

DESERT exposure

Arts & Leisure in Southern New Mexico



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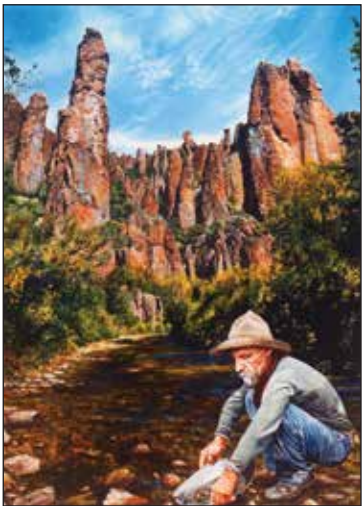
ABOUT THE COVER:

“Gila Riches” by Lois Duffy is based on an old photograph of early gold-pan miners. The prospector is placed in a current view of the Gila River.

Duffy was born in Easy Islip, New York and studied art at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. She lived in western Massachusetts for 30 years, raised a family and pursued an art career with shows throughout New York and New England.

In 1984 Duffy moved to Florida for 12 years and then to Silver City, always creating and exhibiting new work.

For the past 23 years she has maintained a studio and gallery in the historic art district of Silver City. Her art is included in numerous collections, including the John & Mabel Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida; the Williams College Museum of Art in Williamstown, Massachusetts; the Capitol Art Collection in the State Capitol in Santa Fe; and many other public and private collections.



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RAISINGDAD • JIM AND HENRY DUCHENE

All the Way Home

Snakes, nuggets, on the trail

A baseball season or two ago, I was in my den reading the newspaper, shaking my head at Dear Abby, and enjoying a hot cup of gourmet coffee.

I was listening to my TV's Blues channel. They were playing Mean Old World, one of my favorite songs. Maybe I like the song so much because I like the title so much. This old world can be pretty mean. You only have to keep up with current events to realize that. This version was by Little Walter and His Night Cats. I prefer T-Bone Walker's. Maybe I just prefer the name T-Bone.

In a way, the Blues have ruined my appreciation for Rock & Roll. When I first heard certain artists, I thought they were geniuses. 40 years later, when I widened my taste in music to include the likes of Buddy Guy or Z.Z. Hill (Z.Z. Hill. ZZ Top. See the connection?), I realized everything I loved about Rock & Roll was stolen from the Blues, but that's neither here nor there. The point is, I was enjoying some quiet time.

The song changed to one I didn't recognize. The singer sounded drunk, as if Richard Pryor's old wino character was given a guitar and told to earn his next bottle of Thunderbird. I went from Dear Abby to the comic section. That's when my father walked into the den.

"Hi, pop," I said, but kept my head down. I had already said hello to him that morning, not that I count how many times I say hello to him on any given day. I understand when celebrities like Ellen DeGeneres or



Chicken nuggets always taste better in the great outdoors. (Photo by Jim Duchene)

Steve Harvey tell their employees not to make eye contact with them. If you waste time being nice, you won't have time for important things, like promoting a false image to the general public.

My father mumbled something. I kept reading. I know that sounds mean, but I've learned when he wants me to acknowledge something, he'll speak up.

He mumbled again, this time louder. Walked over to the TV set. Stood in front of it, staring. I still didn't look up. He knows I've got dibs on the TV, and I know he has a perfectly good television set in his guest house. He can watch what he wants whenever he wants, but what he usually wants is to watch this particular set. That drives me nuts. I don't hog his TV. Why does he hog mine?

"Isn't there a game today?" my father said, finally speaking up.

Quite clearly, I might add. I stayed quiet, but not in a

mean way. More like a Clint-Eastwood-when-he's-not-talking-to-a-chair kind of way. I know there's a game today. He knows there's a game today. Even Clint Eastwood's chair knows there's a game today. We have so many baseball channels, even if there wasn't a game there would still be a game.

"Isn't there a game today?" my father asked again, this time turning to look at me. He wanted to make sure I heard. I made the mistake of glancing up. Our eyes locked. I couldn't pretend I didn't hear him.

"Did you say something?" I said, pretending anyway.

"Isn't there a game on?" "I don't think so," I told him. He didn't buy it.

"I think there is." "You sure?"

"Pretty sure. Cleveland." Cleveland's his favorite team.

HOME

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THE VIEW FROM HERE • WALT RUBEL

Enough Already

Third strike should spell doom for Gila River diversion

The decision 16 years ago to choose diversion of the Gila River over water conservation and restoration projects resulted in a promise that was always going to remain out of reach: new water.

Local government officials from Catron, Grant, Luna and Hidalgo counties who were selected for the Central Arizona Project (CAP) Entity and made the fateful decision had promised area farmers up to 14,000-acre feet of “new water.”

They would no longer have to make do with traditional crops like cotton and alfalfa. The “new water” would give growers access to more lucrative crops

like hemp, potatoes, pecans and grapes.

The CAP Entity was spawned from the Arizona Water Settlements Act of 2004, which was intended to resolve a decades-old dispute over Gila River water that included not only the states of New Mexico and Arizona but also Native American tribes.

It was a classic western water war. In 1938, New Mexico Gov. John E. Miles ordered the state police to cut locks to the river’s headgates and take over control of the water. But that solution was only temporary. In 1968, Congress passed its first bill attempting to resolve the issue.

The 2004 bill made millions

of dollars available to the state, and gave the CAP Entity a choice as to how to use it. It chose diversion, despite warnings that past attempts to dam the river had failed because water levels weren’t consistently high enough.

Norm Gaum, a former director of the Interstate Stream Commission and an opponent of the diversion project, explained in a radio interview last year that New Mexico has the most junior water rights on the river. That means all other users have to be satisfied first and all of the water we divert has to be paid for ahead of time.

The decision to go with a di-

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HOME

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“If you say so,” I said.

“I knew it! I knew there was a game.”

If he knew there was a game, then why was he asking me? We were at a stalemate, of sorts. He wasn’t asking if he could watch the game, and I wasn’t offering to let him. If my wife were there, he’d already be reclining in front of the TV, snacking on champagne and caviar.

Unfortunately for him, she wasn’t.

Mumble, mumble.

I ignored him.

Mumble, mumble.

I looked up. Dang! Our eyes locked again.

“Did you say something?”

“The game,” he said.

“You sure it’s today?”

“Pretty sure.”

Another stalemate. He stood there, looking at me. Tampa Red started singing When Things Go Wrong With You (It Hurts Me, Too).

I no longer had the heart to keep it up.

“Sit down, pop,” I finally said.

“Let’s see if the game’s on.”

He sat. Didn’t even say thank you. Instead he groused, not quite mumbling but not quite clearly, “Of course the game’s on. I told you that already,” and then confided to the chair next to him, “I know when the game’s on.”

My father.

The new Clint Eastwood.

I put on the Cleveland game. His favorite team was 100 games out of the playoffs, losing 20 out of the last 22. There was no hope for them that year. Their only hope was the next year, or the year after that.

My father settled down in his favorite chair watching his favorite team on his favorite TV set. I went back to the comics and my now luke-warm coffee. Then it started...

Smack!

I lifted my eyes.

Smack, smack, SMACK!

My father has the nasty habit of smacking his lips whenever

er he watches TV. He smacks, he moans, he yawns, he sighs, he oohs and aahs, but what he mainly does is annoy me. I’ve tried, but I can’t sit down with him to watch anything on TV, because his constant noises are so distracting.

My wife insists I should try.

“Why don’t you?” I tell her back.

“He’s not my father.”

It was worth a shot.

Oh, well. Back to the story...

“Ahhh... ohhh...” Big sigh. Fol-

lowed by an even bigger SMACK! “Ohhh... ahhh...” Smack, smack, smack. Mumble, mumble.

I grabbed my coffee and left the den. I walked upstairs to watch TV in my bedroom. That TV doesn’t have a converter to play music.

It’s a mean old world, indeed.

Lost YOURS? Find it at JimDuchene.BlogSpot.com, RaisingMyFather.BlogSpot.com, or @JimDuchene.

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WINING OUT

Tap into New Mexico Craft

Local beverage artisans band together to benefit food bank

Marble Brewery, St. Clair Wine and Santa Fe Spirits are participating in Tap Into New Mexico Craft (TINMC), an annual campaign in September that benefits Roadrunner Food Bank.

Tap Into New Mexico Craft was launched in 2018 and is designed so that a \$50 donation will be made to Roadrunner Food Bank for every local retailer or restaurant that carries

products from Marble Brewery, Santa Fe Spirits or St. Clair Wine. Supporting Tap Into New Mexico Craft means supporting all things local.

For retailers, restaurants, distillers, breweries and wineries, this campaign is not only helping the Roadrunner Food Bank, it's supporting New Mexico's economy.

"The Tap into New Mexico Craft Campaign is such a unique partnership for the benefit of

the people we serve," said Mag Strittmatter, president and CEO of Roadrunner Food Bank, "So many of our fellow New Mexicans are facing hunger for the very first time."

Participating retailers include Smith's, Albertsons, Whole Foods and Total Wine with more being added every day. Promotional displays will start popping up on Sept. 1 and run throughout the entire month. Visit www.tapnmcraft.com for more information on locations that support TINMC.



ENOUGH
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version project started the clock on a 10-year time period to come up with a plan. When the 10 years were up, the CAP Entity asked for an extension. And it was granted, until 2019, when the latest request was denied by officials with the U.S. Interior Department.

That was the first piece of bad news for the CAP Entity. The second came last year when Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham vetoed \$1.7 million that had been requested by the Interstate Stream Commission for the diversion project. Former Gov. Susana Martinez

had been willing to keep funding the project long after it had become obvious that promises of new water for the state would never materialize, but Lujan Grisham was not.

Then came the third strike, a recent decision by the Interstate Stream Commission itself, which now has new members appointed by Lujan Grisham, to finally accept reality and pull the plug on diversion funding.

It is estimated that the CAP Entity spent some \$16 million in pursuit of a diversion plan, and another \$56 million in potential funding was lost when the request for a deadline extension was denied.

The Gila River diversion plan faced determined opposition every step of the way from those

wanting to save the state's last free-flowing river. In the end, however, it was not politics that led to the plan's demises, but rather hydrology.

There is no new water. There is, however, still about \$70 million in federal money available for projects to make better use of the water we have. The Interstate Stream Commission must ensure that no more federal funding is wasted.

Walt Rubel has been a journalist since 1982, working in Las Cruces since 2002. He can be reached at waltrubel@gmail.com.



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STILL LEARNING

WILL Hosts Racism Panel

Diverse individuals discuss diverse issues

In these racially turbulent times, the Western Institute for Lifelong Learning (WILL), an adult-learning group of some 400 members in Grant County, has been responding in various ways.

As part of its response, WILL is presenting a Zoom panel on the subject of “Racism and Discrimination in Grant County: Past and Present” from noon to 1:30, Saturday, Sept. 12. The panelists include two Hispanics, a black person and an indigenous person, all of whom have lived in Grant County for decades.

