

FREE

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Courtesy NM PBS

Community Investment

New Mexico United majority owner Peter Trevisani talks about moving forward with a new stadium

By Andy Lyman, The Paper.

Let's face it: New Mexicans are a proud bunch. Whether it's our quintessential crops, stunning views or famous former residents, we all seem to brag in unison about things that remind the rest of the country there's actually a state between Arizona and Texas.

But, like it or not, we're also a cynical lot.

New Mexico United won off the field in November when the Albuquerque City Council greenlit a lease agreement with United that allows the team to use a chunk of land at the city-owned Balloon Fiesta Park. The city will use about \$13 million of state capital outlay money to improve infrastructure and get the site ready, and the soccer club will foot the \$30 million bill to build a stadium. United will pay about \$30,000 each year in rent and fork over 10 percent of parking revenue. But it wasn't an easy sell for some councilors and many city residents.

Maybe it's the list of now-defunct sports teams, or even a popular indie band that blew town for the Pacific Northwest, that fuels the, "This is why we can't have nice things" feeling that adds a few ice cubes to our warm glass of New Mexico pride.

Sure, many of us are excited for a new stadium, and sure, the slice of public money going towards infrastructure improvements comes from tax dollars that are essentially already spent. But many still can't shake the feeling we're going to get burned — again.

The Paper., in collaboration with New Mexico PBS, sat down with the team's majority owner and CEO Peter Trevisani to learn more about what's in store for both the team and its fans.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

***The Paper.:* Technically, there's some public money involved. But obviously, there's money coming from your organization. Can you walk us through sort of who's paying for what and how that breaks down?**

Peter Trevisani: I'd explain it like this: We have, for the last few years, been focused on building a privately-funded stadium. And in order to do that, it was pretty clear to us, we're going to need some kind of collaboration with the public just to be able to build a facility. So we looked at a lot of sites, and we came to Balloon Fiesta [Park]. What really was exciting about that location for us is that there's 13,000 parking spots there already and they are used for two weeks out of the year for the one of the greatest festivals in the world. And for those two weeks, we won't be active or activated. So that's great. The ingress and egress can handle 100,000 people, we're closer to 10,000. So we had this site that was really used to that. Then it becomes, "Well, how do you build something privately on public land?" We have anti-donation

clauses, and so where we came out is "Yes, we will lease seven acres, which will be the footprint of the stadium, and build privately." So, 100 percent of the stadium on that seven acres will be private. But there's a lot of infrastructure needs that need to go into place, many of which need to go in place anyway for this 400-acre park. Maybe that means improving power or water. There has to be work to be done to figure out exactly what those things are. But thankfully, the state Legislature has already appropriated about [\$13 million] of public money, as well as, I think, another \$5 million for Balloon Fiesta. So I think there's about \$18 million of public money that can only go into the infrastructure: Building bathrooms, making sure vendor row is better, lighting, maybe repaving, which is a common expense for public parks. So, that's where it sits right now. We're obligated in the lease to put in at least \$30 million of private money. And we're prepared to do that. I think between that and the state money that's been allocated, we're going to have a facility that we're all really proud of.

In 2021, 65 percent of voters essentially said, "No way, we don't want to fund a stadium with general obligation bonds." Can you walk us through how we got to where we are today?

I think to really do that, we have to take maybe one or two more steps backward and kind of go to the whole origin of the team. When the ownership group came together for New Mexico United—I'm one of the owners, I'm the majority owner, but we have other owners, and we're all either from New Mexico or have raised our families in New Mexico—we wanted to bring a soccer team [to New Mexico], but more importantly, we wanted to figure out how we can bring our community together, especially at a time where it felt very divided. How can we bring a community together so that we can show everybody that when we all rally together, we're the strongest, best version of ourselves? When we brought the team in, we knew we didn't have a place, a soccer venue, that was really clear. We looked around, there was nothing. So the idea was, "Well, could we convert Isotopes Park? Could we convert that into a soccer field?" That has happened in some other cities. We convert the current field from a baseball stadium into a soccer stadium. We had over 10,000 people a game the first season. Clearly this team was activated. So then it became a matter of, what is next? And I think the city felt that, "Hey, 20 years earlier, we used a similar mechanism to build a stadium for Isotopes that was paid for using city tax dollars, but then would be leased out to a team." We got behind that idea and, you're right, people voted and it was heard—65 percent of people said, "No, we do not want to use city dollars to build a public stadium. We want to use city dollars for other things." At that point, we just took a step back. The best night of sleep I got in that year was the night of the election because I said, "OK, that's behind us. We know it's a 'no', now let's go figure out how to make it a 'yes.'" And from there, we just focused on funding it privately, and that's what we're going to do.

One of the things that was sort of hanging over this was the United Soccer League, said pretty publicly that they had no interest in holding franchise rights for teams that didn't have a home. I don't remember hearing this come out in council meetings or even from the organization saying, "We have to do this or else..." How did that sort of looming consequence shape conversations you had with some

Continued on next page

of these elected officials?

Personally, I'm not someone who wants to use an "or else" line of thinking to get something done. I don't think that's really constructive and productive. I think, too many times here, we get to a place of "yes," because of a threat. At New Mexico United, I think we really feel strongly that we want to focus on the positivity of the project. We want to focus on the reasons to say "yes," and we're not here to say, "If you don't do this, we're going to take our toys and leave the sandbox." I think that doesn't serve us very well. What we really want to do is say, "You know what? New Mexicans can build really nice things for New Mexicans, we have all the resources we need right here in our state. We don't need handouts from outside of the state, we don't need other people to come in. We can do it with people who are born and raised here, have decided to live here, and really care deeply about our community." So you're never going to hear us threaten to leave. This is New Mexico's team. That's why we built it. It's going to be here for 100 years, and whatever the hurdles are, we'll just figure out how to climb and get over the hurdles. What we're not going to do is threaten to take the hurdles away.

