

News-Sun

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 29, 2014

50 cents

Community News

The Hobbs Community Playhouse presents the comedy **"BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE."** Directed by Jonathan Bertschinger. Admission is \$10 for the show directed Jonathan Bertschinger. Show times are 8 p.m. Sept. 5-6, 11-13 and 2 p.m. Sept. 12. Tickets are available in advance at www.communityplayersofhobbs.com or at the door.

The **MONUMENT SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY REUNION** Meet and Greet will be held from 6-10 p.m. today at Del Norte Park, 4314 N. Grimes, in Hobbs, east of the Del Norte Swimming Pool.

First Baptist Church of Eunice and the Christian Motorcyclists Association is hosting a **BIKER BASH** from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday at First Baptist Church, 1211 Ave. G. The event is open and free to the public. It will have free food, bike games and a bike blessing. For information send emails to Rtrikeman@aol.com.

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OIL PRICES

West Texas intermediate	Price	Change
Spot	\$94.55	+ 0.67
Posted	\$91.25	+ 1.00
Sour	\$80.95	+ 1.00
N. Gas	\$4.044	+ .041



LHS PARKING LOT ACCIDENT

Lovington girl dies

JAYCIE CHESSER AND TODD BAILEY
 NEWS-SUN

LOVINGTON — Speaking with the support of her family, Lovington Municipal Schools Superintendent Darin Manes announced Thursday evening that the 17-year old LHS senior injured in an accident at the high school has died.

"It is with sincere sadness I must report the student involved in the incident in the parking lot of Lovington High School on Wednesday, Aug. 27, has passed away today at approximately 4:45 p.m.."

Manes visited with the student's family at Lubbock's University Medical Center Thursday and stayed in close contact with family members throughout the day.

"As a superintendent, obviously I hoped days such as this would never come," Manes stated. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family, and out of respect for them, I will not be providing any information about the student or the incident at this time. I ask that the media and the community similarly be respectful as this matter is reviewed."

The student, whose name has not been officially released, was injured when she fell off a moving vehicle in the northwest area of the parking lot. Her injuries were mainly to her head.

The accident took place at around 3:30 p.m. Wednesday. Emergency personnel were able to stabilize her and she was airlifted to UMC

SEE DEATH, Page 3



JAYCIE CHESSER/NEWS-SUN

Emergency medical personnel prepare to transport by helicopter a student injured in an accident Wednesday afternoon at Lovington High School.



KIMBERLY RYAN/NEWS-SUN

A furry friend

Dahlia Reynoso holds a hamster Thursday in Diana Salinas' first-grade class at Southern Heights Elementary.

LEA COUNTY COMMISSION

County eyeing new franchise policy

Grants SPS a one-year franchise

JAYCIE CHESSER
 NEWS-SUN

TATUM — With the influx of oilfield, utility and other companies to Lea County, the Lea County Commission decided Aug. 21 to develop a policy regarding existing franchises after Southwestern Public Service approached the Commission to ask for the approval of a 25-year franchise agreement as the current one expired Thursday.

"Southwestern Public Service, a subsidiary of Xcel Energy, has a need for the county to grant a franchise authorizing the company to perform necessary construction in the county to generate, store, sell, transmit, conduct, distribute, furnish or otherwise use electric power throughout the county," Scotty Holloman, Lea County attorney, said. "Southwestern Public Service is requesting to obtain a franchise from Lea County in order to perform some of these operations in the county rights-of-way or on county property."

A similar franchise was granted to Southwestern Public Service on Aug.



Holloman

SEE FRANCHISE, Page 3

Casino hotel opens to near full occupancy

LEVI HILL
 NEWS-SUN

Some laughed. Some cried. All cheered at the grand opening of Zia Park Casino's new 154-room hotel Thursday.

It was standing room only for many of the near 200 attendees to the event that was called the "event of the year."

