

News-Sun

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THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2014

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Community News

The public is invited to attend a **TOWN HALL** meeting held by Congressman Steve Pearce beginning at 9 a.m. Aug. 5 at the Western Heritage Cowboy Museum, 1 Thunderbird Circle, in Hobbs.

Registration for contestants and judges is underway for the **UNITED WAY CHILI COOK-OFF** Sept. 27 at the Lea County Event Center. To participate, call 575-397-2203 for forms and information, or visit the United Way Chili Fest Facebook page or www.unitedway-ofleacounty.org.

The City of Hobbs is hosting a **FISHING DERBY** at Harry McAdams Park, 5000 Jack Gomez Blvd. from 7:30 a.m.-noon Saturday. The event is free to the public and the derby is open for children ages 11 and younger. Bring your own equipment and supplies. For more information, call 392-9291.

The **LEA COUNTY FAIR AND RODEO** starts Friday at the Lea County Fairgrounds in Lovington. Opening times are: Carnival 5 p.m. and Hispanic Heritage Celebration 7 p.m. Admission after 1 p.m., is \$8 for adults and \$6 for children. Those age five and younger get in free.

Inside Today

Obituaries	2
Mark the date	3
Arts & Entertainment.....	6
Fun & Games	7
Weather	8
Sports	9
Lottery.....	11
Classifieds.....	12
TV	14

OIL PRICES

West Texas intermediate	
Spot	\$100.27 - 0.70
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AFTER BEING TORTURED WITH ACID Stormy is healing

JAYCIE CHESSER
NEWS-SUN

Stormy, appropriately named after the storm she recently weathered, undergoing life-saving surgery upon sustaining an acid burn, is now in recovery and back to her normal self.

"She loves attention," Pat Huntley, founder of Crazy Dog Lady Pet Rescue, who is overseeing care of the dog, said. "She is excited and happy to see you and licks your hand when she does."

The one-year-old pit bull was rescued last

week by Huntley after she was found with a severe acid burn down her back, which was intentional according to Dr. Keith Cloward at Dal Paso Animal Hospital, who treated Stormy.

"This injury looked like someone was trying to torture the animal," he said. "It was really extensive and severe."

After numerous rounds of a surgical procedure called debridement, which is the

SEE STORMY, Page 3



Stormy receives attention from Pat Huntley, founder of Crazy Lady Dog Pet Rescue, who is caring for her.

Ice bucket challenge

Sheriff and county manager take the trial by ice water

CHRISTIAN BETANCOURT
NEWS-SUN

Lea County officials and law enforcement found a way to combat the heat and raise money for a good cause at the same time Wednesday.

Lea County Sheriff Mark Hargrove and Lea County Manager Mike Gallagher were challenged to an ice bucket challenge.

The challenge, as it is known, has been a social media phenomenon in recent months with people across the country challenging each other to complete the dare or pay \$100 to a named charity. Those who do the dare only have to pay \$10.

Hargrove's and Gallagher's challenge benefits the Officer Down Memorial Fund

Hargrove got doused at the Hobbs Police Department's Coffee for Cops weekly event. Gallagher's trial by ice water took place at the Lea County Communication Authority in north Hobbs.

While both Hargrove and Gallagher winced as the icy water poured over their heads and down their backs, they took different approaches on their responses to getting doused.

"I feel cold and relaxed," Gallagher said after being dunked. "That was quite refreshing anybody would enjoy that. That bucket was a little bit larger than I've seen in other challenges."

Hargrove said he did not feel

SEE CHALLENGE, Page 3



Lea County Sheriff Mark Hargrove gets a 5-gallon bucket full of ice water dumped on him by Hobbs Police Department Chief Chris McCall and HPD Deputy Chief Brian Dunlap to raise money for the Officer Down Memorial Fund. Hargrove was challenged by McCall and Lea County Communications Director Angela Martinez. He challenged five people to do the ice dunk. Those challenged have the option of taking the ice dunk and donating \$10 or not taking the dunk and donating \$100.

GRADING REPORT

Two Eunice schools drop a grade

GABRIELA MUÑOZ
NEWS-SUN

Two Eunice schools earned lower school grades for the 2013-14 school year, than last year according to the grading report released by the New Mexico Public Education Department.

