

FREE

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ALBUQUERQUE'S INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

Cover Art by Rachel Mills

What's Next for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women?

By Jonathan Sims

pg. 10



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Unspent Money

Lawmakers gave the attorney general \$1 million in 2022 to help find missing Indigenous people. The money hasn't been spent.

New Mexico Attorney General Raul Torrez (Courtesy NMPBS)

Bella Davis, New Mexico In Depth

Nearly two years after state lawmakers set aside \$1 million for the New Mexico Attorney General's office to create an online portal to track cases of missing Indigenous people, and potentially give tribes grants to help in that search, the office hasn't spent the money.

Lawmakers in early 2022 considered the need so great they attached an emergency clause to the legislation, meaning then-Attorney General Hector Balderas could have started spending the money that February instead of months later, the usual practice for most new laws.

An audit of programs completed earlier this year, though, revealed the funds weren't used while Balderas was in office, according to Lauren Rodriguez, communications director for Balderas' successor, Raúl Torrez. Balderas couldn't be reached for comment.

Despite Torrez taking over more than 10 months ago, the money continues to sit untouched.

Part of the reason, according to Rodriguez, is that about six months after lawmakers appropriated the money for the attorney general's office, the FBI created a database of Indigenous people missing from New Mexico and the Navajo Nation, to which all law enforcement agencies, including

tribal, can submit information.

But other provisions in the statute haven't been met either. No grants have gone out to tribes.

Asked why that hasn't happened, Rodriguez said she "can't speak to the timeline."

The office aims to grant at least some of the \$1 million to tribes by next July, the deadline state lawmakers set for the attorney general to spend the money, Rodriguez said. If the money is not spent, it would return to the state's consumer settlement fund.

Part of the grant-making process will include consulting with tribes to determine what their needs are, Rodriguez said, adding that those meetings haven't happened yet, as far as she knows.

"We're going to make sure that the funds are allocated in an appropriate way," she said.

Sen. Shannon Pinto, (Diné), a Democrat from Tohatchi who was one of the bill's sponsors, said she's "disappointed" the money hasn't been spent. A state task force Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham disbanded earlier this year highlighted a lack of data on both missing and murdered Indigenous people, Pinto said. A federal commission also outlined the necessity of better data collection in a report submitted to Congress this month.

Lawmakers were vague about what grants

from the attorney general's office could be used for, Pinto said, because each tribe has different needs.

"Do they need to create a position within their law enforcement, or do they need to get somebody to take reports?" she said. "Is there a backlog? Exactly where's the gap for them?"

Pinto hopes the attorney general's office talks with task force members — who gathered feedback from affected families to develop a state response plan — about how the funds should be used and whether the FBI database is sufficient.

The statute lawmakers passed also required the attorney general to hire one or more missing Indigenous persons specialists to review various databases and support law enforcement agencies in collecting data, along with other duties. Balderas in his final months in office assigned an agent to fill that position, according to Rodriguez.

The agent has helped find several Indigenous people from the list the FBI started last year, Rodriguez said, including two "runaway juveniles" who were reunited with their families.

Last updated in October, the list notes 203 Native Americans missing from the state and the Navajo Nation. Officials say that's likely an undercount.

This story was originally published by New Mexico In Depth.



New Mexico Turnout Up in 2023 Local Election

Voter participation was up from 2021 in most counties — except the state's most populous one

(Sara Atencio-Gonzales)

Danielle Prokop, Source New Mexico

Just over 20% of registered New Mexico voters turned out for the 2023 local elections, about 5,000 more people than participated in the 2021 local elections.

County clerks say in general though, voter turnout for local elections has increased. They cited a law passed in 2019 to consolidate school board and municipal elections into a single Election Day in November as the primary driver of the boost.

This year, many counties saw better turnout, including Doña Ana County, which rose from 11% turnout in the 2021 to 18% this election with 22,458 people casting a ballot.

“Frankly, 18% is not necessarily anything we should be satisfied with. However, I am pleased that there was more turnout than in 2021,” said Doña Ana County Clerk Amanda López Askin.

She said the county did more outreach by sending a notification to all registered voters to remind them of the election in the county.

“One of the largest barriers is that people think that the election doesn’t involve them if they don’t live in city limits,” she said. “Our biggest challenge is educating voters that

every November — like clockwork — there is an election in their community.”

Other significant jumps included Colfax County, which had 42% turnout, with 3,224 voters casting a ballot — more than double the participation in 2021.

A school bond question galvanized voters, said Colfax County Clerk Rayetta Trujillo.

“It was great to see the numbers as high as they were, because to me, every election is important, not just the primary or the general, but anytime you have an opportunity to vote,” Trujillo said.

Bernalillo County, however, had fewer participants and registered voters than the 2021 election. Only 82,455 voters, about 21% of registered voters, cast a ballot this year.

The local elections two years ago included the Albuquerque mayoral race, which is often a bigger draw for voters, said Nathan Jaramillo, the elections administrator at the county.

“It’s just simply the fact that there was not a large, contentious race in Bernalillo County this year,” he said.

Bernalillo County is scheduled to certify 2023 results today, and will be gearing up for a runoff election for the City Council District

6 seat between Nichole Rogers and Jeff Hoehn.


This story was originally published by Source New Mexico.

**Election Day for the runoff
will be Tuesday, Dec. 12.**

**Early voting will start
Tuesday, Nov. 21, but all
polling sites will be closed
on Thursday, Nov. 23,
and Friday, Nov. 24 and
Saturday, Nov. 25 for the
Thanksgiving holiday.**

The Paper.

Have something to tell us?



