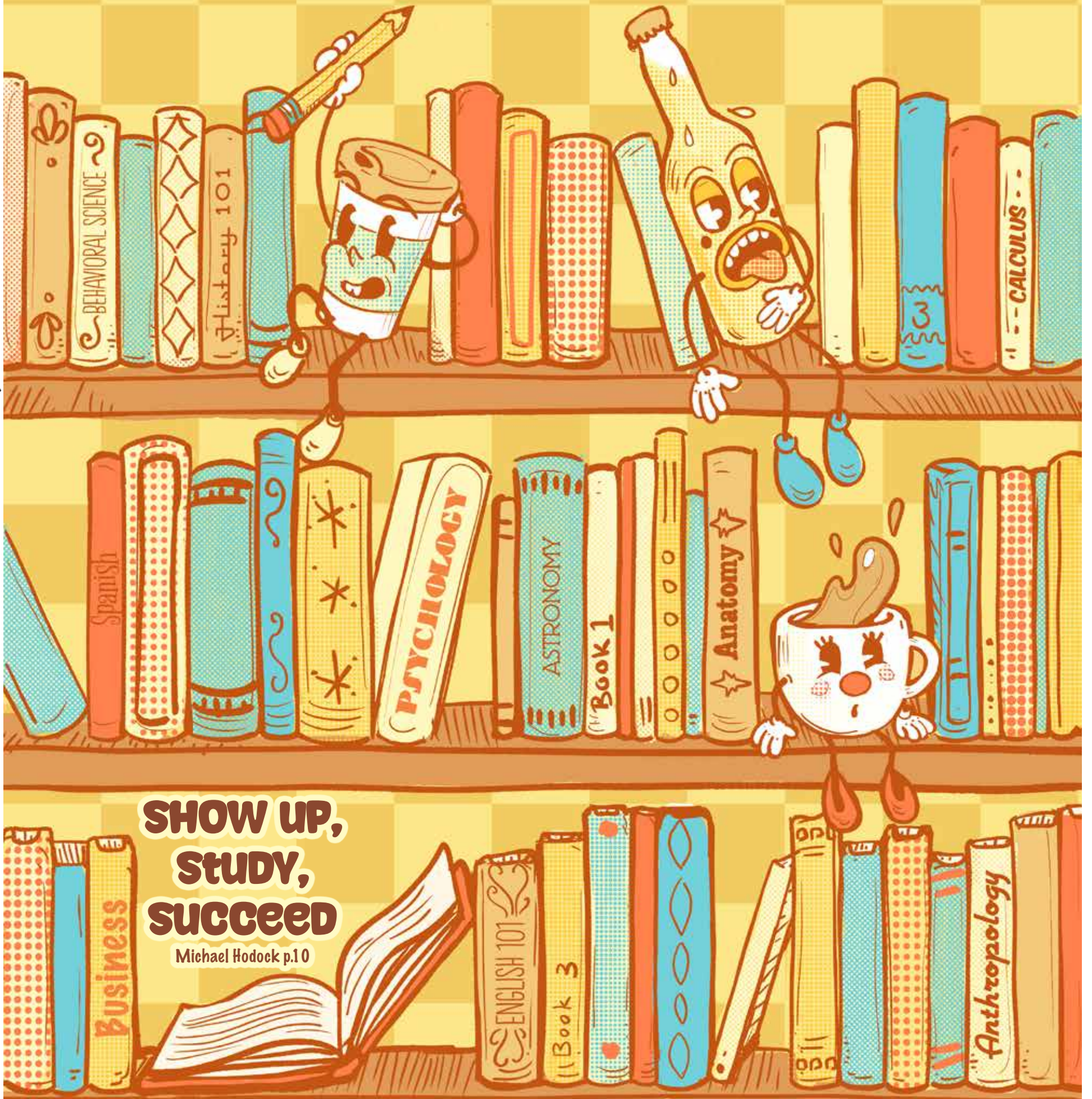


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ALBUQUERQUE'S INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWS



Cover illustration by Rachel Mills

**SHOW UP,
STUDY,
SUCCEED**



Michael Hodoock p.10

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Homelessness Increased Again Across NM Since Last Year, According to Latest 'Point-in-Time' Count

Source

This story is republished from Source NM as a part of our commitment to bringing you the best in independent news coverage that matters to Albuquerque.

By Patrick Lohmann, Source NM

The number of people living on the streets of New Mexico increased to the highest level since at least 2009, according to a new "point-in-time" survey released Tuesday by the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness.

The survey sends volunteers out on a single night in January once a year to speak to people on the streets and collects data about people living in shelters across the state. The survey has many limitations but still likely represents a significant undercount of the total number of homeless people in the state, according to the report authors.

In Albuquerque on January 29 of this year, 1,231 people were counted experiencing unsheltered homelessness. That's a 14.5% increase over last year, when 977 people were counted.

In the rest of the state, 1,011 people were estimated to be living on the streets that same night. That's a 62% increase from the 623 people counted during last year's survey, according to the report.

There are a lot of moving parts to the "point-in-time" count, according to the authors, and the survey results vary based on how many people are willing to sit for a survey, how many volunteers the coalition could recruit and how responsive shelters are to survey requests. This year, for example, nearly half of 2,079 people contacted by the coalition refused surveys.

One factor that affected the Albuquerque count, according to the report, was the increasingly common sweeps of established homeless encampments.

"The city's aggressive decommissioning policy leading up into the night of the count still caused surveyors to arrive in surveying zones, previously identified as having been heavily populated with unsheltered individuals, with no one to survey," the authors wrote.

They noted, however, that surveyors reported that the number of police-led clearing of encampments did appear to be an improvement over last year, when more camps were cleared around the time of the count.

The surveyors asked respondents what types of property they lost after sweeps by police, and how often they occurred. Of 786, respondents, 497 said their encampment had been swept five or more times. A significant position responded "every day" or something similar to that, according to the survey.

Nearly 90% of respondents said they'd lost identification or a driver's license in the sweeps. More than three-quarters lost a phone or tablet. More than 70% said they lost a personal or sentimental item. More than half said they lost prescription medications, according to the report.

Other methods for counting the number of homeless estimate that as many as 20,000 people are unhoused in New Mexico over the course of the year, a figure that appears to be increasing.

The survey cited a recent ProPublica article interviewing people about what they lost in sweeps. They said the ongoing clearings just make it harder for those experiencing homelessness to improve their situations.

"No one's ability to exit homelessness is improved by repeatedly having their belongings stolen or thrown away," the authors write. "The only lasting impact of such initiatives is to prolong episodes of homelessness and inflict additional suffering on an already extremely vulnerable population."

Weak in Review: Aug. 7

Quick hits on this week's news bits

Steven Michael Quezada is set to star in *Strange Darling*, an upcoming thriller about a serial killer.

Readers might recognize Quezada from his role as the county commissioner who stormed out of a meeting earlier this year.



Trudy Jones, a former city councilor, called the Albuquerque Visitor Center a "money pit."

If you think about it, a visitor center with no visitors is only slightly funnier than the idea of Shelley Long and Tom Hanks buying a house together.

Multiple city pools were closed over concerns of cryptosporidiosis.

We'll let readers Google the disgusting symptoms, but it's probably safe to say someone ignored those diarrhea signs we all giggle about.

Independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. admitted to ditching a dead bear cub in Central Park a number of years ago.

Maybe he was trying to get it back to the Hundred Acre Wood?



Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham in an interview with *City Desk ABQ* said, "God help you if you're out there at night," about the streets of Albuquerque.

The city's new slogan: Nothing good happens after dark on the streets of Albuquerque.

The FBI says they finally caught the man dubbed the Tan Pants Bandit, who they say robbed a series of Albuquerque and Rio Rancho banks.

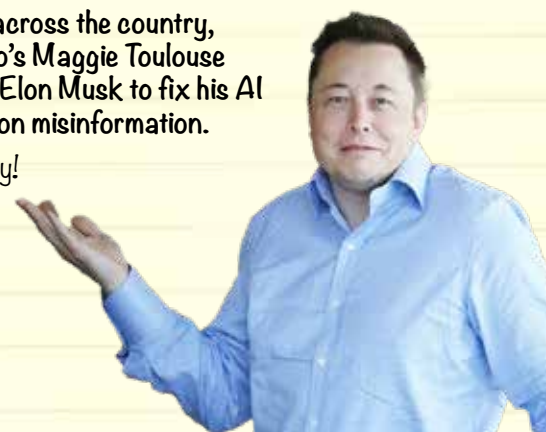
Thankfully youth pastors across the city can go back to their regular attire without getting a side eye from bank tellers.

The Smashing Pumpkins' latest album *Aghori Mhori Mei* has both critics and fans talking.

We're so out of the loop, we could have sworn *Melancholy and the Infinite Sadness* was the band's last release.

Secretaries of state across the country, including New Mexico's Maggie Toulouse Oliver, are calling on Elon Musk to fix his AI chatbot to stop election misinformation.

WHAT?!! You don't say!





This story was originally published at City Desk ABQ, a local nonprofit daily newsroom covering local government, politics and more. If you like this story, please support local, independent journalists like these by reading more and donating today at citydesk.org

By Rodd Cayton, City Desk ABQ

As Albuquerque Public Schools works to improve student outcomes, chronic absenteeism is one of many obstacles it faces.

Superintendent Gabriella Durán Blakey targeted the issue last week during a media event and said she's hoping the community at large will help — specifically those who employ parents.

"We have the students during the day, and our business community has their parents," Blakey said. "So, if we could work together to make sure that parents feel like they have the support to be able to get their kids to school on time and that attendance is important for the whole community, I think that we can really see some big increases (in attendance)."

She said focusing on educational outcomes is nearly impossible when kids are not in class.

"There's little we can do in building foundational skills if their attendance is not consistent," she said.

By the numbers

APS, according to its attendance dashboard, had a 30.8% rate of chronic absenteeism during the 2023-2024 school year. That percentage represents how many students were out of school more than 10% of the academic year, or about 18 days.

FutureEd research showed New Mexico's rate for the 2022-2023 school year was 39.2% — higher than all states except Alaska and Washington, D.C. Albuquerque's 34.1% for that year was slightly better, but Blakey said the rate must go down even more. The 2023-2024 rate is nearly double the rates of before the COVID-19 pandemic (15.8% in 2019-2020 and 18.8% in 2020-2021).