While Caton Middle School maintained a "D," Eunice High School and Mettie Jordan Elementary both dropped a letter grade to a "B" and "F," respectively.

Eunice superintendent Dwain Haynes said addressing the areas of concern at each school will be a top goal for the 2014-15 school year.

"We got knocked to the ground," Haynes said. "It happens. We know that in this business you are going to get knocked to the ground, but we are going to get right back up. We're dusting ourselves off and we are tackling the problems and we are going to continue to work hard to provide our kids with the very best education."

The report graded every school in the state with an A-F letter grade based on subcategories that included current overall standing, school growth based on the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment testing scores and opportunity to learn. High schools are also graded on graduation rates and college and career readiness.

While Mettie Jordan earned "F's" in current standing and student growth in lowest performing students, the lowest "F" numerically was in the growth of highest performing students. Mettie Jordan earned 0.64 points out of a possible 20 in the growth of highest performing students.

Haynes said staff and administra-

SEE EUNICE, Page 3

New Mexico tax-free weekend kicks off Friday

DENISE MARQUEZ
NEWS-SUN

Local stores and boutiques are getting ready for big sales during this weekend's tax-free holiday.

The annual New Mexico gross receipts tax holiday begins at 12:01 a.m., Friday and ends at midnight Sunday.

The state suspends gross receipts taxes on sales of qualifying items so shoppers can buy back-to-school supplies tax free.

According to the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, qualified items include clothing and footwear prices at or below \$100. Desktops, laptops or tablets priced less than \$1,000 and computer hardware under \$500 are also exempt. School supplies must be under \$30 per item to qualify.

Terry Woods, owner of Hopscotch Children's and Baby Boutique, has rows of clothing with marked-down prices.

"We have so many sales going on," she said. "We put a bunch of stuff on sale so we'll do the sales plus the tax-free (this weekend)."

Hopscotch located on 3405 N. Grimes has various clothing items for children of all ages. Woods said some of the brands she sells are unique in her store.

"I've got all this stock and I try to get it out," she said. "The clothing lines that I have here nobody else has. Lubbock has some of them and Midland has them — my girl's lines Peaches 'n Cream, Giggle Moon and Haute Baby, stuff like that."

Grant Taylor, Hobbs Chamber of Commerce executive, encourages residents to take advantage of tax-free weekend and support local businesses.

"Doing most, if not all, our back-to-school shopping in Hobbs benefits locally owned retailers, chain stores and restaurants alike — all of which employ our family, friends and neighbors," he said. "The annual tax holiday is the right time to check off the school-supply lists and get outfitted for the first half of the school year, right here in Hobbs."

Woods said shopping local is something

SEE TAX-FREE, Page 3



Terry Woods, owner of Hopscotch Children's and Baby Boutique shows off some of the items that will be available for purchase with no tax this weekend. The annual New Mexico Gross Receipts Tax Holiday begins at 12:01 a.m. Friday and ends at midnight Sunday.

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Mark the date

TODAY

State Engineer

The Office of the State Engineer will have an open house Thursday from 3-6 p.m. at the Lea County Event Center. State Engineer Scott Verhines will host a discussion about water issues statewide, regional water planning, water conservation and the status of the Pecos River and the Pecos River Compact.

Eunice City Council

The City of Eunice will have its regularly scheduled council meeting at 5:30 p.m. at the city commission chambers at City Hall, 1106 Avenue J.

FRIDAY

Lea County Fair

The Lea County Fair and Rodeo takes place at the Lea County Fairgrounds in Lovington. Opening times are: Carnival 5 p.m. and Hispanic Heritage Celebration 7 p.m. Admission after 1 p.m., is \$8 for adults and \$6 for children. Those age five and younger get in free.

Hobbs Motorsports Park

The Hobbs Motorsports Park is hosting its Fun-N-Grudge and Test-N-Tune 1/4-mile races from 6-11 p.m. For more information, call 392-3724.

