocks, lakes to fish and scenic trails to wander are just a few of the environmental attractions that bring people to Grant County, both new residents and visitors. Four mild seasons are an obvious draw, but so are strong educational opportunities at all levels, including access to Western New Mexico University, with a main campus of 3,500 students in Silver City and satellite campus locations in Deming, Gallup and Truth or Consequences.

Expecting recurring budget cuts as the state faces a financial crisis, WNMU President Joe Shepard in a September 2016 blog outlined a course of consolidating resources and reducing spending, along with a proactive goal of growing the student body.

Grant County, acclaimed for arts and cultural offerings, also has numerous opportunities for volunteers in more than 30 nonprofit organizations serving the county. Silver City was recently touted as one of the “17 Coolest Towns in America” by aroundme.com.

The county-owned Gila Regional Medical Center is a 68-bed acute care hospital with a 4-Star Quality Care rating by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Its staff of 640 makes it the county's third-largest employer.

A conversation with Scott C. Terry, president of the Chamber of Commerce, touched on several important economic factors at play in the future of Grant County, including the county's top employer, the mining industry.

The New Mexico Supreme Court is expected to rule in 2017 on the state's Copper Rule as applied to the construction of a new waste rock stockpile as an expansion of the Chino Mine. Opponents argue it violates New Mexico clean-water laws, while the

industry's position is that the state's tough groundwater protection requirements have been met.

“The copper mines are a huge thing for us,” Terry said. “If the price of copper doesn't go up, and if we overregulate that industry, they may just shut down and say they can no longer operate profitably in Grant County New Mexico.”

The county's 2016 unemployment figure averaged 4.90 percent, rising to 6.6 percent in September. This is a fraction lower than fall 2015's 6.7 percent, but above the national average.

“Jobs are scarce in rural New Mexico and producing new jobs is almost just as scarce,” Terry said.

Population growth is also stagnant. But one sweet bit of news is that St. Claire's Organics, an organic candy manufacturer, will bring its operation from Colorado to Santa Clara, just outside Silver City, attracted they say by Grant County's welcoming attitude, business-friendly environment and financial incentives. The company will add 10 to 15 jobs. Another plus is Boutique Airlines expanding its flight schedule from the Silver City Airport located in Hurley to include Phoenix, Arizona.

Water rights are another game changer in a desert state. A proposal from the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission for a diversion of the Gila River has been debated for more than a decade, with no clear plan of action determined to date. In June 2016, the New Mexico Central Arizona Project Entity narrowed their scope to projects costing \$80 to 100 million to build, an amount New Mexico expects to receive from the federal government to develop water from the Gila.

“Even though Silver City itself doesn't have an issue of water availability right now, in the future it could, so the diversion of Gila waters and hanging onto the water rights that we presently have rather than giving it to Arizona is another huge issue. It's a very divisive issue,” Terry said.

Opponents of the project, including the Gila Conservation Coalition, fear negative impact of the Gila's natural flow and harm to the river's hydrology

CONTINUED ON PAGE 71 ■

LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

- Regulation of the mining industry
- Job growth
- Funding for a diversion of the Gila River and issues surrounding water rights, conservation
- Continued push for expansion of Highway 180



and ecological systems. Silver City opposes the diversion option and instead adopted a water conservation plan in 2013. The Arizona Water Settlements Act requires a National Environmental Policy Act record of decision on the diversion project by 2019.

Progress can be seen in infrastructure projects, according to Grant County Manager Charlene Webb. The remodel of Grant County Conference Center is complete, so it may now comfortably host large groups, potentially bringing new conventions to the region.

Work on another important construction project, Tu Casa Adult Drug and Rehabilitation Center, is anticipated in 2017. Road work includes improvements on Rosedale Road. Planning, engineering and design of the Tyrone Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance sidewalks is ongoing, and application for construction funding is set for 2017. However, funding for expansion of Highway 180 to a four-lane artery is still on hold, Scott Terry said.

“It’s a priority to continue to push for that,” he said.

GRANT COUNTY COMMUNITIES

BAYARD City

Population: 2,304 (2014 estimate)
Located in the foothills of the Gila and Mogollon mountains, Bayard was incorporated in 1938.

CLIFF

Census designated place

Population: 293
Primarily a farming and ranching community, the post office was established in 1894.

HURLEY

Town

Population: 1,278 (2014 estimate)
As early as 1801, the Chino Mines were the principal source of copper for the mint in Mexico.

PINOS ALTOS

Census designated place

Population: 198
Spanish for “tall pines,” Pinos Altos is located in the Gila National Forest, with several historic places to visit.

SANTA CLARA

Village

Population: 1,665 (2014 estimate)
A part of the central mining district that includes Bayard, Hanover and Hurley, Santa Clara was founded in the early 1860s. In the 1960s, residents from nearby Santa Rita removed their homes from the path of the expanding open pit mining operation of the Kennecott Copper Corp.

SAN LORENZO

Census designated place

Population: 97
San Lorenzo is a scenic village located in the Mimbres Valley. The San Lorenzo Canyon Recreation area offers opportunities for hiking and primitive camping.

SILVER CITY

County seat

Town

Population: 10,172 (2014 estimate)
Silver City, the largest town in Grant County, is a hub of activity. It values and preserves its historical, cultural and natural heritage. Home to a four-year university and historic downtown and cultural district, it is surrounded by the Gila National Forest.



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Prospectors group works year-round for Silver City

BY STEVE CHIANG

Whenever one sees a headline in Grant County, whether it's funding the Cancer Center of the Gila Regional Medical Center or upgrading fire-fighting vehicles for a Grant County town, chances are, the Grant County Prospectors have contributed greatly to the effort.

Founded in 1978, the Grant County Prospectors could well be the first regional advocacy group in New Mexico.

"We wanted to get Silver City recognized in the state of New Mexico, that we were part of the state," said one of the original and recently retired Prospectors, Mike Trujillo.

Today the Prospectors' expanded mission is "to educate policy makers and community members about the economic, community development and legislative needs in Grant County." Its efforts are a year-round commitment that involves planning, hosting interim legislative committees and partnering to promote capital improvement plan training workshops.

"Prospectors has become a model organization and other state legislators want to create this kind of support in their districts," said Prospectors President Bruce Ashburn.

Ashburn said the group is a nonpartisan and nonpolitical entity. It advocates for the local community by educating and creating awareness among legislators and the general public of issues facing the community and the importance of aligning public policy to address the need.

Every December, Prospectors members hold a legislative communications forum. The

Forum was created at the request of local legislators to provide opportunity for county citizens to have an open dialogue with them about community needs and projects. The forum results in summary notebooks for each of the area legislators and sets the agenda for "Grant County Day at the Roundhouse" event held during the legislative session in Santa Fe.

At this annual event, Prospectors, county and municipal leaders, and civic group representatives meet in person with our cabinet secretaries, House and Senate Leadership, and the governor to discuss Grant County topics. Some of the top issues raised in 2016 are:

1. Address delayed governmental agency processing and funding
2. Local government: fund capital outlay needs and regional fresh water storage
3. Education: support infrastructure, programs and safety
4. Community health
5. Economic development
6. Rural services

Members of the Prospectors are all volunteers and the group is funded by membership dues and donations. Officers of the group serve one-year terms. Membership reflects the diversity of the local community. The Prospectors has a limit of 50 members and currently has 38. The organization values diversity and welcomes potential members that are passionate about the community. For information, visit grantcountyprospectors.org.

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www.cobre.k12.nm.us

CHARTER SCHOOLS
Aldo Leopold Charter School
1422 U.S. Highway 180 East,
Silver City NM 88061
575-538-2547

PRIVATE SCHOOLS
Guadalupe Montessori School
1731 N. Alabama St.,
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1-800-872-9668
<http://wnmu.edu>

QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 28,609 (2015 estimate)
Households: 12,2296 (2010-2014)
Median household income: \$38,923 (2010-2014)
Persons below poverty level: 19.1 percent (2010-2014)

BUSINESS

Private nonfarm establishments: 624 (2014)
Private nonfarm employment: 6,885 (2014)
Non-employer establishments: 1,541 (2014)
Total number of firms: 1,930 (2014)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 3,962
Persons per square mile: 7.4 (2010)





Hidalgo



County's legislative concerns are primarily educational

BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

Hidalgo County's Lordsburg Municipal Schools' (LMS) main legislative priority this upcoming session is finding a balance between revenue and expenditures, so that more money can be allocated to school districts such as LMS, which is currently dealing with a shortage of teachers, said LMS Superintendent Randy Piper.

"We just can't hire teachers," he said.

Piper said, at a recent meeting with Western New Mexico University, he was told that statewide, there aren't enough students in higher education pursuing careers in education, and said he believed the cause was less-than-national-average pay for New Mexico teachers.

"Teachers work hard, but if we go to a job fair at NMSU, we've got people sitting in the booth next to us from Texas that are paying \$10,000 more to start," Piper said.

LMS, Piper said, cannot afford to pay signing bonuses and moving expenses as some other counties even within the state can.

LMS is facing a 1.5 percent reduction on its FY2015 budget of \$5,748,337. The new budget started in December, Piper said, because of the statewide budget cuts.

The Hidalgo County Commission is not requesting any items be on the agenda of the 60-day 2017 New Mexico legislative session, said Darr Shannon, an Hidalgo county commissioner.

"We've never been at the top of the list anyway," Shannon said. "We're so small and so rural and pretty impoverished; we don't have any industry here, everyone works somewhere else, we've got a lot of people that are on Medicaid. And so, we don't have any requests."

Shannon said the commission received, upon request, \$400,000 from the state on behalf of the efforts of John Arthur Smith (D-Deming), to build a health clinic in the southern part of Hidalgo County.

"(But) the Hidalgo Medical Services decided they didn't want to put in that clinic, even though they had promised that, so we asked for (the money) to be re-appropriated, and so we are going to use as much of that money as we can for our fairgrounds," Shannon said.

The re-appropriation has already been approved, she said.

Shannon said she was disappointed when she learned HMS, a federally funded health provider with clinics throughout Grants County, was no longer interested in building a clinic in Rodeo.

"We wanted (a clinic) in Rodeo, which is about 60 miles from Lordsburg, which is the county seat," she said.

Initially, she said, HMS was receptive to the idea of building a new clinic in Rodeo, pending funds.

"Then, all of the sudden, that wasn't something (HMS) thought was viable," Shannon said. "The thing that gets me is there's the people in Portal, Arizona, right there along the border with Rodeo that would have benefited from this clinic."

Shannon said using the re-appropriated money on the fairgrounds is a wise, though "goofy"-sounding, idea because that area gets much more traffic than many other parts of the county.

"We've got a lot of hard-working community members that work hard during our fair, then we have other events out there," Shannon said.

LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

- Better pay for teachers to combat a shortage
- Re-appropriation of funds allocated for defunct health clinic to work on fairgrounds

QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 4,423 (2015 estimate)
 Households: 1,858 (2014)
 Median household income: \$35,048 (2014)
 Persons below poverty level, percent: 24.5 percent (2014)

BUSINESS

Private nonfarm establishments: 94 (2014)
 Private nonfarm employment: 826 (2014)
 Non-employer establishments: 208 (2014)
 Total number of firms: 250 (2012)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 3,436.86
 Persons per square mile: 1.4 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov

HIDALGO COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ANIMAS

Census designated place

Population: 240 (2016 estimate)

Founded around 1753 by the Spanish, Animas became part of the newly independent country of Mexico in 1821. A ranching community, it is located in the area sold to the United States with the Gadsden Purchase of 1853. The name probably came from the Spanish for souls, or lost souls and may refer to the numerous people who died during the early days of Apache-settler conflict.

COTTON CITY

Census designated place

Population: 393 (2016 estimate)

The Cotton City area was centered around a cotton gin for many years. The region has had

a strong farming base, growing chile, cotton, beans and corn. Cotton City is included with Animas for mail and educational services. Gas and food are bought elsewhere.