Send us your letters

editor@abq.news



ECLECTIC CINEMA 7 DAYS A WEEK

Cinematic expression by Inuk throat singer Tanya Tagaq: **EVER DEADLY**
Fri–Mon Nov 24–27 4:00, 8:00pm

Deadpan comedy about an Afghan woman who writes for fortune cookies: **FREMONT**
Fri–Mon Nov 24–27 6:00pm

Nutzoid horror comedy **POULTRYGEIST: NIGHT OF THE CHICKEN DEAD (2006)**
Fri Nov 24 10:30pm

Dario Argento's psychedelic horror masterpiece **SUSPIRIA (1977)**
Sat Nov 25 10:30pm

The roots of Cajun & Zydeco music: **Les Blank's I WENT TO THE DANCE**
Tue–Thu Nov 28–30 4:00, 8:15pm

Remarkable world of free improvisation in music: **A BRIGHT NOWHERE**
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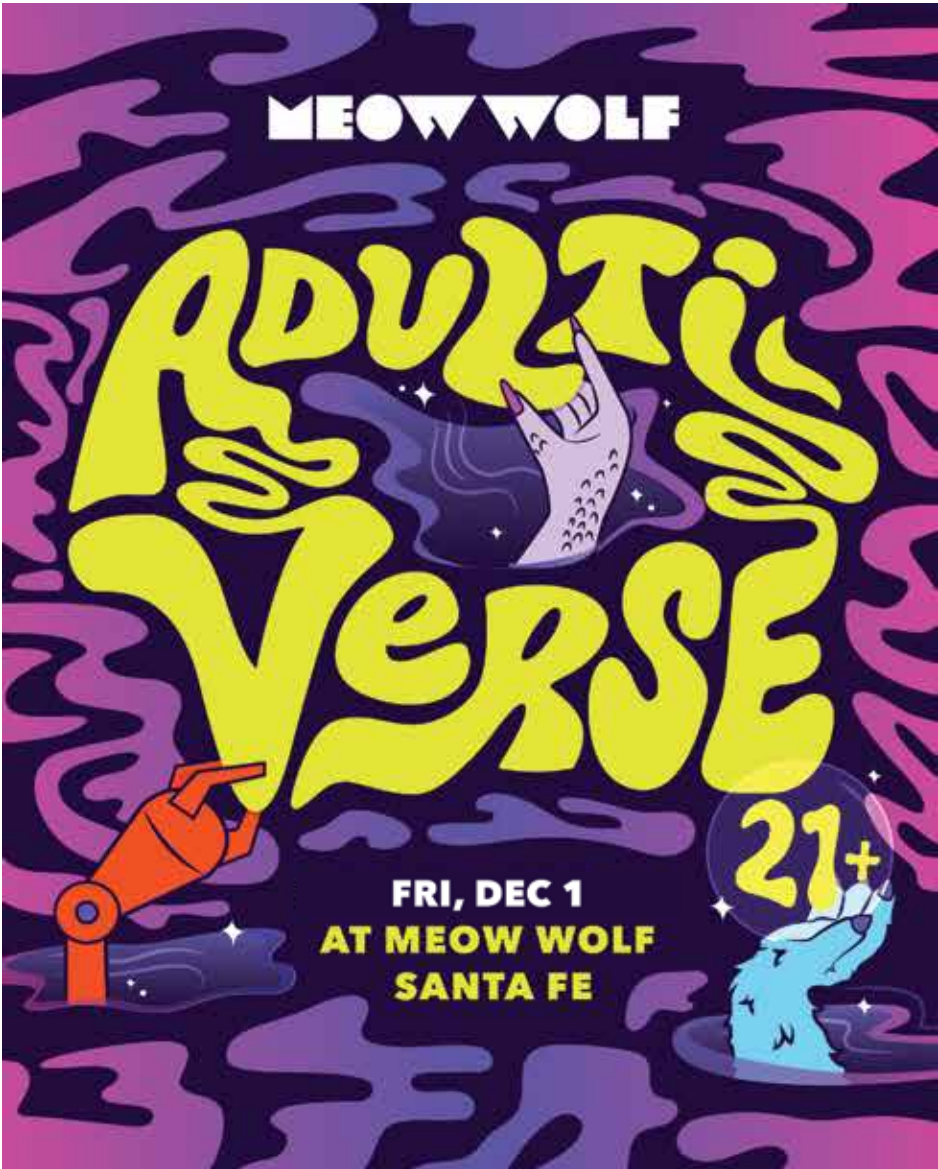
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Also Starring
DAVID HOLTKAMP
CASEY MRAZ
RODNEY BOWE
TONY WILSON
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DON MCIVER

Nov 25
Doors 7pm

Tony O & The Greatest Band Ever Present The First Waltz

Tony O & The Greatest Band Ever take over The Historic Lobo Theater Lounge and Event Center (3013 Central Ave. NE) with a rock and roll tribute celebrating the music of The Band's iconic concert film/live album The Last Waltz. A whole host of local musicians and poets will be on hand to celebrate. The concert also serves as a holiday food drive for Roadrunner Food Bank, so bring along some canned foods, jarred items or other shelf-stable foods for donation. The all-star Albuquerque band hits the stage **Saturday, Nov. 25 from 8pm to Midnight**. Tickets for this 21+ event are \$18 apiece at holdmyticket.com/event/418547.



23rd Annual Rio Grande Holiday Festival

Albuquerque's favorite holiday shopping event returns with 185 artists and craftspeople, live music and festive food samplings. Head to EXPO New Mexico (300 San Pedro Dr. NE) on Friday, Nov. 24 from 10am to 5 pm, Saturday, Nov. 25 from 10am to 5pm and Sunday, Nov. 26 from 10am to 4pm. Admission is \$10 for a day pass or \$15 for a festival pass (good for all three days). You can snag those and browse the list of participating artists at riograndefestivals.com.

The MEOW WOLF logo, with 'MEOW' in pink and 'WOLF' in blue, both in a bold, sans-serif font.

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12/01 Adulti-Verse 21+ Exhibit Hours	12/08 G Space Live with WizDumb
12/03 Holiday Junk Journal Workshop with we.grow.eco	12/09 Paint & Sipz with artist Olivia Jane
12/03 American Aquarium with Lance Roark	EVERY MONDAY: NM residents use code MONDAYFUNDAY for half off admission after 3pm

A colorful illustration of a winter wonderland scene. It features snow-covered houses with warm lights glowing from the windows, snow-covered trees, and a small figure of a person walking in the snow. The scene is set against a dark blue night sky.

