

# The Paper.

FREE

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ALBUQUERQUE'S INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWS



Cover by Rachel Mills

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# The Paper.

ALBUQUERQUE'S INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWS

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By Elise Kaplan, Searchlight New Mexico

On a recent morning, a busy thoroughfare near the Albuquerque International Sunport was a classic neighborhood picture of young mothers pushing strollers, exuberant elementary-age kids, and sleepy teenagers, all emerging from an airport hotel-turned-homeless shelter on their way to school.

Andrea Delgado stood on the sidewalk, watching from afar to avoid a preteen eye roll, as her 12-year-old daughter crossed the street to wait for the school bus. The mother and daughter were among 47 families living in the Family Housing Navigation Center — the one-time hotel that the city of Albuquerque now leases as a homeless shelter for parents and children.

For Delgado, 38, the center was a godsend. She and Eugenia (her daughter's middle name) had bounced around ever since losing their apartment a couple of years ago, even spending three weeks living out of a truck this past summer during the hottest days of the year.

Last year was especially difficult. Eugenia slept on a couch at a relative's house and often refused to go to school or even answer the door when her mother arrived to take her. On the days that she actually went, she frequently called her mother soon after the first bell rang, pleading to be picked up and taken out. Delgado figures she probably missed up to five months of school altogether.

After spending almost a year with the relative, Eugenia returned to her mother, who was living in a Chevy pickup truck next to a park in a fringy Northeast Albuquerque neighborhood. Delgado slept in the front, with Eugenia in the back seat on a pile of blankets and bags. The two frequently heard gunshots; they assumed that any possession left in the truck bed would be stolen. For a while, their Chihuahua, Frijole, kept them company, but even that became too much and a cousin soon took him in.

The Albuquerque Public Schools district has identified about 5.2 percent of its 70,447 students as homeless, according to Cristal Wilson, director of the McKinney-Vento program for APS. But she suspects many more students haven't yet been identified.

The McKinney-Vento program serves kids who couch surf and “double up” — multiple families living under one roof — as well as students living in shelters, motels, vehicles and substandard housing.

Eugenia has experienced nearly every one of these scenarios.

The seventh grader, who's skinny with long dark hair, is reluctant to talk much about her last year, except to say it was “boring,” with a shy smile. When asked what her favorite subject is, she mumbles, “Nothing.”

#### A mother's struggle

Her mother has also been through a lot. When Delgado was in fourth grade, her younger siblings were taken into state custody, a fate she only avoided because she was already living with her grandmother. At age 13, she moved in with a boyfriend; by 15, she was pregnant. She's since earned a GED and found work as a certified nursing assistant. But when her husband, Eugenia's father, died in 2021, it sent her into a tailspin that she is only beginning to

## From Cars and Couches to Safe Havens for the Homeless

*Dozens of families are living at a transformed hotel in Albuquerque, where the unhoused can find refuge and their kids have room to thrive.*



Andrea Delgado in the pickup truck she once lived in with her family. (Nadav Soroker/Searchlight New Mexico)

pull out of. She has also been diagnosed with ovarian cancer, is often in pain and is awaiting surgery.

Advocates for the homeless say education is one of the most powerful tools in breaking a cycle that otherwise can last for generations. Parents who lack education are more likely to be impoverished. And the impacts of homelessness affect children almost at birth: Early childhood educators cite developmental delays in young children who struggle to learn to walk or crawl in a car or shelter, where there isn't space to toddle around. Older children typically perform poorly on tests, are less likely to graduate and log the highest rates of chronic absenteeism among their peers.

The New Mexico Public Education Department found that 61 percent of students who experienced housing insecurity last year were chronically absent, far outstripping any other demographic. That finding is consistent with a large body of national research.

For instance, a nine-year study of homeless students in Los Angeles found that they missed more days of school than their peers. The 2020 study, published by researchers at the University of Southern California, concluded that the negative impacts of instability and trauma could recede once a family regained stable housing.

Delgado hopes this will be true for Eugenia. When they moved from their truck into the family homeless shelter this past summer, caseworkers helped Delgado enroll Eugenia in a new school, Wilson Middle School, where at one point last year almost 8 percent of the students were identified as homeless.

Now, Delgado said, her daughter “won't miss one day. I told her that in order for us to stay here and have a place to live...she has to go to school every day.”

Eugenia, for her part, allows that she enjoys playing basketball at Wilson and has made some friends.

Still, things are not perfect. Eugenia's grades are low and Delgado said she is often late for class and has a hard time following rules. She has been sent to detention and occasionally misses her bus.

“Now that she's back with me, we bump heads,” Delgado said. “Because that time away from your kids, you don't really know what their favorite color is or what they like to eat anymore. They outgrow stuff.”

#### Hunger, stress and homelessness

On a recent day, there were 75 children — 15 of them under the age of 2 — staying at the Family Housing Navigation Center with one or both parents. Among them was a rambunctious toddler and her 20-year-old mother; a newborn named Scout (named after the main character in “To Kill a Mockingbird”) and her 39-year-old mother; and Nicole Anaya, 31, and her three children, who'd spent the previous month sleeping on the floor of a South Valley homeless shelter.

Anaya's path to homelessness began soon after the pandemic, when her mother, a political organizer, died of a heart attack. Her father died soon after from Covid-19. She and her kids spent months with her brother in Las Vegas, Nevada, before returning to New Mexico. They stayed with her ex and his family in Edgewood for a bit before winding up in various shelters across Albuquerque.

In September, Anaya was able to secure a single room at the Navigation Center, with two double beds, a mini fridge and a microwave. After her 10-year-old son was diagnosed with diabetes, Anaya decided to enroll him and his 12-year-old sister in an online school. Most days, the siblings sit on the beds, using computers and a shared hotspot to do their online work. They can also use a conference

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



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room off the hotel lobby.  
“I just think it’s too hard for them to go back (to in-person schooling) after missing so much, and then to keep up,” Anaya said. “It was just too hard being homeless, taking them to school.”