If you go to a home game, in the rowdy section, there's this real sense of ownership and pride that comes with it. I also think another hallmark of New Mexico is, sometimes people call it cynicism or being critical, saying "This isn't going to work out." For folks that are looking at this and saying, "This guy, Peter Trevisani, just made this deal to build a stadium, his team is going to be worth a whole lot more money," what's your future look like with this team and how long are you going to stay at this whole ownership deal?

Our vision is a 100-year vision. We talk about this all the time at United. In the fulfillment of that mission, players are going to come and go. Coaches are going to come and go. Owners, including Peter Trevisani, are going to come and go. Fans that are going to go to every game for 50 years will also have a time when they're no longer at the games. That's the beauty of it. We always have to understand that what we're putting in place, we just want to leave and make it better for the next generation and the next person. We've put a lot of money into the team, we're going to put more money in for the stadium. I come from finance, this is not an ROI, a return on investment project. This is an ROC, a return on community investment. The dividend that we get from New Mexico United is the joy, are the smiles in the stands, the joy of people [who say] "I was going through the most difficult time in my life, and I was at my lowest point, and I got through it because of my New Mexico United family, because of the people that I go to the games with." We need more of those stories. I hear so many stories of people saying, "I got to a low point in my life, and I ended up on the streets," or "I ended up on drugs," and in many cases, leading to tragic circumstances. So, this is a way for us to change some of the narrative, some of the things that we want to change here, crime, homelessness, fentanyl. One of the ways we can have a positive impact is to have an asset like New Mexico United that brings people together no matter their situation. That's the dividend. We get paid in smiles every single day, and that's the greatest reward anyone could ever have.

This story was produced in collaboration with NMPBS. Watch it online at abq.news





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Pueblo Shop & Stroll

'Tis the season for shop & stroll events. But Pueblo Shop and Stroll is a unique opportunity to do a bit of gift shopping among a selection of Native artists selling hand-crafted ornaments, Nativity sets, jewelry and other beautiful works of art. It all happens at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (2401 12th St. NW) on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 4 to 8pm. To keep you entertained, traditional Native fire dancers and other performers are scheduled throughout the evening. Plus, you and your family can stay warm by the bonfire and indulge in the Indian Pueblo Kitchen's hot cocoa bar and popular concessions. The event is free with admission to the Cultural Center (\$12 adults, \$10 residents, \$8 students/seniors/youth).

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12/09 Paint & Sipz with artist Olivia Jane	12/16 Volunteer Palooza Learn About Opportunities at Local Orgs
12/09 The Sponges with MNTRA, Galaxy	EVERY MONDAY: NM residents use code MONDAYFUNDAY for half off admission after 3pm

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ART

ABQ Artwalk

Friday, December 8, 5 pm,
Downtown Albuquerque

All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914

Friday, December 8, 7:30 pm,
North Fourth Art Center, \$24-\$35

Noche de Familia: Invierno

Friday, December 8, 5 pm, Na-
tional Hispanic Cultural Center

Hadestown

Saturday, December 9, 2 pm,
Popejoy Hall, \$50-\$113

High Times Cannabis Cup Awards

Saturday, December 9, 4 pm, Rio
Rancho Events Center, \$34-\$84

Hops & Dreams: Winter Wonderland Edition

Saturday, December 9, 7 pm,
Tractor Brewing Wells Park

Live Band Burlesque

Saturday, December 9, 7 pm,
Revel Entertainment Center,
\$15-\$75

Steve Trevino - America's Favorite Husband Tour

Saturday, December 9, 8 pm,
Kiva Auditorium, \$30-\$55

All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914

Sunday, December 10, 2 pm,
North Fourth Art Center, \$24-\$30

Dale A. Garratt Book Signing

Sunday, December 10, 1:30 pm,
Treasure House Books & Gifts

Guild Cinema's Annual Movie Poster Auction

Sunday, December 10, Noon,
Guild Cinema

Hadestown

Sunday, December 10, 1 pm,
Popejoy Hall, \$50-\$113

Hadestown

Sunday, December 10, 6 pm,
Popejoy Hall, \$50-\$113

Opening reception for The Art of Healing

Sunday, December 10, 4 pm,
Gallery with a Cause located
inside the New Mexico Cancer

Center

Something Must Be Wrong With My Mistletoe

Sunday, December 10, 3 pm,
Hiland Theater, \$20-\$60

The Z Lounge Burlesque Revue

Sunday, December 10, 8 pm,
Hotel Zazz, \$10-\$20

Nutcracker! Magical Christmas Ballet

Tuesday, December 12, 7 pm,
Kiva Auditorium, \$30-\$64

MUSIC

Enjambre

Thursday, December 7, 7 pm,
Revel Entertainment Center,
general admission \$30

Eryn Bent

Thursday, December 7, 7 pm,
Tractor Brewing Nob Hill

Roadside Memorials

Thursday, December 7, 8 pm,
Launchpad, general admission
\$7

Baracutanga

Friday, December 8, 8 pm,
JUNO brewery + cafe + art, \$10-\$40

Clay Walker

Friday, December 8, 8 pm, Isleta
Resort and Casino, \$50-\$60

Early Moods

Friday, December 8, 7 pm, Sis-
ter, general admission \$10

Hello Darlin'