Luis Quinones, who grew up in Bayard, was the founding editor of El Reportero, a bilingual newspaper in Silver City in the late 1980s, and is a longtime Chicano educator and activist.

Cindy Renee Provencio also grew up in Bayard, but four decades after Quinones did, and wrote her master’s thesis at Texas Woman’s University in 2017 about segregation and discrimination against Hispanics in

Grant County.

Kyle Johnson, a black man originally from California, has lived in the Gila Valley for the last 25 years and is the driving force behind Gila/Mimbres Community Radio, a local, progressive radio station for Grant County.

And Romaine Begay, a Zuni Navajo potter and teacher from the Farmington area, has worked and taught in Grant County since the early 1990s.

These four panelists, from varied racial and ethnic backgrounds, and of different ages, will speak from their own life experiences about racism and discrimination in Grant County.

They will address how and whether these circumstances have changed in recent decades, and where they stand today. The moderator of the panel is Magdalena Manzanarez, vice president for external affairs at Western New Mexico University in Silver City. The event is free and open to the public. For information,

call Stephen Fox, chair of the WILL Communications Committee, at 954-290-3569.



Every Saturday through Oct. 31 the Silver City Maker’s Market takes place at MainStreet Plaza, just off Bullard Street between 7th and 8th streets. Creative vendors from four counties gather, socially distanced, to share and sell their goods. Patrons can find gourmet treats, Japanese form of clothing for fishermen which involves printing with real fish, a crochet artist and more between 8:30 a.m. and noon. (Courtesy photo)

COVID CANCELLATION

Gem, Mineral Show

Rolling Stones choose to wait another year

Every Labor Day Weekend for the past 37 years the Grant County Rolling Stones Gem and Mineral Society has hosted their gem and mineral show. Not this year. Because of the desire to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and the restrictions in place they have canceled the 2020 event.


“One of the reasons we have the Gem and Mineral Show is to continue with our mission as a society which is the exchange of information and the furtherance of knowledge of mineralogy, gem cutting, geology and to stimulate interest in the development of these studies,” said Jeannine Weiner GCRS show chair. “We try to accomplish that during the show by having educational displays provided by our members, geology presen-

tations, collecting field trips and vendors who bring in specimens from all over the world.”

Everyone at the show has some knowledge about gems and minerals and all are willing to share that knowledge, she said.

“We are passionate about our hobby and hope to get everyone as interested in it as we are,” Weiner said. “Grant County and New Mexico have so much to offer in geology and specimens. We love to teach what is right here in our own back yards. We will miss seeing the look of wonder and excitement of the children and adults alike as they gaze upon the glories that nature and science provide.”

Visit rollingstonesgms.blogspot.com to keep up with the Rolling Stones.



Gila Friends Meeting

The Religious Society of Friends

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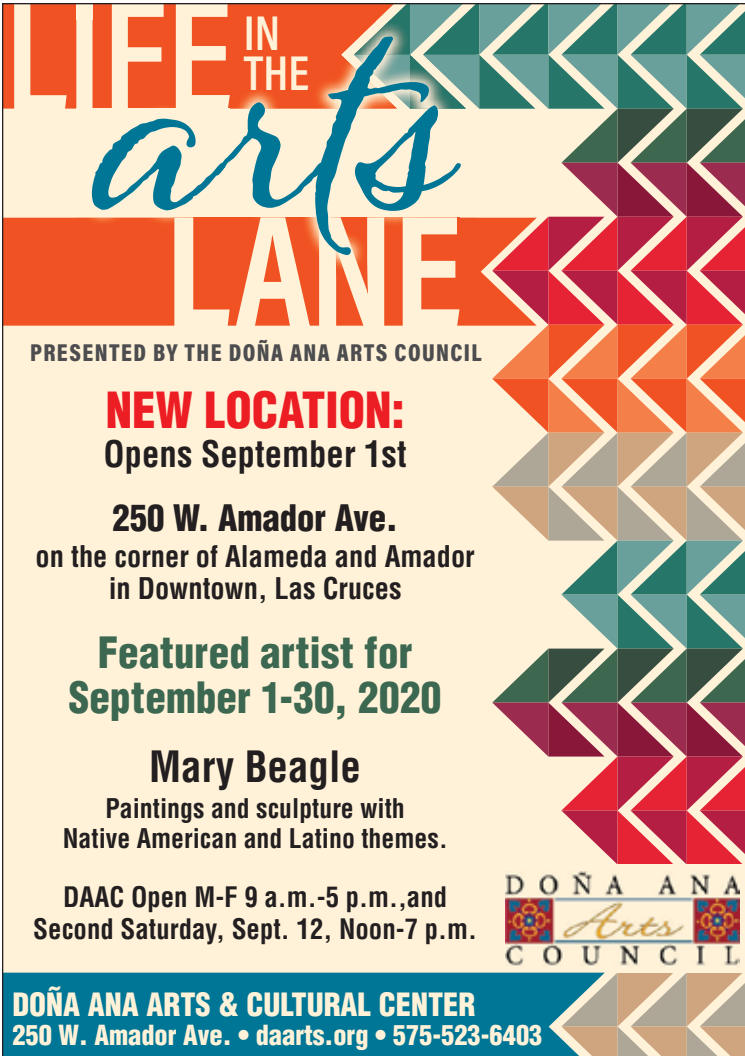
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Supported in part by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and by the National Endowment for the Arts.

SILVER CITY

• **Light Art Space** in Silver City has put out a call for entry for “Facing Forward,” a juried exhibition of handmade prints, including photographic processes, created by women of color. During this time of unrest and uncertainty, this exhibition seeks to present works by women of color that speak to the future in challenging and inspiring ways. The deadline to submit is Sept. 6. Exhibition dates are Oct. 10 to Jan. 2, 2021. Visit lightartspace.com for more information and to enter. Current exhibition “Art in the Time of COVID-19,” continues through Oct. 4. Also on view is the work of Light Art Space gallery artists **Joel Armstrong, Valerie Galloway, Karen Hymer, Carmen Ruiz, Eugene Starobinskiy, Art Peterson and Mimi Calise Peterson**. Hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and by appointment. Social distancing is observed and masks required.

• **Sterling Fine Art** is featuring gallery artists Friday and Saturday 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and by appointment call 505-699-5005. The gallery is located at 306 N. Bullard St. in Silver City and online at sterlingnm.com.



Photo GCAG Stained glass by Susan Rice

• **The Grant County Art Guild Gallery** is located at 316 N. Bullard St. in the purple former Hester House. Hours are 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Monday to Sunday and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays. They will offer extended hours, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., on Labor Day weekend, Sept. 5-7. With close to 40 members, the gallery carries a wide range of art, including original Silver City work from potters, painters, jewelers, artisans, photographers, weavers, woodworkers and more. They also feature three members each month by displaying their artwork in the front windows.

DEMING

• **The Deming Art Center** features artist members for the September art show. Anyone who is a member is eligible to participate and there will be a diverse body of work on display. The show runs Sept. 2-29. Deming Art Center is located at 100 S Gold Ave., Deming. Its hours are 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Monday to Friday and 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Saturday. Info: 575-546-3663 or www.demingarts.org.

CLOUDCROFT



Cloudcroft Art Society Gallery

• The Cloudcroft Art Society's gallery is open every Saturday during the summer months. Many artworks ranging from paintings in all media, fine art and digital art photography, both framed and matted prints, cards, pottery, fiber art, gourd art, intarsia, jewelry and glass art are on display and are for sale. The gallery is located in the old red brick schoolhouse which houses the Nivison Library at the east end of Burro Street where it intersects Swallow Place. Gallery hours are 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

LAS CRUCES



“Sophie’s Heishi” by Mary Beagle

• **The Doña Ana Arts Council (DAAC)** will feature the work of Las Cruces artist **Mary Beagle** in September at the

DAAC Arts & Cultural Center gallery. Beagle's exhibit is the first show in DAAC's new location at 250 W. Amador Ave. Beagle is a well-known artist whose work reflects her love of the Native and Latino cultures. She will be exhibiting at least 20 paintings and sculpture. In 2005 and 2008, Mary attended the Southwest Stone Carving Workshop in Jemez Springs, and found a new medium of expression in limestone, alabaster, calcite and marble while working with nationally known sculptors. Mary's husband, David, frames her paintings with local and exotic woods. Once a piece is finished,



“The Gatherer” by Mary Beagle

he creates a custom frame using laminating, inlay and color to compliment the work, making each piece unique.

The exhibit is available for viewing through Sept. 30, at the Doña Ana Arts & Cultural Center located at 250 W. Amador Ave. during regular business hours, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and will be open for the Second Saturday on Sept. 12 from noon -7 p.m. For more information, visit the website www.daarts.org or call the Doña Ana Arts Council at 575-523-6403.



Arlene Tugel

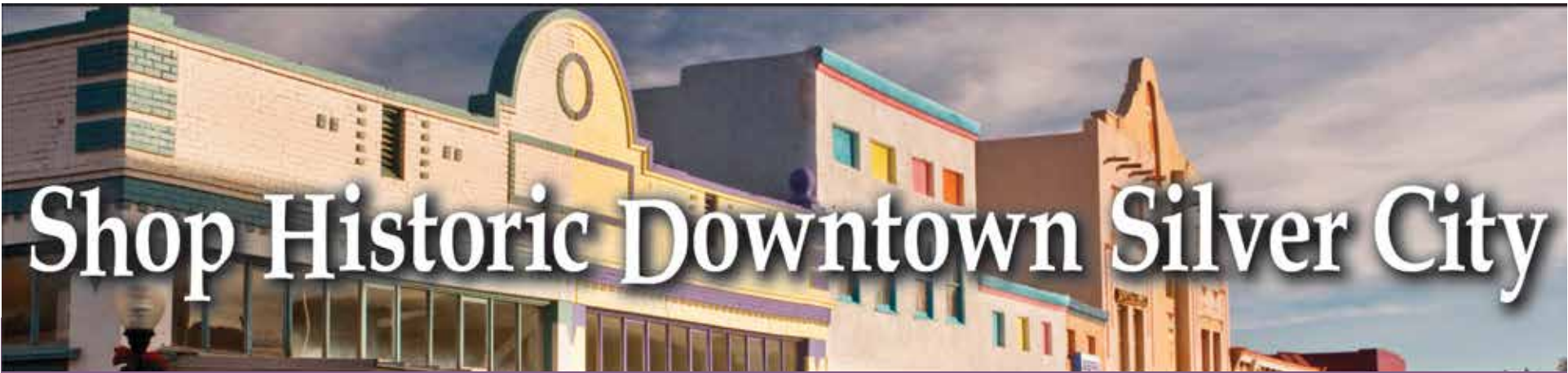


Yvonne Postelle


• **The Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery**, 2470-A Calle de Guadalupe, across from the historic Fountain Theatre in Mesilla, features two local artists for the month of September, **Arlene Tugel** and **Yvonne Postelle**. Tugel, a watercolorist and “watercolor collagist” has lived in Las Cruces for more than 15 years. Prior to New Mexico she resided in California, Oregon and Wash-

ART SCENE

continued on page 10



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The Gospel Cats play the main stage at the Black Range Lodge in 2017. (Courtesy photo)

MUSIC SCENE

Pickamania 2020

Familiar faces live from the Black Range stage

Pickamania 2020, live streaming Friday-Saturday, Sept. 11, 12, and 13, is a virtual acoustic music festival held in Kingston.