Solid ground harder to reach

A federal law called the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act mandates that all students have access to an education, even if they lack a “fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.” The goal of the 1987 law is to provide rights and services to children — including transportation to and from school — so that they have a “full and equal opportunity” to succeed in the classroom.  
But as the pandemic has waned, the cost of housing and food has increased. Wilson, with APS, said she’s seeing families needing more and more time to get back on solid ground. She said her team roams the streets looking for families who are experiencing homelessness — offering to enroll their children in school and providing food, clothing and anything else they might need to remove barriers to attending school.  
“I will tell you that the majority of the team that I work with, and myself as well, we have lived experiences with that extreme side of things, whether we’ve experienced homelessness, extreme poverty, displacement or barriers,” said Wilson, who works down the street from the Navigation Center. “We’ve all

seen that systems and services make a huge difference in the lives of our students.”  
While Wilson said her team has gotten better at identifying children who are living in unstable housing — quickly making contact and providing resources — other districts lag behind, a problem that plagues many areas nationwide.  
Currently, 32 of the more than 180 school districts and charter schools in New Mexico have failed to identify a single homeless student — a fact that should be a “red flag,” according to Dana Malone, the state’s Public Education Department (PED) coordinator for the education of homeless children and youth.  
Many schools in the state are rural, she notes. “They might not think that they have ‘those kinds of students,’ but we know from our own youth risk and resiliency survey that rural communities are more likely to have homelessness than urban communities,” she said.  
The number of students who have been identified as homeless across the state has hovered between about 10,000 and 12,000 over the past dozen years — except for a decrease at the start of the pandemic, according to PED. Administrators suspect that the decline was due to the fact that fewer homeless children attended school at all.  
“A lot of our students didn’t have adults with them to help make good decisions, and maybe they didn’t even have the connection to the school, or internet service,” said Malone. “Those were the kids that were easy to fall through the cracks.”

**Out of the shelter, into a home**  
In mid-November, after almost four months of living in the Family Housing Navigation Center, Andrea Delgado and her daughter moved into their own apartment, with a carpeted spiral staircase leading up to a loft that Eugenia claimed as her own. The space was empty, but within a couple of days a cousin dropped off a Keurig coffee maker as a housewarming gift. Best of all, their Chihuahua, Frijole, was back in the fold.  
The city says their rent will be paid for up to eight years, thanks to a permanent supportive housing voucher arranged by caseworkers at the Navigation Center. The apartment is close enough to school for Eugenia to walk there.  
After a chaotic couple of years, Delgado has noticed changes in her daughter that trouble her. Before, if you were to buy her a bag of chips, she would eat the whole bag within 20 minutes of leaving the store, she said. “Now she conserves her food.”  
It’s the kind of thing that most people don’t understand.  
“You find out who you truly are as a human being and you see who actually does care and support you throughout something like this,” Delgado said. “Everybody turns the page on you because they all assume the worst. It’s like no one has time to actually listen.”  
*Searchlight New Mexico is a nonpartisan, nonprofit news organization dedicated to investigative reporting in New Mexico.*

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Nutcracker in the Land of Enchantment

December is traditionally stuffed to the stockings with productions of The Nutcracker ballet. This year you can catch versions at KiMo Theater, the Kiva Auditorium and the Clyde Hotel. But if you want your Tchaikovsky served with a bit of New Mexico flavor, check out **Nutcracker in the Land of Enchantment** at National Hispanic Cultural Center (1701 Fourth St. SW). Festival Ballet Albuquerque transports the beloved holiday classic to territorial New Mexico in the late 1800s, with added elements of the state's heritage and traditions including Spanish dancers, Southwestern animals, a lively fandango and lavish Victorian-era costumes. This year's 13th anniversary performance even features a special appearance by Zozobra! It happens **Friday and Saturday, Dec. 15 and 16 at 7pm** and **Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 16 and 17 at 2pm**. Tickets run \$14 to \$47 and can be reserved at [nhccnm.org/event/nutcracker-ballet-land-enchantment/](http://nhccnm.org/event/nutcracker-ballet-land-enchantment/).

Thursday, December 14

Class / Workshop

Beginning Square Dance Classes (18 weeks) \$120 All Day 4915 Hawkins St NE 4915 Hawkins Street Northeast

Comedy

Trivia Mafia 7-9 pm Lizard Tail Industrial 3351 Columbia Dr. NE

Community

Winter Wonderland NM \$49 6-9 pm EXPO New Mexico 300 San Pedro Dr NE

Dance

Friday Night Square Dancing 7 - 9 PM Fridays Albuquerque Square Dance Center 4915 Hawkins St NE

Drink

Geeks Who Drink Trivia Night at Boese Brothers Brewpub (NE Heights) 7-9 pm Boese Brothers Brewpub NE Heights 7849 Tramway Blvd, Suite C

Geeks Who Drink Trivia Night at Sunday Service Motor Company 7-9 pm Sunday Service Motor Company 2701 4th Street NW

Festival

Pueblo Gingerbread Experience All Day Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th St. NW

Games

Trivia For a Cause: Harry Potter \$25 6-8 pm Bosque Brewing Heights Public House 5210 Eubank Blvd. NE

Literature/Poetry

Voices of the Barrio: Jesus Lucero 6:30-8:30 pm El Chante: Casa De Cultura 804 Park Ave SW

Miscellaneous

River of Lights \$7-\$17 5-10 pm ABQ BioPark Botanic Garden 2601 Central Ave NW

Trivia Night 7-9 pm Lizard Tail Brewing Nob Hill 3417 Central Ave. NE Suite C

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Sat Dec 16 1:00pm

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Sat Dec 16 10:30pm

Sofia Coppola's **PRISCILLA**  
Tue–Fri Dec 19–22 3:00, 8:00pm

Encores! **JOAN BAEZ: I AM A NOISE**  
Tue–Fri Dec 19–22 5:30pm

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# La Estrella

**A Flamenco Story of The Kings' Quest**

Friday, December 15 | 7:00 pm  
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Sunday, December 17 | 2:00 pm

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Upside Holiday Social \$5 6-9 pm  
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Music

Alex Maryol 7-9 pm Tractor Brewing Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE  
Candlelight: Holiday Special Featuring "The Nutcracker" and More \$31 7-11 pm The Clyde Hotel 330 Tijeras Avenue Northwest

Eem Tripplin - Still Pretty Tour \$20-\$120 8-11 pm Sunshine Theater 120 Central Ave SW

L'uomo Nero Trilogy Album Release Show \$5 8 pm-12 am Launchpad 618 Central Avenue Southwest

Latin Night 8:30-11:45 pm JUNO brewery + cafe + art 1501 1st Street Northwest

Live Mic Karaoke 7:30-11:30 pm Lizard Tail Brewing 9800 Montgomery Blvd NE STE 7

Music on the Patio: The Porter Draw 6-9 pm Canteen Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road Northeast

Open Mic Karaoke 7-10 pm on Wednesdays Lizard Tail Brewing Nob Hill 3417 Central Ave. NE Suite C

The Lineage Trio \$25-\$30 7:30-9:30 pm Outpost Performance Space 210 Yale Blvd., SE

Friday, December 15

Comedy

The Show - Live Comedy Improv \$12 8-9 pm The Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave SW

Community

Christmas IS For Kids 6-9:30 pm Hollow Spirits 1324 1st ST NW

IndigiMixer 1-5 pm Lobo Rainforest Building 101 Broadway Blvd NE

Winter Wonderland NM \$49 6:00pm to 10:00pm EXPO New Mexico 300 San Pedro Dr NE

Dance

La Estrella: A Flamenco Journey of the Kings' Quest \$35-\$65 7-9 pm Rodey Theatre 1 University of New Mexico