Friday, December 8, 6 pm, Albu-
querque Distilling

Hostage Situation

Friday, December 8, 9 pm,
Historic El Rey Theatre, general
admission \$15

The Dawn Hotel Trio Live

Friday, December 8, 7 pm,
Thirsty Eye Brewing Company

The Parson Family Band Contra Dance with Caller Ben Werner

Friday, December 8, 7 pm, FU-
SION Theater

Thelma & The Sleaze

Friday, December 8, 8 pm,
Launchpad, \$12-\$15

A Benefit for Karra featuring

All Thicc

Saturday, December 9, 8:30 pm, Launchpad, general admission \$10

Grupo Super Verza

Saturday, December 9, 9 pm, JUNO brewery + cafe + art, \$15-\$40

Mineral Hill

Saturday, December 9, 8 pm, The Mine Shaft Tavern

Possessed

Saturday, December 9, 8 pm, Historic El Rey Theatre, \$22-\$72

Music on the Patio: The Squash Blossom Boys

Sunday, December 10, 4 pm, Canteen Brewhouse

Nick Brower (cello/folk) with Nicholas Roche and Kevin Herig

Sunday, December 10, 7 pm, JUNO brewery + cafe + art, General Admission \$7

Jarhead Fertilizer

Monday, December 11, 7 pm, Sister, general admission \$15

Queens of the Stone Age

Tuesday, December 12, 7 pm, Revel Entertainment Center, general admission \$59.50

TV Girl

Wednesday, December 13, 8 pm, Revel Entertainment Center, general admission \$40

COMMUNITY

28th Annual Nob Hill Shop & Stroll

Thursday, December 7, 5 pm, Nob Hill

3HL Ice Wolves vs Austin Ice Bats

Friday, December 8, 6:30 pm, Outpost Ice Arenas, \$10-\$15

Goth Night & Dark Market Black Christmas Edition

Friday, December 8, 8 pm, Tractor Brewing Wells Park

Ugly Sweater Holiday Party

Friday, December 8, 7 pm, Bow & Arrow Brewing Co.

Christmas Art & Craft Fair

Saturday, December 9, 10 am,

Escape in Time

Elite Tuner New Mexico

Saturday, December 9, 3 pm, EXPO New Mexico, \$10-\$50

Holiday Market at the ABQ Rail Yards

Saturday, December 9-10, 10 am, Albuquerque Rail Yards

Joy Map Lobby Shop Sale

Saturday, December 9, 10 am, FUSION Theater

Pueblo Shop and Stroll

Saturday, December 9, 9 am, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center

The ABQ Collectives 2023

Holiday Market
Saturday, December 9, 10 am, The ABQ Collective

3HL Ice Wolves vs Austin Ice Bats

Sunday, December 10, 2 pm, Outpost Ice Arenas, \$10-\$15

Second Annual Merry Little Market

Sunday, December 10, Noon, Revel Entertainment Center

BernCo Animal Care Services Vaccine and Microchip Clinic

Wednesday, December 13, 9 am, Bernalillo Animal Care and Resource Center

DRINK

Old Forester Bourbon A'Fare

Wednesday, December 13, 6 pm, The Dirty Bourbon Dance Hall & Saloon, per person \$90
Unmapped category Family

FAMILY

IPCC's Family Story Time: New Mexico Winter Animals

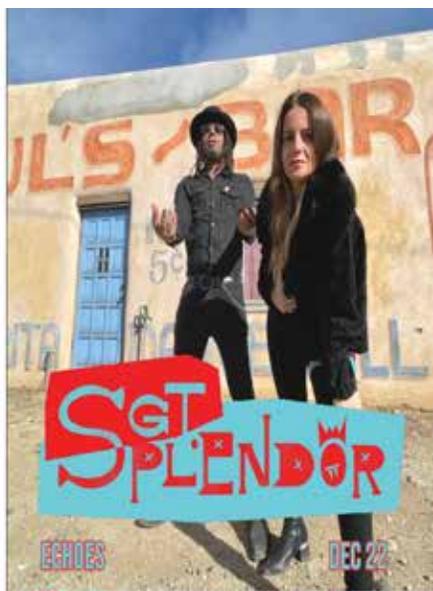
Saturday, December 9, 1 pm, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center

Blippi: The Wonderful World Tour

Sunday, December 10, 2 pm, Rio Rancho Events Center

Holiday Bargain Haul Book Sale

Saturday, December 9, 10 am, Main Library



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Air Quality Board Change-Up

City councilors shot down a mayoral veto aimed at protecting an air quality rule-making board, but things are probably just heating up

By Andy Lyman, The Paper.

The Albuquerque City Council on Monday night effectively abolished the current iteration of a joint city and county air quality board and kneecapped its immediate decision-making capabilities—amid a public outburst and one councilor repeatedly taking shots at the Council’s county counterpart.

The Council voted 6-3 to override Mayor Tim Keller’s previous veto of an ordinance to strip the Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Air Quality Board’s membership and replace it with new appointees. The Council also voted 7-2 to override Keller’s veto of a temporary pause on any further activity by the current Air Quality Board.

Councilor Dan Lewis, who sponsored both the ordinance and resolution, has repeatedly claimed the board was too representative of environmental activism interests and failed to consider the interests of Sandia National Laboratories, Kirtland Air Force Base and local businesses. The Air Quality Board has been considering a neighborhood petition to add more stringent requirements for getting air quality permits—which the Air Force base and the national labs said would significantly hinder their operations. Lewis also maintained that the board was overstepping its authority by considering more stringent rules. Keller, in his veto message, wrote that even if the air quality board was indeed out of its authority—which the administration later argued it was—replacing its members was the wrong move.