Get your tickets at meow.wf/santafeshows



Walking in a Winter Wonderland

Friday and Saturday, Nov. 24 and 25 from 6 to 10pm, EXPO New Mexico (300 San Pedro Dr. NE) transforms into a family-friendly holiday wonderland. This Thanksgiving weekend lighting and performance event offers guests an interactive walking tour through Villa Hispana, Indian Village and the Flower Building. There will be luminarias, professional lighting displays, a winter arcade, Santa photos, Ice Princess photos, food trucks and more. Tickets are \$17 general admission (children 8 and under are free). They can be purchased in advance at eventbrite.com/e/walking-in-a-winter-wonderland-tickets-748635237147



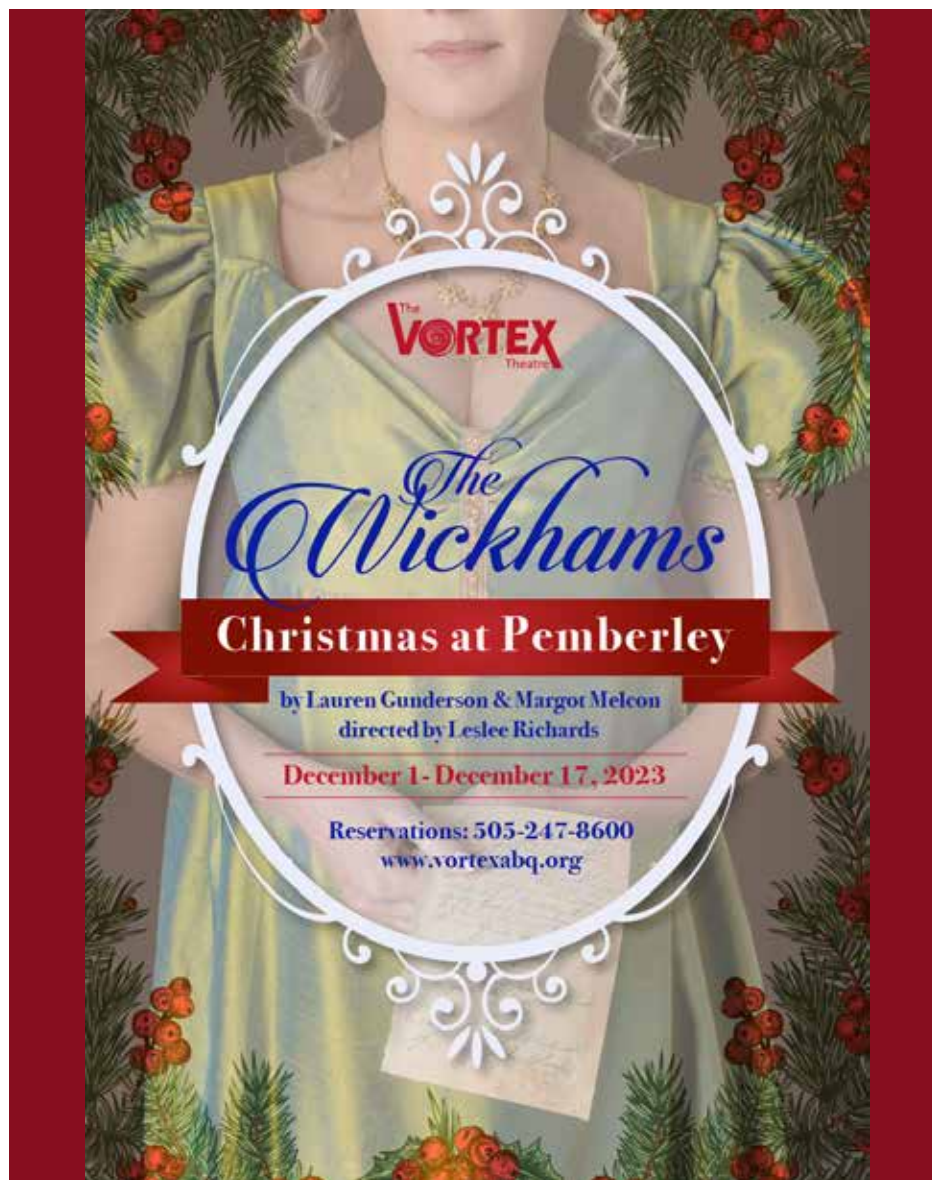
River of Lights

Albuquerque's favorite holiday display returns to the ABQ BioPark Botanic Garden (2601 Central Ave. NW) starting Saturday, Nov. 25 at 5pm. Over 800 light displays, animated and 3D sculptures and millions of twinkling lights await seasonal revelers at New Mexico's largest walk-through holiday attraction. Hot cocoa, holiday treats and food are available for purchase. The event runs every night from 5 to 10pm through Dec. 30. (Closed Dec. 24 and 25.) Tickets are \$14 for adults and \$7 for children ages 3 to 12 (Mon.-Thu.) or \$17 for adults and \$9 for children ages 3 to 12 (Fri.-Sun). To purchase tickets in advance, go to riveroflights.org.



New Mexico Artisan Market

Kick off the holiday shopping season with a visit to the New Mexico Artisan Market at Hotel Albuquerque (800 Rio Grande Blvd. NW). Peruse a wide selection of jewelry, fashion, fine art, home decor, artisanal food, gifts and more, all locally curated and handmade in New Mexico. The market runs Friday, Nov. 24 from 11am to 5pm, Saturday, Nov. 25 from 10am to 5pm and Sunday, Nov. 26 from 10am to 3pm. Entrance tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at nmartisanmarket.com/artisan-market-tickets.