Hosted by the Black Range Lodge, this annual event features The Hard Road Trio with Bill Evans, Peter McLaughlin, Chris Brashear and Alvin Blaine;

the Back Porch Blues Band; Wil Marin and Robert Bowlin from Nashville; and the Super Jam bluegrass all-stars. On Sunday, there will be an open mic hour, the Coyote's Lunch and the Laurieanne Fiorentino Trio.

Tune in at Facebook.com/Black-RangeLodge.com (see Events) or the Sierra County Arts Council

Facebook page. For information call 575-895-5652.

Find more regional art and events at www.sierracountyarts.org.

This event is supported in part by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs and by the National Endowment for the Arts.

ART SCENE

continued from page 8

ington State. She is happiest at her easel painting plein air in the wide open spaces of the West. Postelle has been dabbling in art most of her life. After retiring from the business world and raising a family, she has concentrated on her love of oil painting. Her interests are mainly the tree formation in landscapes. The gallery's newest member, **Marty Alberson**, grew up in the Mesilla Valley. He creates his art with fused glass, that is, glass that is "melted" or fused at approximately 1,400 degrees Fahren-

Marty Alberson

heit. He became fascinated with fused-glass when a stained glass project he was creating needed a fused-glass element. That "element" in the stained glass project captured his imagination and he has been "melting glass" for the last 11 years. COVID-19-adjusted gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily, with limited access. Info: 575-522-2933, www.mesillavalleyfinearts.com.

VIRTUAL NEW MEXICO

An area-created format showcases artists' work on Facebook at "**Las Cruces NM Artists & Art Showcase**" on a page designed specifically for the many undiscovered artists and artisans in Las Cruces and Doña Ana County. No matter what it is you do, painting, photography, sculpting, pottery, jewelry, fiber arts, woodworking, decorative arts, etc., anything created by you is welcome to be displayed. Please note, this

FaceBook page is meant to be a digital art gallery rather than a sales tool. This FaceBook page is the creation of Robert Paquette, a long-time volunteer for many Las Cruces community service organizations.

• **Desert Exposure Virtual Gallery** offers a visit to the art of southern New Mexico artists in their web-based galleries. While we can't yet go to all these galleries and studios and spend our time perusing the amazing work of southern New Mexico artists and craftspeople, we can take a journey through their creativity. This section of the Desert Exposure website journeys through some of the talent we have south of Interstate 25. If you are a southern New Mexico artist and would like to be included in this listing, contact us at editor@desertexposure.com or 575-443-4408. Website: www.desertexposure.com/virtual-gallery/.

We're still here!

Due to the many stores closed due to the Coronavirus, DESERT EXPOSURE'S distribution locations have been reduced, but quantities have been increased at those that remain open. Below, highlighted, are the current locations, and the ones in gray are where we hope to return. Information is subject to change, but you can always find us at www.desertexposure.com. Listings below do not include our locations in Las Cruces, where 29 of our 68 spots remain open.

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Alamo Chamber / Vis. Center
Alamogordo Public Library
Alamogordo Regional Airport
Bamboo Garden Restaurant
Blue Stone Jewelry
Books Revisited
BZ Rockin Burgers
Capped INC.
Civic Center
Creative Designers Cust. Frame
First National Bank
Flickinger Center
Heart of the Desert
Hitchin Post BBQ
Holiday Inn Express & Suites
La Hacienda
La Luz Market
Loco Credit Union
Lowe's Signature Market
Magnuson Hotel & Suites
Margo's Mexican Food
NM Museum of Space History
Plateau Espresso
Super 8 Motel
The Old Post
Tularosa Basin Museum

CLOUDCROFT
Big Daddy's Diner
Cloudcroft Senior Center
High Rolls Market
Mad Jack's Mountain Top BBQ
Old Apple Barn
Cloudcroft Public Library

DEMING
Adobe Deli
Apache Café
Campo's Restaurant
Days Inn
Deming Library
Deming Arts Council
Deming Visitors Center
Deming Mimbres Museum
Desert RV
La Fonda Restaurant
Learning Center
Lo-Hi RV Park
Las Cazuelas Mexican Restaurant
Marie's Italian Grill
Mimbres Hospital
Patio Café
Peppers Supermarket
Rancher's Grill
Readers Cove

HATCH
Hatch Public Library
Hatch Visitors Center/Museum
Jim's Super Market
Pepper Pot
Pic Quik
Village Market

HILLSBORO
Black Range Lodge
Black Range Winery
Enchanted Villa B & B
Hillsboro Antiques
Hillsboro Historical Society
Hillsboro Post Office
Kingston School House Museum
The General Store Café

LORDSBURG
Visitor Center

MESILLA
The Bean Coffee House
Las Cruces Bulletin
Mesilla Book Center
Mesilla Town Hall
Mesilla Visitor Center

MIMBRES
La Tienda Restaurant & Gas
Living Harvest Bakery
Mimbres Senior Center
Post Office
RV Park
Valle Mimbres Market

SILVER CITY
Adobe Springs
Albertsons
All My Momma's Junk

Amos Lash
Aunt Judy's Attic
Bayard Food Basket
Bayard Public Library
Bear Creek Cabins & Motel
Bear Mountain Lodge
Bedroom Shoppe
Better Homes & Gardens
Blue Dome
Bright Funeral
Cassie Health
Chevron Station
Comfort Inn
Country Girl Nursery
Creative Hands
Curl Up and Dye
Dandelion Wish & Pilates
Datura Day Spa
Daylight Donuts
Diane's Bakery
Eagle Mail
Enchantment Realty
Encore
First American Bank
First New Mexico Bank
Food Basket
Foxworth - Galbraith
Ft. Bayard Medical Center
Furniture Gallery
Gila Animal Hospital
Gila Eye Care
Gila Hike & Bike
Gila Mountain Inn
Gila Regional Medical
Gila Valley Library
Grant County Art Guild Gallery
Grant County Humane Society
Grinder Mill
Guadalupe's
Habitat For Humanity

HMS Hidalgo Medical
HMS Mental Health
Holiday Inn Express
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La Familia Restaurant
Laundry Land
Leyba & Ingalls Arts
Light Art Space
Little Toad Creek
Lloyd Gallery
Lois Duffy
Massage Clinic
Mimbres Region Arts Council
Mis Amigos Pet Care Center
Morningstar
Motel 6
Murray Hotel
Old World Antiques & Oddities
Our Paws Cause
Palace Hotel
Pink Store
Pretty Sweet Emporium
Quality Inn
Railroad Museum
Ramolla Arts
Red Hat Chiropractic
Remax
Revel Restaurant
Rock Center
Rose Valley RV
RPM Motors
SC Zen / Dr. Steutzer
Senior Center
Sherman Dental

Silco Theater
Silver Bowling Center
Silver City Book Shop
Silver City Co-op
Silver City Library
Silver City Museum
Silver City RV Park
Silver City Trading Co.
Silver City Women's Club
Silver Health Care
Silver Leaf Floral
Smith Realty
Snappy Mart
Soul River
Stinar Clinic
Sun Valley Hardware
Sunrise Espresso II
Syzygy
Tatiana Maria Gallery
The Market Place
Tranquilbuzz Coffee House
Transitions for Women
United Country
UPS Store
U-store-it
Visitors Center
Wagon Wheel Realty
Western Bank
Wild West Weaving
WNMU Gym
WNMU Student Life
Wrangler Beverage Co.
Ziryabs

Chevron
Comfort Inn
Conoco Gas Station
Davis - Fleck Drugs
Denny's
Elephant Butte Chamber
Elephant Butte Inn
Elephant Butte RV
Elephant Butte State Park
Elephant Butte Store
Geronimo Springs Museum
Geronimo Trail / Visitors Cen.
Grapes Gallery
Grapevine Bistro
Holiday Inn Express
Johnny B's
La Paloma Hot Springs
Marina Del Sur State Park
Old Brick Café
Passion Pie Café
Pelican Spa
Rio Bravo Fine Art Gallery
Riverbend Hot Springs
Sea Properties
Shell Gas Station
Sierra Grande Lodge
T or C Brewing Company

TULAROSA
Horse Feathers
Loredos Restaurant & Bakery
The MERC
Tularosa Old American Center
Tularosa Public Library
Tularosa Travel Center

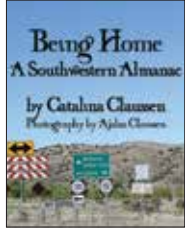
TRUTH or CONSEQUENCES
Blackstone Hot Springs
Bullock's Super Market
Chamber of Commerce
Charles Motel & Spa

ON THE SHELF • ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Local Authors Busy

A roundup of recent books

“Being Home: A Southwestern Almanac”
by Catalina Claussen



Award-winning Grant County author Catalina Claussen has released “Being Home: A Southwestern Almanac” with Progressive Rising Phoenix Press. This collection of humorous vignettes is featured monthly on KURU 89.1 FM and is now available in print.

“Being Home: A Southwestern Almanac” is a laugh-out-loud story collection made for radio featuring quirky characters shaped by the seasons, the desert landscape and small-town living, making audiences feel right at home in the Mimbres Valley. From Brandon Johnson’s mystifying encounter with a coyote to Ernesto Puro Corazon’s sixth grade drive to school with his abuela in his Chevy Impala SS, Claussen captures moments and people that are sure to surprise and entertain.

The collection is illustrated with a unique photographic series taken by her daughter, Ajala Claussen.

“I wanted to capture the essence of each story in the images, placing the reader in the moment,” Ajala said. “But I also wanted to create space for the viewer to imagine themselves as one of the characters.”

The Being Home podcast is available at catalinaclaussen-books.wordpress.com. Follow Catalina on Instagram @catalinaclaussen or on Facebook.

“Titan Martyrs,”
by Kate Rauner

Silver City author Kate Rauner has release, “Titan Martyrs,” the conclusion to her dystopian science fiction trilogy. The story began with “Titan: Colonizing

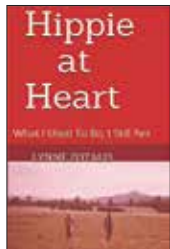


Saturn’s Moon” (2018), a finalist in the e-book category of the 2019 New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards.

When asked about her inspiration for the series, Rauner said, “I read several articles suggesting Titan as the best place in our solar system for a human colony,” Rauner said, “I thought, ‘what a terrible place! What sort of person or group would want to live on Titan?’ I knew I had to write a story to answer that question.”

“Titan Martyrs” is available now in paperback, and on kindle. The Titan trilogy is available for purchase at Amazon books.