GLEN ACRES

Census designated place

Population: 337

Glen Acres is a golf and country club subdivision next to Lordsburg. The city of Lordsburg is working to incorporate the area in order to include it in water and sewage services.

LORDSBURG

City, County Seat

Population: 2,531 (2015 estimate)

Located on Interstate 10, Lordsburg is the county seat and most populous town in Hidalgo County. The area dates back to the 1880s, when the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad brought with it railroad workers, farmers, ranchers, miners and merchants. The town received publicity in the classic 1939 Western, "Stagecoach," starring John Wayne.

RODEO

Census designated place

Population: 101

One mile from the Arizona border on state Highway 80, Rodeo is New Mexico's westernmost town. Founded in 1902 as a rail stop, it once was an important shipping point for livestock. The town today is home to the Chiricahua Art Museum and the Chiricahua Desert Museum.

VIRDEN

Village

Population: 154 (2016 estimate)

Established by the New Mexico Mining Co. as Richmond in 1916, this site along the Gila River was chosen to build a stamp mill. In 1912, Mormons leaving Chihuahua during the Mexican Revolution entered into talks with the company, eventually purchasing the area for \$50,000 and renaming the town Virden in honor of NMMC president Ernest Virden.

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Animas Independent Schools

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Hidalgo_Learning_Center.shtml
https://extended.wnmu.edu/lordsburg/





Lincoln

Ruidoso leverages partnerships, grants and funds to support tourism

BY MARTY RACINE

Ruidoso's economic engine is tourism. While tourism revenue continues to grow, it brings unique challenges to the community, said Village Manager Debi Lee.

"With a full-time population of only 8,000, (we) must have the infrastructure and services necessary to serve over 30,000 seasonal residents and tourists on any given day," Lee said. "While the demands for services increase, the Village has leveraged funding for needed infrastructure through legislative capital outlay, pursuit of grants and private/public partnerships."

Recent examples of how Ruidoso has leveraged these sources include:

- Installation of a new \$600,000 HVAC system at the Convention Center to reduce operating and utility costs, funded through lodger tax funds and capital outlay.
- Park improvements, including bathroom facilities and playgrounds funded through capital outlay, private foundation grants, lodger tax funds and private donations.
- Expansion of public trails, primarily funded through grants and private donations.
- Continued thinning of forested trees, funded through federal grants, capital outlay, local government funds and capital investment from landowners.
- Providing workforce affordable housing, with a comprehensive study funded through grants and local government funds; a land bank and trust fund is receiving seed funding through proceeds from sale of excess Village-owned properties.
- Continued improvements of the water infrastructure for aging and leaking pipes. Funding sources include general obligation

bonds, a special GRT authorized by the Legislature for water, capital outlay and grants.

- Expansion/realignment of wastewater lines. Funding sources include FEMA, state and local funding.
- Replacement of bridges damaged in the 2008 flood. Funding sources include FEMA, grants and local funding.
- Implementation of the New Mexico MainStreet "Accelerator Community" designation. Funding sources will include local government, private donations and support through the New Mexico Economic Development Department.

• Implementation of the regional economic development plan designed under the Stronger Economies Together program of the USDA. Funding will be a combination of grants, local government and private businesses.

• The Village and Ruidoso Municipal School District are working on an agreement to exchange Village land for a school building. If completed, the project will allow the Village to consolidate several offices into a single building.

Meanwhile, officials await the results of a \$3 million installation of a new geotextile liner on the inner face of Grindstone Dam, the village's main reservoir. Six years ago, divers inspecting Grindstone discovered "soft spots" in the 123-foot-high wall, resulting in seepage that lowered the water table by 28 feet.

Ruidoso Water Production Manager Randy Koehn told the Ruidoso News in October that some positive results already have been detected.

"But the real test will come as the reservoir is refilled and the water level is high," Koehn said. "I think in a few months we'll know."

LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

- Capital outlay funding for infrastructure projects

QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 19,420 (2015 estimate)
Households: 8,640 (2015 estimate)
Median household income: \$41,710 (2014)
Persons below poverty level: 20.1 percent (2014)

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 689 (2014)
Total employment: 5,068 (2014)
Non-employer establishments: 1,899 (2014)
Total firms: 2,794 (2012)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 4,831.09
Persons per square mile: 4.2 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov

LINCOLN COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ALTO

Census-designated place

Population: 1,213

Located in the Lincoln National Forest, 5 miles north of the village of Ruidoso, this golf course community is at 7,300 feet and received its name from the Spanish word "high" because of its elevation.

CAPITAN

Village

Population: 1,439

Located north of the Lincoln National Forest, Capitan was founded in the 1890s and incorporated in 1941. It is both the birthplace and final resting place of U.S. Forest Service mascot Smokey Bear.

CARRIZOZO

Town, county seat

Population: 970 (2013 estimate)

Carrizozo was founded in 1899 and grew to prominence as the main railroad access for the county. The town experienced significant population growth in the early decades of the 1900s, but as significance of railroad transport diminished, the population gradually declined. Carrizozo has a burgeoning art district downtown and is known statewide for a cherry cider drink, often found in rural convenience stores.

CORONA

Village

Population: 165

Corona was established as a stagecoach stop in the 1850s, then a railroad town in 1903. Located on U.S. Highway 54, Corona is where the famous 1947 UFO crash was first reported and is actually closer to the crash site than Roswell, which was made famous by the incident.

FORT STANTON

State historical site

Population: 41

Built in 1855 by the U.S. government to protect settlements along the Rio Bonito from marauding Apaches, Fort Stanton was occupied by Confederate forces during the Civil War. It became the country's first tuberculosis internment camp during World War II. It was established as a living history venue in 2008.

HONDO

Census-designated place

Population: 225

Spanish settlers in the 1880s founded Hondo where the Rio Bonito and Rio Ruidoso converge to form the Rio Hondo.

LINCOLN

State historical site

Population: 51

Originally called Las Placitas del Rio Bonito when it was first settled in the 1850s, the town was renamed after Lincoln County was created in 1869. It is the most visited state monument in New Mexico because Billy the Kid made an infamous escape from its courthouse during the Lincoln County War. Many historical buildings out of the Old West, some of them restored, remain.

RUIDOSO

Village

Population: 7,824 (2014 estimate)

The mountain resort town is a destination for both New Mexicans and Texans seeking cooler summers and greener scenery. Located in the Sierra Blanca mountain range, the village takes its name from the Rio Ruidoso, which translates to Noisy River. Alto, Mescalero and Ruidoso Downs are considered suburbs of Ruidoso statistically, though Ruidoso Downs has its own city government.

RUIDOSO DOWNS

City

Population: 2,635 (2014 estimate)

Formerly known as Hollywood and Greentree, this city that adjoins Ruidoso draws visitors to The Ruidoso Downs Race Track, Billy the Kid Casino and the Hubbard Museum of the American West.

SAN PATRICIO

Town

Population: 564

This community is home to a Benedictine spirituality center and sits at 5,400 feet. The historic town was part of the Lincoln County War and is located on the Rio Ruidoso between Hondo and Glencoe.

WHITE OAKS

Ghost town

Population: Undetermined

Located on the outskirts of the Lincoln National Forest, White Oaks began as a gold boomtown in 1879. By the early 1900s, the mines had dried up and the town was almost — but not completely — abandoned. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, one of the town's saloons remains open — the No Scum Allowed Saloon.



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County seeks capital outlay funding for three major projects

BY MARTY RACINE

Lincoln County, once the largest geographical county in the U.S., is still vast enough to exhibit a multiple split personality.

Carrizozo, the county seat, is a dusty ranching town in the Tularosa Basin. County namesake Lincoln draws Old West history buffs, while once-thriving White Oaks became a ghost town before its current revival. Corona in the north might feel more tethered to Albuquerque than to points south. The Hondo Valley has long feuded with Ruidoso, the cultural center and tourist mecca, over water rights. Casino gambling and horse racing support Ruidoso Downs, while sleepy Capitan hosts the county fair and is the final resting place for Smokey Bear.

With so many different interests, county government must juggle occasionally competing agendas. But as a united front, County Manager Nita Taylor identifies three major projects for capital outlay requests to the 2017 Legislature:

- Expand the White Oaks Fire Station, \$255,000.

This request is the County's No 1 priority this year; the existing station barely houses three of the six apparatus utilized by White Oaks' volunteer fire fighters to respond to emergencies.

Per the county, the expansion is necessary to "house existing apparatus and meet the

needs of residents and property owners." The expansion will be of metal construction, approximately 40 feet by 60 feet, and will house three bays. The county is in the final stages of selecting its design contractor.

The White Oaks Fire Department has 21 members responsible for protecting a 225-square-mile area of grasslands and forest that includes the historic town of White Oaks and the surrounding Patos and Jicarilla Mountains in Lincoln County and the Lincoln National Forest. The department also responds to calls for assistance in other areas of the county.

The New Mexico State Legislature has awarded Lincoln County two prior allocations for the station in the amounts of \$20,000 and \$25,000.

- Expand the Lincoln County Detention Center, \$427,000.

The current detention center, built and opened in 2001 in Carrizozo, is sized for 144 detainees. Since June 2013, the space is inadequate to house inmates other than county residents. In addition, the medical suite of the facility is undersized and requires modifications. The New Mexico State Legislature has awarded the County a prior allocation in the amount of \$163,000.

The County hopes to tackle one phase of the overall project in 2017 by constructing a new medical suite. The project is in the design

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- The building of a new \$25 million hospital. On Nov. 8, voters approved Lincoln County's issuance of a \$25 million GO Bond to build it. Taxpayers should not be affected, as cost of the project is expected to be covered by a renegotiation of the county's property lease with Presbyterian Healthcare Services. The new hospital will be located on the same property as the existing Lincoln County Medical Center, which will be converted into a parking lot once new construction is complete. The target completion date is late 2018.
- Relocating and building a new road department and yard. The yard is currently located in a residential area of Main Road.

stage. The 1,767-square-foot expansion is critical, the County feels, to "ensure the health, safety and welfare of inmates and employees."

- County road re-paving, three miles, \$500,000.

Lincoln County has slightly more than 800 miles of road to maintain, with approximately 100 of those paved. With annual re-pavement projects, paved roads will be maintained in a manner that would "ensure the health, safety and welfare of county residents and visitors."

EDUCATION

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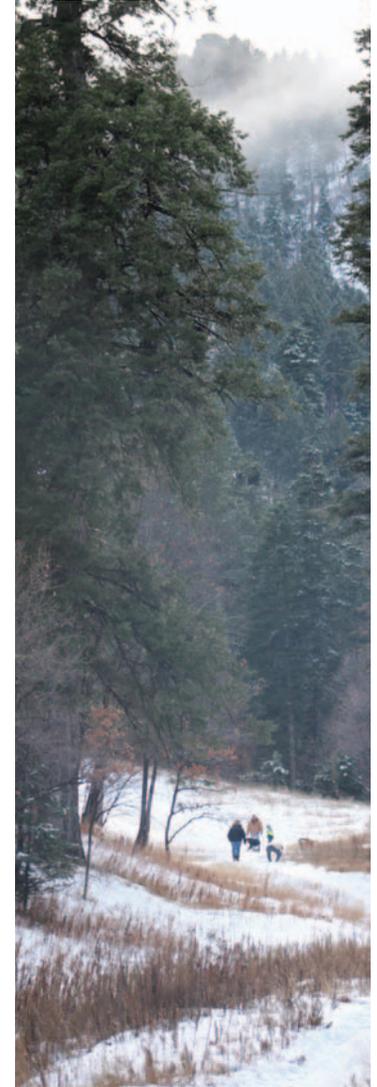
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SunZia project moves forward

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

The planned SunZia Southwest Transmission Project consists of approximately 515 miles of two single-circuit 500 Kilovolt (kV) transmission lines. SunZia is designed to connect and deliver electricity generated in Arizona and New Mexico to population centers in the Desert Southwest.