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TREK


22nd Annual Albuquerque Turkey Trek







If you feel the need to work off that upcoming Thanksgiving meal, the organizers of Albuquerque's annual Turkey Trek have got you covered. Turkey Trek is a 5K (3.1 mile) run and fitness walk (plus a kid 1K) taking place **Thursday, Nov. 23** from **9am** to **noon**. The event supports Locker 505, a student clothing bank that provides school-appropriate clothing for students K-12. So if you're running, please consider making a contribution. The starting line is next to **Tingley Beach (1815 Tingley Dr. SW)**. Registration fees are **\$35** for the 5K and **\$10** for the kids 1K. You can register at register.chronotrack.com/r/73187.

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Finally! A local practitioner is helping cancer survivors live their lives free from the constant pain and suffering associated with Peripheral Neuropathy!

Irreversible is not a word you want to hear from your Doctor but it's a common one if you've been diagnosed with Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy or CIPN.

Elliott S. of Los Lunas survived testicular cancer only to be living life with constant pain. He felt as though he was walking on pins and needles, becoming weaker and weaker every day. "I was beginning to be worried that one day I would be wheelchair-bound"

Nearly half of patients who undergo chemotherapy will develop Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy or CIPN.

Chemotherapy meds travel throughout the body and attack cancer cells; sadly they can also cause severe damage to healthy nerves.

CIPN can begin within weeks of starting treatment and can worsen as treatment continues. Many people will endure the symptoms associated with CIPN for months, even years after they've completed chemo.

When asked how CIPN was affecting his quality of life, he responded, "It was difficult to even walk up and down stairs and do other things we usually take for granted."

The most common symptoms include:

- **pain, tingling, burning, weakness, or numbness in arms, hands, legs or feet**
- **sudden, sharp stabbing or shocking pain sensations**
- **loss of touch sensation**
- **clumsiness and trouble using hands to pick up objects or fasten clothing**
- **loss of balance and falling**

For some, their nerves will recover over time. For most, the nerve damage is 'irreversible.' Which is what Elliott had been told by a series of Doctors and specialists. Essentially, they could cure his cancer but couldn't fix the damage done by the drugs used to cure his cancer.

Elliott then made a call to Doctor Andrea Brogdon of AAIM | Albuquerque Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine, right here in Albuquerque, NM. Dr. Andrea Brogdon is using the time-tested science of Acupuncture and technology originally developed by NASA that assists in increasing blood flow and expediting recovery and healing to treat this debilitation disease.

After a series of treatments, Elliott was taking stairs with stride!

"We have a house and it has stairs. This morning I walked right down the stairs and got in the car," Elliott shared.

"I remember thinking, 'that's becoming mighty easy for me', I didn't have to hold on to the handrail or anything! It's life-changing to have this mobility back!"

Again and again, we meet with patients who were once diagnosed as "untreatable" or "incurable" but after receiving Doctor Brogdon's treatments they are now living lives free from pain and suffering. For many years she has been reversing the effects of CIPN and other varieties of Peripheral Neuropathy, including that caused by diabetes without invasive surgeries and medications that come with uncomfortable side effects.

If you've recently beat cancer only to find that you're living a life in constant pain and discomfort or you're struggling with the same symptoms as a result of either Idiopathic Neuropathy or Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy, Doctor Andrea Brogdon and the incredible team at AAIM can help!

Doctor Brogdon is now accepting new patients but only for a limited time. In an effort to protect her patients, both current and future, she has made the difficult decision to limit the number of patients seen in her clinic.

Call **(505)355-1984** now to schedule a consultation.

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and to take advantage of the New Patient Offer!**



What's The Plan?

Advocates and members of a now-defunct state Indigenous task force are still looking for help

(Photo courtesy Dept of the Interior)

By Jonathan Sims, *The Paper*.

Several weeks ago, a woman in her 20's who was from a local tribal community and was living in Albuquerque went out for a night with friends. But her night took a turn for the worse.

Alone and in need of help getting home, she called her friends around 3am looking for a ride. Her friends did go to help her but only found her car. There was no sign of their friend for two days. Family organized and searched the area on their own. They searched the hospitals, the jail, and finally the morgue. They later discovered the woman was the victim of a hit-and-run on a dark Saturday night on Central Avenue, past 98th Street. A truck driver turned himself in several hours later. With a family devastated, the trucking company offered to pay funeral expenses.

Stories such as this one are not new and are one of the many reasons advocates pushed for a task force to solve an ongoing problem of missing indigenous people going largely unnoticed. Many advocates are pointing to instances such as the recent one on Albuquerque's Westside as an example of why a now disbanded task force was folded prematurely.

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's administration in 2021 created the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives (MMIWR) Task Force and a plan of action. The executive order states: "The New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force (the 'Task Force') is created to develop a state response plan addressing systemic changes that support prevention, reporting, and investigation of MMIWR incidents."

The task force, made up of dozens of representatives from around the state, successfully created that response plan and created movement amongst the multiple agencies, organizations and stakeholders working on MMIW issues. For a time, there

was real progress at hand. More than ever, people were becoming more aware of the issues surrounding MMIW in their state—and one that continually ranks among the top for MMIW cases in the country. Federal agencies were listening and finally making initiatives and creating full-blown new department offices to look into this issue.

The FBI finally stopped giving their favorite line: That they were not in the business of finding missing persons. Their agency actually helped to create one of the few multistate missing persons lists specifically focused on Native peoples in the country. The Albuquerque Police Department was attending meetings, stating they would provide the public with an MMIWR point person. The New Mexico State Police had an officer assigned to work with the task force; for once, families were starting to get answers.

At a summit in January 2022, rumors swirled that the task force would be ending, but no one knew any details, nor was any formal announcement made. In October, without any advanced notice, Lujan Grisham's administration announced the end of the task force.

Representatives from the governor's office explained to reporters that the work was done and the task force's mission was accomplished. Members of the group were encouraged to continue to meet unofficially, but it would be missing any sort of sanction by the state. A new legislative initiative would be needed to make the task force active again.

Earlier this month, a small, unofficial group convened inside the New Mexico Indian Affairs Office to discuss what they can do, even without the official backing from the state. Darlene Gomez, an MMIWR attorney, advocate and state task force member says she's still unclear how things are supposed to move forward.

