Prepping for next year

Summertime renovations taking shape on HHS campus

GABRIELA MUNOZ

Hobbs High School students will park their vehicles in a brand new parking lot when they return to school in August.

During the summer, the HHS parking lot will undergo a makeover complete with new lighting, new entry gates and a new guard house.

“We’re going to enhance the lighting on the lot as a whole,” said HMS director of operations Gene Strickland, “because prior to this, we didn’t have any interior lighting on the lot. As part of this project, we will install some lighting in the middle of the lot. There will be lights on posts and concrete columns that will shed light onto the interior of the lot. It will also allow us to get some light on the front steps of Tydings. We will also explore the guard house and install some newer gates that will fit the remodel.”

Work on the high school parking lot will be completed in two phases — the first will address the east portion of the parking lot and the second will address the west portion. The goal is to have the first phase complete by July 4.

The renovations have been broken down into two phases so that some parking space is in use with lighting, new entry gates and a new guard house.

Record breaking budget approved

DENISE MARQUEZ

The City of Hobbs has approved a record breaking $200 million budget for the 2015 fiscal year.

Toby Spears, City of Hobbs finance director, anticipates the preliminary budget to come in at $225 million, but Spears said the city’s 2015 budget could come in at $260 million.

“That will be a record,” he said. “Right now, we have a record of around $171 million budget for 2014. We got $133 million budget projected preliminary — we usually have about $30 million in carryovers so what I did I took $371 million of the current budget and moved that $80 million over to $400 million, probably going to be $260 million.”

The city commission approved the preliminary budget during a May 15 commission meeting.

City employees can expect the same percentage in cost of living adjustments and merit evaluation increases, Spears said.

“Right now there is a 2 percent COLA and a 3 percent merit base — that’s on an annual increase,” he said. “The 2 percent will probably transition everything at the beginning of the fiscal year, whereas the 3 percent (merit base) is based on a merit system. City employees got evaluated on their job performance and NPW, what’s the highest they could get a zero percent — on how well they do or don’t do.”

Spears said the overall payroll and benefits for 2015 was increased, but was increased due to the city commission’s recent approval of an increase to the city’s employment maximum cap number.

Stamp program greatly helped conservation projects

Bobbie Parish of Hobbs spent his life as a game warden primarily in Lea and Eddy Counties. He EINVALantly talked to him about the fish and game programs that he thought would be of interest to our readers. Here are comments he made about the Habitat Stamp Program and conservation projects that are funded with the money raised.

“The habitat stamp program came about in the early 1980s as a result of Congress passing what was called the Sikes Act,” Parish said. “The act allowed state wildlife agencies to collect additional fees from hunters and fishing licenses to be designated for wildlife habitat improvement. The original act was applied only to military lands but through the efforts of New Mexico Game and Fish Director Harold Olson, Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management personnel present the act was amended to include land administered by the two federal agencies.”

“The first application of the Habitat Stamp was in 1986 when a $10 stamp was required if you were going to hunt or fish on the Vista Valde in northern New Mexico,” he continued. “In 1990 the program was expanded to include land donated to the Forest Service from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farm Bill Program.”

“In 1997 the Guadalupe and Jicarilla Ranches became the focus of the program,” he said. “I worked the Guadalupe deer hunt that year and was dreading all of the hunters I would have to cite for not having the stamp and listen to the complaints. It did not happen. The hunters were very receptive to the new program and I did not contact anyone who did not have the stamp.”

“Another concern I had was at the time the Game and Fish Department had a stamp, turkey stamp and two pole stamp then add the U.S. Fish and Wildlife duck stamp, an avid hunter and fisherman would have a big gob of glue for a license. That did not seem to be a problem either and the license is now considerably different.”

“In 2000 the program went statewide,” Parish said. “Although I was not as receptive to the new program I am happy that 30 percent of the money raised stays in New Mexico.”
Mark the date

TODAY

Earlybird registration for the June 1st Primary Election in Eunice is available for today through Saturday.

FRIDAY

Community Coffee
The Hobbs Community Playhouse invites the public to a coffee at 8 a.m. on Saturday, July 19th, followed by a special meeting to consider a resolution that would lead to the development of a community arts center in celebration of the community’s 115th Ann. For more information, call 739-2000.

THE COMMUNITY DRUG COALITION NEEDS YOUR HELP
If you are 18 years of age or older the NM Office of Substance Abuse Prevention needs your help to learn about the prevention program. This anonymous survey will take 10 minutes.

May 29-31, June 5-7 and 2 June 1 and June 8. Tickets can be purchased at the door or in advance at www.communityplayhouse.com. For more information, call 739-2000.

The Hobbs Community Playhouse is performing The Secret Garden, May 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, June 5 and 6 at 7 p.m. The Hobbs Community Playhouse will present the classic children’s tale of a garden hidden behind the walls of a mysteriously deserted house.

LEA COMMISSION MEETING
The Lea County Board of County Commissioners will meet at 5:15 p.m. on May 26, to discuss the state of community playhouse.com.

JERULDO BOSQUEZ, 38, of Lovington; 05/23/14

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Police report
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ACCIDENTS
6:56 p.m.—Byers and Dalmont

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