“Hippie at Heart”
by Lynne Zotalis



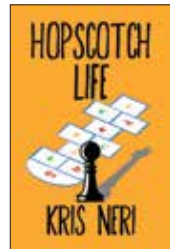
“Flying back from Mexico with my husband’s body entombed in the cargo hold, I grip the armrests as if I’m hanging onto

sanity.” This riveting first line of “Hippie at Heart” gives the reader a clear picture of the depth of this memoir.

Finding true love, your soul mate during the late 1960s amid the drug deluge and sexual revolution was a phenomenal achievement. Nick and Anne’s

life of family and friendship, loyalty and devotion turn nightmarish when tragedy strikes during an idyllic Mexican vacation. Weaving through the mystery of her husband’s bizarre death, spending thousands of dollars fighting the venal Mexican authorities, this powerfully poignant story of survival is armored with the tenacity and strength of the human spirit.

“Hopscotch Life”
by Kris Neri



Award-winning mystery and fantasy author Kris Neri has published “Hopscotch Life,” her first women’s fiction novel.

In “Hopscotch Life,” quirky protagonist Plum Tardy feels like she’s living in a country song, after having just lost her job, her house and her man. In her usual hopscotch fashion, Plum sets out to find a completely new town and a new man, but even knowing how out of synch she is and how oddly she moves through life, Plum could never have predicted the unexpected way that her past would collide with her present. Will her off-beat approach save her, or land her behind bars in hopscotch hell?

“Hopscotch Life” is available through brick-and-mortar bookstores and all online sellers.




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Gila River photos by Gabriela O’Keefe

WILD PLACES • DONNA STEVENS

The Show Must Go On

Resilience is theme of 16th Gila River Festival

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed almost everything about our lives and how we navigate them. Some cherished annual events have been canceled altogether, and others have adopted a new format. Fortunately, the Gila River Festival falls into the latter category. Yes, it’s still happening, on Sept. 18 and 19, and it’s all on-line.

This year we’ll be exploring how we cultivate resilience in our communities and ecological systems as we address the crises of climate change, the coronavirus pandemic and systemic racism. What lessons have we learned from the pandemic that can inform our response to the climate emergency? How can we create a more just and equitable society and emerge stronger and better from these challenges? How do we create a secure water future for everyone in southwest New Mexico?

But the festival won’t be just another video conference. It will take place on a virtual conference platform that allows for multiple presentations to happen concurrently and provides opportunities for attendees to engage with others. If a decision on which presentation to attend is a dilemma, not to worry. Each presentation will be recorded and available to registrants for 30 days after the event, so you can watch at your convenience. Attendees can connect with others via virtual coffee breaks, meet-and-greet sessions and a virtual sponsor expo.

Here are a few highlights from the festival lineup:

- Ethnobotanist, writer and agroecologist Gary Paul Nabhan will give the keynote address on “Restoring Land Health and



Gila River photos by Gabriela O’Keefe

Community Health in the Borderlands through a ‘Slow Agriculture.’”

- U.S. Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM) will kick off the festival with a talk about his “Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature,” an initiative to save 30 percent of the land and water in the United States by 2030. He’ll also discuss the M.H. “Dutch” Salmon Greater Gila Wild and Scenic River legislation to designate the Gila River and major tributaries as Wild and Scenic Rivers, thus affording them special protections.

- The Justice and Equity track includes presentations by activist and actress Casey Camp-Horinek, who will discuss the spirit of resilience in indigenous communities and her Ponca Nation’s Rights of Nature statute.

- Writer and poet Camille Dungy will speak to social, racial and environmental justice, as well as the resilience of people of color.

- In the Community Resilience track, Stacey Cox will talk about how individual and community resilience are equally important and mutually reinforcing.

- Sharman Apt Russell, who won the prestigious John Burroughs Medal for nature writing in 2016, will talk about the importance of humor in getting through tough times, such as climate change or a pandemic.

- The Ecological Resilience track includes presentations by ecologists and other scientists describing our region’s vulnerability to climate change and how we can build community and ecological resilience to adapt to these changes.

This year, the annual Wild and Scenic Film Festival is combined with the Gila River Festival on the evening of Saturday, Sept. 19. You can expect thought-provoking stories and gorgeous cinematography as part of the lineup of 15 films.

This is just a small sampling of the festival’s 40+ presentations. Virtual field trips, workshops, and happy hours round out the festival, inspiring us to stay strong, revel in the Gila’s beauty, and work to ensure that its majesty flourishes for eternity.

For more information and to register for the Gila River Festival, visit gilariverfestival.org.

Gila River Facts

- Gila - Spanish contraction of the Yuma word Hah-quah-sa-eel meaning “Running water that is salty”
- Length - 649 miles, 27th longest river in U.S.
- Headwaters - Gila Wilderness, southwest New Mexico
- Terminus - confluence with the Colorado River, Yuma, Arizona
- Threatened and endangered species of the Upper Gila include the southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow-billed cuckoo, loach minnow, spikedace, northern Mexican gartersnake, narrow-headed gartersnake and Chiricahua leopard frog.
- The Gila River in New Mexico supports the most intact native fish community in the Lower Colorado River Basin.
- The Gila River in New Mexico has one of the highest breeding-bird concentrations in North America, including rare species such as the Gila Woodpecker and the endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. There are also numerous species of conservation concern, such as Lucy’s Warbler and Summer Tanager.
- The Gila River in New Mexico supports some of the last intact riparian forest in the Lower Colorado River Basin.
- The Upper Gila River was inhabited by the Mogollon people 200 - 1450 CE and still is inhabited by the Apache people, 1200 CE - today.
- Apache warrior Geronimo was born at the headwaters of the Gila.
- The first European to see the Gila River was possibly Spanish explorer and missionary Juan de la Asunción in 1538.
- The Gila River briefly served as the border between the U.S. and Mexico after the Treaty of Guadalupe (1848) and before the Gadsden Purchase (1853).
- Once navigable until the early 20th century from the Colorado to the Arizona/New Mexico line, dams and diversions have reduced the Gila’s perennial flow in Arizona entirely or at best to a trickle. The Upper Gila River in New Mexico is the Gila’s last perennial stretch.
- The Gila River in New Mexico was named America’s Most Endangered River of 2019, given the threat of a large-scale diversion project.
- U.S. Sens Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich proposed legislation to designate portions of the Gila and San Francisco rivers in New Mexico as Wild and Scenic in May 2020.
- The Interstate Stream Commission defunded the Gila diversion project in June 2020, protecting New Mexico’s last wild river from a major water development project under the Arizona Water Settlements Act.

PUBLISHER'S NOTEBOOK • RICHARD COLTHARP

Wonder Through the Windshield

Abandoned structures lend mystery to quiet country drives

“**T**ourists Welcome!” shouts the message painted in a script font on the side of the light green building.

Above that are the words, in neat block letters, “Wm. HINDI STORE, General Merchandise, Duran, N.M.”

I drive by the store, abandoned for most of the last 50 years, two or three times a year as I travel north to visit family in Oklahoma. Despite its ghost-town feel, or maybe because of it, I’ve been fascinated with that building since I first encountered it in 1995. Duran lies near the intersection of U.S. Highway 54 and N.M. Highway 3, about halfway between the big metropolises of Corona and Vaughn.

If you take Highway 3 the few short miles north to Encino, you’ll find one of the loneliest roads and one of the most beautiful stretches of land in the state. More than once, I’ve cost myself the 30-minute round-trip detour just to experience the breathtaking views.

Duran is the kind of place I’d like to hang out for a week, and learn as much of its history as possible.

Once, while sitting at the bar of the Dragon Room of the Pink Adobe restaurant in Santa Fe, I happened to sit next to a gentle-

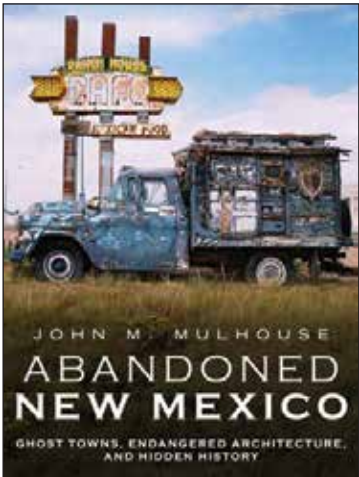
man who was actually from Duran, and a descendant of William Hindi. I shared my fondness of the place, and he was able to fill me in on some background and history.

I figured that would be the best I could do until recently, when I discovered a book called “Abandoned New Mexico” by John M. Mulhouse. The book’s subtitle is Ghost Towns, Endangered Architecture and Hidden History. In this book, I learned more about the Hindis (they were among several families of Lebanese immigrants who helped settle the town) and Duran’s most notorious crime.

Turns out Duran is the site of New Mexico’s 75th and last legal hanging, as Sheriff John Block oversaw the gallows end of a criminal convicted of a grisly murder. The victim’s wife was only spared because a bullet ricocheted off of her metal corset fastener.

The Duran stories take up only about three pages of Mulhouse’s book. There are 157 more pages with similar delicious details, along with some beautiful photographs, both recent and vintage.

Spending time with the book is like taking a slow drive down New Mexico’s quietest highways, only without the gas expense or that tired feeling of ex-



“Abandoned New Mexico: Ghost Towns, Endangered Architecture, and Hidden History” By John M. Mulhouse
Published by Arcadia Publishing


iting a vehicle you’ve driven for four hours.

Another beautiful book, which works in tandem with Mulhouse’s, is “Abandoned New Mexico: Enigmas and Endings,” by Susan Tatterson.

This book, like others she has done in the Abandoned New Mexico series, features Tatterson’s glorious photographs.

At first glance, the desert seems beige and colorless. After you spend time in and around the desert, though, you notice

ABANDONED
continued on page 14



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LAS CRUCES ARTS • MIKE COOK

Artist Relief Fund

Arts council looks to support struggling artists

“For the arts to thrive, we need thriving artists,” said Doña Ana Arts Council (DAAC) Executive Director Greg Smith, as he introduced a new DAAC program to help struggling local artists through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

With anonymous donations, the DAAC Artist Relief Fund began this month, Smith said. Through the program, local culinary, literary, performing and visual artists can apply for \$100 grants, which will be awarded at the end of each month, beginning with August.

Grants will continue to be awarded at least through Dec. 31, 2020, Smith said, and into the new year if DAAC continues to receive donations to support the program and there is approval from the DAAC board of directors.

To apply for a \$100 grant, an artist must be at least 21 years of age, be listed in the DAAC directory and have financial need, Smith said. There are no restrictions on how the grant is to be spent, he said.

Donations to support the Artist Relief Fund are welcome, Smith said.

To apply for a grant, email either director@daarts.org or admin@daarts.org. For more information, visit daarts.org and click on ARTIST RELIEF FUND ANNOUNCED.




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ABANDONED

continued from page 13

the detail. The flowers, the variations of green, the effect of the sun's light, the feathers of the birds, the ever-changing sky, the rocks and so many other things bring immense depth of color just beneath the surface.