The Council’s more politically left-leaning members—Tammy Fiebelkorn, Isaac Benton and Council President Pat Davis*—voted to uphold the mayor’s veto of the member-stripping ordinance. But Davis broke from Fiebelkorn and Benton when it came to the mayor’s veto on a resolution that would pause further action by the Air Quality Board in order to “create some breathing room” to possibly reconsider the air quality rule-making process.

The dustup over the Air Quality Board’s authority began with a petition filed by South Valley residents aimed at considering the

cumulative impact of pollutants instead of the impact from individual permit seekers. The Air Quality Board began a week-long hearing on Monday to consider the petition.

Paving companies, the labs and Kirtland all have said approving the petition would significantly hinder their operations, while residents said their health has been overlooked for too long. One South Valley resident said during Monday’s meeting that his yard regularly “smells like cancer.” Albuquerque Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Samantha Sengel reiterated at the meeting the administration’s stance—that the best course of action would have been to address actions by the air quality board instead of trying to stop anticipated actions by the board. But, she added, “The city will exercise its legal rights to pursue remedy in courts,” if the air quality board were to implement rules outside of its jurisdiction.

Sengel also said the administration is concerned that restructuring the air quality board without consultation from the Bernalillo County Board of Commissioners—which also had a hand in creating the panel—“would open the matter to legal ambiguity” and could still end up in court.

Despite the Air Quality Board’s imminent restructuring, councilors approved, by a 7-2 vote, a resolution to convene a “working group” tasked with evaluating the structure of the board and how it implements air quality rules. The resolution requires the yet-to-be-convened group to finish its work by next month.

Even though the ordinance outlining a moratorium on the Air Quality Board’s actions immediately goes into effect, a news release from the Mountain View Coalition—a group made up of residents of South Valley’s Mountain View neighborhood—signaled that the Air Quality Board is still moving forward with this week’s hearing.

“Despite the horrific decisions by the Albuquerque City Council [Monday] night to override both Mayoral vetoes of the Dan Lewis bills to abolish the current Joint ABQ-Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board and to establish a moratorium on board action through February, the Air Board made the decision this morning to continue the hearing,” the news release states.

But the City Council issued its own news release Monday night signaling any work done by the Air Quality Board after the Council’s vote but before the end of the moratorium in February is basically illegal.

“The Administration and the Environmental Health Department cannot spend any City resources on this hearing including personnel, City finances for rental of space, court reporter, and outside counsel,”



Shane Wallin Comes Home on East of Albuquerque

Inspired by his son, family and his hometown community, musician Shane Wallin returns to his roots in his upcoming new album East of Albuquerque

By Gwynne Ann Unruh

Most anyone who frequents music venues—or even local restaurants—in Albuquerque, has likely heard the soulful voice of singer-songwriter and performer Shane Wallin. His upcoming album, *East of Albuquerque*, set to be released in December, is an ode to his New Mexican heritage and features a love song for his wife.

Growing up, Wallin listened to Motown, '60s, '70s and '80s rock and country music from the '40s, '50s and

'60s. It was country music that inspired him the most. Over the years his music evolved into what Wallin calls “country Americana”, he tells *The Paper*.

“As a musician, I play primarily in New Mexico 220 to 250 times a year,” Wallin says. “I have a lot of people and venues who support me, that have given a lot to me in my musical career thus far. I just wanted to write songs on this album that gave back to the community, that had given me so much by telling the story of my hometown.”

The love song called “Heaven Knows” from the album, releases on Dec. 1. The full album comes out on Dec. 15.

“Since I play music for a living, I’m on the road a fair amount and dealing with that, and having a family, is what the song is about,” Wallin explains. “It’s a song about the relationship between a husband and a wife and letting them know that everything is going to be okay. It’s not the same as being face to face. But it can work. It just takes work.”

Wallin was born in Albuquerque and grew up in Moriarty. He came from an extended musical family and took guitar lessons when he was 5 years old before getting caught up in playing sports. When he picked up the guitar again during his junior year of high school he knew it was what he wanted to do. Music took over and he started writing songs, performing at bars and wherever else he could find to play.

“I’ve been doing this now for about 20 years and I can’t imagine doing anything else,” he says.

Wallin’s website is full of accolades from *Albuquerque The Magazine*. These include Top Musicians, Best Musician, Best Male Vocalist & Best Singer Songwriter in New Mexico.

Wallin lives in the Duke City now and the birth of his son three years ago changed the way he looks at life.

“It completely affected my writing. I started to relate to my parents in a different way because of my son. I started to see where I came from, how I was brought up culturally and realizing that coming from a small town in New Mexico wasn’t so bad,” Wallin explains.

“We had a close musical family. We had close neighbors and we had people that we interacted with day-to-day on a very intimate level that you don’t get in a city.”

Wallin has plans to expand more into the “country Americana” genre and wants to play larger shows and open for some bigger acts regionally

“I’m ready to take some chances. Becoming a parent inspired me to be the best version of myself. Once you have kids your whole perspective changes on life. I’ve opened up more and I’m starting to work with a lot of people and I’m ready to take that next step and whatever that next step is, I’m ready to grow into it.”

Burque Body Slams

A local entertainment company wants to put a 505 stamp on professional wrestling.

By Michael Hodock, The Paper.

It's fairly common to see someone take a slam or two during some of the more rowdy music shows at the Historic El Rey Theatre. It is unusual however, for the body slams to be louder than the music coming from the amplifiers. During Duke City Championship Wrestling's (DCCW) "Coronation" event, the slams in the ring could be heard from outside. Behind the building's familiar red front doors, once a month, Albuquerque gets a glimpse into the world of underground wrestling.