"The plan, the plan, the plan. I asked them to be transparent, both the governor's office and the Indian Affairs Department, as to what they've been doing and saying,"

Gomez tells *The Paper*. "All I get back is, 'we're implementing this plan.'"

It's unclear exactly what the plan is or if there's a hypothetical timeline. The Indian Affairs Department may or may not be adding new staff to work on MMIWR issues directly. Requests from *The Paper* for comments were not returned by publication time.

Gomez says she saw first-hand real progress before the task force was disbanded. Face-to-face meetings between families and law enforcement offered a level of accountability and familiarity, she says.

"People were watching, and so I felt like things moved quicker. There was accountability in place," Gomez says. "Now, in the last six months, my phone calls go unanswered. It seems like without that external pressure, momentum on many fronts has stalled. Even just the sharing of resources and events, less of that is shared by [the New Mexico Department of Indian Affairs Department] now."

Gomez, like many others, is frustrated and looking for details.

"It's like, well, show us who you will work with? They're like, 'Indian Affairs works with families, advocates, and partner organizations,'" she says. "And I'm like, 'OK, well, are they moving forward?' Even just a final meeting, to say goodbyes and talk about strengthening relationships beyond the task force should occur."

Whether or not that closure will occur is up in the air. The Indian Affairs Department says it still plans on hosting a "missings persons' day" event in December, but details have yet to be finalized. This legislative session will provide more answers as to the future of the MMIWR Task Force's work. Until then, families and advocates will continue their plans for the future, with or without the state's backing.

As Gomez puts it: "We are kind of starting from scratch again, it feels like. Without knowing the State's intentions, how do we proceed?"

Sound Bathing Immersions Promote Well-Being

An increasingly common trend of sound therapy has found its way to the Land of Enchantment



(Courtesy Douglas Cardwell)

By Gwynne Ann Unruh, *The Paper*.

The sounds experienced in immersive “sound bath” sessions have been shown to create a sense of calm and relaxation. Thanks to a local percussionist who knows a lot about mindfulness and meditation, using sound therapy to alleviate stress that’s often synonymous with the holiday season is in our own backyard.

Douglas Cardwell of Lotus Sound Bath in Albuquerque, tells *The Paper*. he starts his sound bathing classes by encouraging participants to set their intention for the experience. He says the music he creates is uniquely catered to each person’s needs.

“It’s different in every single session. I pay attention when people come into a space,” Cardwell explains. “I watch their body actions. This dictates the energy level and frequencies needed. Should I play rapidly? Should I play in this key? I am creating a space for their presence where you don’t need to make any decisions; a safe place where you can just relax.”

Using various percussion instruments, which include large crystal bowls and 32-inch and 38-inch gongs, Cardwell takes

participants on a restorative journey as the vibrations of sound guide them into relaxation. He encourages everyone to use their senses to focus on the sounds and frequencies of the instruments he plays.

“The immersion into sound begins with each person lying down or seated in a comfortable position,” Cardwell says. “We start with deep breathing to begin the full-body listening experience. As the sound of the instruments hits the water in the body it creates a pattern that goes through participants like waves.”

Sound therapy sessions such as Cardwell’s have also been gaining steam across the globe.

A study, published in the *Journal of Evidence-Based Integrative Medicine*, found that an hour of sound therapy reduced tension, anger, fatigue, and depressed mood in participants.

Sound bathing meditation sessions where participants listen to the soothing sounds of crystal singing bowls, gongs, and other instruments were named as one of the most popular wellness trends in 2023 by Condé Nast Traveler.

Cardwell has played as a trained percussionist with the Houston, Detroit and the New Mexico symphonies and the New Mexico Philharmonic. He is an avid follower of meditation, the practice of mindfulness and being present in the moment when he’s practicing, or performing.

“I’ve been in the business of sound immersion and creative sound for over three decades,” Cardwell explains. “I’m a jazz musician and have studied how to produce sounds to soothe humans.”

Cardwell offers individual, couple or group sessions at the Lotus Sound Bath studio. He also partners with several yoga and wellness centers throughout Albuquerque that host his sound bath sessions. These include Remedy Day Spa, Badlands Yoga, Studio SWAY and Board30 Albuquerque.

Cardwell will be offering free sound immersion music at the Cathedral of St. John (318 Silver Ave. SW) on Dec. 4 at 6:30pm. No reservations are needed and donations are welcomed.

Register for sound bathing sessions at the studio or online at lotussoundbath.com.



Get It While It's Hot

A reminder to appreciate those annoying school lunches

(Andy Lyman)

Andy Lyman, The Paper.

It seems like everyone these days has an opinion about what should and should not be on the Thanksgiving table. For some, the box of what's essentially seasoned bread crumbs that come to life with some hot water is the only way to go for stuffing. Red chile in lieu of gravy is a given in these parts, but even that isn't always a unanimous choice. Even the main course is up for debate: Do you roast a bird, give it a bath in dangerously hot oil, throw it on the smoker, or forgo the notoriously dry turkey altogether?

Nearly all of us are foodies to some degree and are probably guilty of snubbing our noses at what we see as a sub-par Thanksgiving meal. Or maybe that's just me.

I was recently reminded of how easy it is to miss the experience for the meal.

My youngest son's elementary school recently held its annual Thanksgiving lunch. It's a time-honored tradition of parents filing into their kids' cafeteria and squeezing into tiny lunch tables for a hot-ish meal of holiday-ish food. I hadn't planned on going, but when my wife couldn't make it, I had to unenthusiastically pinch hit and it couldn't have come at a worse time.

I knew my day was going to be filled with edits and layout plans and taking a break for a styrofoam plate full of food wasn't going to

do me any favors.

Parents whose schedules allow for the yearly lunch know the drill: Show up, buy a ticket and eat, all while thinking about those TPS reports back at the office. This year was no different.

My son's school asked that parents arrive 15 minutes before lunch, which immediately irritated me.