"This is the event of the year and it speaks to the kind of friend Zia Park has been to this community for the kind of turnout we have here," said Hobbs Chamber of Commerce Executive Grant Taylor in his remarks. "We are absolutely delighted to have the kind of corporate partner Zia Park is."

For Lorrie Tramell, the hotel's manager,

SEE HOTEL, Page 3



LEVI HILL/NEWS-SUN

Rafael Verde, Zia Park Casino general manager, right center, and Lorrie Tramell, Zia Park Hotel general manager, left center, cut the ribbon at the grand opening of Zia Park Casino's 154-room hotel Thursday. They were joined by city, county and state dignitaries.

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Mark the date

TODAY

Monument Reunion

The Monument School and Community Reunion Meet and Greet will be held from 6-10 p.m. at Del Norte Park, 4314 N. Grimes, in Hobbs, east of the Del Norte Swimming Pool.

SATURDAY

Downtown Sounds Concert Series

The Hobbs Downtown Sounds Concert Series hosts Bamboo Boat Steel Drum Band and Heaven's Grace Ballroom Dance Studio from 6:30-9 p.m., at the Shipp Street Plaza on Broadway. For more information, call the Center for the Arts, 397-2787.

Lovington Farmers Market

The Lovington Downtown Farmers Market is scheduled from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Courthouse Square in Lovington. The market will be open each Saturday until Oct. 25. For more information, call 396-1418.

Hobbs Farmers Market

The Hobbs Farmers Market is open

from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Del Norte Park, 4314 N. Grimes. The market will be open each Saturday until Oct. 25. For more information, call 210-289-9124 or 575-390-5975.

Monument Reunion

The Monument School Reunion will be held at the Monument Community Center from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Cost is \$10 per person with lunch provided by the Monument Baptist Church Women's Group. Guest speaker is Jim Harris, curator of the Lea County Museum. A tour of the Monument room at the museum, in Lovington, will be held from 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Biker Bash

First Baptist Church of Eunice and the Christian Motorcyclists Association is hosting a Biker Bash from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 1211 Ave. G. The event is open and free to the public. It will have free food, bike games and a bike blessing. For information send emails to Rtrikeman@aol.com.

Silhouette Club

High-Lonesome Silhouette Club will be having their annual shooting match starting at 9 a.m. Among the many prizes given away will be two guns, one for our

youth shooters and one for the adults. There will also be a hamburger cook-out for the match contestants and their guests. The cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children age 18 and younger. For more information, call 390-9257.

Remote control fly-in

The Cloud Dusters RC Club is hosting a fly-in event at 3 p.m. at the Remote Control airpark, on west Millen Drive near the Hobbs Gun Club. For more information, call 964-4993.

Watermelon Festival

The annual Plains, Texas Watermelon Festival takes place 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Plains, Texas Courthouse building. The event will feature vendors, arts and crafts and musical acts. Attendees can eat all the watermelon they want. The event is free to the public.

Guidelines

Readers are welcome to submit items for free to Mark the Date calendar. The event should have a local connection, be open to the public and have contact information provided. E-mail items to editor@hobbsnews.com.

Death

from PAGE 1

Wednesday evening.

Manes gave a statement earlier Thursday in which the student was in critical condition.

"Her family is with her and asking for continued prayers," Manes stated.

Manes said he talked with LHS principal Chris Brattain on Thursday and said the morning staff meeting at the school was solemn.

"Teachers were upset," Manes said. "We provided counseling for the students and the staff at multiple schools. The high school and freshmen academy were the primary focus, but we made sure there were resources available at all the schools."

A LHS student reported that a moment of silence was held for the student over the loud-speaker at the commencement of Thursday's school day.

Manes stated Thursday evening that the district will be providing support services and counseling for students Friday.

"Furthermore, if this incident raises any concerns for other students or families, you are encouraged to contact the

school principal or the administration office," Manes stated.

An announcement on social media Thursday evening asked for LMS students and faculty to dress in white in remembrance of their classmate.