That is the way Tatterson's photos work. She enters an old, dusty abandoned building, but with her camera's eye finds the hint or, in some cases, blast of color.



SUSAN TATTERSON
ABANDONED NEW MEXICO
ENIGMAS AND ENDINGS

“Abandoned New Mexico: Enigmas and Endings”
By Susan Tatterson
Published by Arcadia Publishing

Richard Coltharp, publisher of Desert Exposure, has always love exploring abandoned buildings. Two of his New Mexico favorites are the old Cedarvale schoolhouse almost smack dab in the middle of the state, and the Murray Hotel in downtown Silver City, years prior to its wonderful restoration. He can be reached at richard@lascrucesbulletin.com.



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BORDERLINES • MARJORIE LILLY

Two Sides, One World

Palomas, Colombus take economic hits

The economy on the border between Columbus and Palomas, Mexico is being reshaped dramatically this summer because of the coronavirus quarantine and the Trump policy of lengthening the wall between the two countries.

Businesses in Palomas that cater to United States citizens may be most affected by the quarantine, which is enforced on both sides of the border.

Americans crossing the border back to the United States from Palomas in the interminable lines see a lighted sign that says “U.S. Citizens Only” above the one booth that’s open. That’s a misleading sign that even Mexican border personnel get wrong. I was told twice by them that the phrase somehow includes resident aliens even though that phrase is not on the sign.

For some reason most Americans believe that even U.S. citizens won’t be able to get back from Mexico, and this is inflicting enormous harm to the “essential businesses” that are protected by quarantine rules on both sides of the border.

Many Americans don’t understand they don’t even need a passport for the short trip from the border to Palomas.

Adriana Gonzalez was sitting alone at Fierro Dental Clinic in the middle of the afternoon. She said the clinic is getting only one or two customers per day, where they used to get 10-12 per day, before the Coronavirus.

She claims that in Palomas, “The government isn’t giving money to the large businesses or the small ones,” as they are in the United States. Down the main street a little way is Lam Dental Clinic, usually empty now for lack of customers. Adriana claims that business there is in a similar state as Fierro’s. The owner of Lam’s was not at his office when I visited.

Some other “essential businesses,” such as pharmacists, oculists and restaurants, arranged by quarantine rules, are open with almost nonexistent clientele.

At the Pete Alvillar Pharmacy near the border in Palomas school superintendent and high school teacher Arsenio Morales

combines his very scarce work at the store with his work on line with his students. Palomas schools are not changing their methodology yet.

He stands at his computer working and then waits on me as I buy the Juarez paper El Diario. Then he goes back to his computer and communicates with the 80 students he teaches at three different levels.

Arsenio is very much looking forward to the proposed policy of Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who intends to offer college tuition to any student who requests it. Lopez Obrador is being strongly criticized by lots of economists in Mexico, but this policy seems to be one that will have a major effect on Mexico even if it is messy for a while.

The controversy in Columbus, across the border from Palomas, is basically dormant right now, but it involves important issues.

President Trump has been promoting the extension of a border wall that passes through Columbus. For several months the workers have been shutting off the central part of town by rebuilding the roads for their construction project.

There’s been local criticism and a lot of fear of the workers’ neglect of quarantine rules, but that standard has at least been upgraded somewhat, as workers have started wearing face masks.

Mayor Esekiel Salas is promoting the project because it is good for the economy, as he sees it.

“If it wasn’t for the building going on, we would have dried up a long time ago,” he said. “We’re faring a lot better than a lot of the other communities in this area.”

There’s been criticism of the project by Kevin Bixby, executive director of the Southwest Environmental Center, in a let-

ter to the Albuquerque Journal on April 5.

“Most of Arizona and a chunk of Texas will be sealed with 30-foot steel bollard walls,” he said. “There is an obscure legal authority that has allowed the president to ignore the Endangered Species Act and dozens of other laws.”

The New Mexico border is a place to watch as the coronavirus situation unfolds in our area.

Borderlines columnist Marjorie Lilly lives in Deming.



Arsenio Romero, Palomas Schools superintendent and teacher at the high school, stands near his computer at the Pete Alvillar Pharmacy. (Photo by Marjorie Lilly)

DEMING STRONG

Watch for Gift Cards

Stimulus fund for small businesses

In May of this year, Deming City Council approved a memorandum of agreement between the city of Deming and Deming Luna County Economic Development, Inc. (DLCED) allowing DLCED to administer a local economic stimulus grant program allocating \$250,000 to be expended with the intent of assisting small businesses that were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In May of this year, Deming City Council approved a memorandum of agreement between the city of Deming and Deming Luna County Economic Development, Inc. (DLCED) allowing DLCED to administer a local economic stimulus grant program allocating \$250,000 to be expended with the intent of assisting small businesses that were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

A total of 95 businesses applied for the funding and 81 were awarded. The amounts awarded ranged from \$1,000 to \$6,624 per applicant. In addition, DLCED has reserved an additional \$5,000 for a Gift Card initiative promoting a shop local campaign that will be coming soon.

The Gift Card initiative will consist of DLCED purchasing gift cards from eligible, participating businesses. Different opportunities will be given to community members to receive these gift cards. The intent is to have the local community continue to safely support local businesses. More information on how to participate as a business can be found on the website at www.dlced.com. DLCED will keep the community updated on opportunities to win a gift card on its website and social media platforms.

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575-546-3663 Check us out on Facebook
This project is supported in part by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs. www.demingarts.org

Red or Green? is Desert Exposure's guide to dining in southwest New Mexico. We are in the process of updating and modifying these listings. We are asking restaurants to pay a small fee for listing their information. Restaurant advertisers already on contract with Desert Exposure receive a free listing. For other establishments, listings with essential information will be \$36 a year and expanded listings, up to 10 lines, will be \$48 a year. To buy a listing in Red or Green?,

contact Pam Rossi at pam@lascrucesbulletin.com or 575-635-6614. We emphasize non-national-chain restaurants with sit-down, table service. With each listing, we include a brief categorization of the type of cuisine plus what meals are served: B=Breakfast; L=Lunch; D=Dinner. Unless otherwise noted, restaurants are open seven days a week. Call for exact hours, which change frequently. All phone numbers are area code 575 except

as specified. Though every effort has been made to make these listings complete and up to date, errors and omissions are inevitable and restaurants may make changes after this issue goes to press. That's why we urge you to help us make Red or Green? even better. Drop a note to Red or Green? c/o Desert Exposure, 1740-A Calle de Mercado, Las Cruces, NM 88005, or email editor@desertexposure.com. Bon appétit!



Update of open restaurants and services being offered.
* = Open; C/S = Curb Side; DEL = Delivery; D/T = Drive Through;
P = Patio; T/O = Take Out

GRANT COUNTY
Silver City
* **ADOBE SPRINGS CAFÉ**, 619 N. Bullard St., 538-3665. Breakfast items, burgers, sandwiches: Sunday B L, all week B L D; **P/O T/O**
* **CACTUS JACKS**, 1307 N. Pope St. 538-5042. Gluten-free, healthy groceries, grill fast foods and beverages. Monday to Friday B L D, Saturday and Sunday L. **T/O DEL**

* **CAFÉ OSO AZUL AT BEAR MOUNTAIN LODGE**, 60 Bear Mountain Ranch Road,

538-2538. B L, special D by reservation only. **P T/O**

* **CHINESE PALACE**, 1010 Highway 180E, 538-9300. Chinese: Monday to Friday L D. **T/O**

COURTYARD CAFÉ, 1313 E 32nd St., Gila Regional Medical Center, 538-4094. American: B L.

DIANE'S RESTAURANT, 510 N. Bullard St., 538-8722. Fine dining (D), steaks, seafood, pasta, sandwiches (L), salads: Tuesday to Saturday L D,

Sunday D only (family-style), weekend brunch.

DIANE'S BAKERY & DELI, The Hub, Suite A, 601 N. Bullard St., 534-9229. Artisan breads, pastries, sandwiches, deli: Monday to Saturday B L early D, Sunday L.

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

* **DRIFTER PANCAKE HOUSE**, 711 Silver Heights Blvd., 538-2916. Breakfast, American: B L, breakfast served throughout. **T/O**

* **FORREST'S PIZZA**, 601 N. Bullard St., Unit J. 388-1225. Tuesday to Friday L D, slices until 7 p.m. **T/O D/T**

* **FRY HOUSE**, 601 N. Bullard St. Suite C. 388-1964. Seven days L, Sunday L, D. **T/O DEL**

* **GIL-A BEANS COFFEE SHOP**, 1304 N. Bennett St., 538-2239. Monday to Saturday 8 a.m.-noon. **P T/O**

* **GOLDEN STAR**, 1602 Silver Heights Blvd., 388-2323. Chinese: L D. **D/T T/O**

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

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JALISCO CAFÉ, 103 S. Bullard St., 388-2060. Mexican. Monday to Saturday L D Sunday B.

* **JAVALINA COFFEE HOUSE**, 117 Market St., 388-1350. Coffeehouse. **T/O**

JUMPING CACTUS, 503 N. Bullard St., 654-7367. Coffeeshop, baked goods, sandwiches, wraps: B L.

KOUNTRY KITCHEN, 1700 Mountain View Road, 388-4512. Mexican: Tuesday to Saturday B L D.

* **LA COCINA RESTAURANT**, 201 W. College Ave., 388-8687. Mexican: L D. **T/O D/T C/S**

* **LA FAMILIA MEXICAN RESTAURANT**, 503 N. Hudson St., 388-4600. Mexican: Tuesday to Sunday B L D. **C/S**

LA MEXICANA RESTAURANT, 1105 Tom Foy Blvd., 534-0142. Mexican and American: B L.

* **LITTLE TOAD CREEK BREWERY & DISTILLERY**, 200 N. Bullard St., 956-6144. Burgers, wings, salads, fish, pasta, craft beers and cocktails: Monday to Sunday L D. **P T/O**

MI MEXICO VIEJO, 202 E Broadway St. Mexican food stand: 956-3361. Monday to Saturday B L early D.

* **MI CASITA**, 2340 Bosworth Drive, 538-5533. New Mexican cuisine: Monday to Thursday L, Friday L D. **T/O**

NANCY'S SILVER CAFÉ, 514 N. Bullard St., 388-3480. Mexican: Monday to Saturday B L D.

PRETTY SWEET EMPORIUM, 312 N. Bullard St., 322-2422. Dessert, ice cream: Monday to Saturday.

* **Q'S SOUTHERN BISTRO**, 101 E.

College Ave., 534-4401. American, steaks, barbecue, brewpub: Tuesday to Saturday L D. **P T/O**

* **REVEL**, 304 N. Bullard St., 388-4920. Elevated comfort food. Weekdays LD, weekends BD, closed Wednesdays. **T/O**

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

* **SUNRISE ESPRESSO**, 1530 N. Hudson St., 388-2027. Coffee shop: Monday to Saturday B L, early D. **D/T**

* **SUNRISE ESPRESSO**, 1212 E. 32nd St., 388-2927. Coffee shop, bakery: Monday to Friday B L, early D, Saturday B L only. **D/T**

TAPAS TREE, 601 N. Bullard St. in The Hub, 597-8272. Monday to Thursday L, Friday and Saturday L D (closes at 4 p.m.).