"So, I have to be the one to wait?" I grumbled on the way there.

I, along with the other handful of punctual parents, stood awkwardly against a wall in the cafeteria waiting for my lunch date. All I could think about as I tapped my toe and watched the time was how little I actually wanted to eat whatever awaited me in a steam tray behind an industrial sneeze guard. Even my son, who's normally adamant about eating school lunch, opted to bring his lunch because he doesn't like mashed potatoes, the roll and turkey are both dry every year and the green beans are the only thing worth eating.

But my cynical exterior started to melt away after I saw the excitement in not only my kid's eyes, but also the joy all these other families were experiencing.

Sure enough, the turkey—which was not much more than a slice of deli meat—was dry, the gravy was underwhelming and the apple dessert suspiciously had the texture of canned pears with some cinnamon

sprinkled on top. But during the short time I was there, I started to have a real moment of appreciation that I have a job that allows me to ditch out long enough to hear my son gab about the trials and tribulations of elementary school. I also got a flood of memories of my time in elementary school when my mom didn't have the luxury of popping on over to Mitchell Elementary for a bite.

The whole experience also made me think more about Thanksgiving itself and how I'm all too quick to complain about the holidays while tons of others wish they had my problems and how there should really be a holiday all about being thankful.

This is my son's last year as an elementary student, which means no more Halloween carnivals, no more spring flings and no more family Thanksgiving lunches at school. Even though I had to eat my slice of turkey loaf with a plastic fork and the peas and carrots medley was so unappealing they went untouched, it was a good reminder to not only be thankful for what I have, but also to really be in the moment. Work was still waiting for me when I got back to the office, but that enthusiastic 10-year-old will someday be an obstinate 11-year-old and eventually a teenager who wouldn't dream of sharing a plastic meal with dad.

Table Talk

Political opposites can have a civil conversation over turkey

Sherry Robinson, All She Wrote

Looking forward to those family gatherings over the holidays? Or maybe not? There's that one relative who is all about politics. Or worse, two on opposite sides of the fence. Aunt Martha worries they'll ruin dinner.

Research tells us these exchanges can be a good thing. Jennifer Wolak, a Michigan political science professor, finds that those discussions set the table for compromise and civility in national political discourse. That's because if two people with different political views can have a reasonable give and take over Aunt Martha's turkey or enchiladas, we will believe and even expect politicians to do the same.

"The average American is still really keen on compromise," Wolak writes.

Aunt Martha's turkey reinforces social norms. Most people aren't going to offend her or the rest of the family by shouting at each other. The professor concludes that social norms can be a powerful motivator for civility.

At this point, you're thinking about your own family and wondering if this could work.

In my family, all the holiday dinners I remember took place in my Aunt Grace's mobile home, where she managed to get an astonishing number of people around the table to enjoy great food and each other's company. People were happy to see each other and just wanted to catch up. I don't remember a single political conversation.

Nowadays my cousins and I do have some strong political opinions, which we mostly don't share because we value the relationship more. To the extent we've discussed anything, my position is always, we are blood, I love you, and I care far more about that than making a political point. I'm not going to end a relationship with family or friends because we vote differently.

The professor makes a good point, but I think these discussions need a foundation in place. The parties should

understand they're not going to change each others' minds and be willing to listen.

Two researchers, writing in a political science journal, give us a model.

"You wouldn't try to convince a die-hard Alabama football fan not to be an Alabama football fan. You know that's a losing battle. You might be able to convince someone that Alabama's quarterback didn't have a great game or that Auburn played well last week. The goal isn't to convert the Alabama fan. The goal is to have a conversation about football that doesn't rely on blind loyalty, (personal) attacks, or false accusations."

Three learned folks wrote that most people don't find these conversations all that bad. In fact, they may even be listening to each other.

"When you're having these conversations, they can feel really frustrating, but actually you're being influenced," says a faculty member at Notre Dame. "It means you're influencing your family as well. There is actually

some element of productive discussion going on, even when it may not feel like it."

More researchers, sorting through survey data, were unable to link a bad Thanksgiving to talking politics. "Americans appear to be largely successful at putting aside their political differences and enjoying Thanksgiving dinner with relatives and friends with whom they differ," they wrote. The meaning I draw from that is that family dynamics – old grudges, dysfunction and personal differences – do more damage to a festive occasion than political debates.

Going back to my own family, I think we could all survive a political discussion with our mashed potatoes, even without the moderating influence of my Aunt Grace. I would not have said that before because I wouldn't want to take the risk and because not talking about this stuff is a long habit. However, if thousands of such conversations could reduce the temperature nationally, it's worth a try.

All She Wrote



Sherry Robinson

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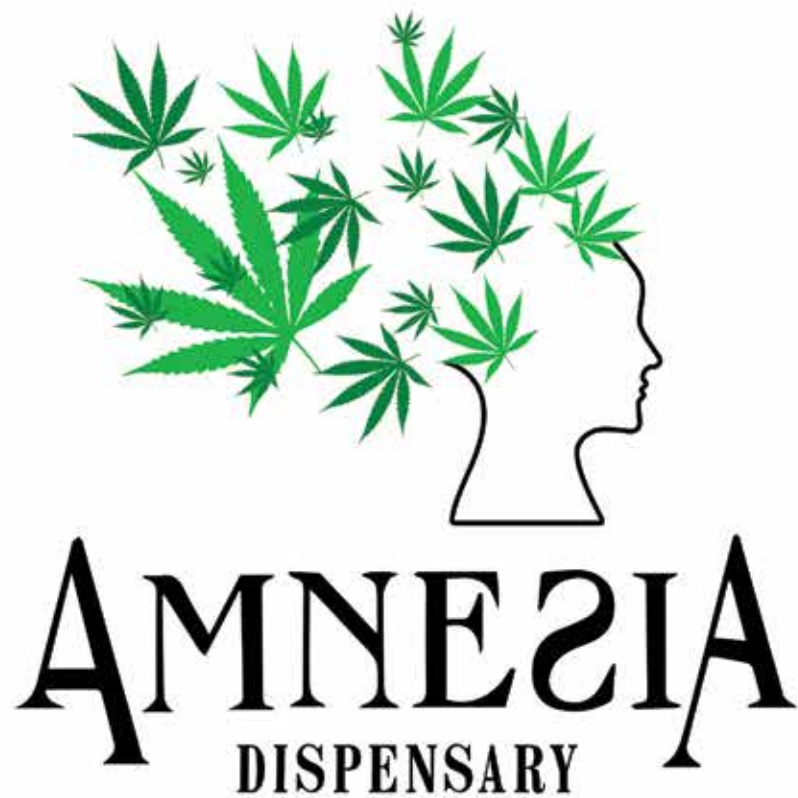
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cannabis news shorts

