

RATON ~ NEW MEXICO NEWS

RATON POLICE BLOTTER

Jan. 12 2009

INCIDENTS:

■ The City of Raton, Movie Gallery, Serazio Construction, Crystal Café and Lounge, Cowboy Ministries, Cunico Tire, Arlene Gonzales and City Market all reported unautho-

rized graffiti on property over the weekend.

CRASHES:

■ Dorothy Florsheim was involved in a crash, when she struck an unattended vehicle owned by Joshua Chavez, causing heavy damage to the vehicles.

COLFAX COUNTY CALENDAR

Raton Optimist Basketball Registration for K through eighth grade will go through Friday, Jan. 16. Registration forms can be picked up from your child's school. Deadline for registration forms will be Jan. 16, 2009 at 5 p.m. Please make the deadline because there will be no late registrations. Call Jonni Valdez-Silva at

(575) 445-2761 or (575) 445-5881.
Jan. 17 - 11:30 a.m. - Daughters of the American Revolution, Tierra de Mesetas Chapter, home of Lily Budd luncheon with meeting following at 1 p.m. Program at 2 p.m. on "Methods, Manners and Medals" learning about DAR. Reservations: Lily (575) 445-4297.

Business Incubator Center to grow Des Moines economy

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Des Moines School intends the BIC to pave the way for the extended community to have a much greater role and presence in the school facility, making the resources of the school available to the community and opening discussion of new ideas for more effective and profitable use of the school building and equipment. The BIC plans to collaborate with many other community-minded organizations in the region, whether civic, educational, governmental, non-profit, or business.

Together, the BIC and the Rural Revitalization Initiative will develop strategic economic planning for the area, aided by a training team from the

University of Wyoming. One of many day-long workshops was held at the school Friday, bringing together the steering committee and consultants. Along with Ms. Hill, participants included University of Wyoming professors Dr. Tena Hoyle and Dr. Todd Bartee, as well as school board president Damon Brown and superintendent of schools Garrett Bosarge. Other committee members participating Friday included Union County Commissioner Justin Bennett, business owner Karen Brown, and former Des Moines School superintendents Jaynee Burchard and Midge Graham. Kelly Hill, Phyllis Shannon, and Pam Sorenson are also on the committee.



The last Drama Club meeting had about 30 students, grades 9 - 12, show to discuss the auditions for their play "Why Do We Laugh." The Club Sponsor is Bill Cray, Artistic Director is Gail Dixon-Willden and Technical Director is Cian Hazen were also present. (Photos by Frank Mahanah)

RHS Drama club hosting auditions for play

Special to the Chronicle

The last Drama Club meeting discussed next week's auditions for the RHS Drama Club's play, "Why Do We Laugh," which is a one-act play that will be taken to the Theater Festival at ENMU in late February. The play is a beautiful, funny, poignant story about the relationship between two people. It shows

them at ages 5, 16, 40 and 65 - and how their relationship changes as they grow older - together.

Auditions for the play will be Wednesday, Jan. 14 from 3 to 5:30 p.m. at the Shuler. Students must follow the NMAA requirements for eligibility in order to participate - including have a G.P.A. of no less than 2.5 and be enrolled in Raton High School (or home

schooled in high school courses). For auditions, students will need to bring a copy of their report card and prepare a one-minute monologue (memorization not required.)

Students interested in working in technical positions for the show, including stage manager, props master, costumes, makeup, publicity, house manager and crew, must meet at 2:45 p.m. at the Shuler on

Wednesday, Jan. 14.

Regular RHS Drama Club meetings will be held every Wednesday at 3 p.m. at the Shuler Theater beginning Wednesday, Jan. 21. High School students are welcome to participate in the club even if they are not involved in this first production. For more information, please contact Bill Fegan at the Shuler Theater.

COLORADO NEWS

Senate panel backs Buescher for secretary of state

By COLLEEN SLEVIN
 Associated Press Writer

DENVER (AP) - A Senate committee unanimously backed the appointment of former state Rep. Bernie Buescher as secretary of state on Monday, sending a vote on his confirmation to the full Senate.

Next, the full Senate will vote on whether to appoint the Grand Junction Democrat to replace Mike Coffman, who was elected to Congress. It appeared Buescher would get another warm reception there. Legislators have already scheduled his swearing-in for Wednesday.