* **TASTE OF VEGAS**, 303 E. 13th St., 534-9404. Daily L **P T/O**.

* **WRANGLER'S BAR & GRILL**, 2005 Hwy. 180E, 538-4387. Steak, burgers, appetizers, salads: L D. **P T/O**

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Duck Creek Café, U.S. Highway 180, Cliff, 535-4500. Visit Duck Creek Café on Facebook. RVs/Big Rigs welcome, Wednesday to Saturday LD, Sunday LD. "Bring home cooking to your table"

DOÑA ANA COUNTY
Las Cruces & Mesilla

ABRAHAM'S BANK TOWER RESTAURANT, 500 S. Main St. 434, 523-5911. American: Monday to Friday B L.

* **ANDELE'S DOG HOUSE**, 1983 Calle del Norte, 526-1271. Mexican plus hot dogs, burgers, quesadillas: B L D. **P T/O**

* **ANDELE RESTAURANTE**, 1950 Calle del Norte, 526-9631. Mexican: Monday B L, Tuesday to Sunday B L D. **DEL P T/O**

* **AQUA REEF**, 141 N. Roadrunner Parkway, 522-7333. Asian, sushi: LD. **DEL P T/O**

THE BEAN, 2011 Avenida de Mesilla, 527-5155. Coffeehouse.

* **A BITE OF BELGIUM**, 741 N. Alameda St. No. 16, 527-2483, www.abiteofbelgium.com. Belgium and American food: Daily B L. **P C/S**

* **BOBA CAFÉ**, 1900 S. Espina St., Ste. 8, 647-5900. Sandwiches, salads, casual fare, espresso: Monday to Saturday L D. **C/S DEL T/O**

BRAVO'S CAFÉ, 3205 S. Main St., 526-8604. Mexican: Tuesday to Sunday B L.

* **BURGER NOOK**, 1204 E. Madrid Ave., 523-9806. Outstanding greenchile cheeseburgers. Tuesday to Saturday L D. **T/O**

* **BURRITOS VICTORIA**, 1295 El Paseo Road, 541-5534. Burritos: B L D. Now serving beer. **T/O**

CAFÉ DON FELIX, 2290 Calle de Parian, 652-3007. Mexican, street tacos, mini-burgers: Wednesday to

Saturday L D, Sunday brunch only 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

CHACHI'S RESTAURANT, 2460 S. Locust St.-A, 522-7322. Mexican: B L D.

* **CHILITOS**, 2405 S. Valley Drive, 526-4184. Mexican: Monday to Saturday B L D. **C/S DEL D/T**

* **CHILITOS**, 3850 Foothills Road Ste. 10, 532-0141. Mexican: B L D. **C/S DEL D/T**

* **DAY'S HAMBURGERS**, 245 N. Main St., 523-8665. Burgers: Monday to Saturday L D. **C/S**

* **PECAN GRILL & BREWERY**, 500 S. Telshor Blvd., 521-1099. Pecan-smoked meats, sandwiches, steaks, seafood, craft beers: L D. **P T/O**

* **DELICIAS DEL MAR**, 1401 El Paseo Road, 524-2396. Mexican, seafood: B L D. **P T/O**

* **DICK'S CAFÉ**, 2305 S. Valley Drive, 524-1360. Mexican, burgers: Sunday B L, Monday to Saturday B L D **C/S P**

* **DION'S PIZZA**, 3950 E. Lohman Ave. 521-3434. Pizza: L D. **DEL D/T**

* **DOUBLE EAGLE**, 2355 Calle de Guadalupe, 523-6700. Southwestern, steaks, seafood: L D, Sun. champagne brunch buffet. **P T/O**

* **EL SOMBRERO PATIO CAFÉ**, 363 S. Espina St., 524-9911. Mexican: L D. **P T/O**

* **ENRIQUE'S MEXICAN FOOD**, 830 W. Picacho Ave., 647-0240. Mexican: B L D. **T/O**

FARLEY'S, 3499 Foothills Road, 522-0466. Pizza, burgers, American, Mexican: L D.

FIDENCIO'S, 800 S. Telshor Blvd., 532-5624. Mexican: B L D.

* **THE GAME BAR & GRILL**, 2605 S. Espina St., 524-GAME. Sports bar and grill: L D. **P T/O**

* **THE GAME II: EXTRA INNINGS SPORTS BAR & GRILL**, 4131 Northrise Drive, 373-4263. Live music on weekends. American, Southwest, now serving weekend brunch 10 a.m. Saturdays and Sundays: L D. **P T/O**

* **GARDUÑO'S**, 705 S. Telshor Blvd. (Hotel Encanto), 532-4277. Mexican: B L D. **P T/O**

GO BURGER DRIVE-IN, Home of the Texas Size Burrito, 1008 E. Lohman Ave. , Las Cruces, NM 88005, 524-9251. Monday - Saturday, 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. Specializing in relleno burritos and other mexican food.

GOLDEN STAR CHINESE FAST FOOD, 1420 El Paseo Road, 523-2828. Chinese: L D.

* **GRANDY'S COUNTRY COOKING**, 1345 El Paseo Road, 526-4803. American: B L D. **D/T T/O**

* **HABANERO'S** 600 E. Amador Ave., 524-1829. Fresh Mexican: B L D. **P T/O**

* **HACIENDA DE MESILLA**, 1803 Avenida de Mesilla, 652-4953. Steaks, barbecue, seafood, sandwiches, salads, pasta: L D. **C/S P**

* **HIGH DESERT BREWING COMPANY**, 1201 W. Hadley Ave., 525-6752. Brew pub: L D. **P T/O**

JOSEFINA'S OLD GATE CAFÉ, 2261 Calle de Guadalupe, 525-2620. Pastries, soups, salads, sandwiches: Monday to Thursday L, Friday to Sunday B L.

* **KEVA JUICE**, 1001 E. University Ave., 522-4133. Smoothies, frozen yogurt: B L D. **P T/O**

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Silver City Downtown

Plenty of beautiful places to settle into

Recently, Silver City MainStreet received a call from a Grant County resident who was in town to pick up her takeout and have lunch. She was looking for a place to enjoy her lunch and got the last open table at The Hub. Her call was asking about other locations she could eat outside downtown.

“We are lucky that we have several pleasant places to enjoy takeout food downtown,” said Charmaine Waite, Silver City MainStreet executive director.

The Big Ditch Park has several benches between Market Street and the Main Street Plaza. The Plaza also has benches, and just north of the Plaza is Lion’s Park. Lion’s Park has several picnic tables that were recently painted by the Community Youth Building Project.

These tree-lined areas along

the San Vicente Creek are almost always cooler than along the street. It’s also relaxing to hear and see the water flowing below. Check them out and you may be surprised at how nice they are.

On Spring Street you will find the lovely Jaurequi Park.

Along with beautiful green grass and a mural dedicated to Greg Jaurequi, there are covered picnic tables.

The Silver City Museum has a nice courtyard with benches under tall trees. These are some of the places you can enjoy a

take-out meal, smoothie or coffee from one of our downtown restaurants or coffee houses. Silver City MainStreet encourages you to support our local downtown restaurants by ordering take out.

The mission of Silver City MainStreet is “To encourage a vibrant, historic downtown Silver City which is recognized as the heart of our diverse community.” Visit the website, www.silvercity-mainstreet.com to learn more.



A corner of one of the benches peeks out in the Big Ditch Park at the base of the stairs at Market Street. (Courtesy photo)

TABLE TALK

A Taste of Downtown

Coupon book on sale Sept. 5

Silver City MainStreet’s annual fundraiser, the Taste of Downtown, usually features a walk around sweet and savory tasting at downtown eateries on Labor Day weekend. This year, due to the pandemic, the event has been turned into a super coupon book featuring 32 downtown restaurants, retail shops and the downtown hotels.

The coupon book features more than \$200 of savings for \$20.

“We were very excited to see the support from the merchants for the coupon book idea,” said Patrick Hoskins, board president of Silver City MainStreet. “The Taste of Downtown has become an event that sells out in 20 minutes and we didn’t want

to lose momentum this year. We surveyed the restaurants first to see if they liked the idea and if they thought we should add retailers. They responded with a resounding ‘yes!’”

The coupon book has 32 coupons with discounts of up to 25 percent, BOGOs and free items.

“We were very pleased with the response from the merchants,” Hoskins said. “This is a win-win, with the coupons bringing customers to merchants and MainStreet able to have a fundraiser, something we didn’t think we could do this year. We wanted the coupons to support the merchants in this challenging time so the expiration for all the coupons is on Dec. 31, 2021.

They would make great gifts for friends and family and appreciated stocking stuffers.”

Funds raised by this event go to support Silver City MainStreet activities that include beautification projects, programs to assist merchants and projects that encourage residents and tourists to visit and shop downtown Silver City.

Taste of Downtown coupon books are on sale Saturday, Sept. 5, at the Maker’s Market from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon. The Maker’s Market is at the Main Street Plaza at 7th Street. and Bullard Street. Coupon Books can also be purchased online at www.silvercitymainstreet.com, or at the MainStreet office at 201 N. Hudson St.

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THE STARRY DOME • BERT STEVENS

Scutum, The Shield

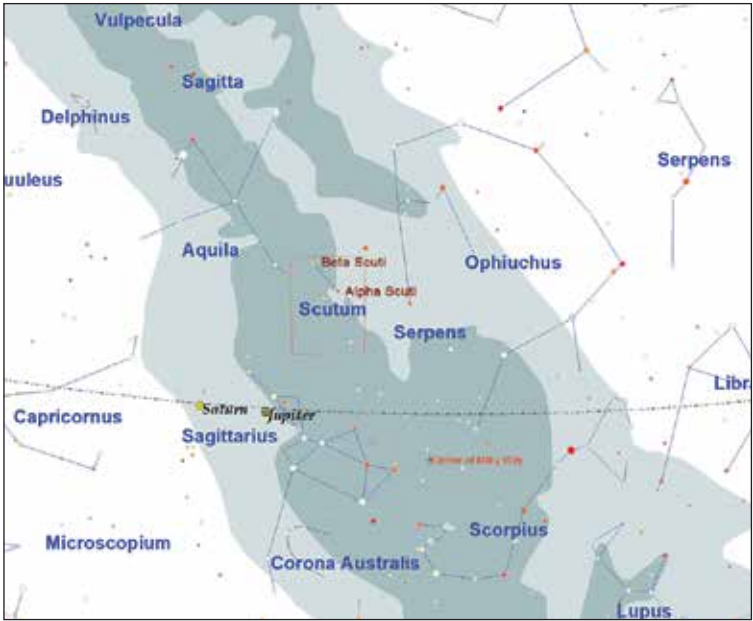
A Polish king's victory celebrated

When knights went into battle, they depended not only on their swords, but on their shields as well. While we do not carry shields around with us, there is one about halfway up in the sky above our southern horizon. Scutum, The Shield, is 84th out of the 88 official constellations in size, covering only 109 square degrees.