Every week, we round up our favorite cannabis-related news stories in bite sized edible pieces. Here's some of our favorites!

Congress' Research Says Keep Weed Taxes Low

Experts warn about overtaxing weed

By Josh Lee, The Paper.

Earlier this month, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) released a report that recommended low federal cannabis taxes to avoid unfair pressure on the industry.

According to the report, cannabis advocates who claim that legalizing the drug would provide a new tax revenue source for the government may not be considering the potential economic impact of overburdensome taxes on financially strapped cannabis users and companies. The report says that high-priced cannabis products have the potential to send consumers to illicit markets, "in turn jeopardizing recreational marijuana's economic potential." The CRS says these pressures could cause uncertainty for cannabis businesses and negatively impact their ability to provide employment.

The report also predicts that higher tax rates will deter

new customers from ever trying weed, "which may be a policy goal for some lawmakers."

The CRS recommends that legislators direct the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of Economic Analysis to investigate the potential economic impact of federal cannabis taxes before pursuing any legislative action.

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is currently considering a recommendation from the Department of Health and Human Services to reschedule cannabis as a Schedule III drug, which will reclassify it as having some medical use. In a statement, the CRS said it could be "likely" that the DEA will accept the recommendation.

New Mexico lawmakers in 2021 opted for a 20 percent cannabis excise tax that is set to increase in the coming years. Legalization advocates and architects of New Mexico's Cannabis Regulation Act justified both the current rate

and the expected increases as the sweet spot to knee cap the illicit market, but also generate revenue.

Lubbock Voters to Decide Decriminalization

The Lubbock, Texas City Council unanimously rejected a petition to decriminalize marijuana. Now the issue will go on a ballot, leaving the city's voters to decide.

Local advocacy group Lubbock Compact collected more than 10,000 petition signatures to put the issue before the city council—more than double the amount of signatures required.

But the council said it couldn't adopt an ordinance that contradicts state law. Now the proposed rule will be presented on a ballot in May.

A number of other smaller Texas cities have successfully passed voter initiatives to decriminalize weed, but in each case, the cities' councils have not gone through with putting the

voter-approved laws in place.

Lubbock is located about 100 miles from Clovis dispensaries.

Dispensary Offers Free Weed Cards to Vets

Albuquerque's Enchanted Botanicals dispensary is giving away free medical cannabis cards to qualified military veterans through the end of November.

Veterans with a valid military ID can apply for enrollment in the New Mexico Medical Cannabis Program for free at either of the shop's two Albuquerque locations (5737 Menaul Blvd. NE and 3417 Central Ave. NE). The application process will then be completed at Albuquerque Integrative Medicine.

That's quite a deal, considering many companies charge more than \$100 for an initial consultation and more than \$50 for renewals. The state does not charge for medical cards, however.

Grand Opening

National cannabis chain Cookies last week opened its first Albuquerque store (1340 Broadway Blvd NE). Customers lined up around the block in anticipation, but there was also quite the party outside.

Photos By Diego Leyba



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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

Week of November 22

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ARIES (March 21-April 19): When we experience authentic awe, our humility deepens. This is turn tends to make us kinder, smarter, and more positive. So how can we stimulate awe? Among the many possible ways are gazing at magnificent art, hiking in a natural wonderland, or being in the presence of a beautiful human soul. In accordance with astrological omens, I recommend that you go in quest of awe and related feelings like reverence, amazement, adoration, and veneration. Your mental, physical, and spiritual health will flourish in response.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): It's the Season for Cherishing and Smoking Out Secrets. So let's talk about the subject. 1. Some secrets are sad, haunting, even risky—and worth keeping secret. 2. Other secrets can be beautiful, healing, and potentially life-changing if they are revealed gracefully. 3. Some secrets are buried so deeply that only very persistent seekers dig them up. 4. Some secrets are "hidden" in plain view, and only visible to people who are clear and brave enough to identify them. I suspect you Tauruses will have a special knack for managing all types of secrets in the coming weeks, including those I mentioned.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): I hope you won't fill yourself up with appetizers and hors d'oeuvres in the coming weeks, Gemini. My soul will be at peace if I see you save your hunger for the main courses. Your motto should be "Feasts, not snacks!" or "The Real Deal, not the pretenders!" or "The jubilee, not the distractions!" If you ever find yourself feeling halfhearted or inattentive, you're probably not in the right situation. Here's an affirmation to go with your mottoes: "I am liberating my divine appetite!"