Nutcracker in the Land of Enchantment \$14-\$49 7-9 pm National Hispanic Cultural Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

Tablao Flamenco Albuquerque Dinner Show \$75-\$85 7-10 pm Hotel Albuquerque 800 Rio Grande Blvd NW

Film

New Mexico Film Holiday Gala \$0-\$1000 6-10 pm Revel Entertainment Center 4720 Alexander Blvd NE

iNEPT CINEMA! A night of live audio visual electronics \$10 10:30 pm-12 am Guild Cinema 3405 Central Ave NE

Markets

Auntie's Night Out Holiday Party 7-11 pm Tractor Brewing Wells Park 1800 Fourth St. NW

Miscellaneous

River of Lights \$7-\$17 5-10 pm ABQ BioPark Botanic Garden 2601 Central Ave NW

Music

Candlelight: Holiday Special Featuring "The Nutcracker" and More \$31 7-11 pm The Clyde Hotel 330 Tijeras Avenue Northwest

Coffin Club w/ DJ Batboy 8-11 pm Revel Entertainment Center 4720 Alexander Blvd NE

Josh Hyde & The Slappers \$10 8:30 pm-12:30 am Launchpad 618 Central Avenue Southwest

Mr. Bill \$10 9 pm-2 am Effex NightClub 420 Central Avenue Southwest

NMDM 9th Annual Brutal Christmas Drive \$8 8:30 pm-12 am Moonlight Lounge 120 Central Ave SW

Return of the 90s (Dance/DJ Night) 8-11 pm JUNO brewery + cafe + art 1501 1st Street Northwest

Music - Classical

Coffee Concert 2: Part Bach, Part Part \$27-\$48 10:30 am-12 pm South Broadway Cultural Center 1025 Broadway Blvd SE

Outdoors

Luminaria Viewing 6-9 pm Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge 7851 2nd St SW

Performance

All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914 \$24-\$35 7:30-9:30 pm North Fourth Art Center 4904 4th St NW

Mariachi Christmas \$25-\$65 7:30-9:30 pm Popejoy Hall 203 Cornell Dr



Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley \$20-\$24 7:30 pm  
Adobe Theater 9813 4th St NW

Tablao Flamenco Albuquerque 6:15-7:30 pm Hotel Albuquerque 800 Rio Grande Blvd NW

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever \$20-\$25 7:30-9:30 pm  
Albuquerque Little Theatre 224 San Pasquale Ave SW

The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley \$19-\$24 7:30-9:30 pm  
Vortex Theatre 2900 Carlisle Blvd NE

Saturday, December 16

Class / Workshop

Wine, Cider and Mead Making Class \$15 1-3 pm Southwest Grape & Grain 3401 Candelaria Rd, NE suite e/g

Comedy

The Show - Live Comedy Improv \$12 8-9 pm The Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave SW

Community

Stories by the Fireside 5-7 pm  
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

WINTER SOUL-stice Community Day 2-8 pm  
Hiland Theater—NDI New Mexico 4800 Central Ave SE

Dance

La Estrella: A Flamenco Journey of the Kings' Quest \$35-\$65 7-9 pm  
Rodey Theatre 1 University of New Mexico

Nutcracker in the Land of Enchantment \$14-\$49 7-9 pm  
National Hispanic Cultural Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

Nutcracker in the Land of Enchantment \$20-\$49 2-4 pm  
National Hispanic Cultural Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

Sky City Buffalo Ram Dancers (Acoma) 12-1 pm  
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Tablao Flamenco Albuquerque Dinner Show \$75-\$85 7-10 pm  
Hotel Albuquerque 800 Rio Grande Blvd NW

The Nutcracker \$22-\$30 7-9 pm  
KiMo Theatre 423 Central Avenue NW

The Nutcracker \$22-\$30 2-4 pm  
KiMo Theatre 423 Central Avenue NW

Discussion / Lecture

Joseph Badal Book Signing 1:30-3:30 pm  
Treasure House Books & Gifts 2012 S Plaza St NW A

Festival

9th Annual Humble Holiday Market 2023 \$5 10 am-4 pm  
Humble Coffee 4200 Lomas Blvd NE

BeMySecret x GearHeadSociety Cars & Anime Con \$20-\$35 10 am-5 pm  
EXPO New Mexico 300 San Pedro Dr NE

Food

Food & Flower Christmas Party \$70 6-10 pm  
Herban Oasis Apothecary & O Lounge 2308 Eubank Blvd. NE

Old Town Cookie Crawl \$5 11 am-4 pm  
Old Town Albuquerque 2005 N. Plaza St. NW  
Albuquerque

Games

YASSSSmas Drag Queen Bingo 7-9 pm  
Tractor Brewing Wells Park 1800 Fourth St. NW

Markets

El Vado Jolly Holiday Market 12-5 pm  
Osuna Nursery 501 Osuna Rd. NE

Holiday Market at Boxing Bear 11 am-4 pm  
Boxing Bear Brewing Co. (Firestone Taproom and Brewery) 8420 Firestone Lane NE

Suenos Coffee Christmas Market 11 am-2 pm  
Suenos Coffee Co. 101 Broadway Blvd. NE

Miscellaneous

Plants & Pups: Holiday Lap Dog Rescue Adoption Event 11 am-1 pm  
Osuna Nursery 501 Osuna Rd. NE

River of Lights \$7-\$17 5-10 pm  
ABQ BioPark Botanic Garden 2601 Central Ave NW

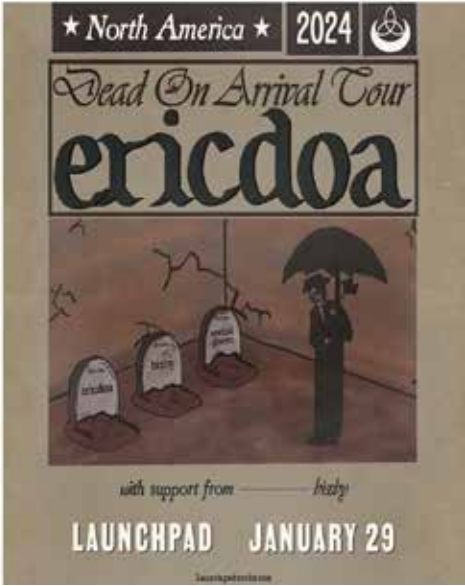
Music

A Winter's Evening with Ryanhood \$18-\$23 7:30-9:30 pm  
FUSION Theater 708 1st St. NW