Renaissance astronomers had a sky that was filled with constellations from Greek mythology as listed in Ptolemy's Almagest, the (at the time) authoritative book on astronomy. Claudius Ptolemy lived in Alexandria, Egypt under the Roman Empire of the second century. The Almagest included tables for computing the positions of planets, a star catalog and a listing of constellations. The constellation list was derived from Greek astronomer Hipparchus's list of 48 constellations.

This list did not cover the entire sky. There were many areas that were not part of these 48 constellations and there were no constellations in the southern hemisphere where Hipparchus could not see because they were below his southern horizon.

STARRY DOME
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Scutum, the Shield, is about halfway up above the southern horizon in our evening sky. Composed mainly of faint stars, this constellation does not have much of a shape, just Alpha Scuti and Beta Scuti connected together. The ecliptic travels a little south of Scutum, with Saturn and Jupiter to the left of Scutum. While the planet stays close to the ecliptic, comets can appear anywhere in the sky.

Calendar of Events – September 2020 (MDT)

01	11:22 p.m.	Full Moon
09	Noon	Mars stands still
10	3:26 a.m.	Last Quarter Moon
12	6 p.m.	Jupiter stands still
17	5:00 a.m.	New Moon
22	7:31 a.m.	September Equinox
23	7:55 p.m.	First Quarter Moon
28	9 p.m.	Saturn stands still

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STARRY DOME

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Renaissance astronomers began inventing new constellations to fill in the empty areas in the sky.

Polish astronomer Johannes Hevelius created the constellation Scutum Sobiescianum (Shield of Sobieski) to memorialize Polish King John III Sobieski's victory in the Battle of Vienna in 1683. Hevelius took the brightest stars in this constellation from neighboring Aquila when he drew the new constellation. The brightest of these stars is Alpha Scuti, shining at magnitude +3.9, a somewhat faint star for the brightest star in a constellation.

Such a small constellation has few really interesting objects, but comets are visitors that travel through many constellations as they make their rounds in our solar system. Most comets have a tail, a feature that sets them apart from most other astronomical objects. Perhaps you heard about or saw pictures of a new comet that graced our skies in July, Comet 2020 F3 (NEOWISE).

A comet is a ball of frozen dust and gas, a "dirty snowball" as hypothesized by American astronomer Fred Whipple in the 1950s. They are normally completely solid when they are far from the Sun. The comets we see generally have orbits that keep them in the outer Solar System most of the time, only occasionally coming into the inner Solar System. As they approach the Sun, they warm up. The water-ice and other ices sublimate, changing directly from the frozen state to the gaseous state, without ever becoming liquid.

In some comets the gas simply drifts off, carrying the dust that it had been trapping with it. In other comets, the gas and dust stream out as jets from underground reservoirs. Since most comets rotate, these jets create spirals of dust and gas around the heart of the comet itself, called the nucleus.

The gas and dust drifts along with the nucleus, forming a

cloud around it, called the coma. The coma is usually spherical surrounding the nucleus, especially when it is still far from the Sun, but not so far that the nucleus is still frozen solid. As it gets closer to the Sun, dust and gas is released more rapidly.

Charged particles stream outward from the Sun in such numbers that they are referred to as the solar wind. These particles strike the gas coming out of the nucleus and push it directly outward from the Sun, separating it from the dust that remains along the comet's orbit. With a bright comet, this results in two tails emerging from the comet.

The gas tail is straight, pointing directly at the Sun. It usually has a blue color, but if the comet has more sodium than the usual comet, the blue may be tinted with green. The dust tail usually is a white color, reflecting the light from the Sun. Since it follows the orbit of the comet, the dust tail usually is curved, following the comet's orbital path.

Comets do not "shoot across the sky." They move slowly against the background stars as they travel in their orbit. Every night, the comet, along with all the other stars rises or sets. Since the comet is brightest when it is near the Sun, bright comets are usually found in the east before sunrise or in the west after sunset. Comet NEOWISE is the brightest comet visible in the Northern Hemisphere in the past 23 years. Perhaps another one will brighten our sky in the near future.

The Planets for September 2020

As the month begins, Mercury appears above the western horizon as it emerges from the far side of the Sun. It will spend the entire month in Virgo, moving from the far western end of the constellation to the far southeastern end. The Messenger of the Gods will slide southward along the western horizon, only about five degrees up. At midmonth, Mercury's disc is 5.6 seconds-of-arc across and it will be

80 percent illuminated. Saturn and Jupiter are still in eastern Sagittarius moving westward at the beginning of the month. Jupiter stops on Sept. 12 and turns back eastward. Saturn continues westward for another 17 days before it too turns eastward. They are about eight degrees apart, 31 degrees above the south-southeastern horizon as it gets dark, setting a little after 4 a.m.

At midmonth, Jupiter has a disc that is 42.4 seconds-of-arc across, shining at magnitude -2.5. Saturn is magnitude +0.4 with a disc that is 17.5 seconds-of-arc across. Its rings are tilted 22.8 degrees downward with the northern face showing and they are 39.8 seconds-of-arc across.

Mars rises around 9 p.m. on the eastern horizon and it is 39 degrees above the west-southwestern horizon as it gets light. Shining at magnitude -2.2, Mars' disc is 21.1 seconds-of-arc across at midmonth. The God of War is moving eastward until Sept. 9 when it turns around and heads westward in eastern Pisces.

The brightest planet in our sky shines at magnitude -4.1 as it rises around 3:30 a.m. Venus will be 35 degrees above the eastern horizon as it gets light. During the month, it moves from eastern Gemini, through Cancer, and into southwestern Leo. The Goddess of Love's disc is 17.3 seconds-of-arc across and it is 66 percent illuminated.

Day and night are of equal length on Sept. 22, marking the Equinox. On this day, the Sun crosses the celestial equator traveling southward. In the Northern Hemisphere, the season of astronomical autumn begins on that date. So, start unpacking your winter clothes and "keep watching the sky!"

An amateur astronomer for more than 45 years, Bert Stevens is co-director of Desert Moon Observatory in Las Cruces.



If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14.

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TALKING HORSES • SCOTT THOMSON

A Change for the Better

Rental horses not the best business

Earlier in the summer, I received an interesting note from a reader of Desert Exposure that reminded me about an era in the world of horses that, thankfully for me at least, has pretty much gone away. The reader was asking about why there don't seem to be facilities anymore where you can just rent a horse for a few hours and go merrily out for a ride on your own with no supervision or guidance, regardless of your skills or knowledge of the area. The reader had wonderful memories of doing this during his life, and even being able to do it in many different areas of the country.

After over 20 years of training horses and working with hundreds of different horses and riders and seeing all that can happen to animal or human, it's hard for me to believe this was ever possible. But I know this was how my wife was introduced to riding – the joys and the perils – when she was a kid growing up

in Rhode Island. She and a friend would take their allowance money from babysitting and rent a couple of horses to ride around a park near where she lived. They rode carefree and fearless as most do at that age, even experiencing the joys of taking a horse into the ocean in Narragansett Bay. It wasn't long before she also got to experience a trip to the ER with a broken arm, perhaps a foreshadowing of what many years of riding would do to her body.

I also saw some old pictures of the stable where we boarded our horses in Marin County, California. This stable is the oldest continually functioning riding stable in the area, dating back to 1932. In the pictures, there were horses lined up and tied to hitching posts, saddled and ready to go, with a sign that said you could rent any horse for 25 cents and ride off for the day. Needless to say, the horses didn't look too eager and happy, but in all prob-

ability the average citizen probably knew more about horses and riding back then, as horses had only just lost their positions as essential parts of everyday life.



I even remember a lyric in an old Beach Boys song about "when we rode that horse, we sure had some thrills," and I always pictured some blonde California kids galloping their rented horses all over the place back in the 1960's.

I'm sure there are places where you can still pull out a few dollars and take a tired old horse from a rent string, but I think for the most part this has been replaced by guided trail rides that are more controlled and supervised – better deals for the horses.

When I wrote back to this reader, I offered some theories on why I think the rent-a-horse business is just not something that makes sense anymore.

CHANGE
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“Civil disobedience is not our problem. Our problem is civil obedience.” Howard Zinn

“Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

There are those who believe that finding fault with our country is radical and un-American. The slogan, “Love It or Leave It” implies that our country is perfect the way it is, and no more changes need to be made. The history of our country shows that that has never been the case. There have been many changes to our laws and even our constitution – hence the 27 amendments. There have been approximately 30,000 statutes enacted since 1789. That’s a lot of changes to the status quo.

Right now, the big change on everyone’s mind is creating better safeguards to be sure our country treats all people equally. It has clearly come to our attention lately that not all people are

being treated equally and some people are being systematically excluded from the right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” I choose to believe that this has been simply an oversight, and everyone would like to see equality for all. I understand that change can be difficult, but without change we would still be under English rule. Without change, we will stagnate as a people and as a country.

The way we correct problems that come to light is to change our laws through voting and education. Two of our commonly used forms of education, in order to bring a problem to the attention of the public, are demonstrations and marches. Historically, those in power have never willingly given up power, the status quo, or for that matter, even agreed to diminish their power without a struggle from those who will benefit from a change to the status quo. Thus, in order for women to have the right to vote, they had to march in the streets, hold rallies and demonstrations, and often be arrested for “civil disobedience.”

Eventually, women got the vote, which diminished the power men had over women, a change that improved the life of half the people in our country.

Right now, white people have a lot more privilege (power) over people of color. Consequently, there are a lot of people, both white and people of color struggling to create changes to make our laws more equitable for everyone. Being able to struggle for change is an example of democracy in action. It is what the American people have fought for over the many years of our country’s existence. Many of these struggles to improve our country have been hard-won battles that have taken many years. The current struggle is an example. POC, especially African Americans, have been struggling for equality in our country for the last 400 years.

My first involvement in a protest was with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) I was walking home from high school one day when I saw some of my friends picketing Safeway. Back in 1960, Safeway supermarket

would not hire African Americans. I grew up in East San Diego, a predominately Black and Hispanic area of the city. So, I asked them if I could march with them and hold a sign. I was the only white person protesting this inequality. I was yelled at, cursed at and called a traitor by the white people driving by in their cars. When I got home later, my mom scolded me and said how could I shame them so much. I had actually thought they would approve. I didn’t understand why everyone wasn’t for equality. That was the beginning of a long history of being involved in protests and demonstrations against inequality and for the improvement of our country.