Albuquerque's absenteeism might be higher than the national average, but it's an issue the entire country is dealing with.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation in 2022 reported that chronic absenteeism rose during the pandemic and hadn't returned to pre-COVID levels.

Blakey said the problem cuts

APS Superintendent Says it Takes a Village to Stop Excessive Student Absences

As the school year is about to begin, Blakey says parents need more support from their employers



Superintendent Gabriella Durán Blakey. (Roberto E. Rosales / City Desk ABQ)

across grade levels and is present in all socioeconomic groups. She said the pandemic may have changed the routines of some households, and those changes have become entrenched in some cases, to the detriment of school attendance.

Another culprit, she said, is family vacation time, which often overlaps with the start of the school year, a crucial time for establishing a grasp on the subject matter.

"[Absenteeism] is especially costly in the first weeks of school," Blakey said.

New law, APS response

The excessive absences are a statewide problem as well. In 2019, New Mexico enacted the Attendance for Success Act, which "turned the state away from a truancy approach," APS Spokesperson Martín Salazar said.

The law requires districts to monitor attendance at each school, organize students into four tiers, based on how much school they miss and provide intervention according to absentee status.

A provision in the law calls for school authorities to refer students who continue to have unexcused absences after a written notification to the Children, Youth, and Families Department.

Salazar said APS responded to the law by developing an attendance support unit made up of social workers. As part of the process, he said, APS

has instituted an early warning system and a student success system, which alerts school staff of students developing attendance and academic challenges.

School staff then provide interventions to support students and families, he said.

"These efforts are built upon a strong foundation that includes the implementation of the community school strategy as a transformational model for schools," Salazar said.

A national problem

Caitlynn Peetz, writing in Education Week, said more than a quarter of students nationwide were chronically absent during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.

Peetz cited research from Attendance Works and the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University. Robert Balfanz of the Everyone Graduates Center wrote that close to 15 million students were chronically absent in the 2021-22 school year, and two-thirds of K-12 students were attending schools where 20% or more of the student body was chronically absent.

Rhode Island is one state that's had some success — reporting that 90% of its schools saw fewer absent students than it did a year ago. The governor credited this improvement to a dashboard that reports daily absence rates at each school.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM AT APS:

By school year

2019-20: 15.8%

2020-21: 16.8%

2021-22: 43.5%

2022-23: 34.1%

2023-2024: 30.8%

By school type

Elementary: 30.7%

K-8: 30.7%

Middle: 29.8%

High: 32.2%

Other: 6.2%

By gender

Female: 30.9%

Male: 30.6%

Other/not given: 34.4%

By race/ethnicity

American Indian/Alaska Native: 42.5%

Asian: 12.6%

Black/African American: 30.2%

Hispanic: 33.7%

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 12.7%

Two or more: 26%

White/Caucasian: 20.5%

SOURCE: APS Dashboard

STATEWIDE:

Chronic absenteeism rate: 29.76%

Average excused absences per student: 4.34

Average unexcused absences per student: 10.5

SOURCE: PED Dashboard



Science Fiction or Fact: Forbidden Planet

The New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science separates fact from fiction with its new exhibit "Sci-Fi & Sci-Fact." To highlight the newly opened exhibit, the museum is hosting a Science Fiction or Fact movie night featuring the 1956 classic *Forbidden Planet*. Come by the museum (1801 Mountain Rd. NW) on Thursday, Aug. 8, starting at 5:30 p.m. to check out the exhibit. From 6 to 6:30 p.m. there will be a short talk in the museum's planetarium, discussing various "scientific" aspects of *Forbidden Planet*, from alien planets to robots to faster-than-light travel. At 6:30 p.m. the film screens on the planetarium's 55-foot domed screen. This event is free, but seating is limited. You need to secure tickets in advance at my.nmculture.org/36962/36966.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 8

Trees 11 am-4 pm Richard Levy Gallery 514 Central Ave SW

Dance

International Thursday w/ Precious tha Jewel & DJ Darly 9 pm JUNO brewery + cafe + art 1501 First St. NW

Discussion / Lecture

Nerd Night #6 8-10 pm Green Jeans Food Hall 3600 Cutler Ave. NE

Exhibit

Desert Stories: The Art of Kelly Frye & Jazmin Novak 9 am-5 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Poeh Ah Ka Wohatsey: The Emergence Teachings of Resilience 9 am-5 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Pueblo Baseball: Stitching Our Community Together 9 am-5 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Film

Science Fiction or Fact? Forbidden Planet 6-8:30 pm New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science 1801 Mountain Rd. NW

Food

JP'Z Fair Food Drive Through Weekdays 12pm-9pm and Weekends 11am-11pm Coronado Center 6600 Menaul NE

Games

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

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

Geeks Who Drink 7-9 pm Outpost 1706 301 Romero St NW

GUILD cinema
ECLECTIC CINEMA 7 DAYS A WEEK

Samuel Beckett biopic: **DANCE FIRST**
Fri-Mon Aug 9-12 3:45, 6:00

Nic Cage serial killer horror **LONGLEGS**
Fri-Mon Aug 9-12 8:15

Brian de Palma: **BODY DOUBLE (1984)**
Friday August 9 10:30pm

3RD ANNUAL ALBU-CRAZY FILM FEST
Saturday August 10 1:00pm

Gothic vampire film **THE VOUDALAK**
Saturday August 10 10:30pm

Palestinian **WHERE OLIVE TREES WEEP**
Sunday August 11 1:00pm

German Oedipus adaptation **MUSIC**
Tue-Thu Aug 13-15 3:15, 8:00

Japanese family drama: **MOVING (1993)**
Fri-Mon Aug 9-12 8:15

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Music

28th Annual Summer Thursday
Jazz Nights - Red Hot & Red
\$15-\$30 7:30-9:30 pm Outpost
Performance Space 210 Yale
Blvd. SE

Ben Nichols - Bikeriders Tour
\$20 8-11 pm International District
Library 7601 Central Ave NE

Cali Shaw Band 6-9 pm Canteen
Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road
Northeast

Captain Klas 7-9 pm Tractor
Brewing Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE

Dark Honey Karaoke 6-9 pm
Gold Street Pizza & Brew 3211
Coors Blvd. SW Suite H1

Karaoke w/ Swords
Entertainment 7:30-11:30 pm
Lizard Tail Brewing 9800
Montgomery Blvd NE STE 7

Mineral Hill 6-9 pm Rio Bravo
Brewing Company 1912 Second
St NW

She Rises 2024 Preview: Shae
Fiol & Andrea Magee \$20-\$25
7:30-9:30 pm FUSION 700-708
First St. NW

Performance

The Bridges of Madison County
\$20-\$26 7:30-10 pm Adobe
Theater 9813 4th St NW

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9

Comedy

Dry Heat Presents \$15 9:30-11 pm
Dry Heat Comedy Club 100 Gold
Ave SW Suite 112

Marcello Hernandez \$30-\$60
7-8:30 pm Quezada's Comedy
Club at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez
Canyon Dam Road, Santa Ana
Pueblo

Marcello Hernandez \$30-\$60
9:30-11 pm Quezada's Comedy
Club at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez
Canyon Dam Road, Santa Ana
Pueblo

Stef Darnell Presents - Special
Headliner: Subhah Agarwal
\$19 7:30 pm Fuzzy Bunny 515
Central Ave NW

The Show - Live Comedy
Improv \$10-\$12 9-10:30 pm The
Box Performance Space 114 Gold
Ave SW

Dance

Friday Night Square Dancing \$8-
\$9 7-9 pm Albuquerque Square
Dance Center 4915 Hawkins St NE

Howeya Family Traditional
Dance Group (Acoma) 2-3 pm
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
2401 12th Street NW

Exhibit

Pueblo Baseball: Stitching Our
Community Together 9 am-5 pm
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
2401 12th Street NW

Trees 11 am-4 pm Richard Levy
Gallery 514 Central Ave SW

Family/Kids

Family Picnic Night 5-9 pm ABQ
BioPark Botanic Garden 2601
Central Ave NW

Markets

La Familia Farmer's Market 5-8
pm Westside Community Center
1250 Isleta Blvd SW

Music

Casa Flamenca Summer Tablao
Season Continues \$40 8-9:30 pm
Casa Flamenca 401 Rio Grande
Boulevard NW

Cinematica Album Release Show
\$10 8-11 pm Launchpad 618
Central Ave SW

Goth Night & Dark Market: Bela
Lugosi's Dead Edition 8-11 pm
Tractor Brewing Wells Park 1800
Fourth St. NW

Lani Nash 7-9 pm Albuquerque
Distilling 5001 Central Ave NE
Suite A5

Let IT Grow & Friends 7-10 pm
Marble Brewery 111 Marble Ave NW

Luke Bulla 12-2 pm International
District Library 7601 Central Ave NE

Orange Lala Vinyl Club Spins
Out 8-11 pm Tractor Brewing
Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE

Orange Lala Vinyl Club Spins
Out 8-11 pm Artisan ABQ 3017
Monte Vista Blvd. NE

Sonic Melee - King of Beats
\$5 8-11 pm Rio Bravo Brewing
Company 1912 Second St NW

Thra, Felsenmirror, Dysphotic
\$15 7-11 pm Sister 407 Central
Ave. NW



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Trinity Soul 6-9 pm Boxing Bear Brewing Co. (Firestone Taproom and Brewery) 8420 Firestone Lane NE

We House Fridays ft. Fallon \$10 9 pm-2 am Effex NightClub 420 Central Avenue Southwest

Performance

Blackout Theatre Presents: Santa Beva 7-9 pm Orpheum Community Hub 500 2nd Street Southwest

Shrek the Musical Jr. \$15 7-9 pm Rodey Theatre 1 University of New Mexico

The Bridges of Madison County \$20-\$26 7:30-10 pm Adobe Theater 9813 4th St NW

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

Art Openings

Urban-N-Out 4:30-7 pm Artisan ABQ 3017 Monte Vista Blvd. NE

Vortex of Days 2-5 pm Black Wall Gallery & Events 2125 San Mateo Blvd NE

Class / Workshop

Sip & Paint with Kelsy Kinks \$40 6-8 pm Sunday Service Motor Company 2701 4th Street NW

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

Comedy

Dry Heat's Second Saturdays Open Mic 7-8:30 pm Dry Heat Comedy Club 100 Gold Ave SW Suite 112