AMP Concerts Presents A Winter's Evening with Ryanhood \$18-\$23 7:30-11 pm  
FUSION Theater 708 1st St. NW

BOB 2nd Annual Christmas Party/Toy Drive \$10-\$15 7 pm-12 am  
Bama's 1865 6001 Osuna Rd. NE

Beer & Jazz on the Hill 7-9 pm  
Tractor Brewing Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE







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Northwest

December Sparks 8 pm-12 am  
Lizard Tail Brewing Nob Hill  
3417 Central Ave. NE Suite C

Living Legends & Brother Ali:  
How the Grouch Stole Christmas  
Tour 2023 \$32 8 pm-12 am  
Historic El Rey Theatre 622  
Central Ave SW

L'uomo Nero 6-9 pm High and  
Dry Brewing 529 Adams St. NE

New MexiChords Holiday  
Concert 2-4 pm St Johns United  
Methodist Church 2626 Arizona  
NE

Noise for Toys 2023 \$15 4-11:45  
pm Juno 1501 1st St NW

Strange Mix 8-11 pm Moonlight  
Lounge 120 Central Ave SW

Wendy Rule 1-3 pm Taylor  
Ranch Library 5700 Bogart NW  
, 87120

Winter Reggae Bashment: Dre-Z  
Melodi Album Rising Release \$10  
8:30-11:30 pm Launchpad 618  
Central Avenue Southwest

Performance

All is Calm: The Christmas Truce  
of 1914 \$24-\$35 7:30-9:30 pm  
North Fourth Art Center 4904  
4th St NW

Miss Bennet: Christmas at  
Pemberley \$20-\$24 7:30 pm  
Adobe Theater 9813 4th St NW

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6:15-7:30 pm Hotel Albuquerque  
800 Rio Grande Blvd NW

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever  
\$20-\$25 2-4 pm Albuquerque  
Little Theatre 224 San Pasquale  
Ave SW

The Best Christmas Pageant  
Ever \$20-\$25 7:30-9:30 pm  
Albuquerque Little Theatre 224  
San Pasquale Ave SW

The Wickhams: Christmas at  
Pemberley \$19-\$24 7:30-9:30  
pm Vortex Theatre 2900 Carlisle  
Blvd NE

Sunday, December 17

Comedy

Brain Gang Trivia 12-2 pm  
Lizard Tail Brewing 9800  
Montgomery Blvd NE STE 7

Community

The Historic Lobo Theater’s  
Pajama Brunch and a Movie! \$10  
10 am-2 pm The Historic Lobo  
Theater - Lounge & Event Venue  
3013 Central Ave NE

Winter Wonderland NM \$49 6-9

pm EXPO New Mexico 300 San  
Pedro Dr NE

Dance

La Estrella: A Flamenco Journey  
of the Kings’ Quest \$35-\$65 2-4  
pm Rodey Theatre 1 University  
of New Mexico

Nutcracker in the Land of  
Enchantment \$14-\$49 7-9 pm  
National Hispanic Cultural  
Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

Nutcracker in the Land of  
Enchantment \$20-\$49 2-4 pm  
National Hispanic Cultural  
Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

Sky City Buffalo Ram Dancers  
(Acoma) 12-1 pm Indian Pueblo  
Cultural Center 2401 12th Street  
NW

The Nutcracker \$22-\$30 2-4  
pm KiMo Theatre 423 Central  
Avenue NW

Drink

Geeks Who Drink Trivia Night at  
Tractor Brewing Wells Park 7-9  
pm Tractor Brewing Wells Park  
1800 Fourth St. NW

Festival

BeMySecret x GearHeadSociety  
Cars & Anime Con \$20-\$35 10  
am-5 pm EXPO New Mexico 300  
San Pedro Dr NE

Food

Holiday Brunch & Libations \$25  
10 am-12 pm M’tucci’s Bar Roma  
Restaurant 3222 Central Ave. SE

Old Town Cookie Crawl \$5 11  
am-4 pm Old Town Albuquerque  
2005 N. Plaza St. NW  
Albuquerque

Ugly Sweater Brunch 10 am-3  
pm Damacios Bar & Tapas 722  
Central Ave. SW

Markets

2nd Annual Merry Mingle and  
Holiday Jingle 12-4 pm Canteen  
Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road  
Northeast

Amaya Productions Presents  
Shimmy Shake Market \$10-\$12  
1-4 pm FUSION Theater 708 1st  
St. NW

Shop & Sip Holiday Market 2-6  
pm Bosque Brewing Co. Nob Hill  
Public House 106 Girard Blvd.  
SE B

Miscellaneous

River of Lights \$7-\$17 5-10 pm  
ABQ BioPark Botanic Garden  
2601 Central Ave NW

Music

Bagels and Jazz \$10 10:30 am-  
12:30 pm Jewish Community  
Center of Greater Albuquerque  
5520 Wyoming Boulevard NE



## Letters to the Editor

### War, What is it Good For?

How would we feel about a neighbor who MURDERS a neighbor child or your child? How would we feel about people who pay the neighbor to MURDER the kids? How can the U.S. send billions of dollars to Ukraine to kill Russian soldiers while the U.S. sends billions of dollars to Israel for their soldiers to MURDER far more Palestinian children in two months than Russia ever MURDERED in so short a time? Why is Russia's MURDER of Ukrainian children EVIL but Israel's MURDER of Palestinian children paid for with billions of U.S. dollars? Their blood is on our hands if we are silent!

Imagine how those MANY billions of U.S. dollars could provide all U.S. homeless people who want shelter to have a small, simple place. Over 500,000 people in the U.S. are now homeless. I voted for Biden in 2020, but I will NOT vote for Biden or anyone for Congress who refuses to demand Israel STOP NOW making HELL in Gaza. I will NOT vote for Biden or the lying dictator Trump in 2024 if they are the candidates and if I am alive.

I have paid NO federal income tax for 44 years. One third to ½ of federal income tax goes for U.S. WARS — past, present and future. I REFUSE to pay for U.S. MURDERS of MILLIONS in MANY nations for decades under BOTH Republican and Democrat presidents.

-Don Schrader, Albuquerque resident

### Think of the Kids

For more than a dozen generations, my ancestors have called New Mexico home. There is no other place with such incredible landscapes and beautiful sunrises and sunsets. Truly the Land of Enchantment. However, I worry about what the future holds. I am a health-conscious, environmentally-minded person with elementary-aged children, one of whom developed asthma living in Southern NM's poor air quality.

You'd be surprised to know that it's not just heavy vehicle pollution impacting my daughter's health, but living downwind from the Permian oil boom. The problem is growing rapidly, half of all onshore O&G leases issued nationally under Biden have been in the Permian.