The transmission lines are planned to originate at a new substation in Lincoln County in the vicinity of Corona, and terminate at the Pinal Central Substation in Pinal County near Coolidge, Arizona.

The electricity distributed by SunZia could help meet the nation's demand for renewable energy and reduce dependence on fossil fuels for power production.

In January 2015, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved SunZia's application for right-of-way across federal property.

Three segments, totaling five miles of the project in Socorro and Torrance Counties in New Mexico, will be buried in order to mitigate impacts to military operations

at White Sands Missile Range. The impacts of burial have been analyzed in a Mitigation Proposal Environmental Assessment (EA) that has also been approved. The Project has the potential to add 3,000 to 4,500 megawatts of added electric capacity to the desert southwest region of the United States.

White Sands Missile Range Commander Brig. Gen. Eric L. Sanchez said SunZia has made requests for access to start surveying and SunZia and WSMR have been working closely with the office of the Secretary of Defense to insure the necessary protections are in place.

"They have agreed to run a good portion of the line underground," he said. "Right now I don't see any big issues. We asked for corridors underground. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done. From our standpoint, we are insuring they understand what our requirements are."

Sanchez said SunZia must work separate agreements with the ranchers in the range's call up areas.

Luna



County concerned with economic development, improving education

BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

Legislative priorities for Luna County and its county seat, Deming, in the upcoming session include addressing the state's budget crisis, creating jobs and attracting industry.

Deming has enough people to support more companies in the town, said City Councilor Joe "Butter" Milo.

A new high school is being built in Deming and a new middle school is also being considered, Milo said.

Getting the budget fixed so that these new schools can be built and function properly is important, Milo said.

Western New Mexico University's Deming campus is also concerned about balancing the

state budget, said President Joseph Shepard.

"Our focus will be to make sure the Legislature supports higher education, particularly WNMU, how it contributes to the economy as an economic driver and how the appropriations from the state keep tuition low," said Shepard.

Shepard said WNMU is also concerned about capital improvement funding and said he expects WNMU's severance tax money will be lower than prior years.

Ensuring that WNMU receives its fair share of capital improvement funding and tax money to fund campus and branch maintenance, as well as improve online courses, is WNMU's secondary priority, Shepard said.

LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

- Addressing state's budget crisis
- Support for WNMU by way of capital improvement funding

QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 24,518 (2015 estimate)
Households: 9,120 (2014)
Median household income: \$28,489 (2014)
Persons below poverty level: 30.6 percent (2014)

BUSINESS

Private nonfarm total employer establishments: 392 (2014)
Total employment: 4,301 (2014)
Total non-employer establishments: 1,002 (2014)
Total number of firms: 1,353 (2012)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 2,965.10
Population per square mile: 8.5 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov



LUNA COUNTY COMMUNITIES

COLUMBUS

Village

Population: 1,625 (2015 estimate)
Thirty miles south of Deming and three miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border, opposite the Mexican village of Puerto Palomas, Chihuahua, stands Columbus, the second-most-populous town in Luna County. In 1916, the town was attacked by Mexican revolutionary Francisco "Pancho" Villa, killing eight soldiers and 10 residents, in what historians refer to as the Battle of Columbus.

Columbus Elementary School serves schoolchildren from both Columbus and its neighbor to the south, Palomas, by busing students across the border.

DEMING

City

Population: 14,749 (2016 estimate)
The Luna County Seat, Deming is the largest city in the county and is home to nearly 60 percent of its population. Founded in 1881 and incorporated in 1902, Deming began as a main port of entry near the Mexican border and has grown into an agricultural center and transportation hub. Tourism and retirement are also major industries.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

LUNA COUNTY COMMISSION

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Linda Smrkovsky

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John Sweetser

District 3

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Deming, NM 88030

575-546-8848

www.cityofdeming.org

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Mayor

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dsanchez505@q.com

Roxana Rincon

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EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Deming Public Schools

1001 S. Diamond Ave.,

Deming, NM 88030

www.demingps.org

COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES

Mimbres Valley Learning

Center (WNMU)

2300 E. Pine St.,

Deming, NM 88030

575-546-6556

http://wnmu.edu/

ExtUniv/deming





Otero



County moves forward with multiple improvement projects

BY ELVA K. OSTERREICH

Some long-awaited projects are finally coming to fruition in Otero County and are expected to move forward in 2017.

Alamogordo Mayor Richard Boss said the city is excited at the passing of a \$6 million bond allowing the Family Fun Center and Bowling Alley to begin construction.

"It's been a long haul," Boss said. "The plans are 95 percent complete and it (the Fun Center) should be done late in 2017. A lot of our kids are going to have something to do; it's going to be a real quality of life thing for Alamogordo."

The new facility is going to be a 24-lane bowling alley and will include laser tag, an arcade and a full-service restaurant with an outdoor eating area.

Boss also said there will be two squadrons of F-16s coming into Holloman Airforce Base.

"This is exciting news for Alamogordo and New Mexico," he said.

Otero County lost no capital outlay dollars during the 2016 legislative sessions, Otero County Commissioner Susan Flores said.

She said there are several projects the county is still working on and others they will be asking to fund in the upcoming session.

Dollars already awarded for projects currently happening include the expansion of a building for the Children in Need of Services facility which provides an umbrella for both children's and adult food services and children's daycare and counseling services.

The county commission is working to get a senior center built in the community of Chaparral in southern Otero County and

received \$194,600 to complete the kitchen part of it, Flores said.

Other community and senior centers in the county are being upgraded and improved with the help of capital outlay and bond money including those in High Rolls and Mayhill.

Other projects already in motion include completing work on the Otero County Fairgrounds, upgrading the facilities there and providing HVAC and ADA upgrades at the Flickinger Center for Performing Arts, which received \$225,000, she said.

Other projects funded by bond money include an animal shelter upgrade and HVAC upgrades in county administration and courthouse buildings.

Breaking ground in November 2016, the Otero County Solid Waste Convenience Center in La Luz has begun major expansion construction, a \$1.8 million project, Flores said. The center is being upgraded to a full-scale transfer station where it will compact trash, slowing down the filling of the Otero County Landfill, located 24 miles south of Alamogordo on U.S. Highway 54.

Greentree Solid Waste Authority, the contracted trash collector for Lincoln and Otero counties, will be able to process trash at the new transfer station, saving wear and tear on the road and trucks, reducing the chances of trash escaping into the environment in transport, Flores said.

On the November 2016 ballot, there appeared a question asking voters if they would be interested in increasing the Otero

CONTINUED ON PAGE 82 ■

LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

- \$700,000 for a new fire station in Timberon.
- Emergency operation center equipment and improvements.
- Protections for fragile adults from fraud in their retirement accounts.
- Regulatory reform in the area of child care
- Support for economic development projects

QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 64,362 (2015 estimate)
Households: 23,907 (2014)
Median household income: \$40,614 (2014)
Persons below poverty level: 20.2 percent (2014)

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 958 (2014)
Total employment: 11,651 (2014)
Total non-employer establishment: 3,203 (2014)
Total number of firms: 3,918 (2012)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 6,613.21
Persons per square mile: 9.6 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov

County Commission to five positions, up from the current three. Flores feels the question may have confused some of the voters reading it. The vote, of which the results indicated people would like to see the commission increase, did not actually increase the commission numbers.

“It was a general survey question,” Flores said. “There is a lot more information we need before making that decision.”

For a county commission to increase its numbers, the current sitting commissioners must vote unanimously for that to happen. Flores said there are too many unanswered questions about what that would mean and how much it would cost before that will happen.

On the agricultural front, Otero County has commercial operations in pecans, pistachios and apples, said Otero County Agriculture Agent Sidney Gordon. There are also many people who grow crops on the side.

“We are the largest pistachio production county in the state,” Gordon said. “And although we are the second-largest county in the state, the cattle production is not the largest.”

The 2016 pecan and pistachio crops saw some wind damage, but still produced a good crop. Apple and cherry orchards saw some significant hail damage, he said.

The weather is certainly a contributing factor in smaller production numbers, he said.

“I don’t know what percent we are down because of the mild impacts,” he said. “As long as we get low enough degree days to get the trees into their production cycle, we will be OK.”

But weather also affects the water in the Tularosa Basin, which is not in the greatest situation.

“We are highly dependent on runoff, no different than any other basin,” Gordon said. “We need snow for surface irrigation and ground-water aquifers. We haven’t had good snowpack for a good while. There is a good chance we are going to la Niña which will affect the whole southern part of the state.”

On the brighter side, Gordon said Otero County can go forward implementing a noxious weed management plan the Otero branch of the New Mexico Soil and water Conservation District has been working on for years.

“So we have gone back to the county and are working with other agencies to try and get suppression and control on invasive weeds,” he said. “We had a school for county employees that work on the roads and the grounds and are going to start a large push to try to get those under control.”

ELECTED OFFICIALS

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Patrick Garcia

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Robert Sainz

575-491-8577

John “Ray” Telles

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CLOUDCROFT VILLAGE COUNCIL

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Bruce Smaga, Mayor Pro-tem

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Cindy Voight

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Jim Maynard

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Bill Denney

billd@ote-coop.com

Alamogordo ready to look for desalination facility contractors

BY ELVA K. OSTERREICH

Alamogordo, the biggest municipality in Otero County, has water concerns of its own. Water sources continue to diminish, such as existing wells to Bonito Lake which became unusable in 2012 when the Little Bear Fire caused sediment and ash to shut down the area. The area is still under repair.

Developing a plan for a desalination facility, the city, after many years of getting things lined up, is scheduled to advertise for construction in January 2017, according to Sarah Tuite, design engineer with design contractors CDM Smith Inc. The company is designing the desalination plant and Tuite is the project manager.

The desalination plant will divert brackish water from a well field north of Tularosa and carry it to the desalination facility planned adjacent to the city’s convenience center (trash compactor) off LaVelle

Road.

“What you’re going to be getting are two half-a-million-gallon-a-day treatment capacity skids ... (like the kind) that the Navy uses,” Robert Fowlie of CDM Smith Inc. told Alamogordo city commissioners at a meeting presentation in 2015. “It is essentially a modular type treatment unit on a skid, that’s set onto a concrete pad, and then the piping is connected to it.”

He said the firm designed the facility’s building, chemical feed systems, site-specific conditions and the integration of the new water supply into Alamogordo’s existing system.

“Not only are we treating the water, we’re having to put in the infrastructure and design it so that we can take that treated water and put it in your system in an efficient manner, so that you can properly use it,” Fowlie said.

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Alamogordo Public Schools
1211 Hawaii Ave.,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-812-6000
www.aps4kids.org

Cloudcroft Municipal Schools

10 Swallow Place,
Cloudcroft, NM 88317
P.O. Box 198
575-601-4416
www.cmsbears.org

Tularosa Public Schools

504 First St., Tularosa, NM 88352
575-585-8800
www.tularosa.k12.nm.us

NM School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

1900 N. White Sands Blvd.,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-437-3505
www.nmsbvi.k12.nm.us

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Father James B. Hay Catholic School

Type: Roman Catholic
Grades PK-5
1000 E. Eighth St.,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-437-7821
http://fjbhcatholic.org

Imago Dei Academy

Type: Classical Christian School
1100 Michigan Ave.,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-434-3903
www.ida-alamo.org

Legacy Christian Academy

Type: Private, Catholic
Grades PK-12
Prep. National Top 50

Honor Roll School
3001 Thunder Rd.,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-434-0352
www.legacychristianacademy-
edu.com

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

New Mexico State University-Alamogordo NMSU-A, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, offers freshman and sophomore level classes and consists of three divisions: Humanities, Social Sciences & Education; Math, Engineering Science & Health; and Professional Occupations, Technology & Fine Arts.
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575-439-3600
www.nmsua.edu

Park University

Fourth Street, Suite 203,
Holloman AFB
575-479-2337
www.park.edu/campus-centers/
new-mexico/nm-alamogordo.html

NM State University

at Holloman AFB
596 4th St. #249, Holloman AFB
575-479-4318
http://nmsua.edu/student-
services/holloman-afb

Coastline Community College

596 4th St., Holloman AFB
575-479-1045
http://military.coastline.edu

Central Texas College

596 4th St. #224, Holloman AFB
575-479-4188
www.ctcd.edu/locations/other-
us-locations/holloman-afb

Cultural landscape of southern New Mexico reflected at new museum

BY JOAN E. PRICE

With the grand opening of the shining-white Tularosa Basin Historical Museum (one of the Otero County's signature capital outlay projects) in January 2016 at the entrance into the historic district of Alamogordo, a passionate local community of history activists initiated a strong new course for the small city hoping to attract people to its warm winters and scenic attractions.