Marcello Hernandez \$30-\$60 7-8:30 pm Quezada's Comedy Club at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez Canyon Dam Road, Santa Ana Pueblo

Marcello Hernandez \$30-\$60 9:30-11 pm Quezada's Comedy Club at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez Canyon Dam Road, Santa Ana Pueblo

The Blue Show \$10-\$12 8-9 pm The Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave SW

Community

Downtown Growers' Market 8 am-12 pm Robinson Park 810 Copper Ave NW Albuquerque

Dance

End of Summer Teen Dance \$15 7-10 pm Escape in Time 1100 San Mateo Blvd NE, Unit 21

Hops & Dreams: SpongeBob Edition 8-10 pm Tractor Brewing Wells Park 1800 Fourth St. NW

Howeya Family Traditional Dance Group (Acoma) 11 am-12 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Howeya Family Traditional Dance Group (Acoma) 2-3 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Discussion / Lecture

Pueblo Revolt Presentation 12-1 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Exhibit

Pueblo Baseball: Stitching Our Community Together 9 am-5 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Trees 11 am-4 pm Richard Levy Gallery 514 Central Ave SW

Family/Kids

IPCC's Family Story Time – Pueblo Revolt Skit and Knotted Cord Demonstration 1-2 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Festival

Indigefest of Nations 11am-4pm Open Space Visitor Center (Westside) 6500 Coors Blvd NW

The Latin Explosion Music Festival & Car Show \$25-\$99 12-9 pm Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta Park 4401 Alameda Blvd NE

Film

Movies Under the Wings: Raiders of the Lost Ark \$11-\$17 7-10 pm National Museum of Nuclear Science & History 601 Eubank Blvd SE

Third Annual Albu-Crazy Film Fest Fundraiser \$5 12:30-2:30 pm Guild Cinema 3405 Central Ave NE



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For questions, write to Rabbi Dov Gartenberg at dov@shabbatwithfriends.org or visit <https://shabbatwithfriends.org>.

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7

Literature/Poetry

Ranae J. Wischmann Reading & Book Signing 1:30-3:30 pm
Treasure House Books & Gifts
2012 S Plaza St NW A

Miscellaneous

Humble Coffee’s 10th Anniversary Birthday Bash 10 am-4 pm
Humble Coffee 4200 Lomas Blvd NE

Parkland Village Presents: A Parkland Hills Historic District Tour \$10 10-11:30 am
Parkland Hills Neighborhood

Music

Adobe Disco \$5 8 pm-1 am
Launchpad 618 Central Ave SW

Casa Flamenca Summer Tablao Season Continues \$40 8-9:30 pm
Casa Flamenca 401 Rio Grande Boulevard NW

Elovated Roots 6-9 pm
Tijeras BioZone Open Space 1/2 mile east of Tramway on (or Central Ave.)

Enchantment Blues & Guitars 2: A Jeff Beck Tribute \$22-\$25 7-10 pm
Albuquerque Museum 2000 Mountain Road NW

Keeping Up With the Joneses 7-9 pm
Tractor Brewing Westside 5720 McMahon Blvd NW bldg 5 ste a

La Santa Cecilia \$25-\$45 7:30-11 pm
KiMo Theatre 423 Central Avenue NW

Redd Kross \$22 9-11 pm
Launchpad 618 Central Ave SW

Sabor Latin Night \$5-\$10 9 pm-1 am
Hotel Andaluz 125 Second St. NW

Substitute Teacher 12:30-2:30 pm
Old Town Albuquerque 2005 N. Plaza St. NW Albuquerque

Summer Music Saturdays Presents: Kevin Kinane 1-4 pm
Canteen Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road Northeast

Traveler in Pain 7-10 pm
Voodoo Girl Pizza & Pints 1401 Second St. NW

True Story House + Radio Free ABQ 7-10 pm
Flock of Moons Brewing Company 111 Harvard Dr. SE

Outdoors

Second Annual Thirst for the Outdoors, An Outdoor Adventure Fair 12-5 pm
Canteen Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road Northeast

Performance

Ahhlmaa’s AAA Cabaret \$10 9:30-11 pm
The Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave SW

Miscast Cabaret Fundraiser \$15-\$20 7-9 pm
Musical Theatre Southwest 6320B Domingo NE

Shrek the Musical Jr. \$15 2-4 pm
Rodey Theatre 1 University of New Mexico

The Bridges of Madison County \$20-\$26 7:30-10 pm
Adobe Theater 9813 4th St NW

Reading

Friends Book Sale: Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror Blast! 10 am-4 pm
Main Public Library 501 Copper Avenue Northwest

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11

Class / Workshop

Ayurvedic Yoga in the Park \$6-\$15 8:30-9:30 am
Wildflower Park San Mateo & Eagle Rock NE

Yoga for Addiction Recovery 6:30-7:45 pm
Yogasaar Studio 2205 Silver Ave. SE

Comedy

Stand-up Comedy \$15 7-9 pm
Public House ABQ 201 Hermosa Dr NE

Dance

Howeya Family Traditional Dance Group (Acoma) 11 am-12 pm
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Howeya Family Traditional Dance Group (Acoma) 2-3 pm
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Exhibit

Pueblo Baseball: Stitching Our Community Together 9 am-5 pm
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Family/Kids

Free Family Sundays at Casa Flamenca 11 am-12 pm
Casa Flamenca 401 Rio Grande Boulevard NW

Games

Brain Gang Trivia 2-4 pm
Lizard Tail Brewing 9800 Montgomery Blvd NE STE 7

Brain Gang Trivia 5-7 pm
Lizard Tail Brewing Nob Hill 3417 Central Ave. NE Suite C

Literature/Poetry

J.L. Greger Book Signing 12-3 pm
Treasure House Books & Gifts 2012 S Plaza St NW A

Markets

Rail Yard Market: Old School Day 10 am-2 pm
Albuquerque Rail Yards 722 3rd St SW

Miscellaneous

Summer New Mexico Wedding Expo \$10-\$15 12-5 pm
Marriot Pyramid Hotel North 5151 San Francisco Rd NE

Music

Casa Flamenca Summer Tablao Season Continues \$40 7-8:30 pm
Casa Flamenca 401 Rio Grande Boulevard NW

Indigenized ft. Deer Lady & Nokeezy \$10 7-11 pm
LongHair Records 1321 San Mateo Blvd NE

Le Chat Lunatique 4-7 pm
Canteen Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road Northeast

Sunday Jazz Jam 5-7:30 pm
Flatiron Bites & Brews 6001 San Mateo Blvd NE

Performance

Shrek the Musical Jr. \$15 2-4 pm
Rodey Theatre 1 University of New Mexico

MONDAY, AUGUST 12

Class / Workshop

Sabor Cubano - Casino Salsa \$20-\$60 5:30-7:30 pm
National Hispanic Cultural Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

Exhibit

Pueblo Baseball: Stitching Our Community Together 9 am-5 pm
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Games

Geeks Who Drink 7-9 pm
M’tucci’s Bar Roma Restaurant 3222 Central Ave. SE

Geeks Who Drink 7-9 pm
Santa Fe Brewing (Tin Can Alley) 6110 Alameda Blvd NE Suite #1

Geeks Who Drink 7-9 pm
Bow & Arrow Brewing Co. 608 McKnight Ave NW

Pixels & Pints 5-9 pm
Tractor Brewing Wells Park 1800 Fourth St. NW

Music

Dark Honey Productions Presents: Karaoke on the Hill 7:30-10:30 pm
Tractor Brewing Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE

La Lom \$25-\$30 8-10:30 pm
Launchpad 618 Central Ave SW



View the full list of events at calendar.abq.news

The Paper.



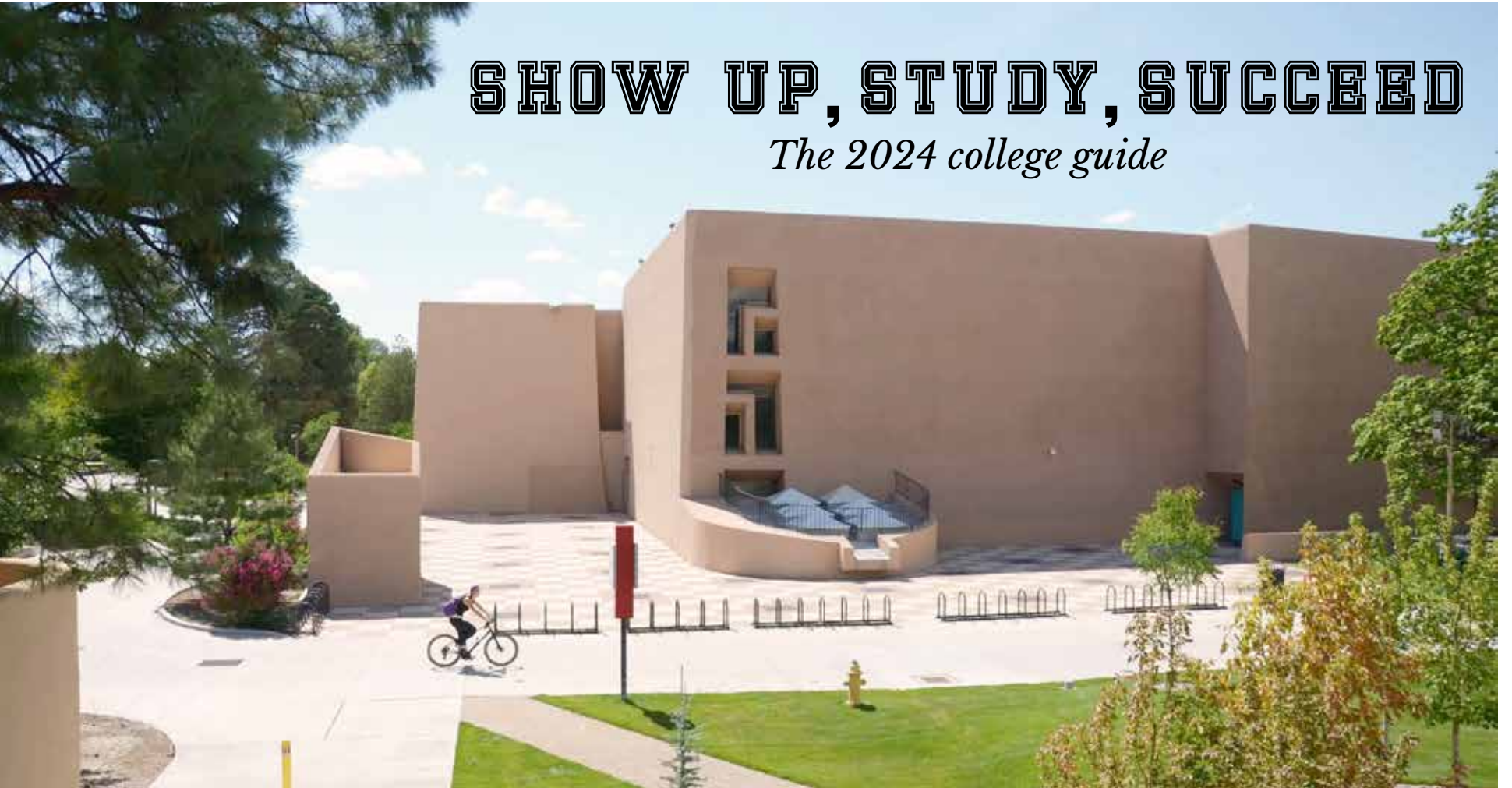
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SHOW UP, STUDY, SUCCEED

The 2024 college guide



University of New Mexico campus (Jesse Jones / The Paper.)