For kids like my daughter, this is urgent. Her symptoms improve dramatically when we travel. It's hard telling a kid they can't read or play in the backyard on bad air-quality days, that where we live is hurting her health. Not to mention those who have traditional swamp coolers instead of central air, have to live with dirty air being pulled indoors to cool their homes, causing some to feel like they are suffocating in their own home, constantly smelling fumes, suffering from headaches or nose bleeds. Enforcing state and new federal rules will be critical in ensuring our communities' air gets cleaned up so we can all live healthier, fuller lives.

Air pollution knows no boundaries. The new federal rules will improve life

for communities bordering states lacking protections, like Texas. A recent report from IEA found it would cost industry just 2 percent of gross profits to retrofit all equipment nationwide to leak and emit less climate and health-harming pollutants. With year-over-year record profits, the time is now for industry to step up and protect communities from the social costs of business as usual. My daughter and I say action can't come soon enough.

-Antoinette Reyes, organizer with the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club

### Just Say No to Nixing Rewards

New Mexico's tourism economy brings millions of dollars—and thousands of people—to our state each year. But a bill before the U.S. Senate could jeopardize that.

At first glance, the Credit Card Competition Act is an arcane bill that deals with interchange fees and payment networks, but it will actually have a huge impact on our state—and small businesses like mine.

In tinkering with the credit-card payment processing system, the CCCA will do away with credit-card rewards programs, including points programs—an important part of how middle-class families pay for discretionary travel.

The impact would be huge. In 2022, 85,332 air passengers arriving in New Mexico purchased their tickets using points, miles and rewards, according to data from Airlines for America, the trade association of U.S. airlines. Between direct spending and tax revenues, those travelers generated a combined \$114.6 million while visiting, and supported more than 1,000 jobs. New Mexico has benefitted from credit-card points programs with higher airport passenger traffic, hotel bookings, restaurant patronage, and local retail spending.

How do we know the impact of the CCCA will be so bleak? Experience. After Congress passed a similar debit-card bill in 2010, debit card rewards programs all but vanished. In Australia, when their Reserve Bank imposed similar regulations on credit cards, rewards-card fees skyrocketed and diminished the value of rewards points. There's no guesswork here. Passing the CCCA will end credit-card rewards and dry up a key source of New Mexico's tourism revenue.

Like many of my fellow tourism-based small-business owners, I started my business because I love my state. I'm proud of the thriving arts, culinary and, especially, craft-brewing communities thriving here. With New Mexico constantly at the bottom of so many lists, it's exciting to see our state recognized as a top tourism destination. Our local breweries have been winning international awards for outstanding local beers. I love the reaction of the out-of-state clients who come on my tours when they not only realize what our breweries have to offer, but also when they tell me,

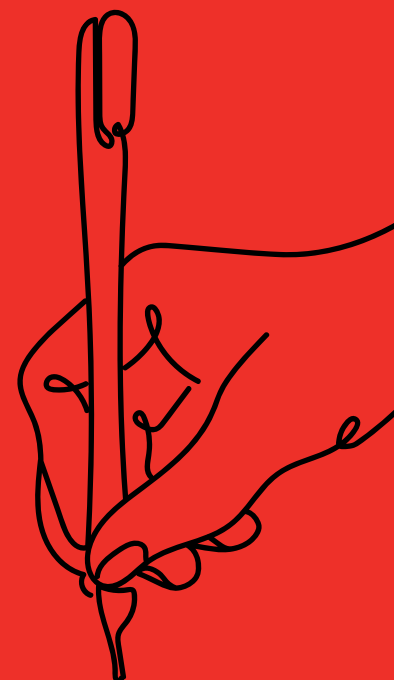
with great enthusiasm, about the amazing sites they've already seen. Many of the people who come through my tours are first-time visitors to New Mexico, but they talk about coming back to see and do even more. Rewards points make it easy for first-time visitors to come to our state; all that New Mexico has to offer makes them want to come back. Our tourism economy is a success story we can all be proud of.

With the year-end crush of bills coming through the U.S. Senate and further prospects for congressional action on the Credit Card Competition Act in 2024, I urge Sen. Martin Heinrich and Sen. Ben Ray Lujan to continue their records as advocates for New Mexico's tourism industry and oppose this dangerous bill. Small businesses like mine depend on a robust tourism economy. For the good of small businesses around the state, the U.S. Senate must say no to the Credit Card Competition Act.

-Gordon Monaghan, President and Chief Beer Guide of ABQ Beer Tours.

# The Paper.

## Have something to tell us?



## Send us your letters

editor@abq.news



# Last Minute Gift Guide

*'Tis the season to get in a tizzy and scramble for the perfect presents*

By Andy Lyman, The Paper.

We've all been there: Despite every ounce of good intentions to make *this year* different, those dang holidays are already right around the corner and there's still a list of loved ones, sans presents.

Luckily, we've got a handy-dandy last-minute gift guide, which *may* have been filed at the last minute. Since we're big fans of shopping locally, we wanted to offer up some classic local spots that feature online ordering for those who really don't have a moment for leisurely shopping. We've also curated some local businesses that offer gift cards, since everyone has that one uncle who buys himself everything he wants, leaving the rest of the family scratching their heads. Also included are some bonus ideas for a day or night out with those hard-to-shop-for friends and family.

## Online Shopping

We're not saying you have to get the rest of your gifts online, but it sure makes things a lot easier. Sure, you can try snagging something from that big shopping website that must not be named, but we all know how good it feels to support a local business.

### Albuquerque Dukes Store

[Abqdukes.com](http://Abqdukes.com)

Even if you don't remember the Albuquerque Dukes, someone on your list probably does, and there's a good chance they would be stoked to get some gear with Mike Piazza donning a Dukes uniform. The Dukes store also has a bunch of Lobo gear for those college sports fans in your life. According to their website, online orders can usually be picked up at the store within about 24 hours of your purchase. But if you want to

roll the dice on getting something shipped to your home in time, they do that too.

3500 Central Ave. SE 8  
(505)255-0219

### Buffett's Candies

[Buffettscandies.com](http://Buffettscandies.com)

This iconic and local candy shop has been around for generations, and it seems they've got more than enough choices for each decade they've been satiating Albuquerque's collective sweet tooth. Buffett's will ship their themed gift sets, but it's also worth popping in when you have the time in order to truly appreciate what they offer.

7001 Lomas Blvd. NE  
(505)265-7731

### Desert Rose Trading Outlet Store

[www.desertrosedirect.com](http://www.desertrosedirect.com)

Desert Rose has you covered for reasonably priced, New Mexico-inspired jewelry. Nothing beats seeing earrings and necklaces in person, but that's not always in the cards. Check out their ongoing sales and deals as well as free shipping for some orders.