As for the investigation into the incident, Lovington police Det. David Miranda said Thursday the specifics as to how the student fell from the vehicle are still being investigated and he doesn't expect it to be complete until sometime next week. He also stated that no arrests have been made.

One Lovington High School student at the scene said she saw some students doing tricks with their cars. Lovington police officers were witnessed Wednesday marking the scene and a black Jeep Wrangler was taken to the Lovington Police Department for further investigation.

Miranda said LPD officers patrol the parking lot in the mornings and afternoons as a security measure.

"Lovington Police routinely and actively patrol school zones every morning and afternoon to help safely regulate the substantial flow of traffic from student drop offs

and pickups, as well as in the case of the high school students driving their own vehicles to and from school," he stated. "One of our officers was patrolling the school zone at the time of the incident and he happened upon the scene in seconds, but there is only so much you can do on scene."

Jaycie Chesser can be reached at reporter3@hobbsnews.com or by calling 391-5436.

KEEP

JAMES

BRITTON

District 4
Please

VOTE
Nov 4



Portrait by Britton for Commissioner - Freddie Slightko, Treasurer

Hotel

from PAGE 1

the turnout to the event brought tears to her eyes.

"This is just amazing that everyone will be here to support us on this," she said. "The hours we have put in have been very, very hard. We have wonderful staff. They are amazing. Not just the staff, we have had everyone pulling in making this place phenomenal. This is the best property in Hobbs. I can guarantee you that."

The \$26 million Zia Park Hotel opened earlier this week, but Thursday constituted the official opening and attendees of the event were heard commenting on the beauty of the hotel.

The hotel may represent a \$26 million investment for Penn Gaming, but the casino brings much more to the community and the state than just much-needed hotel space.

Sen. Gay Kernan, R-Hobbs, thanked Penn Gaming for their contribution to the \$61 million New Mexico casinos make to the state's general fund.

"You certainly pay your fair share," Kernan said. "Twenty-six percent of your get goes to the state. I am very proud to be here today and celebrate with you. We are so fortunate in Lea County and Hobbs to have you here."

Hobbs City Commissioner Gary Buie talked about how the sparse ranchland that once held 10-20 head of cattle became a Casino and how the land's former owners would be proud of the casino and hotel.

Hobbs City Commissioner John Sena told a story with a punchline that rolled into the message that the economy and casino's patrons pushed the casino to build the hotel and how the hotel will play a major role in the upcoming hosting of major events, such as the New Mexico Municipal League's annual conference that will be held for the first time in Hobbs in 2016.

Zia Park's General Manager Rafael Verde thanked everyone for attending the event and for the prosperity the customers and residents of the county brought to the casino.

"The economy of the county made this happen. There are not too many people around the countries building hotels and casinos nowadays and we are very lucky to be here in Hobbs, New Mexico," Verde said.

Perhaps the best testament to what the hotel has brought to Hobbs was the occupancy rate for the first weekend. Tramell said 120 of the 154 rooms were booked for Thursday night and the number of booked rooms only went up for Friday and Saturday.



Lea County Commission Chairman Gregg Fulfer thanks Penn Gaming for the investment of their new \$26 million hotel at Zia Park Casino Thursday.

SADDLE UP!

August 28 - November 16

An exhibit showcasing the usage, history, and craftsmanship of the various types of saddles. Items on exhibit are from the collections of the Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame members.

- Trophy Saddles
- Working Saddles
- Historic Saddles

Western Heritage Museum and Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame
Museum Hours: 10 am - 5 pm Tuesday - Saturday, 1 pm - 5 pm Sunday.
1 Thunderbird Circle, Hobbs, NM 88240 on the campus of New Mexico Junior College

Franchise

from PAGE 1

25, 1989.

"Under the terms of New Mexico statute, the county and other municipalities have the power to grant franchises allowing companies to use rights-of-way in county facilities and install lines and telephone poles in those facilities, which includes county roads," Holloman said. "Those can be effective for a period of up to 25 years."