By Michael Hodock, The Paper.

College is a test. Sometimes the academic machine is testing your knowledge or your memory, sometimes it's testing your ability to make adjustments and think quickly on your feet and sometimes it's testing your ability to follow directions and take orders. The institution we call college will definitely test your sanity, but there are tricks of the academic trade — shortcuts to learning — that will protect your mind and body from any unnecessary damage during your trip to intellectual enlightenment. If you keep your ears and eyes open in class, establish good study habits, and never quit, even if you think you have really messed things up, you might just catch your competition sleeping.

My college years lasted decades. They were undoubtedly some of the best decades of my life, and some of the most excruciating. Through trial and error I have chipped away at a couple of degrees including a master's in literature while hustling late nights in restaurants after school, helping raise a child, and for the most part, keeping my personal relationships from going up in flames. I have been on both

sides of the classroom, as a student and as an instructor and I have some insights about what to do — and what not to do — to make academic life at least mostly bearable.

IN CLASS

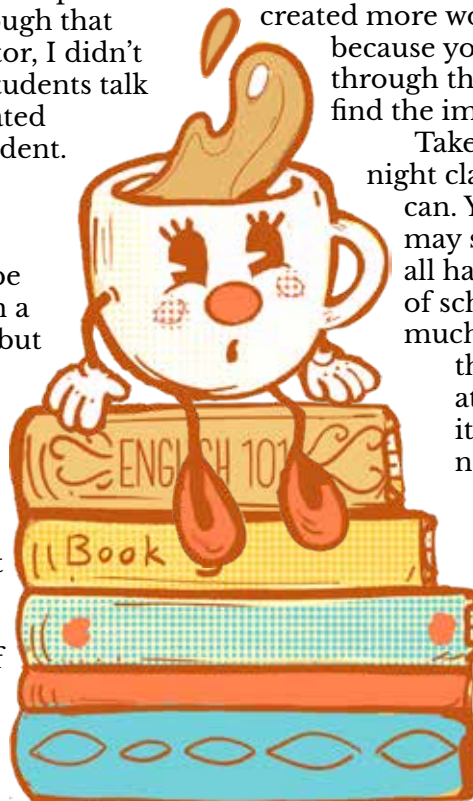
Don't participate in class if you have nothing to say. You might have nothing to add because you didn't read the book or do your homework, and professors can see right through that act. As an instructor, I didn't like listening to students talk in circles and I hated hearing it as a student.

If you didn't prepare for class, go anyway. Your professor might be mad, especially in a small classroom, but be brave and show up. Even if you didn't read the assigned material, listen in class, you will get the important points and can re-visit the text with a fresh set of eyes. No matter how much you may dislike your teachers, you're

there for yourself and every class period is valuable. Don't make up excuses for missing class. You can't have a death in the family every semester. Professors respect honesty more than you might think.

Take notes on everything — trust me. It's a matter of preference, but handwritten or typed notes always worked better for me. If you record the lecture, you won't miss anything the instructor said, but you have created more work for yourself because you have to search through the recording to find the important points.

Take afternoon or night classes when you can. Your social life may suffer, and we all have lives outside of school, but it's much harder to sleep through a class at 7 p.m. than it is at 7 a.m. I noticed the work I received when teaching a night class was substantially better than what students turned in first thing in the morning.



GOOD STUDY HABITS

Read every book your instructor assigns cover to cover. Remember that you paid for these books and, whether you realize it at the time, college will make you smarter if you take advantage of the opportunity to devour every scrap of knowledge your teachers dangle in front of your face. Professors are smart and they have gone through what you are going through and made it. Trust their experience and realize that if they assigned something to read, they probably think it will help you be a better student — and more importantly — a better thinker in some capacity.

If you're pressed for time and can only skim through a book, read the introduction, first chapter and last chapter. The intro will usually point you to the juiciest meat, sandwiched between the first and last chapters, then you can pick additional chapters that seem important to cram in at the last minute.

If you find yourself reading the same line ten times, take a nap — even if it's for 15 minutes. Try sleeping with the light to avoid drifting away for too long.

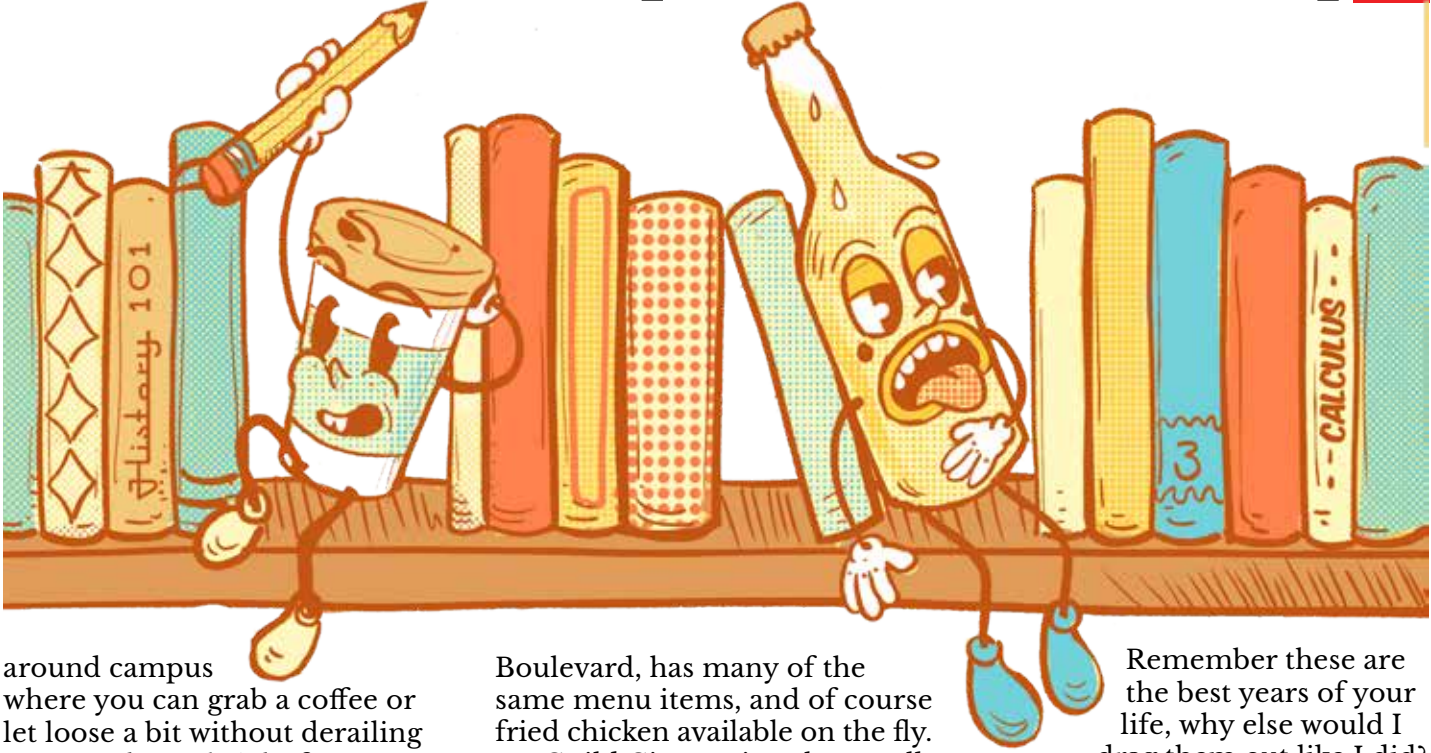
Caffeine is not as good of a friend as you think it is and neither is alcohol, so use sparingly, if at all.

TAKE SOME TIME TO LIVE YOUR LIFE

Studying in public places may work for some students, but I always found it to be a distraction, causing more harm to my academic performance than good. For me, the most social atmosphere I could handle while studying or doing research was the University of New Mexico’s Zimmerman library — an absolute goldmine of material. Even there I kept my head down and avoided eye contact with anyone who might coerce me into hitting the town or “networking” at social events.

That being said, you have to find some time to escape the grind and reward yourself with a brief sojourn from academia. Find fun things to do for college credit whenever possible, and kill two birds with one stone. Add a yoga or swimming class as an elective. Take music appreciation, or attend a handful of concerts at UNM’s Keller Hall, especially if it means extra credit for a class.

In order to succeed in any field or concentration, you must also take care of your mental health, and there are some spots



around campus where you can grab a coffee or let loose a bit without derailing your track to a bright future.

The Frontier played an instrumental role in my collegiate success not just because of its proximity to campus, but because the menu is affordable, even in a post-COVID economy. It’s arguably some of the best and most nourishing food in Burque. If you don’t have time to sit down and eat, Golden Pride, on Lomas

Boulevard, has many of the same menu items, and of course fried chicken available on the fly.

Guild Cinema is a short walk from campus and one of the coolest theaters in town. They screen intelligent, cultured and weird stuff that you won’t likely encounter at a larger, more expensive theater.

Go catch a local music act, see a play or visit a gallery. Invite your cohort to fish or wade in the Rio Grande for the afternoon or go on a date.

Remember these are the best years of your life, why else would I drag them out like I did?