Fred Slow, co-owner of DCCW and the organization's licensed promoter, says his passion project is rooted in nostalgia. He says he wants to bring a bit of his midwest childhood, when he would sit "crisscross applesauce" on his grandmother's floor to catch the latest match, to the Land of Enchantment.

"We chose Thursday nights on purpose," Slow says. "Where I grew up—St. Louis, Missouri—we had a thing called "Wrestling at the Chase" and they had the exact same formula. They would record TV for the month on Thursdays, then they would air it Saturday mornings."

The amped-up nature of DCCW's live events is contagious. It's a unique experience attending the shows in person, and the devoted fans come out in force. While there is the traditional bell, the crashes from wrestlers hitting the canvas mat seem to signal the next match. Fans run from the bar after intermissions as soon as they hear that distinct sound. The outfits are tight, revealing, colorful, and outrageous—exactly what you would expect from a true professional wrestling event. There's both heels and heroes along with jeers and cheers for each. Hobo Hank was one of the most popular local heroes by far, and signs bearing his name punctuated the crowd.

"[Hobo Hank] has been in the game for 27 years," Slow says. "No matter where we put him on the card, people are excited about that spot, and they always get really involved in his match."

But there's a whole slew of other wrestlers, each with unique personas and skills.

"Turbo Tony is a local guy that I really like and he's been doing it for about 10 years," Slow says. "We've got some undersized guys, we've got performers like Sid the Kid who



Rusty Rutherford
CREATIVE

may be a shade over five-feet tall and every 13-year-old kid's favorite wrestler."

The grizzly-bearded, long-haired, 187-pound "Wild Man" Fonzi Le Fleur who hails from "an abandoned trailer in the 505" faced off in a brawl with the younger, and more clean-cut newcomer Enrique Del Gato, who had already proven himself in earlier matches by defeating larger opponents. The match ended with Fonzi delivering a flying blow to his opponent from the top ropes, but it was when Fonzi hoisted his defeated adversary onto his shoulders to share in the crowd's praise, that the fans went wild.

Of course, there's the age-old debate over how real this type of wrestling is. Slow and DCCW create live drama and suspense, and the El Rey events feel like a TV show unfolding on stage.

"We're episodic, so we have a storyline, and what we're able to do is feature those things throughout the show," Slow tells *The Paper*. "Because we record four episodes every live taping, we can kind of sprinkle in a main event every other match. It's a really interesting dynamic because if you get there late, you're gonna miss something significant."

Even the bureaucracy behind sanctioning the event includes some blurred lines between athletics and entertainment. Slow says state law requires him to be a licensed athletic promoter even though he sees the events as more entertainment than anything else.

Slow wants to bring pro-wrestling to Albuquerque without using shock value as a marketing technique.

"We're not interested in blood, we're not interested in sensational politics or the world that surrounds us," he says. "This is theater, and this is meant to be an escape. It's meant to provoke excitement, laughter, and happiness at certain points. A good swerve in wrestling is as good as any storyline

in 'Game of Thrones.'"

But DCCW does have a fair amount of athleticism and is violent enough to keep the attention of hardcore fans. There is a feeling of danger in the matches, but it's not violent in the same way as mixed martial arts or other contact sports. People aren't purposely trying to inflict injuries to win matches.

The DCCW storylines have some twists and irony. Old friends are forced to face each other for a chance at the championship belt. Former tag-team partners turn to enemies and exact brutal revenge in the ring for past betrayals. Many fans root for the heel in certain matches, and the definition of a "good guy" gets murky as the episodic drama progresses. Both Hobo Hank and Fonzi Lafleur are from the streets of Albuquerque with antihero-type personas, and they are clearly two of the city's most beloved. Like any sporting event, spectators overwhelmingly root for the local guys and aren't shy to offend the visitors. The New Mexico-Texas rivalry at DCCW events is apparent, and even played-up during wrestler interviews between the taped television matches.

DCCW hosts its matches on Thursday nights and the events are taped live. The shows provide a whole night of entertainment, and feature live performances by Albuquerque high desert-rockers manhigh before the first bell.

Slow says, "We cut [the] two-hour taping up into four 30-minute episodes which we release episodically on Comcast channels 26 and 27. We have a YouTube presence and all the other outlets that go along with that. I think we're up to episode 18 now, we're flying through them."

DCCW's next show, "Countdown to Chaos" hits El Rey once again on December 30.



Photo by Rusty Rutherford for DCCW

Climate Change Rocks Property Insurance Premiums

Climate change's impact on insurance

New Mexico is a great place to live when it comes to weather. Some studies show that New Mexico is also one of the safest places to live when it comes to natural disasters. We have no hurricanes, intermittent minor floods, limited tornadoes. Wildfires are one of the few risks.

All this sometimes leads us to believe we aren't impacted by climate change. Think again. All you need to do is look at your property insurance premiums.

My attention was drawn to this in 2022 when the property insurance premium on my house in Hillsboro jumped by 42 percent. I called my insurance agent. Two things generated the increase: COVID-19 impacts on product availability and cost and increased climate disasters around the country.

The first idea was to lower the replacement value of the house, which I thought was high. Because New Mexico is a "replacement value" state, the increased value is determined by the insurer based on a formula and other factors: proximity to fire stations and hydrants and location within fire zones. Lowering the value was not an option.

The second approach was to increase the deductible, which was under \$1,000. By increasing the deductible to \$5,000 the premium was reduced to the previous year's amount. (The deductible is the amount the insured would pay before coverage kicks in)

Then this year's bill arrived. My premium once again jumped about 35 percent. This year it was clear; the cause was climate-related events driving more claims than ever before.