The building, built in 1938, is on the State Register of Cultural Properties.

The museum stands finished with some 80 displays, a gift shop, research library, a small theater and classroom space and storage and work space.

Curator Jean Killer-Dann deals with all-important documentation for the many donations of historic items stored for up to 50 years in vaults out of public view and now being incorporated for display for the wall space in the new museum.

"As curator, I receive lots of materials — photos, documents, manuscripts, furniture and clothing, paintings and artifacts from various residents," Killer-Dann said. "Our acquisition policy or collection policy direction is that it must come from the Tularosa Basin.

"We have to receive some kind of documented information

with donations and if they don't have anything demonstrating origination in the basin, we don't accept it. Our standard of provenance has to reflect involvement of basin cultural resources because that is the way the museum was established and organized."

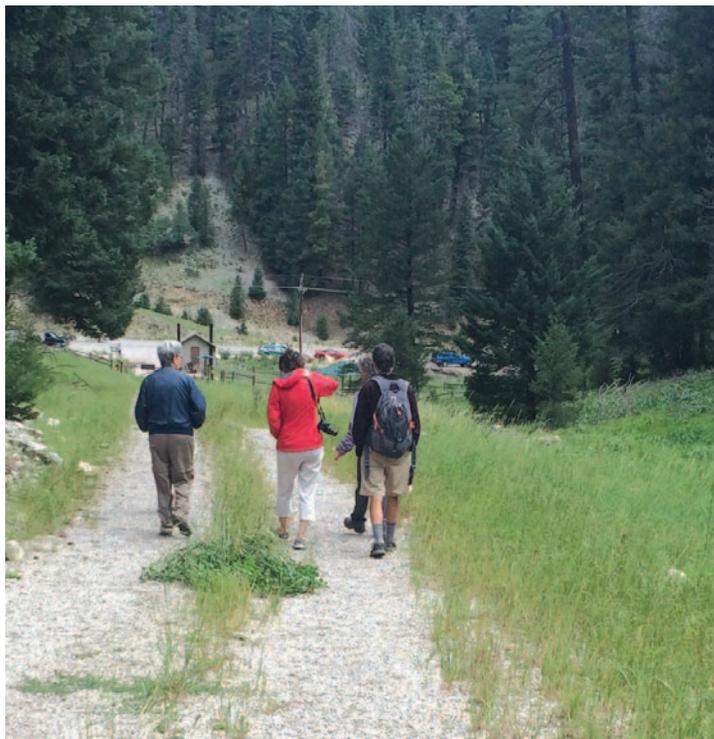
The museum also houses a special collections library for research in terms of historic scholarship and interest set up along the lines of the national Smithsonian standards, she said.

One acquisition Killer-Dann is excited about is the donation from David Townsend of the entire personal library and elegant library furniture of Albert B. Fall, notorious New Mexico senator who rose to Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

"The job of a museum is to preserve and to educate," Townsend said.

"We are always quick to finance infrastructure like roads, water and sewers, but the people who live there also need to support a cultural infrastructure over time — books, libraries, museums, and schools that don't belong to a single owner — a good museum can demonstrate that," he said.

The museum stands at the corner of White Sands Boulevard and 10th Street in Alamogordo. For more information call the museum at 575-434-4438.



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OTERO COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ALAMOGORDO

City

Population: 29,850 (2016 estimate)
The county seat, Alamogordo is home to the oldest zoo in the Southwest, Alameda Park Zoo, as well as the New Mexico Museum of Space History and the Clyde M. Tombaugh Planetarium. Its culture and economy are augmented by nearby Holloman Air Force Base.

BENT

Unincorporated community

Population: 119

A cross at the top of Round Mountain commemorates an 1868 battle in which soldiers and Tularosa villagers defeated Apache warriors.

BOLES ACRES

Census-designated place

Population: 1,172

Listed in Sperling's best places to live, Boles Acres has an unemployment rate of 5 percent. The median home price is \$118,700.

CHAPARRAL

Unincorporated community

Population: 14,631

The population of Chaparral, included in the Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area, has grown rapidly in recent years.

CLOUDCROFT

Village

Population: 697

Located high atop a forested "island" in the arid desert, Cloudcroft's elevation (8,600 feet) brings a relatively mild, wet summer that makes this Alpine village a popular seasonal destination.

HIGH ROLLS - MOUNTAIN PARK

Unincorporated community

Population: 829 (2016 estimate)

Located at the southernmost tip of the Sacramento Mountains, High Rolls includes a general store, a post office, an elementary school, two churches and occasionally a bar. It has many local attractions, including a

Cherry Festival and Apple Festival.

HOLLOMAN AFB

Census-designated place

Population: 3,223 (2016 estimate)

Established in 1942, 6 miles west of Alamogordo, the base was named in honor of Col. George V. Holloman, a pioneer in guided missile research, in 1948. Total economic impact is more than \$480 million per year.

LA LUZ

Census-designated place

Population: 1,615

Founded in 1719, La Luz is the oldest settlement in the Tularosa Basin. It lies on the eastern edge of the Tularosa Basin and on the western flank of the Sacramento Mountains.

MAYHILL

Unincorporated community

Population: 80 (2016 estimate)

Surrounded by the Lincoln National Forest, Mayhill is almost entirely residential, with a number of vacation homes as well as farms and ranches. The population density is two people per square mile.

MESCALERO

Census-designated place

Population: 1,338

Mescalero was originally called Blazer's Mill and was the location of a famous gunfight during the Lincoln County War. The Mescalero Apache Tribe operates tribal enterprises including Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort & Casino, Ski Apache, Casino Apache Travel Center, Mescalero Forest Products and Mescalero Cattle Growers.

NEWMAN

Unincorporated community

Population: Unavailable

Newman, just north of El Paso, Texas, was a small railroad town and yard. It was named after Texas real estate developer Henry L.E. Newman.

OROGRANDE

Unincorporated community

Population: 52

Established as a mining town in 1905 and named Jicarilla Junction due to its proximity to the Jicarilla Mountains, the town was renamed Orogrande (Spanish for big gold) in 1906. It is a semi-ghost

town that does offer a functioning gas station/convenience store.

PIÑON

Unincorporated community

Population: 71

The town is in the piñon-juniper shrub lands habitat with an altitude of 6,060 feet. The population remained stable between 2000 and 2010.

SUNSPOT

Unincorporated

Population: 674

Located at an elevation of 9,200 feet, Sunspot is named after the nearby National Solar Observatory on Sacramento Peak, which is open most days from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunspot has no gas station, grocery store or restaurant.

THREE RIVERS

Unincorporated community

Population: 119

The community is home to the 50-acre Three Rivers Petroglyph Site, which contains more than 21,000 glyphs dating from 900 to 1400 A.D.

TIMBERON

Census-designated place

Population: 348

Considered a resort and retirement community high in the Sacramento Mountains, Timberon has a golf course, lodge and airstrip.

TULAROSA

Village

Population: 3,031

Tularosa received its name from the Spanish description of red reeds that line the Rio Tularosa. It is well known for its display of luminarias on Christmas Eve.

WEED

Unincorporated community

Population: 63

Nestled on the east slope of the Sacramento Mountains at 7,047 feet, Weed was founded in 1884 by George and Elizabeth Lewis. It was named after William H. Weed, who opened a branch store there.





Sierra



County works creatively, collaboratively to tackle issues

BY RICHARD COLTHARP

In many ways, Sierra County is a microcosm of New Mexico.

It has wide open spaces with agriculture and ranching.

It has a historic and cool downtown with colorful buildings and a funky art vibe.

It has some beautiful and expensive homes, but also struggles with poverty and economic development.

Sierra County also has some things that make it unique in our state.

There is Elephant Butte Dam, which celebrated its 100th birthday in 2016, and Elephant Butte Lake. Combined with nearby Caballo Lake, it provides New Mexico's premier resource for water recreation.

There is Spaceport America, a facility unlike any other. And, of course, there are the hot springs. Truth or Consequences (T or C), the largest city in Sierra County, used to be named Hot Springs. A revival of hot bath venues in the past decade or so has re-energized tourism and provided a great place for stressed-out New Mexicans to relax.

Like any community there are problems with infrastructure and resources. Many of the problems are shared by the county's primary municipalities: The City of Truth or Consequences, Sierra County, the City of Elephant Butte, and the Village of Williamsburg.

"We're definitely working together on addressing regional issues," said Juan Fuentes, T or C's city manager.

Some of those joint concerns include an animal shelter, water and wastewater systems, and the hold harmless payments connected with the state's removal of tax on food.

"We know the Legislature has a really difficult job to do," said Bruce Swingle, Sierra County manager. "We realize tax reform is necessary. We just hope local government is involved. We'd like to be at the table when it's discussed."

Consistent drought conditions have meant lower water levels at the lakes. Elephant Butte Lake began the summer of 2016 with 250,000 acre-feet of water. By autumn, it had been reduced to less than 130,000 acre-feet, putting it at 6.7 percent of capacity.

There remains water to boat and fish in, but Fuentes said simply the perception of not much water keeps some people away.

"The regular visitors who are used to seeing more water are now seeing more beach," Fuentes said.

"There's still a lot of water," Swingle added. "But it will accommodate smaller numbers of people."

Swingle said some people who had houseboats on the lake have moved them out of state.

"We've lost a number of them," Swingle said. "And that means lost business for slip rentals, maintenance and other support." Because of the extreme costs of moving a houseboat, Swingle said, the ones that leave, "we're not getting them back."

Because of the lake's role as an economic driver for the region, as well as for the state, work has begun to prevent further drop in water levels.

"We're working to create a minimum pool of water," Swingle said.

"The four government entities in the region have collaborated to find and procure water

CONTINUED ON PAGE 86 ■

LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

- Landfill
- Animal shelter
- Hold harmless
- State tax policy
- Improve Chief Procurement Officer requirements

QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 11,282 (2015 estimate)
 Households: 8,686 (2014)
 Median household income: \$28,855
 Persons below poverty level: 23.8 percent

BUSINESS

Private, nonfarm establishments: 219 (2014)
 Private, nonfarm employment: 2,193 (2014)
 Non-employer establishments: 711 (2014)
 Total number of firms: 837 (2007)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 4,178
 Persons per square mile: 2.9 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov

ELECTED OFFICIALS

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Spaceport to be self-funding by 2019

New CEO getting started

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Spaceport America in Sierra County has a new chief executive officer who started in November 2016.

"Dan Hicks has over 34 years of experience serving our nation as an Army civilian at U.S. Army White Sands Missile Range," said New Mexico Spaceport Authority (NMSA) Board of Directors chairman Rick Holdridge in a news release. Hicks, a graduate of Las Cruces High School and New Mexico State University, comes to Spaceport from the Materiel Test Directorate at WSMR as acting division chief where he managed the activities of the three branches in the division.

Spaceport America's chief financial officer Zach DeGregorio said they facility has had a successful 2016.

"It's been a fantastic year," he said.

DeGregorio said NMSA has opened up the revenue streams for the spaceport. While the core business is still aerospace, events like the November drone summit and the upcoming April relay race provide addition revenue and exposure to the world.

In fiscal year 2017 the facility

will be covering 71 percent of its own operating expenses, 92 percent in fiscal year 2018 and, in 2019, it will be fully self-funding.