I was in many anti-Vietnam War demonstrations – many times as a speaker and an organizer. During that time, I was put on the FBI watch list. Way back in 1974, I was in my first gay and lesbian march. Back then, they were protest marches. Now they are Gay Pride celebrations. I was in Tucson’s and Seattle’s first Transgender Awareness marches. I was with many other students who occupied the M.E.Ch.A. Building at WNMU for weeks. The university was trying to take the building away from the M.E.Ch.A. Club. Not long ago, I was with a group of women who stopped traffic in

downtown Seattle with an abortion rights protest. Many of us were arrested. Recently, I have marched and protested with the Black Lives Matter movement, both here and in Seattle. Also, I have been in numerous Take Back the Night marches.

If we don’t work for the improvement of our country to make it better and more equal for everyone, then the status quo will remain and those in power will stay in power. My question is, Why do people who worry about not having enough money for food and rent defend the status quo – the very system that causes this inequality?

I have always considered myself a work-in-progress. So, why not think of our country as a work-in-progress? Our founders thought of it that way.

Susan, 76, stays active riding her bicycles and is currently building a storage shed in her yard. She earned both a BA and an MA from Western New Mexico University. Both times she was valedictorian, the first time as a man and the second time as a woman. She has lived all over the country.



CHANGE

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Liability – I imagine even years ago if you rented a horse, you’d sign some kind of waiver in case you got hurt. But what people probably didn’t think about was all the damage a horse could do to other people, property or animals when an inexperienced rider does something stupid or loses the horse. The reality of life today is few people know how to behave around horses and few riders, even experienced ones, know how to handle a horse in a scary situation. I run into this all the time when I meet someone on the trail and the first thing they do is get off the trail and get behind a tree, not realizing when a human, a predator in the horse’s mind, hides behind a tree it can represent a major threat to a horse.

As a prey animal – the basic nature of the horse to flee or spook has not changed in 60 million years. There is no such thing as a bombproof or dead broke horse, there’s always something that can make a horse become unglued. I think many owners of rent strings realized there’s too much risk of getting sued by someone other than the rider to be in the business anymore. There’s no liability release or insurance policy ever written that can protect you from what can happen when horses are involved.

Cost – Like everything else, horses have become very expensive to keep. I tell people here in Silver City that you need to plan on an average of about \$400 per month for hay and feed, vet care, farrier work, tack, etc. Most rent

string owners probably wouldn’t give the care a private owner does, but you can see how hard it would be to generate enough income from rentals to cover the cost of a horse every month.

Quality of life for the horse – I believe many people came to the understanding that inexperienced multiple riders on out of shape horses bordered on abuse in terms of what it does to the horse. The reality is that horses were never “designed” to be ridden. They don’t live to be ridden. All they really want is to live in a herd, walk 10-15 miles a day and eat for 15 hours a day. That is what their physiology and minds are designed to do. Everything we ask them to do is in conflict with their basic nature and chemistry.

A good riding horse needs to be developed physically to carry the weight of a rider, just the way you need to train and strengthen any athlete. It should never be asked to carry more than 20-22 percent of it’s body weight, including tack, as it puts enormous strain on muscles, joints etc. (I wonder if anyone paid attention to that when renting a horse!). In the wild on their own, horses spend only about one percent of their time moving above a walk, about 15 minutes a day, yet we want to run them all over the place when we get on them. Rescues around the country are filled with horses broken down and discarded from rental strings, and I think people started to see the cruelty in all that.

If someone just wants to be on a horse, I always suggest going out on some guided trail rides with a reputable operation. You

won’t get to cowboy around but at least you’ll be on a horse that does this job for a living and is probably pretty well cared for.

Our responsibility is to help horses live in our world, and that world has changed and continues to do so. For the horses of the world, realizing the time has past for using these animals as equipment for hire, is one change we can feel good about.

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



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LIVING ON WHEELS • SHEILA SOWDER

Rooftop Tents

An inexpensive solution to the stay-at-home blues

Every month I need to have my article to the editor by a certain deadline. And every month, around the beginning of the second week, I realize I have nothing. With the deadline getting closer and closer, I used to panic, but not any more, because something always turns up.

Last week I started waiting. A couple of days went by with nothing happening, no chance remarks to put me on the trail, no significant dreams.

Then one morning when the article was the furthest thing from my mind, Jimmy told me to look across the road. Expecting to see a stray bag of trash some RVer had left, or maybe a couple of deer, instead I saw two women sitting in front of a little tent, which happened to be perched on top of their SUV! And even more amazing, another SUV was parked behind them and IT HAD A TENT ON TOP TOO!

Okay, I can tell you are not impressed. What's the big deal? you're wondering. A while back, I did an article on RVing in Iceland and rooftop tents are popular there, but these were the first I had seen here in the U.S. I grabbed my notebook and ran over to interrupt their peaceful morning coffee.

Both women, Laura and Louise, are from Albuquerque, and have been friends all their lives. Laura is retired and Louise is a pediatric physical therapist. Every summer they take off on an outdoor adventure for several weeks. Louise also is a serious bicyclist and goes to lots of bike races, where a couple of years ago she noticed quite a few rooftop tents. Last year, she and Laura bought their Tepui brand tent from REI and did an initial tour of national parks in Utah, Montana and California. "We stayed

in a hotel one night, but missed our tent," Louise told me. "We love it." Even though at one park they had to evacuate because of a bear sighting.

"Wait a minute," I interrupted, "aren't you safe that high up?" Turns out bears can climb onto car hoods.

I carefully climbed the ladder to peek at the inside space, which is mostly filled with a large mattress. It looked comfortable, but later I read in the product specs that most of these tents have a 2 1/2-inch foam mattress. I thought about my own 12-inch mattress and speculated that a nice thick mattress pad might be called for if you happen to have bones that are close to their use-by date.

Normally these campers are self-sufficient foodwise, but Louise admitted to forgetting the stove for this trip, which is how they happened to stay here at Rose Valley RV Ranch. During dinner the previous evening at the Little Toad Creek Brewery and Distillery in downtown Silver City, they asked the waitress if she knew of a place for them to camp for the night. A young man at the next table introduced himself – Nick from Yorkshire, England, on a month-long camping trip through our Southwest – and told them he knew of a place. And by an amazing coincidence, he also was camping in a rooftop tent.

They all generally camp in national forests because dispersed camping, as it is called, is free as long as you're 100-200 feet from any road, trail or water source. As they described some of their experiences, I flashed back to their bear story. They described going through their first big wind in the tent: ("Frightening, but the tent held fast.")

We discussed the drawbacks of the rooftop tent, especially the danger in a middle-of-the-night descent when nature calls.

"No liquid after 6 p.m.," Louise insisted, while Laura declared the first step "a doozy." And no drinking parties, they warned, although Nick told us he had a positive experience with that, strictly as research, of course.

I watched them fold up their nighttime shelter, which took them about 10 minutes. Supposedly this process can be done by a single person if they're tall enough. Watching what seemed to me a somewhat complicated routine, I wondered just how tall that would have to be.

Nick's tent is a Smittybilt Icamp and is similar to the Tepui.

Rooftop tents come in both hard and soft-sided models; the latter seems roomier, but thinking of those bears, I know which I'd choose. Soft-sided tent prices range from around \$1,500 to \$2,500, while hard-sided are a little more expensive. I do question the description of many of these tents, that they "sleep four," since the largest I found was 72-inches wide by 96-inches long by 52-inches high. Maybe four really small or really young or really friendly campers could fit. Some have sky panels for extra light, and no-see-um-proof mesh screens. They can also be mounted on a truck bed, which would seem to make access and assembly easier.

So many of us are suffering from traveling deprivation right now, and these rooftop tents seem to be one cost-effective way to explore new places without risking your safety. Well, except for that bear thing.

All three campers mentioned the inconvenience that once the tent is set up, they don't have use of the vehicle for sightseeing.



Laura and Louise enjoy their morning coffee after a good night's sleep in their rooftop tent. (Photos by Sheila Sowder)

But all brought along bicycles to compensate.

I bid the travelers goodbye and wished them safe journeys. I marveled at my good fortune in living right across the lane from where they spent the night, and at their willingness to share their adventures and experiences with a stranger. It was tempting to believe they had been sent here by divine providence for the purpose of this article, but to be honest, it's a rare day when

there's not something intriguing happening at this RV park.

Sheila and husband, Jimmy, have lived at Rose Valley RV Ranch in Silver City since 2012, following five years of wandering from Maine to California. She can be contacted at sk Sowder@aol.com.



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Where it still flows wild in New Mexico, the Gila supports a vibrant riparian forest community of cottonwoods, sycamores, willows and alders. Black hawks, eagles, elk, javelina, cougars, and black bears, all roam the river corridor and Ponderosa pine forests that climb the rugged canyon hillsides.

This year the annual Gila River Festival, Sept. 18 and 19, will explore cultivating resilience in communities and ecological systems. The event takes place on a virtual conference platform that allows for multiple presentations to happen concurrently and provides opportunities for attendees to engage with others.



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HIGH PLACES • GABRIELE TEICH

Switching Back

Crossing the foot bridge in Cloudcroft

If you’ve ever driven up to Cloudcroft from Alamogordo before, you’ve probably wondered about the little metal pedestrian bridge. I know I have. How do I get there? What trail do I have to use to cross it? Who put it there?

I finally decided to find out. The trail is called the “Switchback and Old Cloudcroft Highway Trail.” I would rate it moderately easy, it is fairly flat, but over four miles long. Since you are not at the Cloudcroft altitude of over 9,000 feet, the habitat is not quite alpine yet in character. Think less pine trees, more open spaces, desert shrubs and some meadowy areas. It does not provide quite as much shade as one would wish for in the summer months, but the higher altitude makes for pleasant temperatures. The trail head is on Bailey Canyon Road, past the pedestrian bridge on the left as you come up the mountain, where the road makes a big sharp right curve. Drive on Bailey Canyon Road for a few hundred yards just past the cattle guard and park your vehicle there. Start on the marked trail leaving the dirt

road to the left into the forest. The trail is never very steep but it does venture down the mountain first, staying fairly close to the main road. Several signs describe the logging and railroad activities here. Some are placed in the exact spot as the photo they depict and thus give a neat glimpse into the past.

And THEN you get to cross that bridge you’ve been thinking about for so long. And yes, you will find out who put it there and when. On the other side of the road you stay in a beautiful green meadow while making your way slowly back up the hill. The butterflies and squirrels were abundant in June. And then there was that one very tame deer. I couldn’t believe how close we could get before it turned away from us and headed for the woods. It gave me ample time to get his portrait. Overall, the trail sticks fairly close to the main road here as well, which makes this my only complaint: You can hear cars and trucks the whole time.

In that afore mentioned sharp right curve in the road you will go through a pedestrian tunnel under the road to return to your



Switchback and Old Cloudcroft Highway Trail. (Photo by Gabriele Teich)

car safely. The whole route took us not longer than two and a half hours at a very leisurely pace.

If you decide to go, wear sunscreen, bring water and don’t forget to wave at the cars when you are on the bridge.

Of German origin, Gabriele Teich has called Las Cruces her home for more than 20 years — and loved every minute of it, hiking the mountains in the immediate surrounding area and all over this beautiful state.



Switchback and Old Cloudcroft Highway Trail. (Photo by Gabriele Teich)



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