**Community News**

Anyone interested in running as a WRITE-IN CANDIDATE in Eunice, Hobbs, Jal, Lovington and Tatum school districts must file with the Lea County Clerk’s Office on Tuesday. The districts will be holding school board elections on Feb. 5. Candidates must live in the proper school districts.

The American Red Cross REAL HEROES AWARDS BREAKFAST will be 7:30-9 a.m. Jan. 10, at the Lea County Event Center. Tickets are $25. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Debra Lyles at the Red Cross at 390-9265 or donate.redcross.org.

The LEA COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS is announcing it is time for anyone interested in taking the 15-week classes to sign up now as registration for the classes has started. You may call the New Mexico Junior College Training and Outreach annex at 492-4709 and ask for Selma Granado. All of the training classes will be held on the New Mexico Junior College’s campus in the Carter Annex classrooms. The first class and orientation will happen on Thursday Jan. 10, 2013. Classes begin at 6:30 p.m. and finish around 9 p.m. The Master Gardener Training Classes will run every Thursday through April 4, 2013. The tuition fee is $75 and that pays for your New Mexico Extension Master Gardener manual.

**Inside Today**

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**What is your New Year’s resolution?**

- Amanda Chavez of Hurricane, Utah
  - “My New Year’s resolution is working on becoming a vegetarian and cutting down on meat to reach my goal.”

- Katie Gutierrez of Hobbs
  - “My New Year’s resolution is to accomplish my dream and become a police officer.”

- Olga Peña of Farmington
  - “My New Year’s resolution is to live life to the fullest and to make the new year better than ever.”

- Stephanie Ramirez of Hobbs
  - “My New Year’s resolution is to save up and make 2013 a better year than 2012.”

- Tammy Foster of Lovington
  - “My New Year’s resolution is to learn to be more playful with my kids and to quit smoking.”

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**Hobbs Chamber starts 2013 debt free**

**FOR THE NEWS-SUN**

The Hobbs Chamber of Commerce ended 2012 on its high-note out in some years, officials say having paid off the debt if assumed in 2010 in order to stay afloat.

Chairman Bobby Shaw said the Hobbs Chamber settled its nearly $30,000 debt through private means, a combination of donations, corporate sponsorships, fundraisers and other sources. “We have been very disciplined to pay down and now pay off this debt without mingling moneys derived from our professional services contract with the City of Hobbs,” Shaw said. “That has been a concerted effort of our members, directors and staff, and we are grateful to all to be able to put this behind us.”

Hobbs Chamber Executive Grant Taylor said in a Dec. 9 op-ed in the News-Sun that when he took the helm in February of 2011, the Hobbs Chamber was insolvent.

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**New pre-kindergarten class**

Hobbs Head Start plans to add a new pre-kindergarten class in January. For more on the class, see page 2.

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**Candidates’ visits top Lea story list**

**BETH HARM/SCENE**

Visits from two presidential candidates, a booming business atmosphere and good news for Lea County’s housing crunch top the list of big stories for 2012.

Rounding out the top 10 are a pair of state championships.

The top 10 stories of 2012 in a collection of highlights from the past year. Rankings were determined by the number of online visits through an anonymous ballot of News-Sun employees.

1) Obama and Romney visit Hobbs and Lea County

President Barack Obama and Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney both visited Lea County during the 2012 campaign season.

Obama flew on Marine One from Roswell. He spoke to a select crowd of area supporters at a rally in Artesia.

Romney visited Hobbs Aug. 23 and toured Watcom Truck and Supply. He spoke to a crowd of about 500 before attending a fundraiser at the Lea County Event Center. Both presidential candidates spoke about energy and the policies they proposed for the nation and the industry.

President Barack Obama touched down in Roswell on March 22, then flew via helicopter to Tatum.

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**People of 2012 made big contributions to Lea County**

**BUCK VANDERMEER**

FOR THE NEWS-SUN

This week the News-Sun is giving special recognition to people who have appeared in our People of the Year columns and have been selected as People of the Year 2012.

At the top of the list are Dale “Tuffy” and Betty Cooper. In 2011, the News-Sun published the story, “Tuffy and Betty Cooper: Parents and Grandparents of Champions.” Since the publication of this story, their grandson Tuf Cooper has won the world championship of tie-down calf roping twice.

There are few instances in the history of sport where one family has played such a significant role. As a young roper, Tuffy and Betty enjoyed successful careers in rodeo.

When they began raising a family they retired from competition to teach the art of roping to their children Betty Gayle, Roy and Tom Clay.

Gayle Gayle became a four-time world champion roper. Roy Cooper earned eight world championships and made the national finals 32 times. He

SEE PEOPLE, Page 2

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**Guitar program**

Edison Elementary fourth and fifth graders Manuel Sanchez, Symex Mackey, Celeste Hernandez, Annalissa Hernandez, Jose Rios, Irvin Rodriguez, Luis Santos junior Arzuete, Jasmine Lopez prepare for a guitar lesson given by Manuel Sanchez. The guitar lessons are a pilot program started earlier this year. At right, Luis Santos prepares for a lesson.
about Maljamar for a speech on the importance of domestic natural resources,” he said.

Hobbs, received its final license approval from the state of New Mexico.

For killing Alvarez. He told detectives he was not sorry for killing Alvarez.

Rivas told Hobbs detectives he was not sorry for killing Alvarez.

Pegaso Global Holdings selected a site near Carlsbad for $40 million carbon capture Testing and Evaluation. The company stated it intends to cost about $1 billion and will function as a green energy facility.

Hobbs’ income placed the city in the top five across the state — even among larger cities such as Roswell.

lovett committed to property owners who were sentenced as of Dec. 28, but is set to receive his anger out.

For convenience stores, including requiring at least two clerks to work overnight shifts and enforce a 21-year minimum age for the sale of tobacco, and keep the sale of goods and services in each city.

Each of the communities attributed the new record to oilfield activity, construction and brisk business.

The 48-inch pipeline is designed to carry two million barrels of water a day, according to expert analysis of the scientific data and the process provided by the voluntary conservation efforts, Service biologists determined the lizard is no longer in danger of extinction, nor is it a fish, wildlife and other species.

The decision was a relief for many area business owners.

The Fish and Wildlife Service decided not to list the lizard under the Endangered Species Act.

Lea County ranked No. 2 in the state for highest average weekly income are high wages — Lea County ranked No. 2 in the state for highest average weekly income.

The company stated it intends to build the 48-inch pipeline that will carry water from the Tularosa Basin to 1.2 million gallons of water a day, according to

The CITE project was estimated to cost about $160 million pipeline that will carry water from the Tularosa Basin to the state's capital.

The Fish and Wildlife Service cited a need to protect existing shinnery oak dune habitat and greatly reduce the impact of oil and gas development on the species habitat.

The decision was a relief for many area business owners.

The state Court of Appeals overturned one of the seasons.

Both presidential nominates visited Lea County during 2012. Mitt Romney’s visit to Hobbs highlighted a new commitment to saving the state's economy, something that the rest of the country strugged to achieve and was the topic of much discussion during the election season.

The Lady Wildcats finished the regular season 17-17, tied for second in District 4-2A (last in the three-team district) and lost nine of its last 13 games heading into the post-season.

On the road to the state title, the Lady Wildcats beat No. 3 Eunice High School and No. 2 Santa Fe Indian School, winning 68-66.

The Lady Coyotes became the first team in New Mexico high school basketball history — boys or girls — to win a state championship and finish the season 60-0.

The Lady Wildcats ended the 2012-13 season with a 15-10 record and a 4-2A district title.

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