In the 2016 fiscal year, Spaceport America made an economic impact of \$20 million in New Mexico, said Tammara Anderton, vice president of business development. In the same year, new business grew 135 percent over fiscal year 2015.

Virgin Galactic, one of the biggest clients, is not the only aerospace company providing revenue to the spaceport. The spaceport hosted 33 vertical launches in 2016 and several horizontal ones.

Construction of the southern road to the spaceport is of primary importance, according to Anderton. Currently the road straight to Las Cruces from the facility remains under construction.

"This is a major concern for companies relocating to New Mexico," Anderton said. "It has already cost us at least \$600,000 in lost revenue."

Visit spaceportamerica.com for up-to-date information on activities at Spaceport America.

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 85

and have it rest at the lake," Swingle said.

Officials are actively working on soliciting water rights, working with landowners and looking at options for procurement and financing.

The resting water will help offset required releases for the Elephant Butte Irrigation District and to Texas.

An issue of particular importance for the Village of Williamsburg are the new requirements for chief procurement officers in the state. New regulations and increased certification requirements are burdensome to smaller municipalities, said Williamsburg Mayor Deb Stubblefield. The new rules went into effect in 2015.

"Our clerk is currently certified, but now they're asking for the certifications to be renewed every two years, and they won't let us work through other municipalities. It may keep us from being able to purchase."

Still on the horizon for Sierra County is the planned re-opening of the Copper Flat Mine.

Swingle said other projects Sierra County is working on include a water system in Monticello, a hazard mitigation plan to deal with accidents and natural disasters such as floods, a comprehensive plan, preserving 911 funds, and restoration of DWI funds.

Another project involves Spaceport America.

"We and Doña Ana County want the state to takeover the Spaceport roads, both the southern and northern," Swingle said.

Truth or Consequences continues its work with the USDA on a wastewater treatment plant and waterside system. Fuentes said Phase 1 of the three-phase project is about 50 percent complete. The city is looking at a law enforcement facility which would house regional dispatch. Another regional project that has seen preliminary work is a construction and demolition landfill.

Legislators, we appreciate your support



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Sierra County

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SIERRA COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ARREY

Census-designated place

Population: 225 (2016 estimate)

The community just south of the Caballo Reservoir is where farming begins in the Mesilla Valley, producing chile, pecans, onions and other crops. The name Arrey is believed to refer to French settlers in the 1800s.

CHLORIDE

Former ghost town

Population: 11

A mining town known by a couple different names in its early days, the name Chloride stuck and became official in 1881 when a post office was established and remained open until 1956. At its height, it had more than 1,000 people living there. Today, 11 people call it home, and you can find a museum, gift shop and gallery and a restaurant. Many of the original structures remain.

CUCHILLO

Census-designated place

Population: 35

Named for a nearby creek and a local Apache chief, Cuchillo Negro (Black Knife), the Hispanic farming and ranching community flourished from 1880 to 1930 because of its location between silver mines and the railroad in Engle. A few historic buildings have survived.

CUTTER

Census-designated place

Population: Unavailable

A railroad station 20 miles east of Truth or Consequences, Cutter once had more than 3,000 people living there during the mining boom, but now only a railroad sign remains.

DERRY

Census-designated place

Population: 49

A companion farming community to Arrey, it is the southernmost community in Sierra County with much of its corn and alfalfa grown for dairies.

ELEPHANT BUTTE

City

Population: 1,390

Supported by the water sports that its namesake reservoir attracts, the city of Elephant Butte's

fortune rises and falls with the waters, but "New Mexico's Diamond in the Desert" has seen its population balloon to 3,000 when all the summer homes are occupied.

ENGLE

Census-designated place

Population: Unavailable

Once a cattle town that formed around a rail station, Engle saw its greatest growth during the construction of the Elephant Butte Dam. Today, it serves as a gateway to Ted Turner's Armendaris Ranch and Spaceport America.

HILLSBORO

Census-designated place

Population: 124 (2010)

Now a quaint small town, gold and silver mines once made Hillsboro the county seat in 1884 and it reached a population of 1,200 by 1907. Glimpses of its colorful past can still be seen, including the former courthouse and jail where a controversial trial was held for the accused killers of Col. Albert Fountain and his 8-year-old son.

KINGSTON

Census-designated place

Population: 32

Another town that rose and fell with a nearby silver mine, Kingston was touted as one of the largest and most developed towns in the territory, with Mark Twain, Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid among its notable visitors. It's often referred to as a ghost town, though a few hardy souls remain.

LAKE VALLEY

Census-designated place

Population: 63 (2016 estimate)

The mining town of Lake Valley was founded in 1878 after silver was discovered. Almost overnight, it blossomed into a major settlement with a population of 4,000. Today, all that remains is a ghost town, though a few folks carry on in the statistical census area. The Bureau of Land Management has restored the schoolhouse and chapel for a self-guided, interpretive walking tour.

LAS PLACITAS

Census-designated place

Population: 576

Also called Placitas or Placita, the town reportedly was founded by the Sedillo family in the 1840s, with a schoolhouse, dance hall and the San Lorenzo Catholic Church built in 1916 as its main features.

MONTICELLO

Census-designated place

Population: 135

At its peak, Monticello had more than 5,000 people living along the banks of the shallow Alamosa River. Founded by ranchers and farmers, it is best known today for its organic farms, including an award-winning balsamic vinegar made here.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

City

Population: 6,103 (2014 estimate)

The county seat and commercial hub, Truth or Consequences is a city that is constantly trying to reinvent itself. Originally named Hot Springs, the city agreed to change its name in 1950 to that of a popular national radio show that became an early television show. An attraction always has been its access to hot springs that are featured in bathhouses and hotels. In recent years, that has been complemented by a funky eclecticism downtown and the town's position as the closest fully developed area to Spaceport America.

UPHAM

Unincorporated community

Population: Unavailable

More of a cattle unloading stop along the railroad, Upham is best known today for leading visitors to nearby Spaceport America along its unpaved southern route off Interstate 25.

WILLIAMSBURG

Village

Population: 437

When Hot Springs changed its name in 1950 to Truth or Consequences, a group of residents moved down the road in protest, naming itself after the first mayor, Dr. Thomas Williams. Today, the relationship to T or C is friendlier, with T or C contracted to provide utility service to the village.

WINSTON

Census-designated place

Population: 59 (2016 estimate)

Some miners found Chloride to be too rowdy, so they moved a couple miles south, forming Winston, named after Frank Winston, a local miner, businessman and legislator. A flood in the 1950s wiped out many of the town's buildings, but Winston's home survived and a general store is still open seven days a week.

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Truth or Consequences Municipal Schools

180 N. Date St.,

Truth or Consequences, NM 87901

575-894-8166

www.torcnschools.net

Superintendent Craig Cummins

ccummins@torcnschools.net

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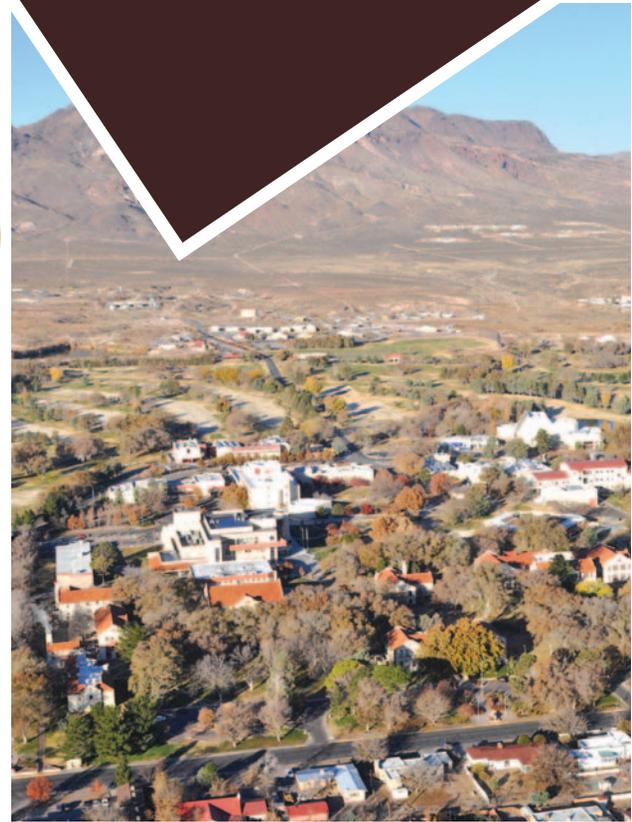
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Socorro



Jewel in the center of the state shines

BY RICHARD COLTHARP

Historically, Socorro County has been known for mines and cattle.

There's still some mining happening at the Grefco perlite mine in town, and you'll also find another group of "miners" in the students on the campus of New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, commonly known as New Mexico Tech.

There will likely be a new influx of livestock, too, as the City of Socorro puts the finishing touches on its rodeo arena. The first formal event at the new arena is scheduled for Feb. 18-19, 2017, the Clint Benjamin Rope for Hope, a team roping fundraiser.

A 200-foot-by-300-foot facility marks the rodeo grounds, which also include 100 horse stalls and lots of spaces for RVs.

The arena is part of the City of Socorro Sports Complex, which also includes multiple new soccer fields.

Don Monette, Socorro's city administrator, said the city's main legislative request will be \$400,000 to finish the arena with lights, additional parking and signage.

The complex, just southwest of town on U.S. Highway 60 is part of continuing growth which also includes the new hospital and an industrial park.

The industrial park regularly attracts inquiries from businesses seeking to set up operations at the park, and in late 2016, the city was working with some very interested prospects.

Last year, the National Guard transferred to the city ownership of its armory, adjacent to the new sports complex, and the city is looking to turn it into a convention center. That project is a few years down the road, but the

city has already begun traffic studies and other preliminary work.

The soccer fields are already a good attraction, but Socorro is planning additional bleachers and more lighting to give them a second lighted field. Officials believe that will enable them to host a New Mexico Activities Association state soccer tournament in the near future.

ROAD TO GROWTH

"We're going to need help from our representatives in getting the Department of Transportation's help in widening Highway 60, and adding a turn lane; that's the fastest growing area of our city," said Monette, who joined the city as its administrator in 2016 after serving 18 years as a city councilor.

Mayor Ravi Bhasker has even more tenure in city government, having served since 1990.

While Monette and Bhasker have been involved for a long time, the new person in town is Stephen Wells, the president of New Mexico Tech. The university is generally recognized as the most important economic driver in the county.

Wells took over July 1, 2016, following the retirement of Daniel Lopez, who had led the university for 23 years.

"He has shown great interest in working with the city, the county and the school district in promoting Socorro," Monette said of Wells. "And he has added two liaisons to the community."

In 2015, Gov. Susana Martinez appointed Monette as a New Mexico Tech Regent. Already on the Board of Regents was Jerry Armijo, from Socorro, meaning the university has two

CONTINUED ON PAGE 89 ■

LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

- Rodeo facility completion
- Turn lane for U.S. Highway 60
- Wastewater treatment
- Wastewater services
- Protection of DWI funds

QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 17,256 (2015 estimate)
Households: 5,161 (2014)
Median household income: \$33,570
Persons below poverty level: 31 percent

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 228 (2013)
Total employment: 2,913 (2014)
Non-employer establishments: 753 (2014)
Total number of firms: 961 (2012)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 6,646.68
Persons per square mile: 2.7 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 88

local regents for the first time in nearly 50 years.

While re-paving roads is an ongoing concern, Socorro continues to work on other infrastructure issues.

An update to the city's wastewater treatment plant continues to see improvement.

"We've got a lot of things taken care of, but there's still a little more to go," Monette said, adding that some state and federal funds will likely be needed.

"We're also expanding wastewater services," he said, meaning more residents can eliminate the need for septic tanks.

The city recently made an infrastructure improvement that should have multiple benefits. A loan from the USDA enabled Socorro to change valves in the city's natural gas lines, which will allow more capacity.