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Playwright Anton Chekhov (1860–1904) is regarded as one of history's great writers. That does not mean everything he said was wise, useful, or worthy of our attention. For example, he was once asked to give his opinion about ballet. "During the intermissions, the ballerinas stink like horses," he replied. I hesitate to bring up such a vulgar reference, but I wanted to make a vivid point. In the coming weeks, I hope you will ignore the advice of people who don't know what they are talking about, no matter how smart or charismatic they may be. I hope you will not attribute expertise to those who have no such expertise. I hope that as much as possible, you will rely on first-hand information, rigorous research, and reliable influences.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Researchers have determined that there are two basic dispositions among tigers. One is what they call "majesty." Creatures with this orientation tend to be dignified, imposing, and agile. The other type of tiger personality revolves around "steadiness." This is the opposite of neuroticism, and includes the qualities of being affable, easy to get along with, and well-adjusted. I know many astrologers associate lions with you Leos, but I prefer to link you with tigers. If you agree with me, here's my prediction: You are beginning a phase when you will be more majestic than steady—but with plenty of steadiness also available if you want it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): "It is better to entertain an idea than to take it home to live with you for the rest of your life," wrote author Randall Jarrell. That's decent advice, though I will add a caveat. If you entertain an idea for a while and it turns out that you love it, and you also love the beneficent effect it has on you, you may be smart to take it home to live with you. I'm guessing you Virgos are at a pivotal point in this regard. Not yet, but soon, you will know whether it will be wise to get cozier with certain influences you have been flirting with—or else decide they are not ones you want to keep.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): If I could give an award for Most Curious Genius in the World, it would be to Libran author and naturalist Diane Ackerman. She would also

get my prize for Most Voracious Learner and Best Questioner and Most Exuberant Seeker and Searcher. "To hear the melody," she writes, "we must hear all the notes." In response to the question, "What is life?" she offers this answer: "corsages and dust mites and alligator skin and tree-frog serenades and foreskins and blue hydrangeas and banana slugs and war dances and cedar chips and bombardier beetles." In accordance with current astrological omens, I encourage you to be like Diane Ackerman in the coming weeks.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Have you located any of your soul twins? If not, is that an interesting prospect for you? Please note that soul twins are not necessarily the same as dream lovers. They may simply be people with whom you share deep values and perspectives. They might aspire to influence the world in ways similar to you. With a soul twin, you feel at home in the world and extra happy to be yourself. I bring these meditations to your attention, Scorpio, because the coming months will be an especially likely time for you to encounter and engage with soul twins. Be on the alert!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Composer Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) was charismatic and forceful, but also hot-tempered and prone to rude behavior. The writer Goethe, his contemporary, said "his talent amazed me," and described him as an "utterly untamed personality." Beethoven seldom lived in one home for very long and loved to sing at the top of his lungs as he washed himself. Although he played piano with exquisite skill, he was quite clumsy as he moved through the world. Can you guess what astrological sign he was? Same as you! Sagittarius! I'm not saying you are exactly like this wild, unruly genius, but you do have tendencies in that direction. And in the coming weeks, I expect you'll be inclined to be more Beethoven-esque than usual. Please work on emphasizing the winsome aspects.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): I hope you have developed good boundaries, Capricorn. I hope you are so skilled at taking care of yourself that you steadfastly refuse to let people manipulate you or hurt you. Just to make sure your discernment is working at peak levels, though, I will offer you a tip. In the English language, we have the idiom "to rub salt in a wound," which refers to the fact that daubing salt in an open gash in the skin makes the pain even worse. But did you know that smearing sugar in a wound is equally distressing? The metaphorical lesson is that you should be vigilant for seemingly nice, sweet people who might also violate your boundaries to hurt or manipulate you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): I estimate this horoscope is worth \$22,225. It has been made possible by my many years of disciplined meditations, extensive reading of holy texts, and an ever-growing devotion to astrology and my readers. But here's the fun part: You can read these words for free! No cost at all! I will, however, ask you to do something for me in return. First, give your gifts joyously and generously in the coming weeks, holding nothing back. Second, don't be in the least concerned about whether you will receive benefits in return for your gifts. Find the sweet spot where you love bestowing blessings for no other reason except this one: You are expressing your gratitude for the miraculous life you have been given.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Do you possess gambits, tactics, and knacks that we might refer to as your "bag of tricks"? I hope so, because such an asset will be extra valuable during the coming weeks. You will be wise to employ every cagey move you can imagine and call on every favor that's owed to you and cash in on every advantage you have accrued. I don't want you to engage in outright cheating, but I encourage you to use ploys and stratagems that have full integrity. Be on the lookout for secret shortcuts, magic cookies, and wild cards.

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 Pasta shape
- 5 Social stratum
- 10 Asian housemaid
- 14 Rainbow goddess
- 15 Bagel choice
- 16 Pampered one?
- 17 Self-absorbed
- 19 Become unhinged
- 20 Medical setback
- 21 Produce milk
- 23 Domino dot
- 24 Alleviated
- 25 Grammatical slip
- 29 Cleveland's lake
- 30 Hotel worker
- 31 Barbecue fare
- 33 Growl viciously
- 36 Resistor unit
- 37 Dependent
- 39 Fluffy scarf
- 40 Cunning
- 42 Building toy
- 43 Cole ____
- 44 Turn's partner
- 46 Type of lights
- 48 Dinner accessory
- 51 Ms. West of films
- 52 Machine gun sound
- 53 Rodeo props
- 57 "Tide" anagram
- 58 Chinese porcelain color
- 60 Astringent fruit
- 61 Mournful chime
- 62 Actress Stone
- 63 Put in the mail

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- 64 Disreputable
- 65 Very best

- 10 Refrain from
- 11 Controllable
- 12 Subside
- 13 Made too much of
- 18 Grand in scale
- 22 Swore, old-style
- 24 Natural, as lighting
- 25 Skyline obscurer
- 26 Waikiki's island
- 27 Constraint
- 28 Window ledge
- 32 Type of palm
- 34 MGM mascot sound
- 35 Ground cover

- 37 Stopwatch button
- 38 As a rule
- 41 Found
- 43 Ice cream alter-native
- 45 Hints at, with "of"
- 47 Small pie
- 48 News media
- 49 Gravy server
- 50 Make amends
- 53 Tread-bare
- 54 "Tickle me" doll
- 55 Coal unit
- 56 Arabian and Caspian
- 59 Quilting party

DOWN

- 1 Wedding cake section
- 2 Strongly suggest
- 3 High school subj.
- 4 Pulled a Houdini
- 5 Plot together
- 6 Start the pot
- 7 Knight's title
- 8 Labors long
- 9 Protect, in a way

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Solution to Crossword:



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