8001 Wyoming Blvd. NE b-5  
(505)821-6723

### Fly By Provisions

[flybyprovisions.com](http://flybyprovisions.com)

It's hard to go wrong with New Mexico-themed baskets, especially for those kids you just shipped off to college or those loved ones who ditched town and need a reminder of what they're missing. Fly By Provisions' curated baskets each have a theme of sorts, including Taste of New Mexico, Los Poblanos and Lavender Love. But they also have baskets for those who already live within arm's reach of New Mexico's bounties such as the Missing You Gift Box, the Slow Down and the Tarot Card Gift Box. You can always pop by in person and put together your own unique box too.

201 Coal Ave. SW  
(505) 525-5494

### Good Company NM

[goodcompanynm.com](http://goodcompanynm.com)

We discovered this Burque-centric retailer on the local craft fair circuit this year and, boy, did they ever tap into the essence of living in the city. Their physical store shouldn't be overlooked, but they definitely have a bounty of cool apparel available online. Their gear is perfect for anyone who's proud to rep Albuquerque, but it's also a good choice for that one *carnale* who moved away and just hasn't figured out they're eventually coming back.

2117 Central Ave. NW A-3  
(505)800-4663

### New Mexico Piñon Coffee

[nmpinoncoffee.com](http://nmpinoncoffee.com)

If you've been around long enough, you'll probably recognize this company's notable labels from your neighborhood grocery store and the distinct smell of coffee and piñon from your kitchen. You may not be aware, though, that this decades-old coffee roaster has expanded its inventory to include roasting equipment such as grinders, presses and pour-over rigs. If turning your kitchen into a coffee bar is more your speed, they've also got pods for those fancy single-cup machines and flavored syrups to up your at-home coffee experience.

2420 Comanche Road NE D2  
(505)298-1964

### Remedy Day Spa

[theremedydayspa.com](http://theremedydayspa.com)

Let's be real: This time of the year, regardless of cultural and religious backgrounds, can really wear down even the most mindful and present of all of us. Sure, maybe a good soak and a round of yoga is the ideal gift for that tightly wound friend or relative. But maybe it's you, dear reader, who deserves a special spa day. Go ahead, book some time for yourself. If anyone asks, tell them *The Paper*. said it was cool.

113 Vassar Drive SE  
(505)265-9219

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**Worth Leaving Home For**

Sure, finishing all of your holiday shopping with some strokes on the keyboard and some clicks of the mouse is cool and all, but sometimes you just have to “get down from the car” to find the perfect present. Go on, get some fresh air, make eye contact with someone. It’s good for you.

**Blake’s Lotaburger****lotaburger.com**

Look, we’re not going to take up the space necessary to list every single Blake’s location. We’re also not going to try and sell folks on this iconic burger joint’s perfectly thin patties that don’t require unhinging of jaws to eat. We won’t waste your time selling you on their seasonal shakes, perfectly cooked fries or their underrated Frito Pie. As the kids say: IYKYK. We’re not suggesting you throw a bag of fast food under the tree this year, but you do you. We are suggesting, though, that a Blake’s gift card might be the perfect way to say you care.

**Jubilation****jubilationswines.com**

If there were such a thing as a booze scavenger hunt, this is where we would set up camp. Yeah, we know, there’s a big chain store in the center of town, but Jubilation is the classic neighborhood shop where you can easily find an employee who can advise you on the perfect bottle to bring to a holiday party or which peaty Scotch is the best choice to impress that aficionado uncle of yours.

512 Lomas Blvd. NE  
(505)255-4404

**The Next Best Thing to Being There****beingthereabq.com**

The name nearly says it all. This quaint, Old Town-adjacent shop offers finds from all over the globe, without the requirement of a passport. Originally planned as a puppet shop, the store now has fun imports for hard-to-shop-for worldly travelers.

1315 Mountain Road NW  
(505) 433-3204

**Experiences To Share (As In: Make a Date with Someone)**

Sometimes you just have to bust out the construction paper and glitter in order to make that special homemade gift certificate, promising a special night out with that special someone. There are a few places on our list this

year that are really more about an experience to share. The key is you have to actually follow through.

**Guild Cinema****guildcinema.com**

We’re going to let you in on a secret only Guild regulars know: They use real butter on their popcorn. If that’s not enough to spur a night out with that special someone, maybe the unique list of films this iconic theater offers will. Folks of a certain age will appreciate the nostalgia of showing up early and lining up to get the best seat and getting an old-school ticket before plopping down for an indie film.

3405 Central Ave NE  
(505)255-1848

**Lobo Theatre****loboabq.com**

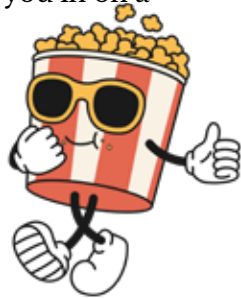
Remember before the internet when the historic Lobo Theater used to show all those cool movies? Well, the Lobo is back at it with some modern updates such as online ticket sales and dinner or brunch and a movie. Tacos paired with the classic Christmas story of John McClane saving the Nakatomi Plaza, all while barefoot? Count us in. The theater has started hosting concerts for those who are more inclined to catch a live show.

3013 Central Ave. NE  
(505)876-7176

**Restaurant Forty Nine Forty and Fancies Bakery, Market & Cafe****fanciescorrales.com**

Nothing says, “You’re special to me” like a fancy brunch in Corrales. OK, a lot does, but you get the drift. This gem, just several minutes out of town, offers breakfast, brunch, lunch and dinner menus that are the perfect experience to share with someone. Maybe consider offering to be the clear-eyed driver for the night so your date can enjoy a couple craft cocktails such as the Caribbean White Christmas.


4940 Corrales Road #400  
Corrales, NM 87048  
(505)554-3850



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**Theobroma Chocolatier**  
12611 Montgomery Blvd  
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info@theobromachocolatier.com





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**GALLERY GUIDE**

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## Feds Drag Feet On Marijuana

*Feds blow report deadline*

By Josh Lee, The Paper

Two federal agencies have failed to deliver cannabis reports that were due to Congress. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) did not deliver its report on cannabis research barriers that was due in November, and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) just missed a deadline last week to deliver a report on weed's potential as a medicine.

The DOT report is supposed to analyze research barriers holding up progress on the development of a standardized roadside marijuana test. It was ordered in 2021 when President Joe Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

The sweeping law funnels money into projects to rebuild roads, bridges and rails, expand access to clean drinking water, introduce universal access to high-speed internet, advance environmental justice policies and invest in low-income communities.

Included in the infrastructure bill was a provision requiring the DOT to work with the U.S. attorney general and the HHS to develop the report, which is supposed to give recommendations to Congress for policies that make it easier for scientists to research retail-level marijuana that is actually sold in dispensaries.