This will help in the event of a major freeze, like the one in 2011, when lower gas pressure left many in the community without heat. It will also make the community more viable to potential businesses and manufacturers who are reliant on natural gas.

NEW JAIL

Work will begin soon on the road to the new Socorro County Detention Center. The improvement will chip-seal a dirt road, making access to the new facility easier and safer, especially in poor weather.

The recently completed new jail upgrades the detention center's capacity from 47 to 92. As the county averages about 80 inmates, it was spending as much as \$800,000 per year transporting inmates to other counties. At long last, the facility is done.

"It was a two-year project, seven years in the making," Socorro County Manager Delilah Walsh said.

With that major capital project complete, the county will focus on administrative concerns, such as computer and server upgrades.

One important operational concern for Walsh is potential further reduction of DWI funds, a problem statewide.

"That has a huge impact on our community," Walsh said. "We've

already had to lay off one compliance officer. I really hope there's no cut in our prevention efforts. Recovery and prevention such a high need."

GETTING WIRED

Construction of a new elementary school in San Antonio, nine miles south of Socorro but still in the Socorro Consolidated Schools district, could have an additional benefit to infrastructure at the industrial park. The school is likely to qualify for federal E-Rate funds which would enable running fiber optic cables from Socorro to the school. The cables could be routed by the industrial park, which could add value there as well.

The new school building could also create another opportunity for Socorro County, which may take over the old school building in San Antonio, possibly for a community center or senior services.

Another beneficiary of the fiber optic cable project will be the new detention center, also located near the industrial park. It will enable better communication, and even the ability to view security camera footage from the county administration building.

"It's a good thing to have in a small county," Walsh said.

The fiber optic plan is also a great illustration of the collaboration of entities in Socorro.

"We have a really good relationship with our school district and the City of Socorro," Walsh said.

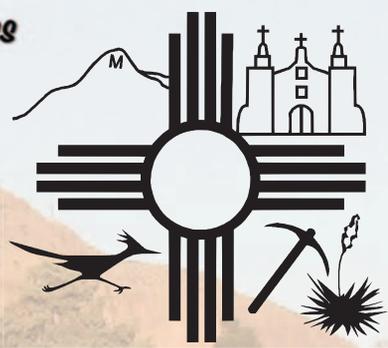
That collaboration, along with New Mexico Tech, was a big factor in Socorro landing the June 2018 meeting of the New Mexico Association of Counties.

"We're very excited," Walsh said. "This is huge for us. If 500 people go to Bernalillo County or Doña Ana County, it's on the radar. But 500 visitors for a week in Socorro County is a massive economic impact. We are one of very few small counties to even bid on this conference. We could not have done it without our partnerships. New Mexico Tech was really helpful. Plus, we're centrally located."

EDUCATION	5907, Alamo, NM 87825 Phone: 575-854-2635 Website: www.ansbi.org	
PUBLIC SCHOOLS	CHARTER SCHOOLS	
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Magdalena Municipal Schools Address: 201 Duggins Drive, Magdalena, NM 87825 Phone: 575-854-2241 Website: www.magdalena.k12.nm.us	UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES	
PRIVATE SCHOOLS	New Mexico Tech Institute of Mining and Technology Address: 801 Leroy Place, Socorro, NM 87801 Phone: 575-835-5434 Website: www.nmt.edu	
Alamo Navajo Community School Address: Highway 169, PO Box		

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SOCORRO COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ABEYAS

Census-designated place

Population: 63

This agricultural community is on the western bank of the Rio Grande at the northern end of Socorro County.

ALAMO

Census-designated place

Population: 1,085

Alamo is the largest community on the Alamo Navajo Indian Reservation, which has a population of 2,200.

BINGHAM

Census-designated place

Population: Unavailable

Halfway between Carrizozo and San Antonio on U.S. Highway 380, Bingham is known for its rock and mineral shop, where visitors can still buy Trinitite, the glass formed at nearby Trinity Site, the location of the first atomic bomb blast.

CHAMIZAL

Census-designated place

Population: 100

Ten miles north of Socorro lies Chamizal.

CLAUNCH

Census-designated place

Population: Unavailable

This community, named for the Claunch Cattle Co., in northeast Socorro County along state Highway 55, sits almost directly in the center of New Mexico.

ESCONDIDA

Census-designated place

Population: 47

Just south of Escondida, Lake Escondida has fishing, camping and picnic areas, and is an increasingly popular recreation spot.

LEMITAR

Census-designated place

Population: 327 (2016 estimate)

About seven miles north of Socorro sits this agricultural community. While Hatch remains the Chile Capital of the World, the reputation of Lemitar's chile is growing.

LUIS LOPEZ

Census-designated place

Population: Unavailable

This community, a few miles south of Socorro, is named for Capt. Luis Lopez, who in 1667 was mayor of the Piro Pueblo along the Rio Grande.

MAGDALENA

Village

Population: 913

More accustomed to attention as the closest community to the Very Large Array, Magdalena made national headlines after the state's severe drought resulted in the town's well running dry. The village re-drilled the well, which did get the water flowing again, but it was pumping only about a quarter of what it previously produced. Mining (silver and zinc) and a railroad spur brought the village a period of prosperity. The spur's strategic location made it a destination for cattle drives. Cowboys from all over the Southwest drove cattle to Magdalena to load on the trains, earning Magdalena the nickname "The Trail's End."

POLVADERA

Census-designated place

Population: 414

A farming community on the west bank of the Rio Grande north of Socorro, Polvadera was founded in the 1620s but abandoned in 1680 after the Pueblo Revolt, when the native people rose up against the Spanish colonists.

SAN ACACIA

Census-designated place

Population: 44

Fifteen miles north of Socorro, east of Interstate 25 and just west of the Rio Grande, lies San Acacia, once a thriving railroad town. The San Acacia Butte was a guidepost for traders along the El Camino Real. The community is now largely deserted, though a few families remain.

SAN ANTONIO

Census-designated place

Population: 165

For a small place, there's a lot going on in San Antonio, which sits just east of Interstate 25 on U.S. Highway 380. In a state that boasts about its green chile cheeseburgers, this tiny burg just may have the very best. The legendary Owl Bar & Café is on the north side of Highway 380 and the Buckhorn Tavern is on the south. Devotees of each restaurant's burgers will debate the qualities with gusto. San Antonio is also a gateway to the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

SAN ANTONITO

Census-designated place

Population: 94

San Antonito is an agricultural community along state Highway 1.

SOCORRO

City

Population: 8,751

The county seat of Socorro County is home to the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, better known as New Mexico Tech. With about 2,000 students, it has a reputation as one of the best technological schools in the nation, and as an important research center, especially for astronomy. Socorro's location along Interstate 25 echoes back to the 1600s, when the main north-south route was El Camino Real, and Socorro was an important stop along the way. The Piro Indians, who inhabited the area as far back as the 1200s, provided support and sustenance for the colonists of Juan de Oñate, who named the area Socorro, meaning "help" in Spanish. In New Mexico's territorial days, Fort Craig, south of Socorro, became a Civil War outpost and saw the 1862 Battle of Valverde. History remains an attractive part of Socorro's present-day culture, including the San Miguel Mission Church, Socorro's historic plaza and even the Capitol Bar, which was established in 1896.

VEGUITA

Census-designated place

Population: 263

A farming community just east of the Rio Grande at the northern tip of Socorro County.

Improvements ongoing at NM Tech campus

BY RICHARD COLTHARP

The face of New Mexico Tech is changing.

A new chemistry building will be completed in February 2017.

Thanks to passage of the state's General Obligation Bond, a badly needed \$5.5 million renovation to outdated Jones Hall will begin in fall 2017.

There is a literal new face of the university as well, new president Stephen Wells.

Wells arrived in Socorro to lead NMT in July 2016.

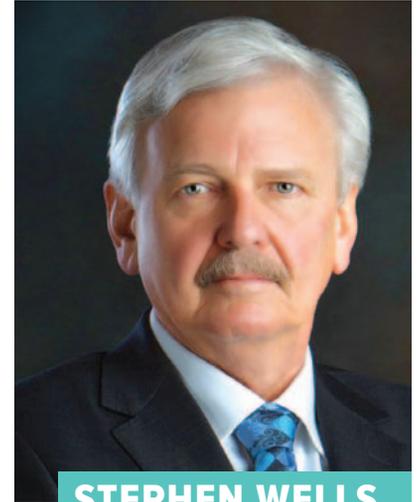
Wells had been president at the Desert Research Institute in Reno, Nevada, where he was president for 17 years.

A former geology professor at the University of New Mexico, Dr. Stephen

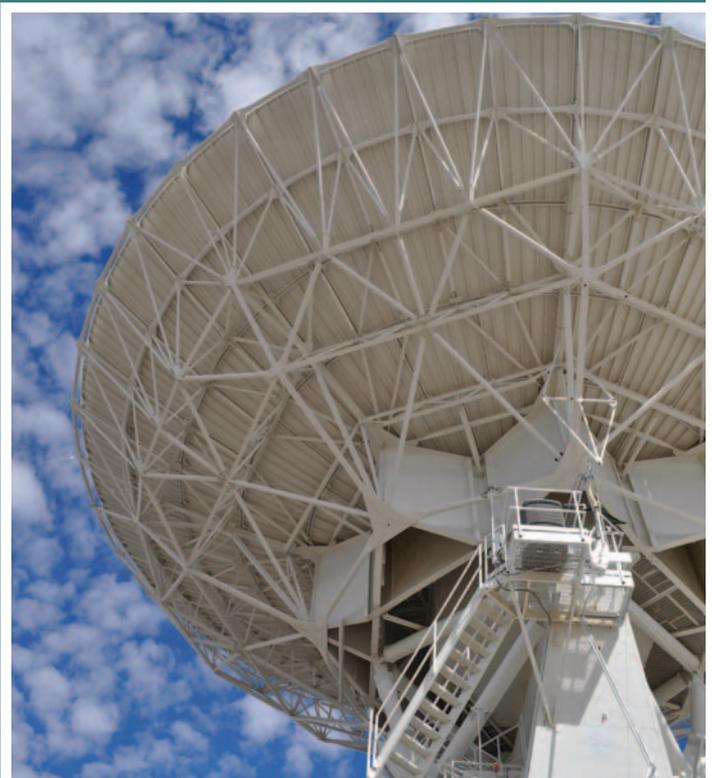
Wells is very familiar with the local culture, people, cuisine and landscape.

Wells hasn't just been a researcher and chief executive; he's also been involved in myriad community projects, outreach efforts and other leadership positions. Three causes he's championed are the Nevada Center of Excellence in Water, Gathering Genius (or G2), and the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance.

An existing NM Tech project is the Magdalena Ridge Observatory Interferometer, which recently had its first telescope installed. The project is a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory. Ultimately, the interferometer will have four telescopes, allowing scientists to study space in a way and on a scale that's never been done.



STEPHEN WELLS



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Budget still falls short

Building up reserves, tax reform, Medicaid big issues for 2017-18

BY SUSIE OUDERKIRK

Continued low wholesale prices for oil and gas have kept New Mexico in a limbo that legislators across both parties are struggling to break from to move the state toward economic health.

“The shortage in 2016 was in the \$100-million range,” said Sen. John Arthur Smith (D-District 35), chair of the Senate Finance Committee. “We can’t show how we’re going to pay our bills. We’ve used the special session one-time money to pay our bills and we’re running out of it.”

Rep. Jason Harper (R-District 57), chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, said, “We ended the 2016 fiscal year with a \$130 million shortfall, and going into the current fiscal year there was a much greater shortfall — like \$460 million — adding up to almost \$600 million.” The state’s fiscal year starts July 1 and ends in June 30.

Harper explained that during the special session in the fall of 2016, the legislature was able to “plug the hole. We made a lot of cuts, sweeps and swaps for 2017,” he said. “But it looks like we now have less than 1 percent reserves.”

“The first important thing we have to do for 2017-18 is to build reserves,” said Smith. “But, when you do that you could impact spending, which the economy needs. We’ll have to be real judicious about that and try to avoid layoffs and furloughs. It’s not going to be a quick fix.”