The ISO (Insurance Services Office) recently changed rating criteria including proximity to a fire zone (from 5 miles to 50 miles). Wildfires had increased in intensity and radius.

In Hillsboro we have a volunteer fire department and equipment station. As the gateway to the Gila Forest, we fall within the fire hazard zone. Luckily, we do have fire hydrants and, during fire season, a fully staffed fire watch tower in the Gila.

All of this helped me understand increases in insurance costs for my Hillsboro house.

My bill for my primary residence in Albuquerque came at the same time.

Another surprise! The premium increased by 67 percent. Once again, I raised the deductible and reduced the increase to "only" 30 percent.

Climate change, climate change.

This is not just my story but the story of homeowners here and everywhere.

In Florida, Louisiana and California some of the largest insurers, including State Farm, Farmers, and AAA, have withdrawn from the residential insurance market due to catastrophic climate events.

In California, 6,000 condominium projects are currently uninsured. Santa Fe projects are struggling with the same issue.

Increased drought caused by climate change makes parts of our state more susceptible to wildfire disasters with floods in the aftermath. But in New Mexico, companies haven't exited the market, they just decline to renew residential policies in vulnerable places.

Unaffordable and unavailable is becoming a common story for homeowners.

In Louisiana the Commissioner of Insurance said recently, "We would have to be blind and dumb not to recognize climate change as a factor."

In some cases, where no mortgage exists, homeowners decide they can't afford the cost and decline coverage. This is particularly true of homes passed down through generations in New Mexico. If the house is destroyed, everything is lost.

Given what is happening, homeowners are searching for how to get the best coverage for a manageable price. Here are some ideas:

- Pay more attention than ever before. Ask questions. Shop around.
- Read the small print. As premiums increase, make sure your coverage is not diluted.
- Raise your deductible to an amount that you could manage if disaster strikes.
- Above all, recognize that climate change is real and learn what you can do to deter it.

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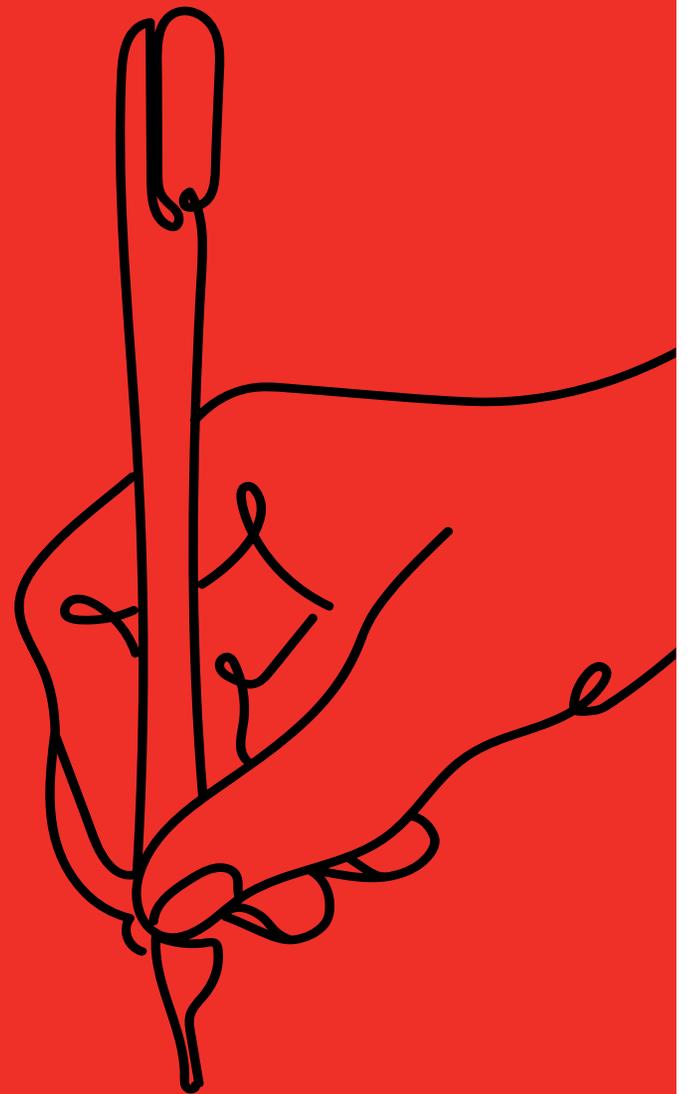
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Testing, Testing

ABQ Transit Advisory Board calls for drug testing changes

By Josh Lee, The Paper.

An Albuquerque transit advisory panel recently passed a resolution to push the nation's top health agency to certify oral drug-testing labs in New Mexico for transit employee screening. Advocates say that saliva tests are less invasive than urine tests and are better at determining whether a person has recently used cannabis. They also say it will help cure the city of its bus driver shortage.

Last month, the Transit Advisory Board approved a resolution that asked New Mexico's congressional delegation to urge the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to certify at least two state labs to conduct saliva testing for ABQ RIDE employees.

In October, local news outlets reported that ABQ RIDE was suffering a staffing shortage and told bus riders to prepare for longer waits. Since then, the city has held three job fairs in a rush to fill positions.

"The transit employee shortage is the missing piece to improving our bus system in Albuquerque," Transit Advisory Board member Althea Atherton tells *The Paper*. Atherton says

the city has had to cut back on frequency of service and some route coverage due to a shortage of drivers, mechanics and the vehicle servicers.