Until recently, researchers were limited to studying weed that was produced at the University of Mississippi under the watchful eye of the federal government. The samples produced at the university are infamously subpar compared to dispensary products and even those found on the black market. That means all previous research that used these samples is unreliable at best and flat out wrong at worst. Finding a standardized roadside test for cannabis impairment should theoretically be much easier if researchers gain access to samples that better represent real-world samples.

Sen. John Hickenlooper (D-CO) sent a letter last year to DOT's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) calling the report a "critical first step," and asking for an update on the report's progress.

"Due to the statutory classification of marijuana as a controlled substance,

federal researchers face barriers not only to evaluating marijuana's effects on a driver's performance, but also in developing tests to accurately detect the amount of THC in a driver's body or determine a THC impairment level," Hickenlooper wrote.

It's unclear if the agency ever answered the inquiry.

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg was supposed to make the policy recommendations in November—two years after the infrastructure bill was signed into law. But that date has come and gone with no sign of the report.

Meanwhile, HHS just missed the deadline on another weed report. This one was a requirement of the Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Expansion Act that was signed into law in December of last year. The law makes it easier for researchers to gain federal approval for marijuana research.

Other than a lack of access to quality weed samples, cannabis' Schedule I status has made it incredibly tough for researchers to gain access to the drug and virtually impossible to get approval for human trials.

The research bill eased these requirements and removed much of the red tape involved in seeking research approval and gaining Schedule I registration. The legislation allows the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to approve applications for companies to produce cannabis for research purposes. It also requires the attorney general to approve research applications within 60 days or request supplemental information and allows researchers to request larger quantities of weed.

"Research is foundational for the path forward on cannabis policy," wrote the co-chairs of the Congressional Cannabis Caucus in a news release. "Research is essential to better understand the therapeutic benefits of cannabis that have the potential to help millions of Americans struggling with chronic pain, PTSD, multiple sclerosis, anxiety disorders and more."

Part of the law requires HHS to produce a report on the medical applications and health risks of cannabis as well as its impact on the development of adolescent brains. The report is also supposed to identify

policies that pose barriers to marijuana research and recommend changes that will remove those barriers, "including whether public-private partnerships or Federal-State research partnerships may or should be implemented to provide researchers with access to additional strains of marijuana and cannabidiol [CBD]."

That report was due Dec. 2, but it has not been published yet.

Neither DOT nor HHS have given an explanation about the delay or provided a future date when the reports will be released, leaving advocates to wring their hands and ask whether these deadlines actually mean anything to federal agencies.

Earlier this year, following an order from President Joe Biden, HHS recommended that cannabis be rescheduled under the Controlled Substances Act from Schedule I to Schedule III. The recommendation was sent to the DEA, which will ultimately decide whether to follow through with the rescheduling. The agency is expected to do so, since HHS has scientific authority.

Like the DOT and the HHS, the DEA has not set a date for its response to the recommendation, and many advocates believe that it's waiting for the HHS report, since the report will presumably clarify the agency's motivation behind the recommendation.

If that's the case, the HHS's failure to produce the report could further delay the DEA's decision.

In the meantime, advocates are pressing the Biden administration to speed up the process of rescheduling weed. In a letter that was sent to Biden near the end of last month, a coalition of veteran's groups called for the president to put pressure on the DEA to conclude its administrative process "in a timely manner."

"While the significance of cannabis rescheduling is unique to each community, as Veterans, reclassifying cannabis means a better future for those who chose to serve our country," wrote the groups. Last week, six state governors — but not Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham — sent a letter to Biden calling for the administration to reschedule cannabis before the end of the year.





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Photography courtesy of Visit Las Cruces



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&



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

## Chinese Pot Farms Worry Officials

By Josh Lee, The Paper.

Law enforcement officials say they are concerned with the growing number of illicit cannabis farms tied to Chinese organized crime in legal pot states.

The Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics reports that 80 percent of illicit marijuana farms raided in the state in recent years were found to have links to groups in China. Authorities there claim law enforcement has busted more than 1,000 Chinese farms since 2020.

Officials say they have found illegal weed farms linked to China in California as well. It's thought that cannabis is a fast and

easy way to make tax-free money that can be sent back to China to fund organized criminal activities and pose a national security problem for the U.S.

In September, a group of Chinese immigrants sued Navajo businessman Dineh Benally and Taiwanese entrepreneur Irving Lin for allegedly using predatory practices to lure unsuspecting workers with promises of farm employment before forcing them to trim illicit cannabis in a Farmington hotel.

The workers accused the men of failing to provide food, proper accommodations and even denying payments. They said the men targeted desperate immigrants during the COVID-19

pandemic and hired armed security guards to ensure that they could not leave.

The lawsuit seeks a jury trial and unspecified damages. Lin has said he and his associates never used force or violence and were never involved in human trafficking.

### Governors Press Biden to Reschedule

Six U.S. governors sent a letter to President Joe Biden, calling for his administration to reschedule marijuana before the end of the year.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recommended that the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) reschedule cannabis from Schedule I to Schedule III. The designation change would open the door for federal decriminalization and make it easier for scientists to study the drug.

The governors of Colorado, Illinois, New York, New Jersey, Maryland and Louisiana wrote that the recommendation represents "sound public policy"

and is "a big win for states." They argued that the policy change would allow the government to collect taxes from legal marijuana businesses and would ensure the safety of products.

The DEA has the final say over rescheduling.

### Weed Traces Found In Old Bones

For the first time ever, archaeologists have found traces of cannabis in the bones of pre-modern humans.

The traces were discovered in bones belonging to people from the 17th century. Their remains were found under a hospital in Milan, Italy.

According to a toxicology analysis, the thigh bones of a young man and a middle-aged woman who died between 1638 and 1697 had traces of both THC and CBD—two cannabinoids found in marijuana. The researchers were unable to find any record of cannabis being used as a medicine in the hospital's records, likely indicating the two people were self-medicating or using the drug recreationally.

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# “ 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](http://AAIM-ABQ.com) to learn more  
and to take advantage of the New Patient Offer!**



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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

Week of December 13th

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**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** In 1849, Harriet Tubman escaped from enslavement on a plantation in Maryland. She could have enjoyed her new freedom in peace, but instead resolved to liberate others. During 13 bold forays into enemy territory, she rescued 70 enslaved people and ushered them to safety. She testified that she relied on her dreams and visions to help her carry out her heroic acts. They revealed to her the best escape routes to take, the best times to proceed, and information about how to avoid the fiendish “slave catchers.” In alignment with astrological omens, I invite you to be like Tubman and seek practical guidance from your dreams in the coming weeks—to solve problems or seek bliss.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Jack Nicholson has often played mavericks and anti-heroes in his movies. His life away from the silver screen has also been less than steady and predictable. For example, he has fathered six children with five different women. His fellow actor, Carrie Fisher, said Jack was “fun because he doesn’t make sense.” A person with casual knowledge of astrology might be surprised that Nicholson is a Taurus. Your tribe isn’t typically renowned for high eccentricity. But in his natal chart, Nicholson has the brash planet Uranus near his sun in Taurus, indicating he’s quirky. Aside from that, I have known plenty of Tauruses whose commitment to being uniquely themselves makes them idiosyncratic. These themes will be in play for you during the coming weeks. (PS: Taurus musician David Byrne starred in the concert film, Stop Making Sense.)