Gov. Susana Martinez’s recommendation, to be presented in January, also prioritizes increasing reserves to a more sustainable level, said Julia Ruetten, communications director and records administrator in the office of the secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration.

“Legislators left them dangerously low after the special session,” Ruetten said.

Harper’s goal for this year’s regular session is two-fold. The first thing to work on for the 2018 budget, he said, is “trying to figure out how to build our reserves back up to a healthy 8 percent. The other wrinkle — and this is of serious concern — is Medicaid expansion.” In the past, Harper said, the federal government paid for 100 percent of the Medicaid expansion but will phase down to, ultimately, 90 percent, leaving the state responsible for the other 10 percent. Medicaid is currently a substantial one-sixth of the budget.

Another issue of concern this year is New Mexico’s negatively impacted bond ratings.

“We knew our bond ratings were going to be reduced and I don’t think this administration acknowledges that and we’re heading for additional reductions,” Smith said.

But Harper urges cautious optimism.

“Yes, our bonds were downgraded, but they’re still very high. We went from a Aa1/Aa2 down to Aa2/Aa3 — just one notch down,” he said, although he admits that if the state doesn’t improve, the bonds could be further downgraded.

The governor’s office will continue to watch the oil and gas industry, as well as revenues, closely, Ruetten said.

“We’re committed to continuing our fiscally responsible approach to taxpayer dollars,” she said.

Harper said there are two things New Mexico needs to do, and they play off each other.

One necessity, he said, is substantive tax reform.

“The last time the state had structural tax reforms was in the 1960s, and the economy has changed substantially since then. We have to change the tax structure to fit our modern economy. It needs to be simple, fair and low, while also funding essential government services,” he said.

The Legislature has been working on tax reform for the last four years, and Harper is hoping this year is the charm.

The second remedy for New Mexico’s budget woes is to “diversify our economy,” Harper said, “which is easier said than done. Twenty-five percent of our economy is government, and that’s just not sustainable. Instead of deciding how to cut up a shrinking pie, we must grow our way out of this budget problem.”

The state can dig itself out, Smith said, but, “we’ll have to go in and fix it and do additional cuts or find additional revenues.”

“Typically, what happens from an operational standpoint is we don’t cut down any branch of government

so virtually all branches and agencies have to step to the plate with ways to give more without furloughs if we can avoid it,”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 93 ■

“Instead of deciding how to cut up a shrinking pie, we must grow our way out of this budget problem. — Rep. Jason Harper (R-District 57)”

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he said.

Harper is unsure how the Trump presidency will affect the state's budget and capital outlay. Under Barack Obama's administration, Harper said, the national labs, headquartered in Albuquerque and Los Alamos, did well "and that helped." But, Obama's administration also increased eligibility for SNAP, the federal food stamp program.

"With 23 percent of New Mexicans now on SNAP, and nearly 900,000 using Medicaid, it's clear we need substantive change to bring in more high-quality jobs," Harper said.

Annually, the Legislature receives hundreds of thousands of requests for capital outlay funding. These requests are reviewed and analyzed and only a fraction of requests are authorized, said Ruetten.

The capital outlay projects authorized in the 2017 legislative session will be funded with severance tax bonds, which is directly proportional to the health of oil, gas and mineral production.

"When that industry is doing well, it pays a lot in severance taxes," Harper said.

But, he notes the oil and gas industry is "not very good right now."



Regulation, education commissions welcome new members



BY MIKE COOK

There were two seats on the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (PRC) and four on the state Public Education Commission (PEC) on the Nov. 8, 2016 general election ballot. All six were won by Democrats without Republican opposition.

One member of each commission was re-elected, while one member of the PRC and four members of the PEC were newly elected.

PRC

The five-member PRC's only new member will be Cynthia Hall in District 1, which includes most of Albuquerque. She defeated incumbent Karen Montoya in the Democratic primary in June.

In District 3, incumbent Democrat Valerie Espinoza of Santa Fe was re-elected.

Other PRC members are Patrick Lyons of Quay County in District 2, which includes the entire eastern half of the state; Lynda Lovejoy of Crownpoint in District 4, which includes the northwest part of the state; and Sandy Jones of Truth or Consequences in District 5, which includes Doña Ana County and the southwest corner of the New Mexico.

The PRC regulates electric, natural gas, water and wastewater utility rates and quality of service; propane quality of service, but not rates; telecommunications rates and quality of service; and transportation companies. It administers fire safety programs through the State Fire Marshal's office; local firefighter training through the Firefighters Training Academy; pipeline safety requirements; Native American tax exemption; and the state's Low-Income Telephone Assistance Program.

For information, call 1-888-427-5772 and visit www.nmprc.state.nm.us.

PEC

New members of the 10-member PEC will include Ricardo

Carlos Caballero in District 1, which is located entirely in Bernalillo County; Trish Ruiz in District 9, which includes parts of Chaves County, as well as Curry, Eddy, Harding, Lea, Quay, Roosevelt and Union counties; and Tim Crone in District 10, which includes parts of Rio Arriba and Santa Fe counties as well as Colfax and Taos counties.

Karyl Ann Armbruster was re-elected in District 4, which is composed of parts of Bernalillo County as well as Sandoval, Los Alamos and Santa Fe counties.

No candidates filed to run in District 8 by the March 8 filing deadline, according to Ballotpedia. Democrat Denise M. Dawson filed as a write-in

candidate in the Democratic primary, but did not receive enough votes to qualify for the general election ballot. Gov. Susana Martinez will appoint the new District 8 commissioner.

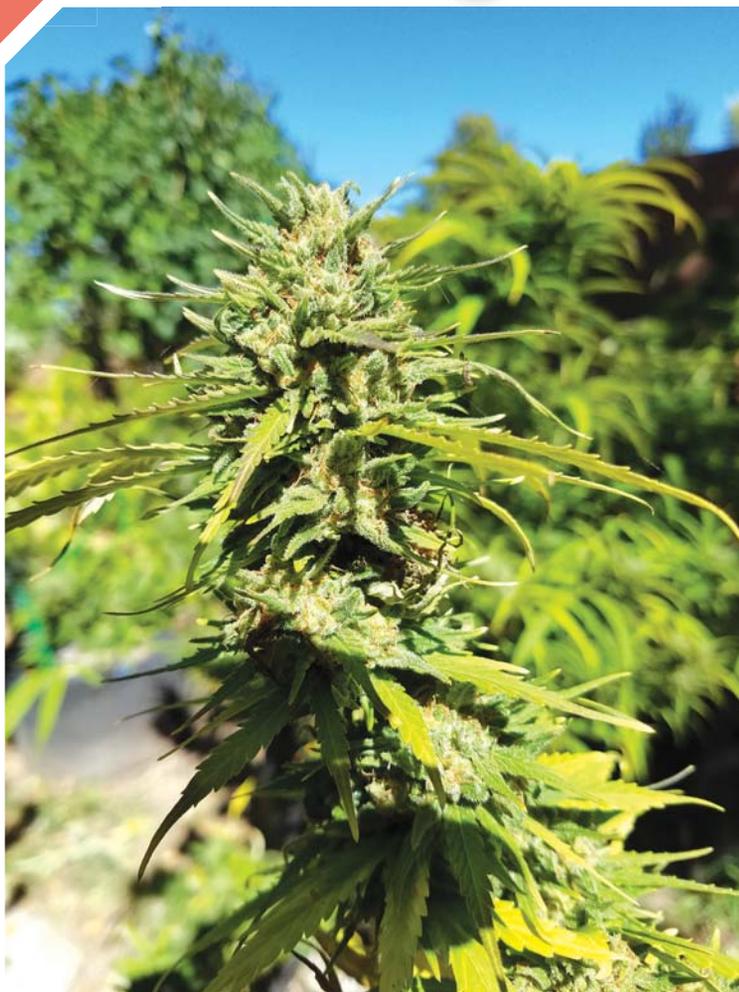
The other PEC commissioners are Millie Pogna, District 2; Carmie Lynn Toulouse, District 3; James Conyers, District 5; Gilbert Perea, District 6; Patricia Gipson, District 7; and Danielle Johnston, District 8. The PEC advises the secretary of the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) and serves as authorizers for all state chartered charter schools in New Mexico, according to the NMPED website.

For information, contact Beverly Friedman, liaison to the PEC, at 505-827-6661 or bev.friedman@state.nm.us. Visit <http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/PECindex.html>.



CYNTHIA B. HALL PRC

Legislators explore alternative funding sources for the state



BY BILLY HUNTSMAN

Lawmakers have been scrambling to find alternative funding sources after the state ended fiscal year 2016 on June 30 with \$131 million in debt, according to numbers released by the Legislative Finance Committee.

The current year will have a shortfall of \$458 million, the committee estimates.

The shortfalls are related to declines in revenue from the state's oil and gas industry, as well as from gross receipts tax and income tax exemptions given to certain people and corporations, said John Arthur Smith, state senator for District 35 and Senate Finance Committee Chair.

Because of the shortfalls, state-funded agencies and programs across the state have had their budgets reduced in order to make up the difference while politicians throughout the state have been proposing both short-term and long-term solutions.

One of these solutions was to use about \$219 million from the Tobacco Settlement Permanent Fund, created in 2000 as part of the settlement between New Mexico, other states and big tobacco companies. If used, about \$326 million would still need to be found in order to meet the state's budget of \$6.2 billion.

UNLEASED MINERAL ACREAGE

In the upcoming legislative session, Aubrey Dunn, the state land commissioner, is proposing a transfer of underground mineral holdings by the federal government to the state Land Office's control as a means of freeing up money in the state's budget.

"The federal government currently holds a vast amount of unleased federal subsurface mineral acreage beneath private

land within New Mexico — (about 6.5 million acres)," Dunn said. "Any and all unleased subsurface mineral acreage beneath private land that is transferred by Congress from the federal government to the state after the effective date of the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Act would then be leased out by the State Land Office for the purposes of revenue generation, with all funds earned to be deposited to the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund," he said.

The money earned from the state leasing these acres would fund public education in the state, freeing up money currently used to fund public education to be redirected to other state programs.

"In FY 16, the State Land Office earned an average of \$32.29 per acre from mining, oil and gas extraction activities across its 13 million subsurface acres," Dunn said. "Once transferred from the federal government to the state and leased out by the State Land Office, the approximately 6.5 million acres currently under consideration for transfer could potentially generate \$210 million in annual royalties to the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund — based on average SLO subsurface earnings of \$32.29 per acre."

Though not a "quick fix" solution, the Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund would grow over time and provide a long-term, sustainable endowment and funding stream for early childhood education in New Mexico, Dunn said.

ONE OPTION: BRING BACK THE FOOD TAX

Smith proposed additional ideas as to how to bridge the budget deficit.

New Mexico, as other states, receives operational funds mainly from property, gross receipts and incomes taxes.

"Our property tax, for the most part, is dedicated to local government as their revenue stream," Smith said.

Additionally, unique to New Mexico and only a few other states, the state receives funding from the interest on the Land Grant Permanent Fund (LGPF), which was established at statehood in 1912 and has grown to about \$15 billion today, due to revenues from leases and royalties produced by nonrenewable natural resources (oil and gas), as well as income from returns on investments.

The interest generated from this sum, \$656 million in FY16, funds public schools, universities and other state programs and agencies.

Together with LGPF interest, gross receipts tax and income tax generate about \$850 million a year for state funding, Smith said.

Rather than raising the gross receipts and income taxes on the state's population, which would drive people out of the state to different states with lower tax rates, Smith said, a better solution is to expand the items and services that are taxed.

"The ideal world would say, 'Move back to tax everything, but make certain you have a lower (tax) rate,'" Smith said.

Smith said he was not in favor of former Gov. Bill Richardson's removing the state's food tax, which fell under gross receipts tax, which "made the purchase of health and beauty aids, soap and toilet tissue more expensive," Smith said.