Before writing for The Paper., Michael Hodock attended New Mexico State University and later UNM, where he received an undergraduate in psychology and a master’s degree in English language and literature. During his master’s program at UNM, he taught English composition and technical writing.





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11

By Michael Hodock, The Paper.

Flamenco is undeniably a part of New Mexican culture, and there is a large community of flamenco performers, teachers and students who call Albuquerque home. If you ask a member of that community just how good the dancers, singers and musicians are, they will likely tell you that the level of talent, the quality of the schools and the opportunities for growth and advancement in the field are second only to Spain — where the origins of flamenco can be traced back to the city of Andalusia nearly 500 years ago. Tierra Adentro of New Mexico (TANM) charter school offers flamenco programs to students as early as sixth grade. In fact, studying dance, music, and visual arts is a requirement at TANM. The University of New Mexico is one of the few colleges in the world that offers a degree in flamenco dance.

The level of skill and talent in The Duke City was put to the test when Eloy Gonzales and Madison Olguin, two flamenco artists studying in Albuquerque, competed at the Concurso de Talentos Fundación Cristina Heeren held in Sevilla, Spain, and were awarded scholarships for guitar and dance, respectively. They were both students at TANM charter school, the Conservatory of Flamenco Arts at the National Institute of Flamenco and members of Yjastros: The American Flamenco Repertory Company.

Gonzales, a 26-year-old guitarist who was born and raised in Albuquerque, joined Yjastros when he was 19 and has already traveled to Spain with the company when he performed at the prestigious Festival de Jerez. It was the first time an American flamenco company was invited to participate. Gonzales says that the name Yjastros — which means “stepchildren” — was chosen because New Mexicans are the “stepchildren of Spain.”

“[The scholarship] offers a path for me to get a student visa and be able to move to Spain,” Gonzales says. “I have to go somewhere where the bar is even higher. And I would go out on a limb and say the only place in the realm of Flamenco where the bar is higher than here in Albuquerque is Spain.”

Gonzales was introduced to music at an early age, but it wasn’t until he was 12 and attending TANM that he began seriously



The Stepchildren of Spain

Local artists head to the flamenco big leagues with guitar and dance scholarships

Madison Olguin dancing at Concurso de Talentos Fundación Cristina Heeren in Sevilla, Spain. (Source: National Institute of Flamenco)

studying flamenco. It is also where he met Madison Olguin, with whom he will continue his professional relationship and friendship at Escuela Fundación Cristina Heeren in Sevilla this year.

Olguin started at TANM in sixth grade and continued on to the Conservancy of Flamenco Arts. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from UNM in 2023 and is the recipient of the Friends of Dance scholarship and the Princess Grace Award for dance performance. Earning her degree is an important personal accomplishment for Olguin not only because she has made it as a dancer, but because the experience has been formative mentally as well.

Olguin recalls looking at her reflection in the mirror and saying, “I’m going to get better, I’m going to grow, I’m going to do this, I’m going to be working with the people that I love and we’re gonna grow as a community.”

“I especially feel the dance

program was where I found myself, and where I thought, ‘Okay, I’m not here because someone’s telling me to be here. It’s because I want to be here.’ It’s when I also started finding my independence,” she says.

In the scholarship competition, both Gonzales and Olguin were judged on their improvisational skills. Gonzales says he participated in a “flamenco dance and accompaniment” competition. He submitted a video where he played guitar with a singer performing a *cante* — or solo — and another video where his guitar playing accompanied a solo dance performance. After he was selected as a finalist, he participated in a live competition where he had about 10 minutes to plan an improvised accompaniment performance with professionals in the field, before playing live for a panel of judges.

Olguin’s competition was similar, but she was required

to improvise a dance solo with musicians provided by the Concurso de Talentos Fundación Cristina Heeren. She says, “I couldn’t repeat anything that I did in the semifinals for the finals. It’s also a *tablao* competition. *Tablao* is structured improvisation. So, it wasn’t set choreography.”

Olguin is overseas now, preparing to put her skills to use on the world’s largest flamenco stage, and the experience hasn’t fully set in yet.

“I’m here in Sevilla, I go to the Hollywood Bowl, I go back to Albuquerque, I have to fill out all my visa paperwork and then I’m moving to Spain. So it all just happened really fast, and without any time to really think about it,” Olguin says.

Gonzales has similar thoughts about the prospects of continuing his journey in Spain.

“I can’t believe it,” he says. “I’ll believe it when I’m getting off the plane and not with a return ticket.”

"I HAVE TWO WORDS FOR LONG COVID: THE WORST!"

Albuquerque resident Eric T had been suffering from the lingering effects of Long Covid symptoms. That was until he met Albuquerque's Dr. Andrea Brogdon of Albuquerque Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine and got his life back!

While the initial alarm of the Covid-19 outbreak has subsided, the fallout from the pandemic is ongoing. Many continue to feel long term impacts from their infection. In fact, nearly 23 million Americans (and 100 million people globally) have learned that regardless of the severity of their initial infection, they may continue to experience debilitating symptoms for weeks, months or even years. In a number of these cases, symptoms worsen with time, even turning deadly.

"I got Covid early last year and it was pretty bad," shares Eric. "I was hospitalized for 9 days and there was a point where I wasn't sure I was going to make it. I'm still here so I guess God had other plans but months passed and I was still gasping for air. I couldn't do everyday tasks like cut the grass or work in the yard, much less enjoy a quick bike ride. And then there was what my doctor called, 'brain fog'. I'd lose my train of thought mid-sentence or forget words for stupid things like plates and toilet paper. It felt like I'd had a stroke more than it did a virus."

Officially dubbed Long Covid, the aftermath of the original virus has taken on a life of its own. Dozens of symptoms have been reported and include everything from shortness of breath and cognitive issues to a sudden onset of diabetes and cardiothoracic conditions. These symptoms are so well-documented and common that those suffering now qualify for disability assistance.

Unfortunately for Eric and so many others, the treatment options thus far have been limited. "I started with my primary care doctor and saw specialist after specialist. A pulmonologist finally told me, 'This is the best we can do for you, it's time you start thinking about how you're going to live with Long Covid.' Apparently, their best was letting me live what felt like half a life."

Eric wasn't satisfied with that and decided to do his own research, which is how he ended up at AAIM Albuquerque Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine in Albuquerque.

"I fully believe the human body has the ability to heal itself, but sometimes it needs a little push. I've used acupuncture in the past to help me through a bout of sciatica and just knew if anyone could help me with this Long Covid business, it was going to be Dr. Brogdon."

You might think that a novel virus needs a novel solution, but if so, you'd only be half right. While the staff at AAIM Acupuncture does use innovative solutions like ATP Resonance BioTherapy® to combat Long Covid, because it aids in the healing and repair of specific cells and tissues, it's a much more time-tested science that's getting patients back to living their lives.

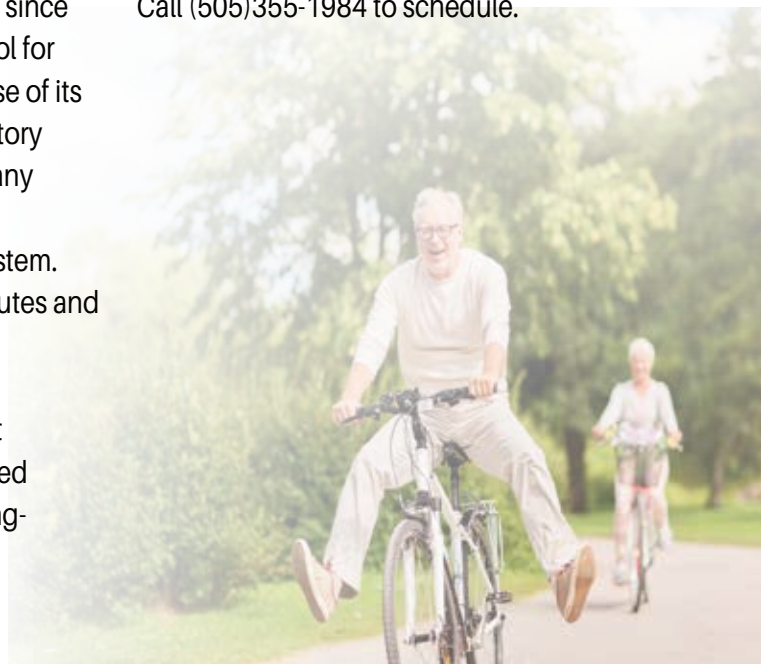
"Our O3 ReBoot Therapy® has all-encompassing and powerful healing capabilities," shares Dr. Brogdon. "Ozone therapy has been used since the 1800's and was actually a popular tool for Doctors during the first world war because of its antibacterial, antiviral, and anti-inflammatory properties. We use it today to inactivate any residual Covid virus, stimulate oxygen metabolism, and activate the immune system. The whole treatment takes about 15 minutes and is completely noninvasive."

As with AAIM's other services, O3 ReBoot Therapy® requires consistent and repeated treatment to achieve measurable and long-lasting results.

"I'm in my second month of treatment and back to riding my bike and breathing better than before I even had Covid. Everyone [at AAIM] has been amazing! I really feel taken care of every time I walk in the door." says Eric.

Dr. Andrea Brogdon, AAIM's founder and leading practitioner, has been successfully treating chronic pain and complicated conditions for over two decades. She has pioneered effective protocols to treat seemingly hopeless conditions like peripheral neuropathy, fibromyalgia, and postherpetic neuralgia. When Covid-19 emerged three years ago, she and her team got right to work researching and developing therapies that would effectively address that complex virus. Based on the testimony of patients like Eric, it seems their efforts have been a smashing success.

For more information, visit AAIM-abq.com. In an effort to do their part in helping people through this difficult time, they are waiving the \$240 new patient consultation fee for Long Covid patients. Call (505)355-1984 to schedule.



**LONG COVID?
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WWW.AAIM-ABQ.COM**

Domenici Needs to Show She's From Here

Let's not talk about race. It might upset the children. That's the rule in Florida, at least, or so we interpret from the way it's been reported. It means they don't want to upset the white children. It's not clear whether they consider the Black children.

This was Florida's response to something called critical race theory.

But if someone were to say we want to stop the teaching of critical race theory in New Mexico, how would that even make sense? Nella Domenici, Republican candidate for U.S. Senate from New Mexico, said it. The statement was in a fundraising letter that the general public probably won't see.