Southwestern Public Service requested that the County Commission grant another 25-year franchise. However, due to the number of franchises being requested, county officials discussed developing an overall policy on the matter as opposed to granting multiple individual franchises.

"There was some concern in discussion about whether or not there should be a policy to be looked at to approve all of these franchises," Holloman said. "I don't know that there is a comprehensive policy in place now and this directed the county to look at an overall document for that."

Commissioners voted unanimously to approve a resolution granting Southwestern Public Service a one-year franchise in order to allow the county time to delve into the issue.

"I know we have several existing franchises that include not just utilities, but we also have various requests from oil companies to lay pipeline, flow lines and disposal lines along county roads and right-of ways, so we are trying to look at outside entities usage of county properties of right-of ways," Holloman said. "Southwestern Public Service just happened to be the one

brought up now for us to come to the realization that this is such a pressing issue."

Mike Gallagher, Lea County manager, listed specific companies that have open franchise agreements with the county.

"We have Zia Gas and Baja Broadband that I know of besides Southwestern Public Service," he said. "I think the majority of those have been previously approved for a 25-year period."

Ben Jaime, community service manager for Southwestern Public Service, said he fully understands the county's desire to have some time to look at the process. However, he added the company would like to have 25 years because of the investment it is putting into the county.

"Under all circumstances the utilities that would be impacted by this really do need to have significant input in it," Gregg Fulfer, commission chairman, said. "We are trying to be a county that is business friendly."

A small committee was put together of county officials to evaluate current franchises and bring a policy for adoption to the commission for review by the first of the year.

"This really presses us to come up with a policy within this year since we have a deadline," Jim Britton, commissioner, said. "If we approved a 25-year franchise we would just sit back and let the policy be forgotten."

Jaycie Chesser can be reached at reporter3@hobbsnews.com or by calling 391-5436.

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- *THE NOVEMBER MAN (2:00 4:30) 7:15 9:45 "R"
- *TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 3D (2:00 4:30) 7:00 "PG13"
- *TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 9:25 "PG13"
- *IF I STAY (2:00 4:30) 7:00 9:30 "PG13"
- THE EXPENDABLES 3 (2:45) 6:05 9:05 "PG13"
- *WHEN THE GAME STANDS TALL (1:50 4:30) 7:10 9:45 "PG"
- *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY 3D (2:50) 6:10 "PG13"
- GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY 9:15 "PG13"
- *AS ABOVE SO BELOW (2:00 4:20) 7:20 9:35 "R"
- *SIN CITY: A DAME TO KILL (4:40) 9:40 "R"
- LET'S BE COPS (1:55 4:20) 7:15 9:40 "R"
- *THE GIVER (2:30) 7:15 "R"

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\$2 UPCHARGE ON ALL 3D TICKETS

PAST & PRESENCE

SOUTHWEST SYMPHONY 2014-2015 SEASON

HANNEKE CASSEL TRIO
Friday, September 19, 2014
Hobbs First Assembly 7:00 pm
Season Tickets - \$50.00 on sale at: Center for the Arts Music World

SOUTHWEST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
FEATURING MICHAEL MARTIN MURPHEY
Saturday, October 11, 2014
Tydings Auditorium 7:00pm
Lovington MainStreet Office or at www.swsymphony.org

PEARL DJANGO
Friday, November 14, 2014
Crosswinds Community Church 7:00 pm
Individual door tickets are \$20.00 per concert
18 & Under FREE
College Students with current ID FREE

SOUTHWEST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
and TOUR OF SCHOOLS
Monday, January 12, 2015
Tydings Auditorium 7:00 pm
For more information call (575) 738-1041 www.swsymphony.org

GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA
Tuesday, February 17, 2015
Tydings Auditorium 7:00 pm
2014-2015 Community Partners

SOUTHWEST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
with guest soloists SIMON AND AGNES MAURER
Sunday, March 8, 2015
First United Methodist Church 3:00 pm

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA KREMLIN
Friday, March 27, 2015
Tydings Auditorium 7:00 pm