The removal of the food tax also exempted some medical services from gross receipts tax, and simultaneously reduced the cost of groceries, which interfered with local governments' tax incomes.

To offset the imbalance, Richardson's administration implemented a "hold harmless" provision, to give local governments money from the state General Fund in order to make up for the taxes they missed out on because of the food tax repeal.

On July 1, 2015, the Legislature passed a bill to repeal hold harmless over the next 15 years. By 2030, no local governments will receive any more reimbursements.

Smith said he's in favor of bringing back the food tax on processed foods, but many other legislators are not. A bill to reintroduce the food tax was presented at the Legislature in January 2015, but it never reached the Senate floor.

TAKING THE INTEREST FROM THE LGPF

Another alternative funding source both Smith and Dunn mentioned was tapping into the interest earned off of the Land Grant Permanent Fund. Both Smith and Dunn said they are against such a move until all other funding sources have been completely explored.

About 84 percent of the earnings from the fund go to public education in New Mexico, so, Dunn said, to use that money is robbing future generations.

So far, the LGPF has not been used to address the state's budget issues.

ANOTHER OPTION: RIGHT-TO-WORK

In last year's Legislative Guide, Paul Gessing, president of the Rio Grande Foundation, spoke in favor of right-to-work legislation, which enables a worker not to be required to join a union and pay dues.

"Right to work is something we believe can lead to more job creation," Gessing said last year.

Like Dunn's proposal for an Early Childhood Education Land Grant Permanent Fund, creating jobs with right to work laws would take time.

New Mexico is not currently a right-to-work state, although legislation has been introduced to pass it during the past two legislative sessions.

Gessing said, given that Democrats have taken the majority in both houses, he doesn't anticipate right to work legislation to come up in the near future.

REDUCING TAX BREAKS FOR CORPORATIONS

Sen. Joseph Cervantes (D-District 31), is a proponent of cutting tax breaks for corporations.

"The idea of cutting taxes on large out-of-state corporations with the idea that they will move here is generally proven to never materialize," he said. "It's a popular hope which I have seen never work."

Cervantes said the community pays for those tax cuts by raising the taxes for everybody else.

"The companies we're trying to attract are pretty sophisticated and they look at the total tax picture and they realize that while we may have cut their corporate taxes, if we're increasing the local taxes, it's a wash," he said.

RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA TAX

Rep. Bill McCamley (D-District 33), has long been an advocate for legalizing recreational marijuana and hemp production in the state.

The financial benefits of doing so could greatly contribute to the state's current and future budget issues, he said.

"(Legalizing) would bring in between \$60 and \$70 million of direct revenue that would go to schools, cops, prevention and health services," McCamley said. "That doesn't include the additional revenue that would come in through income taxes, property taxes and gross receipts tax from legitimate businesses (as opposed to illegal sales of marijuana)."

McCamley said, this legislative session, he is proposing a bill to legalize marijuana in the state

McCamley further suggested getting rid of tax deductions for capital gains as a way of helping meet the state's budget.

"Right now, if you work for a living, you pay five percent of your salary to the state as an income tax," McCamley said. "If you make money on investments, you're only paying two and a half percent."

Getting rid of tax deductions for capital gains could bring the state about \$50 million a year, McCamley said.



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WSMR testing essential for new technologies

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Southern New Mexico's economy owes much to the U.S. military and the facilities working together to keep the country safe. White Sands Missile Range and Holloman Air Force Base occupy a substantial amount of land between Las Cruces and Socorro. Fort Bliss, based in Texas, includes range space in New Mexico.

Brig. Gen. Eric L. Sanchez took the helm as commander at White Sands Missile Range on Aug. 25, 2016. He said he has never seen the kind of community support as southern New Mexico provides the range.

"I've been all over the world and had many jobs and I'll tell you the support that we get from the local communities is unmatched," he said. "Alamogordo, Las Cruces, El Paso — even the little town of Mesilla — they are very supportive and work with us closely and we appreciate that greatly."

Sanchez was put to work immediately when he came on board, learning the details of the vast Army facility. Having been on the operational side throughout his career, he said this is a new experience for him.

"It (WSMR) started with the atomic bomb, then based on the great amount of land we had, it became the missile test center for the United States and other countries as well," he said of WSMR. "Really there is nowhere else in the United States that you can do the testing that goes on here."

WSMR offers the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) great capability to test against many different threats that are out there, he said. There are always a lot of new technologies being tested at the range.

"We test a myriad of different things," Sanchez said. "One example is the hot/cold chamber where we can take the chamber to arctic and hottest desert, make sure equipment has the ability to do what it needs to do. We have the capability to test in a lightning storm, dust storms, nuclear environment."

At WSMR entities contract not only for land but also for all different facilities, he said. One always thinks of the big tests that happen there but actually numerous things go on at the same time, he said.

"There could be 20 to 30 smaller things going on at the same time — microchips, circuit boards, you never know what," he said. "You can walk into any one of these buildings and you will see someone doing tests on something."

One of the strong assets at WSMR, Sanchez said, is the

personnel available for DoD to take advantage of years of knowledge.

"There are people here with 25 to 30 years of knowledge," he said. "They actually created a lot of the capability we have. They engineered this stuff."

Between the expanse of land available for exercises and experimentation and the proximity to Fort Bliss, McGregor Range, HAFB and Cannon Air Force Base, WSMR is set up for just about anything including the ability to conduct live air missions for live tests of U.S. capabilities.

"This really gives us a lot of options," Sanchez said. "Really the sky's the limit on coming up with ideas on how we can use the range."

Because of the special capabilities and personnel at WSMR, the future could hold a partnership with the Army's new Rapid Capabilities Office (RCO), which Sanchez said was recently stood up by Army Secretary Eric Fanning. The RCO is intended to allow the army to bring systems in more quickly than the normal acquisition process.

"He stood up this office to look at existing capabilities and emerging technologies and try and streamline those, to bring those on board a little bit quicker," Sanchez said. "In the pentagon, as they see new technologies, they are thinking they could potentially bring it out here to work with our experts to test it on the range. The other thing they really wanted to tap into is the expertise that scientists and engineers that have been here at White Sands for over 30 years."

WSMR also welcomes the public into its confines several times a year. 2017 is a big year for the annual Bataan Death March event in March, for U.S. prisoners of war, which recreates the harrowing forced march in the Philippines which took place during World War II.

"This is the 75th anniversary of the actual Bataan death march and the 28th year we will be doing the march at WSMR," Sanchez said. "This event really brings people from all over the world who are going to come and march in it."

The other commemoration on the range the public is invited to twice a year. He said about 4,000 people visited the Trinity site, where the first atomic bomb was detonated, in 2015 during the days it is open to the public — the first Saturdays in April and October.

Holloman Air Force Base and Alamogordo are celebrating

MILITARY BASES AT A GLANCE

HOLLOMAN AIR FORCE BASE

Branch: Air Force
Established in 1942 as Alamogordo Army Airfield
Land Area: 93.1 square miles
Commander: Colonel Houston R. Cantwell, commander of the 49th Wing
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 U.S.
Commander: Brigadier General Eric L. Sanchez, commanding general
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.
Commander: Major General, Robert P. White, commanding general

the upcoming arrival of two F-16 training squadrons, created to increase fighter pilot production, according to a release from the base. HAFB has been determined to be the “preferred alternative” to receive the 45 F-16s which will add 690 new military personnel to the area.

The influx is fortuitous for the community as the German air force, training pilots at Holloman since 1992, has announced it is withdrawing. The Tornado pilot training mission will end by 2019 as it has become easier to take the Tornados to Germany and train at home.

Located in El Paso, Fort Bliss is home to the 1st Armored Division, which returned to U.S. soil in 2011, after 40 years in Germany. Fort Bliss is comprised of approximately 1.12 million acres of land in Texas and New Mexico.

Despite plans that could cut the Army’s strength from the 565,000 soldiers it had in 2011 to 165,690, Fort Bliss should be able to weather the challenges ahead as a regional training center. There are 32,836 total military on Fort Bliss; 12,128 total civilian workers on Fort Bliss; and 40,384 total family members. More than \$6 billion has been invested in the installation during the most recent base realignment and closure (BRAC) process.



Film Las Cruces opens downtown office, hopes to expand film in southern NM

BY MIKE COOK

Film Las Cruces held a reception Nov. 9, 2016 to celebrate the opening of its first-ever film office in Las Cruces.

The office is in the WIA building, 340 N. Reymond St. in the downtown area, across from Pioneer Park.

“I’m fighting hard to grow the film industry in Las Cruces,” Film Las Cruces (FLC) President Jeff Steinborn said at the reception.

Formerly a member of the New Mexico House of Representatives representing District 35 in Las Cruces, Steinborn was elected to the state Senate the day before the reception.

Steinborn said Film Las Cruces, a nonprofit that has a three-year memorandum of understanding with the City of Las Cruces to bring film and television production to Las Cruces, is working to “create a film studio in Las Cruces.”

After a nationwide search, FLC hired Scott Murray as a full-time film liaison this past summer.

Steinborn said Las Cruces is partnering with film studios in northern New Mexico on the project, and has almost \$1 million in state capital outlay funds to help pay for a local film studio.

Steinborn said about a dozen state legislators contributed capital outlay funds to that total, and there is very strong support for it in the Legislature.

“My colleagues (in the Legislature) are very excited to see this project come to fruition. People want to see the money spent,” Steinborn said.

The Las Cruces City Council has given its informal approval to move ahead with the plan to purchase a building in Las Cruces to be used as a soundstage at a Nov. 14 work session. A formal vote is expected in the next few months.

Steinborn also noted that the 2016 Las Cruces International Film Festival (LCIFF) attracted 8,000 visitors to Las Cruces and was very successful.

“Everybody was blown away,” Steinborn said, adding that the 2017 festival, which will be held March 8-12, hopes to be even

bigger.

The festival has named its 2017 opening night film, “The Tiger Hunter.” The cast includes “Napoleon Dynamite” star Jon Heder, who will attend the Las Cruces festival, LCIFF Executive Director Ross Marks said.

LCCIFF will also include “The Big Bang Theory” star Johnny Galecki and television writer and producer Don Foster.

Galecki will receive the LCIFF Outstanding Achievement in Comedy Award at the festival’s VIP after party on Saturday, March 11. Foster will receive the Mark Medoff Outstanding Achievement in Entertainment Writing Award.

And, Priscilla Morales of Las Cruces, who is now Kevin Costner’s manager, will receive the festival’s Hometown Hero award, Marks said.

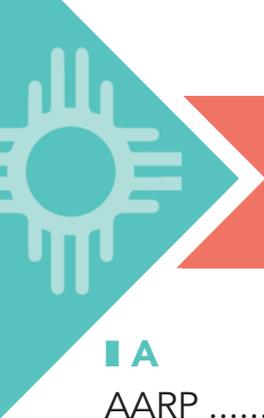
“I really see the film festival as the mouthpiece for film in Las Cruces,” Marks said.

Marks, an assistant professor at New Mexico State University’s Creative Media Institute for Film and Digital Arts, is also a member of the Film Las Cruces (FLC) nonprofit.

FLC’s “big focus and all our efforts” are behind getting a soundstage for film and TV production, Marks said. “If you get a soundstage, film will really explode in Las Cruces,” he said.

“Film Las Cruces is working hard on a variety of fronts to strength our community’s marketing to the film industry in a variety of ways, including a great location database, strengthening our worker training and opening a new film office, Steinborn said. “We’re just working very hard to grow our film community here,” he said and to encourage the state of New Mexico and the film industry to come to Las Cruces to make movies and television shows.

For more information, visit www.lciffest.com and www.filmlascruces.com.



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- Inpatient Visits
- Outpatient Visits
- Deliveries
- Clinic Visits

Financial Benefits: \$81.4 million

- Salary, Wages, Benefits
- Capital Investments

Caring for our Community: \$25.8 million

- Charity & Uncompensated Care
- Charitable Donations
- Property & Sales Taxes

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*Dollar amounts are approximate.



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