Critical race theory started out as an academic concept that was only taught in colleges or law schools. It has been described as a legal framework for observing how systemic racism persists in spite of laws that attempt to overcome it.

The term was redefined a few years ago. A conservative

pundit named Chris Rufo claims credit for this. It is now used by conservatives to mean whatever they want it to mean, related to the discussion of race. The implication is that public schools are teaching that white people are oppressors and Black people are victims, making white students feel guilty, and this should stop.

Domenici's letter says: "I want the federal government to stop telling states and local government how to run our schools. ... And I want the left-wing Teachers' unions to ... stop pushing Critical Race Theory curricula that are divisive and anti-American."

In the same paragraph she says the federal government should not tell New Mexico how to run its schools and then she says how the schools should be run. Which is it?

The letter is on Nella Domenici letterhead and signed by her. I have no doubt it is authentic.

But I did not get an answer when I asked her staff for a comment. I think it's reasonable for New Mexicans to know what she means.

The history of New Mexico, as readers know, is not a simple story of racial domination of African Americans by whites, or, as we say here, anglos. Our history contains centuries of complex interactions of multiple ethnic groups, and that complexity factors deeply in our culture to this day. The differences among us are not only

cultural but in some cases are enshrined in law, like the rights of the Indigenous people whose ancestors were here first. To avoid talking about race when teaching history in New Mexico is not only insulting to this state, it's impossible.

(Before I go further in oversimplifying racial history, this is not to imply that racial issues are simple anywhere else either.)

Triple Spaced Again



Merilee Dannemann

It must be tempting for someone named Domenici to take advantage of her famous family name. Her father, Sen. Pete Domenici (R), was admired and respected here for decades. But what is her real commitment to the job she's running for?

Someone who knows New Mexico would not have written that incredibly insensitive comment. I'm guessing it was written by a staff member who knows generic partisan buzzwords but not New Mexico. But I have to wonder: Since it was sent in her name, did Domenici even read it? Does she stand by these comments or not? Will she demonstrate that she takes responsibility for her own campaign?

It's hard to imagine that someone named Domenici would be a carpetbagger in New Mexico, but it was her choice to seek to represent this state in the Senate, so it's up to her to prove she isn't.

Contact Merilee Dannemann through www.triplespacedagain.com.

Cold Food, Cold Coffee: Senior Care Facilities Can Do Better

Two recent studies of New Mexico's senior care facilities ring alarm bells.

In June, the news organization *ProPublica* published a report that ranked New Mexico nursing homes fifth in serious deficiencies (Texas was first!); in the last three years, 28 of 68 homes had at least one deficiency causing "immediate jeopardy."

And recently, the state Department of Health reported that after surprise inspections at one third of New Mexico's senior care facilities, only 11 of 91 passed muster and about half scored 90%.

Given my family's dismal experience with these places, this was better than I expected. But it's not good enough for Health Secretary Patrick Allen or the governor, who found the quality of long-term care wanting.

Horror stories are common, and the problem is nationwide.

In May, Health Department inspectors, armed with questionnaires, fanned out over 13 counties and visited 91 of 268 facilities, noting observations and interviewing residents. Eleven captured a perfect score, and four

failed and were reported to the Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Hotline. The state found at least one violation in 88% of facilities.

Residents' top concerns were food, boredom and how they're treated. Inspectors also looked at cleanliness, atmosphere, communications and privacy.

Good food is apparently so hard to achieve that otherwise high-scoring facilities struggle. Said one Albuquerque resident, "They deliver breakfast really late... and it is always cold, and the coffee is cold." A Belen resident gave her facility high marks for staff treatment and activities but panned the food, saying she wanted more protein and less starch. A Gallup resident was tired of eating mutton all the time.

For too many facilities, "activities" amount to a TV set. In some cases, residents can't even change channels, and they never get to go anywhere. They're lonely and sad, said one person. However, at a Taos facility, residents enjoy a variety

of activities and praised the activities coordinator.

Treatment of residents is generally good, but a small percentage of staff ignore residents when they need help, don't bother to knock before entering their rooms and don't respond to requests for room repairs. Said one resident in Gallup, "The staff are mean. They will not say hi and will get mad sometimes." At another facility, a resident said they needed more staff. Wait times were so long that "sometimes a bowel movement happens before they come to help."

Inspectors found that facilities don't meet the sniff test. The place smells of cleaning agents — or worse. Some areas or the residents themselves smelled strongly of urine and feces. In one incident reported to the hotline, a resident recovering from a recent surgery asked for help changing herself at 9 p.m., but didn't get it for 12 hours.

The Health Department believes it's a basic responsibility

to make sure residents are clean, groomed, and dressed in clean clothes that fit. Thirteen facilities failed in these categories. Some residents couldn't shower every day. One woman had only hospital gowns to wear. And residents' clothing went missing when sent to the laundry.

Inspectors looked at whether the atmosphere was institutional or homey. One Gallup resident said they couldn't use the phone to call their family, couldn't put anything up on the walls in their rooms, and had no privacy.

Some of this dysfunction is simply short staffing and high turnover. "Staff keep leaving," said a resident. "The cook left and now the food is awful. There used to be more activities, but the activities director left so recently there is nothing going on." *ProPublica* recorded turnover at the 68 nursing homes that ranged from 26.1% to 89.3% and was most often in the high ranges. No organization can function properly with this head-spinning level of staff change. If the state isn't looking at staffing and turnover, it should be.

All She Wrote



Sherry Robinson

Letter to the Editor: Remembering a Martyr, as a Study Reveals Shocking Numbers in the War Between Israel and Gaza

Submitted by Scott Hammond

He walked with conviction. A travel coffee tumbler was in one hand and a livestreaming iPhone in the other. Ahead of him, just beyond the high, spiked fence, a pale blue Star of David rippled slackly.

Still recording, he set his phone on the ground, stood before the wrought-iron gate, and tilted the coffee tumbler over his head. In the cold February early afternoon sun, a shimmering liquid sloshed down hair — short and sandy — eyebrows, nose and mouth. His voice rang out. He flicked his thumb. And dripping from his chin, the veil of accelerant ignited —

“Free Palestine!
Free Palestine!
Free Palestine!”

At the turn of the 20th century, Palestine was a territory within the Ottoman Empire, which had governed it since the early 1500s. Palestine was home to a majority Arab population

living quite peacefully alongside a small percentage of Jews and other ethnicities.

The Empire declined in power in the coming years, and with its disintegration immediately after World War I, European Zionists arrived by the tens of thousands, snatching up land and uprooting Palestinian peasants.

Tensions between Zionists and Palestinians turned increasingly bellicose. So, in 1947, the United Nations intervened with a partitioning plan that allotted Palestinians just over 40% of the land, even though they comprised more than two-thirds of the population. Seeing themselves as native inhabitants, Palestinians rejected the proposal.

Owing to war between the Zionists’ newly self-proclaimed state of Israel and surrounding Arab nations in 1948 and again in 1967, more than one million Palestinians became displaced. Many of them were banished to a

25-mile strip of land called Gaza, abutting Egypt to the south and the Mediterranean Sea.

In the time since, every aspect of these Palestinians’ lives, now comprising more than two million densely packed-in people, has been aggressively controlled through advancing means, right up to modern day’s panopticon-like border of razor wire and remote-controlled machine guns.

On Oct. 7, the militant governing body of Gaza, called Hamas, launched an attack on Israel that left nearly 1,200 people dead. And although questions remain about Israel’s culpability for a portion of these deaths, through a hostage-thwarting directive known as the Hannibal Protocol, Hamas’ offensive provoked a forceful Israeli military response —backed by \$12.5 billion in U.S. military aid — that continues to this day.

On July 27, Israel bombed a Gaza school, killing 30 and injuring 100. It brings the total

dead Palestinians, mostly women and children, to almost 40,000.

However, according to a new study published in the medical journal *The Lancet*, the death toll is expected to rise to an estimated 186,000. This number includes the anticipated indirect deaths attributable to the conflict.

It has been almost half a year since he set himself ablaze in front of the Washington, D.C., Israeli embassy. He sought to illuminate for the world over 70 years of barbaric persecution of the Palestinian people.

Members of Congress have not kneeled in the Capitol rotunda for him as they famously did for another American citizen in June 2020, paying homage on white marble for eight minutes and 46 seconds. And our president has not acknowledged him. He was an Air Force airman, just 25 years old, with a deeply righteous conviction he deemed worth dying for.

His name was Aaron.

Letter to the Editor: Cohabitation Before Matrimony

Submitted by Don Schrader

MARRIAGE means promising each other to be in love and to make love with ONLY each other until death do us part. MANY questions for a man and a woman, two women or two men wanting to marry...

Do you both want kids? How many? If one of you does NOT want kids, what then? Do you agree on how to raise kids? How differently were you each raised by your parents? Are you OPPOSED to HITTING and CURSING kids?

Are you both religious? Same religion? If one of you is NOT religious, will you raise your kids in religion? If different religions, how will you decide which religion for your kids?

Do you both know and feel loved by the other’s family? When you wrong each other, do you APOLOGIZE? Do you FORGIVE? Do you hold GRUDGES?

Many couples fight like crazy over MONEY. Does one of you enjoy living SIMPLY? Does the other want to BUY, BUY, BUY CRAP no one needs? If so, SEPARATE money accounts?

Want to live in a small place or a mansion? In a LOW income community with people of ALL COLORS? In a HIGH income, mostly white community?

Does one of you need and want much more peace and quiet

with less TV, radio and music? Stay up late or get up early? Many visits from friends? A very neat, always picture perfect house or one that feels relaxed and lived in?

Does one of you eat ONLY HEALTHY PLANT foods? The other mostly junk? Drinks BOOZE? Uses illegal drugs?

Are you truthful with each other? Do you LIE about anything? Open and HONEST about your past? Anything you are afraid to tell your partner? Anything about your partner’s beliefs, feelings and past you are afraid to ask? Do you both enjoy warmly hugging alone and in public? Are you emotionally constipated in showing feelings? Do you both have longtime CLOSE friends? Are either of you very insecure and jealous?

Do you welcome PERSONAL QUESTIONS?

Are you committed to live FAIRLY in our world family of 8 BILLION sisters and brothers? Are you ADDICTED to the American Dream – a NIGHTMARE DISASTER for the world’s hungry and homeless MILLIONS and for ALL life on Earth?