"This in turn, leads to a less equitable and accessible public transit system that works for everyone," they say.

Atherton submitted the advisory board's resolution. They say the legalization and destigmatization of adult-use cannabis in New Mexico has played a part.

"As one of the many states in the U.S. who have legalized cannabis for adult use, we want to make sure we are updating our drug-testing systems to meet the modern workforce," they say.

Last year, a Wells Fargo analyst said nationwide trucker shortages and supply chain issues could be blamed on federal drug testing mandates. During a company conference call, head of equity strategy Chris Harvey said the government was excluding a "significant portion" of the trucker industry in states that have legalized weed.

City transit employees are currently tested for drugs with a urine exam. Advocates say that type of screening is unreliable for detecting current intoxication levels in a person. Delta-9 THC stays in the fat cells and is detectable by urine analysis for up to 30 days, according to experts. That means someone could be tested and deemed "under the influence" a whole month after they got high.

In comparison, saliva tests detect weed use for up to 72 hours. Since more potential employees are beginning to legally consume cannabis, the pool of those who can pass a urine test is shrinking. The shorter

window associated with saliva tests will open the doors for legal cannabis users who are applying for a job.

Saliva tests also help when determining who is at fault following a collision. Although it will still be difficult to determine whether someone was under the influence of marijuana while they were driving, oral tests will at least exonerate anyone who has abstained for 72 hours.

Advocates also point out that urine tests can make trans and non-binary people uncomfortable, since it requires invasive surveillance. Oral tests are gender-neutral and don't require a secured restroom.

"As a non-binary person who cares about public transportation, any steps we can take to help the City of Albuquerque become a more friendly employer to LGBTQ+ staff and applicants is worth investing energy into," says Atherton.

Oral tests are also much harder to tamper with, since an observer can watch the entire process

Federal regulators have already changed the rules to allow oral testing for transit employees. The advisory board is also calling on the City of Albuquerque to update its testing policies to match the new regulations, but Albuquerque needs labs that have been certified for oral testing by HHS before the city can switch over.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Transit Administration (FTA) adopted a new rule that allows oral drug testing of federally regulated safety-sensitive transit employees in the place of the more traditional urine testing.

The rule applies to commercial drivers, pilots, train operators and a number of jobs involved in transporting goods and people in vehicles.

The rule change was hailed as a progressive milestone by advocates, but it hasn't actually translated to the real world yet.

The new rules require at least two SAMHSA-certified laboratories in an area before saliva-testing can be used: One lab to conduct the initial screening and confirmation testing and another to conduct reconfirmation of a secondary specimen in case the subject receives a non-negative result and wants a retest.

The new regulations also require the use of an HHS-approved sample collection device that has been approved by the HHS' Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which hasn't happened yet.

In October, the American Public Transportation Association wrote a letter to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra calling for the agency to approve a device and start certifying labs.

In a November letter to Becerra, the Transit Advisory Board asks the secretary to expedite the certification of two Albuquerque labs to address the city's staffing shortage.

"A strong, reliable public transportation system requires the cooperation of many," wrote the board. "We need action to alleviate one of the impediments to hiring and retaining employees."

Atherton says the city is stuck until HHS makes a move.

"When it comes to bus drivers, we have to follow FTA regulations," they say. "If the FTA regulations are allowing more

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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!

Blunts: Feds Punish Farmers growing Hemp and Pot

Uncle Sam says pick a lane

By Josh Lee, The Paper.

Hemp farmers say the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is revoking their licenses for growing state-legal cannabis.

Vermont hemp and cannabis farmer Sam Bellavance recently told local newspaper *Seven Days* that the USDA sent him a letter in March ordering him to surrender either his federal hemp license or his state cannabis license.

The email reportedly clarified that licensed hemp farmers are not allowed to produce marijuana. According to the 2018 Farm Bill, "hemp" is defined as cannabis that has less than 0.3 percent Delta-9 THC by dry weight.

Many Vermont hemp farmers reportedly pivoted to marijuana after the state legalized adult-use sales and the demand for CBD

dropped. If the feds continue to go after these farmers, many may leave the hemp industry altogether.

It's unclear if the USDA has targeted any other farmers; Bellavance may have been the first.

Out-Of-State Mushroom Patients Flock to Oregon

Oregon's legal psilocybin clinics have been treating dozens of out-of-state patients who have traveled long distances to take the drug legally.

While the state keeps records of psilocybin patients confidential, businesses have reported that the majority of participants have come from other states. Some claimed that as much as 80 percent of their clients came from outside Oregon.

Oregon was the first state to legalize psilocybin mushroom treatment in 2020. According to the *Oregon Capital Chronicle*, "hundreds" of people have accessed the treatment since the first psilocybin clinic opened in June, and thousands of people are on waiting lists.

Industry insiders said a single psilocybin therapy session can cost between \$1,000 and \$3,000. The state has licensed 17 service centers and issued 540 permits to industry workers.

Weed Plus Tobacco May Equal Lung Damage

A new study has found that people who smoke both tobacco and weed are much more likely to develop emphysema.

The study's findings were recently presented at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America by Canadian researchers who found that people who combined weed and tobacco were 12 times more likely to develop centrilobular emphysema than non-smokers. The researchers looked at chest CT images of four patient groups to collect the data: non-smokers, cigarette smokers, marijuana smokers and combined marijuana and cigarette smokers.

Centrilobular emphysema is a type of pulmonary emphysema in which the lungs' air sacs are damaged. The disease can lead to serious respiratory issues and make it difficult to breathe.

Combined marijuana and cigarette smokers were also three to four times more likely to have airway wall thickening—a symptom that was not present with people who only smoked either weed or cigarettes.