SATURDAY

Lea County Fair

The Lea County Fair and Rodeo takes place at the Lea County Fairgrounds in Lovington. Opening times are: Junior Livestock 7 a.m., Carnival 5 p.m., Mutton Bustin 7 p.m., and 38 Special/Night Ranger performance 9 p.m. Admission after 1 p.m., is \$8 for adults and \$6 for children. Those age five and younger get in free.

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.

Hobbs Motorsports Park

The Hobbs Motorsports Park is hosting the IHRA Summit Super Series and Junior Dragsters races. Gates open at 4 p.m. and time trials start at 6 p.m. For more information, call 392-3724.

Hooked on Fishing

The City of Hobbs is hosting a morning of fishing at Harry McAdams Park, 5000 Jack Gomez Blvd. The event is from 7:30 a.m.-noon and features a fishing derby, casting contest and other awards and prizes. The event is free to the public and the derby is open for children ages 11 and younger. Bring your own equipment and supplies. For more information, call 392-9291.

Got Shots?

The New Mexico Department of Health's Lovington Public Health Office will host a back to school immunization clinic from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Lovington Public Health Office 302 W 5th Street.

Lovington Downtown Round-up

Lovington Mainstreet is hosting its Lovington Downtown Round-up sale from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. At various retail stores in downtown Lovington. For more information, call 396-1418.

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.

County approves liability insurance increase

JAYCIE CHESSER
NEWS-SUN

Lea County now has a bigger umbrella to stand under when it rains, figuratively speaking, after the Lea County Board of Commissioners approved an increase to the county's liability insurance coverage.

"We have an option to increase our excessive liability coverage," Mike Gallagher, Lea County manager, said at the July 24 county commission meeting. "Our current excessive liability coverage is \$5 million and we are looking at increasing that to \$10 million."

The county approved a new 12-month contract with its property and casualty insurance provider, Daniels Insurance in Hobbs, July 24, which is valid from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. The contract cost has increased from the previous year due to several factors, Gallagher said.

"The amount of assets the county has acquired have gone up such as employees and vehicles," he said.

To increase the excessive liability insurance, the cost to the

county is \$14,500 for the year.

"By selecting this option to renew the insurance contract with the additional \$5 million umbrella, the total cost will be \$867,000," Gallagher said. "I know that in the last year other counties have had suits brought against them that have exceeded their current coverage and we think adding an additional \$5 million is beneficial."

"Daniel's Insurance has been very good to work with and we have been happy with the coverage they have provided our county," Gallagher added. "Guy Kesner has been our agent that we work with directly."

Kesner added the umbrella covers auto liability coverage, general liability, law enforce-

ment, which is a large risk for the county as well as all of the other professional liability lines.

County attorney Scotty Holloman strongly encouraged the county commission to approve the increase.

"I strongly encourage a \$10 million excessive liability coverage, as it allows additional funds for unforeseeable events that might arise," he said.

Lea County Commissioner Ron Black robustly agreed with the extra coverage.

"I know my own personal umbrella lets me sleep better at night," Black said. "This is something the county needs."

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

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Man arrested for allegedly spending \$1,300 on stolen debit card

CHRISTIAN BETANCOURT
NEWS-SUN

A Hobbs man was arrested on credit card fraud charges Tuesday after allegedly using a stolen credit card and spending about \$1,300 on it.

Odere Ononye, 24, of the 800 block of West Calle Sur, was arrested and charged with 20

counts of criminal penalty, a fourth-degree felony.

According to a police report, on July 9 officers were contacted by a woman saying she noticed several suspect transactions on her bank statement. She further stated she has lost her debit card and ordered a replacement card but never

received it.

She told officers her card had been used about 23 times and totaled about \$1,300.

Detectives with the department began investigating and were able to obtain videos of the suspected transactions and information into the suspected

fraud.

One of the leads took detectives to Ononye, but he was not interviewed due to the investigation continuing.

After reviewing the videos, officers believed Ononye was the person using the credit card.

Ononye was interviewed by detectives on July 23 in the presence of his attorney but invoked his right to remain silent.

He was arrested Tuesday on the 1800 block of North Turner and booked on a \$15,000 bond.