Are you strongly sexually attracted to each other? If sex is NOT important for you both now, what if someday that changes for one of you? If passionate sex is very important for you, how often? Do you tell

each other what turns you on and what turns you off in making love?

My close friend Tom, a preacher, married a woman. Years later he realized his strong attraction to certain men. He and his wife stayed together until he died but she never fully accepted his sex with a man. My friend Beverly knew BEFORE she married Frank his attraction to men — much better for both Beverly and Frank. Often one partner in a male/female marriage has not realized or accepted his or her attraction to the same gender before marriage.

If you see or meet someone you feel sexually attracted to, do you feel free to tell your spouse? Are you more attracted to some other persons than your spouse?

Do you both enjoy CUDDLING together – NAKED and SOBER? Can you both ARGUE vigorously and still feel deeply connected? Are you turning off much of yourself to stay together?

If you are STARVING ROMANTICALLY, are you turning to booze, gambling, hogging down junk food fighting over stupid stuff or becoming a workaholic?

Are you free from all shame and guilt about being naked and your sex together? Are you changing how and how much you travel, how much you consume and pollute to slow the climate

crisis catastrophe? Nearly the same on politics or very different? On racism, white supremacy, justice, police brutality, U.S. WARS?

Do you prefer to sleep in the same bed or separate beds?

Before making a solemn vow to being romantic ONLY with each other until one of you dies, try living together for 6 months or a year to see how your relationship works.

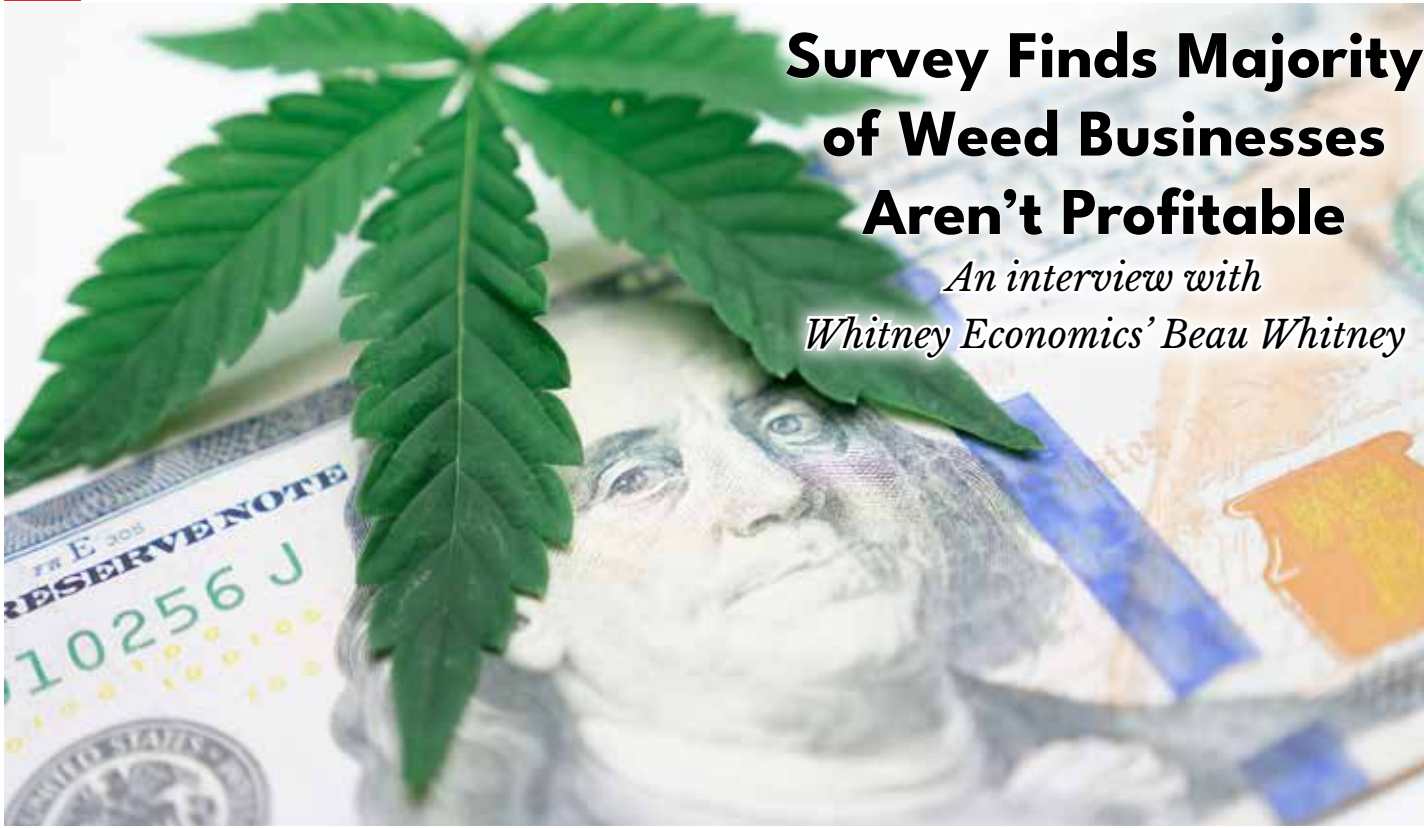
How do you talk about your past girlfriends or boyfriends? If someday you both divorce, do you refuse to blame it all on the other as a devil? A peaceful or bitter divorce?

If you become severely disabled with dementia or paralysis much less capable of sex, do you want your partner to enjoy sex with someone else?

I TREASURE hot affectionate SEX and passionate ROMANCE with certain LEAN, HEALTHY men who have NO shame, NO guilt about sex with men. But I do NOT want to MARRY any man no matter how attracted I am to him, no matter how much I am in love with him. I can be openly and deeply in love with several men at the same time so I would feel trapped, caged and suffocating in marriage to one man. I refuse to make this promise I would soon regret. I aim to tell the TRUTH and NOT to make foolish promises I would want to break!

Survey Finds Majority of Weed Businesses Aren't Profitable

*An interview with
Whitney Economics' Beau Whitney*



(Source: Kindel Media from Pexels)

By Josh Lee, The Paper.

Ownning a marijuana business is harder than ever, and a new survey from Portland-based cannabis consulting firm Whitney Economics paints a bleak outlook on the current environment. We sat down with Whitney Economics founder and chief economist Beau Whitney to talk about the implications of the survey's results.

This interview was edited for length and clarity.

The Paper.: Can you tell us about the 2024 Cannabis Industry Business Conditions and Sentiment Survey?

Beau Whitney: For the last several years, we've sent surveys to licensees in ancillary businesses in the cannabis space, and we've asked them very similar questions, year over year, over year, so that we could get a baseline of data and see how that changes over time. A lot of questions center around: "Are you profitable? What are your feelings about the future? What are some of the things that keep you up at night?"

And in doing so, we've been able to chart, over time, the profitability of the industry. For example, the demographic makeup of who's more successful than others from a profitability standpoint, and then what are some of the obstacles that are preventing them from being successful in the space?

Having that baseline of information has been extremely

helpful. This year's survey was just one in a slew of surveys that we've done.

One of the driving forces in this was that we were trying to provide some more granular data on the impact that the Schedule I status was having on small businesses and minority businesses. And through that, we asked some questions on the size and makeup of the businesses and the like.

Those results were fascinating, because basically, they demonstrated that there's a wide gap between white owners and non-white owners, in terms of profitability. It also leaked into their sentiment and their optimism about the future.

We provided this data to the Minority Cannabis Business Association, and they provided it to the DEA and the Office of Management and Budget as part of their public submission for comments on the impact that rescheduling to Schedule III would have on their group of businesses.

We did a general survey—we asked some typical and standard demographic data—and then we were able to provide insights to MCBA for their comments to the DEA.

When you look at this from different vantage points — from small businesses or from women-owned businesses or minority businesses — there's a much different story to be told than there is if you look at it from a multi-state licensed producer of cannabis. Teasing out those details, we think, is very helpful,

not only for operators — so that they can use that in their business decision making processes — but also for policymakers to see just what is the more granular impact that their policies or lack of policies are having on the industry.

What was the biggest concern among the respondents?

What we found is that 27.3% of the industry is profitable, and that was actually an improvement, year-over-year, from last year's results, which were only 24.4%.

Although things are getting better, when you look at it from a U.S. Chamber of Commerce perspective on small businesses — they list 65.3% of businesses as profitable — it just shows you the impact that federal, state and local policies are having on the cannabis industry. It's putting the industry under economic stress.

That stress is having these unintended consequences throughout the industry. It's impacting a lot of the very policies that legislatures and regulators are trying to improve, like public safety and addressing and reducing the amount of illicit activity. It seems like the lack of profitability is actually having a negative effect. There's an increase in illicit activities. There's a greater public safety risk.

What we found — and it was pretty clear in the qualitative comments — was that something has to change. The status quo, from the regulatory perspective, that's been going on for the last

10 years just isn't cutting it, and because it isn't cutting it, it's putting people out of business.

And when you're out of business in the cannabis industry, it's different. It has a more profound effect, because you don't have federal protections due it being Schedule I and the illegality of cannabis. So if you go out of business, then there's no bankruptcy protection.

Failure in the cannabis industry is basically wealth destruction — personal wealth destruction. When Oregon had a collapse in prices from 2017 to 2018, the cost per pound, or per ounce, or per gram went below the production costs for cultivators. There was a significant spike in farmer suicides, because they didn't feel like they had any other option. They lost their farms, they lost their houses, because of personal guarantees and predatory lending. They couldn't cover their costs, and so they killed themselves. That's the tragedy of the continuation of these policies. There's a real human toll that is occurring. People don't understand that. They just see cannabis as this cash machine for tax revenue or employment and job opportunities, but it stops there. They don't think about the effects of their policies if they're not geared towards the health and sustainability of their operators, if they don't look at it from that lens, then this devastation occurs.

Wow. That's kind of a dark outlook.

What's really interesting though, is when we looked at the data, there was mostly optimism. I think part of that optimism was born from the fact that there's potentiality of change. One of the questions was: "Are you going to get out in the next three to five years?" and over 50% — a clear majority of the respondents — said that they're going to stay in it. So there's this contrast: As much as it's been devastating on communities and individuals in personal wealth destruction, people are sticking around and they're optimistic on their views of the future. We haven't been able to reconcile that. The only exception to what could be the reason for this optimism is the potentiality of change — federal reform. So although it sounds doom and gloom, the industry remains optimistic, and I found that to be one of the more fascinating, consequential findings in our business condition survey.