"There is a common public misconception that marijuana smoking is not harmful," said study co-author Jessie Kang in a news release. "More research needs to be done in this area, so the public can make an informed decision on their recreational usage of marijuana."



“ IT'S LIFE CHANGING

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.

Visit AAIM-ABQ.com to learn more and to take advantage of the New Patient Offer!

Why I support Jeff Hoehn for our future District 6 City Councilor...

As a retired teacher and architect who has been a resident of District 6 for over 40 years, I have witnessed severe decline in our area. I understand the importance of economic development, beyond just the presence of over 50% of the providers of services to the unhoused. Prior to buying my home in Parkland Hills, I lived in an apartment on South San Mateo for nine years .

Jeff Hoehn is a candidate who understands the need for economic development, housing, and business development in District 6, and how these critical measures will benefit not only housed residents like me, but the vulnerable community he has been serving throughout his professional career - children who are in homeless families and children with disabilities. He has seen the ways our city has marginalized and failed District 6, and he has an eye to the future with a vision to revitalize our neighborhoods.

His administrative experience instills confidence: he has worked as Director of Carrie Tingley Foundation and as Executive Director for Cuidando Los Niños. He has demonstrated his abilities to successfully run and financially manage organizations with large budgets, while meeting all federal, state, and local laws for businesses and nonprofits.

		
	JEFF HOEHN	NICHOLE ROGERS
FINANCIAL AND NONPROFIT EXPERIENCE	As the Executive Director of Cuidando Los Niños, Jeff manages a \$3.5M budget and a staff of 35 and every penny is accounted for.	Nichole's Welstand Foundation was not in compliance, had no staff, and no financial records are available for review.
WORK TENURE	Jeff worked for Carrie Tingley Foundation for 5 years and has been at Cuidando for 6 years.	In addition to longtime work as a financial advisor, Nichole's tenure at most jobs is 2-3 years.
		

This level of responsibility and accountability is crucial in managing the finances of a city as large as Albuquerque. He is also working with the development community to invest in District 6. As the city has demonstrated, they cannot fund the needed development for our communities on their own. New developments include partnership between the city AND the development community. Combining these two goals may seem at odds, but you need to understand both in order to address our district's divergent and complex needs.

If you care about the **economic vitality of our neighborhoods, and finding solutions from a candidate who has been successful in managing a substantial budget, provided services to those who are marginalized by society and the most in need, and has worked in collaboration with the business community**, please elect Jeff Hoehn as our next District 6 City Councilor.

Thank you for your consideration.

Peter Kalitsis
District 6 Resident

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

Week of December 6th

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ARIES (March 21-April 19): I will cheer you on as you tenderly push yourself to be extra exploratory in the coming weeks.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): In January, I will tempt you to be a spirited adventurer who undertakes smart risks.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) was an American Black leader who advocated a gradual, incremental approach to fighting the effects of racism.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): I periodically get a big jolt of feeling how much I don't know. I am overwhelmed with the understanding of how meager my understanding of life really is.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Have you reached your full height? If there were ever a time during your adult life when you would literally get taller, it might be in the coming weeks.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): I like Virgo author Cheryl Strayed's thoughts about genuine togetherness. She says, "True intimacy isn't a cluster fuck or a psychodrama.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): According to my interpretation of your astrological prospects, you now have the capacity to accelerate quickly and slow down smoothly.

effectiveness—as well as a finely honed sense of when each mood and mode is exactly right for the situation you're in.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Dear Goddess — Thank you a trillion times for never fulfilling those prayers I sent your way all those years ago.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Among our most impressive superpowers is the potency to transform ourselves in alignment with our conscious intentions.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The eminent Capricorn philosopher William James (1842-1910) is referred to as the "Father of American Psychology."

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Are people sometimes jealous or judgmental toward you for being so adept at multi-tasking?

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Romantic relationships take work if you want them to remain vigorous and authentic. So do friendships.

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 Bundle of hay
5 Post Office purchase
10 Surfer's concern
14 Multi-user OS
15 Video's counterpart
16 Valuable deposits
17 Reason for a repossession
19 Sandwich alternative
20 Sound a bell
21 Compensate
23 Go one better
25 Raven's haven
26 Smugly ingratiating
29 Teensy bit
31 Trajectory
34 Die down
35 Pirate captain of legend
37 Informal farewell
39 Contest submissions
41 Notwithstanding
43 Godly belief
44 Not as much
46 Dermal opening
47 PA time zone
48 Culminating point
50 Embalming ingredient
52 Whopping
54 Discussion group
56 Kind of agreement
59 Andean animal
63 Predicament

Grid for the crossword puzzle with numbers 1-71.

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- 64 Profitable venture
5 Put into words
6 Swollen
7 Tonsil neighbor
8 "Do you ___?"
9 Packing a punch
10 Dots on a map
11 Annoyance
12 Like many signers
13 Get a look at
18 Mineral salt
22 Diner offerings
24 Preschooler
26 Stockholm native
27 Flowing tresses
28 Direct opposite
30 Racetrack ratio
32 Nostalgic style
33 Fishing basket
36 Emerald
38 Higher court
40 Likeness
42 "NFL Live" carrier
45 Uses, as energy
49 Scribe
51 Control spot
53 Retract, as words
55 "Skyfall" singer
56 Actor Epps
57 Cancún coin
58 Bygone bird
60 Like, with "to"
61 Pinochle play
62 Star anagram
65 Cry of triumph

DOWN

- 1 Barracks bed
2 Soon, to a bard
3 Place to wait
4 Erikson and Vespucci, e.g.

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