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** The platitude says that if life gives us lemons, we should make lemonade. I’ve got a variation on this theme. Consider the Neva River in northwestern Russia. It freezes every winter. During the frigid months of 1739-1740, Empress Anna Ioannovna ordered her workers to cut huge blocks of ice and use them to construct a magnificent palace on the riverbank. She filled the place with furniture and art, making it a hub of festivities celebrating Russia’s triumph over the Ottoman Empire. I bring these themes to your attention, Gemini, because I suspect that in the coming weeks, you will have substantial redemptive power. Whether you make lemonade from lemons or a palace from a frozen river is up to you.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** “If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy,” wrote Cancerian author E. B. White. “If it were merely challenging, that would be no problem. But I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.” According to my astrological analysis, your fate in recent weeks has been more challenging than seductive. You’ve been pressed to work on dilemmas and make adjustments more than you might like. But this rhythm is about to change. Up ahead, life is seductive, welcoming, and appealing. Are you prepared to drop any unconscious attachment you have to your interesting discomfort so you can smoothly make the transition to more ease?

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** I want to prepare you for the delights of the coming days. I want to make sure you are fully alert for them and primed to appreciate them. So I give you the thoughts of Leo psychologist Carl Jung. “It is important to have a secret, a premonition of things unknown,” he said. “We must sense that we live in a mysterious world—that things happen and can be experienced that remain inexplicable; that not everything can be anticipated; that the unexpected and incredible belong in this world. Only then is life whole.”

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Have you taken a refreshing break lately? Maybe even a soothing sabbatical? Have you treated yourself to a respite from the gritty grind? If not, please do so soon. And while you are recharging your psychic batteries, I ask you to give your fantasy life ample room to wander wildly and freely. In my astrological opinion, your imagination needs to be fed and fed with gourmet food for thought. For the sake of your soul’s health, I hope you dream up fantastic, unruly, even outrageous possibilities.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** My Uncle Ned advised me, “The best gift you can compel your ego to accept is to make it your servant instead of your master.” An early Buddhist teacher sounded a related theme when she told me, “The best things in life are most likely to come your way if you periodically shed all hope and practice being completely empty.” The girlfriend I had when I was 23 confided, “You may get more enjoyment from the witty ways I confound you if you don’t try to understand them.” I offer these three ideas to you, Libra, because you’re in a phase when the moral of your story is that there is no apparent moral to your story—at least until you surrender your notions of what the moral of your story is.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** I believe you Scorpions are the zodiac sign mostly likely to benefit from being empathetic. By that I mean you have substantial power to thrive by reading other people’s moods and feelings. You are often able to figure out angles that enable you to gather what you want while helping others to gather what they want. You are potentially a genius at doing what’s best for everyone and getting paid and rewarded for it. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, this knack of yours will soon be operating at peak levels.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamun died over 3,300 years ago. When his mournful entourage placed him in his tomb, the treasures they left included a pot of honey, which was meant to sweeten his travels in the afterlife. In the early 20th century, archaeologists excavated the ancient site. They dared to sample the honey, finding it as tasty and fresh as if it had just been made. Amazingly, this same longevity is a characteristic of most honey. I propose we use this as a metaphor for your life. What old resources or experiences from your past might be as pure and nurturing as they were originally? And now could they be of value now?

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Screenwriter John Patrick Shanley writes, “Life holds its miracles, good erupting from darkness chief among them.” I predict a comparable miracle for you, Capricorn, though I suspect it will arise out of confusion or inertia rather than darkness. My advice: Don’t be so bogged down in the muddle that you miss the signs that a great awakening is nigh. Start rehearsing how you will feel when deliverance arrives.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Before he reached the height of fame as a novelist, Aquarian Charles Dickens experienced financial instability. When he was 31, the situation got desperate, and he resolved to take extreme measures. For six weeks, beginning in October 1843, he obsessively worked on writing the story A Christmas Carol. It was published on December 19 and sold out in a few days. Within a year, 13 editions were released. Dicken’s economic worries were over. Dear Aquarius, I think the near future will be a favorable time for you, too, to take dramatic, focused action to fix a problem you’re having.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Many religious people believe God can hear their prayers and intervene in worldly affairs. Other religious folks think God can hear their prayers but may not intervene. Then there are the non-religious folks who don’t believe in God and think praying is useless. Wherever you might be on the spectrum, Pisces, I’m pleased to reveal that you will have extra access to support and benefication in the coming weeks—whether that’s from God, fate, nature, or other humans. So seek out blessings and assistance with alacrity. Be receptive to all potential helpers, even unlikely ones.

The Weekly Crossword by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 Souvlaki meat
- 5 Cornfield cries
- 9 Stationed
- 14 Malarial fever
- 15 Mishmash
- 16 Eat away
- 17 Rack and pinion, e.g.
- 19 Theater platform
- 20 "No questions \_\_\_\_"
- 21 Fonda played one in "Ulee's Gold"
- 23 Diameter halves
- 25 Seating section
- 26 Rolling in dough
- 28 Defenseless
- 32 Type
- 33 Blue jeans' material
- 35 Sheik's bevy
- 36 Trim to fit, maybe

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- 10 Kind of highway
- 11 Bath cake
- 12 Leg up
- 13 Forest forager
- 18 Stated further
- 22 Family member
- 24 Notion
- 26 Belgian city on the Meuse
- 27 Like days gone by
- 28 Partner of vim
- 29 NYC dwelling
- 30 River embankment
- 31 Fix text
- 34 Data-sorting method

- 37 Ignore a "Keep Out" sign
- 39 Half of R & R
- 42 Diplomatic agreement
- 44 Back of a boat
- 47 June honoree
- 49 Met productions
- 51 Silvery fish
- 52 Milk dispensers?
- 53 Advil target
- 54 Tack room item
- 55 Singer Fitzgerald
- 57 Learning style
- 58 Doomsayer's sign
- 61 Sailor's affirmative

DOWN

- 1 Tibetan priest
- 2 Mellows
- 3 Exposing scandal
- 4 Use the guillotine on
- 5 Arroz \_\_\_\_ pollo
- 6 Form of defense
- 7 "Early to bed..." quote ending
- 8 Now and then
- 9 Beg

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Solution to Crossword:





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