Blunts.

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!

Florida Cops Try to Stop Legalization

By Josh Lee, The Paper.

Both the Florida Police Chiefs Association (FPCA) and the Florida Sheriffs Association (FSA) are calling on voters to oppose a legalization initiative that will be on Florida's ballot in November. The groups say legalizing marijuana could be detrimental to public health and lead to "violent assaults and deaths."

According to a news release, FPCA President Chief Charles Vazquez said, "The use of marijuana, just like with alcohol, is also a major risk factor for victimization, violent assaults and deaths."

Vasquez claims studies have found that alcohol and marijuana are present in similar percentages in homicide victims (37.5% and 31%, respectively). He did not cite the studies nor explain the significance of the presence of THC in the bodies of victims.

Meanwhile, the FSA passed a resolution to oppose the measure.

"Our priority is the safety and security of our communities, and the data clearly shows that legalization leads to increased public health issues, road safety concerns, and a rise in youth marijuana use," Florida Sheriffs Association President and Charlotte County Sheriff Bill Prummell said in a news release.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has been vocal in his opposition of the measure.



(Source: Elbert Hampton at Wikimedia Commons)

Judge Dismisses Texas AG's Lawsuit

A Texas judge dismissed a lawsuit filed by the state's attorney general meant to overturn local marijuana decriminalization laws in San Marcos.

Last month, Hays County District Judge Sherri Tibbe dismissed the lawsuit, marking the second time a suit filed by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton was denied.

In June, a Travis County judge dismissed a similar lawsuit brought by Paxton against the city of Austin. Paxton also sued the cities of Killeen, Elgin and Denton for the same reason.

The suits claim that local

ordinances in the five cities that decriminalized possession of small amounts of marijuana violate state laws, requiring police to enforce drug prohibition. The judge said decriminalizing weed did not harm the state and allowed law enforcement agencies to focus on more dangerous crimes.

Paxton's suit with Elgin was resolved through a consent decree in June and the city will not be enforcing its decriminalization ordinance. The Denton ordinance has been stalled by the city manager, who says it conflicts with state law.

Paxton's suit with Killeen is still pending.

Psilocybin Edibles Company Granted License

The first-ever legal psilocybin edibles producer license was recently granted to a Portland, Oregon, company. Last month Oregon regulators granted the license to Spiritus Oregon, producer of Horizon Edibles psilocybin products. The brand includes various doses of psilocybin extracted from raw mushrooms and infused into chocolate or fruit-flavored gummies.

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

Week of August 7

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ARIES (March 21-April 19): Legend tells us that the first person to drink tea was Chinese Emperor Shennong in 2737 BCE. As he lounged outdoors, tree leaves fell into his cup of water and accidentally created an infusion. Good for him that he was willing to sample that accidental offering. It took many centuries, but eventually tea drinking spread throughout the world. And yet the first tea bag, an icon of convenience, didn't become available until 1904. I don't expect you will have to wait anywhere near that long to move from your promising new discoveries to the highly practical use of those discoveries. In fact, it could happen quickly. The coming weeks will be a favorable time to ripen your novel ideas, stellar insights, and breakthrough innovations.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): I hope that in the coming months, Taurus, you will be refining your skills with joy and vigor. I hope you will devote yourself to becoming even more masterful at activities you already do well. I hope you will attend lovingly to details and regard discipline as a high art—as if doing so is the most important gift you can give to life. To inspire you in these noble quests, I offer you a quote by stage magician Harry Blackstone Jr.: “Practice until it becomes boring, then practice until it becomes beautiful.”

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Wohlweh is a German word that means “good pain” or “pleasurable pain.” It might refer to the feeling you have while scratching a mosquito bite or rubbing your eyes when they're itchy from allergies. But my favorite use of the word occurs when describing a deep-tissue massage that may be a bit harrowing even as it soothes you and provides healing. That's a great metaphor for the kind of wohlweh I expect for you in the coming days. Here's a tip: The less you resist the strenuous “therapy,” the better you will feel.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): I earn my living as a writer now, but for many years I had to work at odd jobs to keep from starving. One of the most challenging was tapping the sap of Vermont maple trees during the frigid weather of February. Few trees produce more than three gallons of sap per day, and it takes 40 to 50 gallons to create a single gallon of maple syrup. It was hard work that required a great deal of patience. According to my analysis, you Cancerians are in a metaphorically comparable situation these days. To get the good results you want, you may have to generate a lot of raw material—and that could take a while. Still, I believe that in the end, you will think the strenuous effort has been well worth it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): I love the fact that Antarctica doesn't belong to anyone. Thirty nations have research stations there, but none of them control what happens. Antarctica has no government! It has a few laws that almost everyone obeys, like a ban on the introduction of non-indigenous plants and animals. But mostly, it's untouched and untamed. Much of its geology is uncharted. Inspired by this singular land, I'd love for you to enjoy a phase of wild sovereignty and autonomy in the coming weeks. What can you do to express yourself with maximum freedom, answering primarily to the sacred laws of your own ardent nature?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Babylonia was an ancient empire located in what's now Syria, Iraq, and Iran. Among its citizens, there was a common belief that insomnia was the result of intrusive visitations by ancestral spirits. Their urge to communicate made it hard for their descendants to sleep. One supposed cure was to take dead relatives' skulls into bed, lick them, and hold them close. I don't recommend this practice to you, Virgo. But I do advise you to consult with the spirits of deceased family members in the coming weeks. I suspect they have a lot to tell you. At the very least, I hope you will explore how you might benefit from studying and pondering your ancestors' lives.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Libran tennis player Naomi Osaka is one of the highest-paid women athletes ever. She is also a staunch political activist. That blend of qualities is uncommon. Why do I bring this to your attention? Because now is an excellent time to synergize your pragmatic devotion to financial success with idealistic work on behalf of noble causes. Doing both of these activities with extra intensity will place you in alignment with cosmic rhythms—even more so if you can manage to coordinate them.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Scorpio actor Sally Field told a story about an agent who worked for her early in her career. In those formative years, all her roles were on TV. But she aspired to expand her repertoire. “You aren't good enough for movies,” the agent told her. She fired him, and soon she was starring in films. Let's make this a teaching story for you, Scorpio. In the coming months, you will be wise to surround yourself with influences that support and encourage you. If anyone persistently underestimates you, they should not play a prominent role in your life's beautiful drama.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): One Sagittarius I know is building a giant sculpture of a humpback whale. Another Sagittarius is adding a woodshop studio onto her house so she can fulfill her dream of crafting and selling fine furniture. Of my other Sagittarius acquaintances, one is writing an epic narrative poem in Greek, another is hiking the Pacific Crest Trail from Northern California to the Columbia River in northern Oregon, and another has embarked on a long-postponed pilgrimage to Nigeria, the place of her ancestors' origin. Yes, many Sagittarians I know are thinking expansively, daring spicy challenges, and attempting fun feats. Are you contemplating comparable adventures? Now is an excellent time for them.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): When I opened my fortune cookie, I found a message that read, “If you would just shut up, you could hear God's voice.” In response, I laughed, then got very quiet. I ruminated on how, yes, I express myself a lot. I'm constantly and enthusiastically riffing on ideas that are exciting to me. So I took the fortune cookie oracle to heart. I stopped talking and writing for two days. I retreated into a quiescent stillness and listened to other humans, animals, and the natural world. Forty-five hours into the experiment, I did indeed hear God's voice. She said, “Thanks for making space to hear me. I love you and want you to thrive.” She expounded further, providing me with three interesting clues that have proved to be helpful in practical ways. In accordance with your astrological omens, Capricorn, I invite you to do what I did.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Scientists at the University of California devised a cheap and fast method for unboiling an egg. Their effort wasn't frivolous. They were working with principles that could be valuable in treating certain cancers. Now I'm inviting you to experiment with metaphorical equivalents of unboiling eggs, Aquarius. You are in a phase when you will have extra power to undo results you're bored with or unsatisfied with. Your key words of power will be reversal, unfastening, unlocking, and disentangling.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Every week, I imbibe all the honey from an eight-ounce jar, mostly in my cups of hot tea. To create that treat for me, bees made a million visits to flowers, collecting nectar. I am very grateful. The work that I do has similarities to what the bees do. I'm constantly gathering oracular ideas, meditating on the astrological signs, and contemplating what inspirational messages my readers need to hear. This horoscope may not be the result of a million thoughts, but the number is large. What's the equivalent in your life, Pisces? What creative gathering and processing do you do? Now is a good time to revise, refine, and deepen your relationship with it.

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

1

Complain

5

Construction site sight

10

Lowlife

14

Tech support caller

15

Baklava ingredient

16

Greedy cry

17

One way to ride a horse

19

HS subject

20

Sunday speaker

21

Remote

23

Study aide

25

Engine sound

26

Inbox contents

29

2022 film, "_____ Talking"

31

"Take On Me" pop trio

34

See-through item

35

Ballgame segment

36

Mafia bigwig

37

Indignation

39

Legislative meeting

41

VIII doubled

42

Hushed talk

44

Canyon sound

45

Word on a Ouija board

46

Groundwork

47

Skewered Thai dish

48

Black cat, maybe

50

Violin parts

52

Type of salad

55

Tear gas target

59

Troop group

60

Yahoo.com, e.g.

62

Small buzzer

63

Seed structure

64

Climber's goal

65

Pitcher's goal

66

Roster listing

67

Laze about

9

Morning coffee, for one

10

Bad-mouth

11

Go against

12

It may be hard to resist

13

Pinocle combo

18

Music genre

22

Pulmonary pair

24

Deed holders

26

Hobbyist's glue

27

Pale purple

28

Word for a loner

30

Squander, say

32

To-do

33

Pester

35

Bulky herbivorous dinosaur

38

Color of honey

40

Like some resorts

43

Type of wage

47

Scrape, as the knee

49

Photo finish

51

Calls out

52

Java holders

53

Writer Quindlen

54

Exploding star

56

Fiesta fare

57

Hermione portrayer

58

Snorkeler's haunt

61

Stout

DOWN

1

Transition point

2

Where India is

3

Many wines

4

More attractive

5

Patient record

6

Reel's partner

7

Fireplace piece

8

"Little House on the Prairie" merchant

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