Reporter Christian Betancourt can be reached at courts@hobbsnews.com or 391-5446.

Stormy

from PAGE 1

removal of unhealthy tissue from a wound to promote healing while under anesthesia, pain medication and antibiotics, Stormy is finally in the clear.

"She is going to be OK," Cloward said. "I think in a few weeks she will have new skin that may even have a little bit of hair."

Although several individuals came forward to volunteer a home for Stormy once she is completely healed, Huntley discovered, Stormy already had a home.

"The owner called me in tears couldn't believe we found his dog and couldn't believe someone had hurt her," she said. "He thought someone had stolen her from his yard and thought he would never

see her again."

Stormy's owner, who would like to remain anonymous, is preparing his home for the canine to return safe and sound.

"He wants to make sure his yard is secure so this can never happen again," Huntley said. "He is going to put up some shade canopies in his yard for her because she can't be exposed to that much sunlight."

Stormy's tragic tale also prompted a number of other individuals to reach into their pockets and give to her cause.

"We have received at least a dozen donations on Stormy's behalf to cover her veterinary bills," Huntley said. "The amounts of the donations have ranged from \$10-\$300, so it's

been an absolutely phenomenal response."

Crazy Dog Lady Pet Rescue is a volunteer, foster-based, non-profit animal rescue shelter whose mission is to save or improve the lives of pets in the area through rehoming and education.

"We are having a yard sale Saturday to help with some of the veterinary costs, not just for Stormy, but for other pets we have rescued as well," Huntley added. "The yard sale is going to be at 318 W. Bender between Saturday's and Gunn's Guns from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. and we have a little bit of everything to sell."

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

Eunice

from PAGE 1

tors have already started discussing the possible issues and viable solutions, particularly for Mettie Jordan Elementary.

"What we have seen so far is that the Mettie Jordan Elementary reading program seems to have hit a wall," Haynes added. "Three years of data indicate that we are sitting in the 30 percentile of proficiency and not making movement."

Three years ago Mettie Jordan adopted the StoryTown Curriculum.

"I don't believe that it is the program itself," Haynes said. "StoryTown is a research-based program and we feel that it is a strong program."

Haynes said because of his confidence in the curriculum, he feels assessing the last three years of individual student data is necessary.

"We realize that we have a systemic problem," Haynes said. "We just don't know what that problem is. We have to go in and take a look at the students' scores over the past

three years and identify where we are stalling out."

Additionally, Haynes will be meeting with Jal and Tatum district officials next week for intensive training for the new mathematics curriculum adopted by the three districts last year.

For more information on school grades, visit ped.state.nm.us.

Gabriela Muñoz can be reached at 391-5434 or reporter1@hobbsnews.com.

Challenge

from PAGE 1

the cold but felt as if the air was knocked out of him.

"It just took every breath I had away," Hargrove said.

After being dunked Hargrove said he would still donate the \$100 and \$200 more for the first two people who accept his challenge.

Hargrove challenged four friends who reside outside the area to the dare.

Gallagher challenged Lea County city managers J.J. Murphy from Hobbs, James Williams from Lovington, Bob Gallagher from Jal, Marty Moore from Eunice and Lea County attorney Scotty Holloman.

Once challenged, the person has 48 hours to complete the dare and has the option of challenging others as well.

The Officer Down Memorial Fund is a nationwide organiza-

tion, Hargrove said.

"It spread like wildfire in Lea County," he said. "Several of my deputies participated, the dispatchers participated, several Hobbs police officers participated. I was challenged by (Hobbs Police Department) Chief Chris McCall and (Lea County Communications) Director Angela Martinez."

Martinez said she challenged Hargrove and the board of the Lea County Communications Authority, where Gallagher serves, after she and several dispatchers were challenged.

"It's for a good cause," she added. "It started off with offi-

cers and then turned into first responders. The fire department started doing it. Officers' wives were doing it to show their supports."

McCall said he challenged Hargrove to get other law enforcement entities involved after his department participated.

"Our department stepped up big," McCall said. "Almost all of our officers took the challenge and our support staff took the challenge."

Christian Betancourt can be reached at 391-5446 or courts@hobbsnews.com.

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