Buescher, who served four years at the state Capitol before being ousted in November's election, told members of the Senate State, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee, that he wanted to build public confidence in state elections, including its electronic voting machines. During a recent meeting with the Colorado Restaurant Association, Buescher said 15 percent of those attending told him they didn't have confidence that their vote had been accurately counted.

Buescher told members of the Senate State, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee, that he wanted to build public confidence in state elections, including its electronic voting machines.

He said testing of the machines should be rigorous and transparent and that there should also be post-election audits to make sure that votes were counted accurately. However, after the hearing, Buescher said a request from county clerks to continue the use of the electronic voting machines temporarily certified for last year's election seemed reasonable.

Electronic voting machines include both the touch-screen machines where voters make their ballot choices and the optical scanners used to count paper ballots.

The machines have been under a cloud since the 2006 election, when voting activists went to court to challenge the state's certification system. They were mostly worried

about the reliability for the touch-screen devices because many didn't have a paper record that could be verified.

A judge allowed the machines to be used in that election but ordered the state to start from scratch and re-evaluate the accuracy and security of each machine.

Under that court-ordered evaluation, Coffman decertified most of the state's electronic voting machines, upsetting preparations for the 2008 presidential election. He then asked for more time to come up with fixes for the machines and the authority to work with clerks and vendors on solutions. Lawmakers agreed, but only allowed him to certify those

machines for the 2008 and 2009 elections.

This year, lawmakers must decide what to do next and Buescher said he will defer to them to come up with a plan.

Most Colorado voters cast their votes by mail-in ballots last year, a first for a presidential election in the state. Buescher said he didn't think the state should move to an all mail-in election because counties should be able to choose the method that works best for them.

"I support the variety that we've given to the counties," said Buescher, acknowledging that providing voters more options means more costly elections.

Soldier from Colo. killed in Iraq

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (AP) - Military officials say a Fort Bragg-based soldier from Colorado was killed when a bomb went off near his vehicle in Iraq.

The Department of Defense on Monday identified the soldier as 24-year-old Staff Sgt. Justin L. Bauer of Loveland,

Colo. He died on Jan. 10 in Baghdad.

Bauer was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg.



Boomerang, an Australian shepherd, plays in the snow during his morning walk in Jefferson Park after a heavy early morning snow storm blew through Denver on Monday, Jan. 12, 2009. (AP Photo/Bill Ross)

Shane Co. jewelry store files for bankruptcy

DENVER (AP) - Colorado-based jewelry store retailer Shane Co., has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, saying the business suffered a disappointing holiday season.

The company filed paperwork Monday in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Denver and asked to be able to continue paying its 542 employees in stores in 14 states, including two stores in Colorado. The court filings show the company has between \$100 million to \$500 million in estimated assets

and liabilities.

"The severity of this past holiday season dramatically impacted existing liquidity requiring the Company to seek this bankruptcy protection," CEO Tom Shane said in a written statement. "I am confident that this action will guarantee that our customers will continue to enjoy the top-notch service, expansive selection, and unbeatable prices that they have enjoyed since the days of my grandfather."

The company listed about

6,000 creditors. Its largest creditor was listed as New-York based Dison Gems, Inc., with about \$4.7 million, with the 20 largest unsecured claims totaling \$26.2 million, according to court documents.

Besides Colorado, Shane Co., has stores in California, Washington, Indiana and Georgia.

The company said it plans to continue business without interruption while it executes a restructuring plan.

Lawmakers could require handsfree cell phones

DENVER (AP) - State lawmakers will consider whether to require all adult drivers to use a handsfree device when talking on their cell phones.

The bill (House Bill 1094) was introduced Monday by state Rep. Claire Levy, a Democrat from Boulder. It also would ban teenagers and the drivers of school buses and taxis from using cell phones to talk or text while driving.

Violators would be fined \$100.

Levy said she's noticed that drivers talking on cell phones don't always stop for pedestri-

ans in crosswalks and seem unaware of their speed.

"I think it's time for people to start focusing on driving when they're in the car," she said.

Last year, 9-year-old Erica Forney was killed in Fort Collins while riding a bike after an SUV drifted into the bike lane. Police believe the driver was talking on a cell phone.

Levy said she didn't introduce the bill because of the girl's death but said it has raised awareness about the issue.

On-duty police officers, firefighters and the drivers of

emergency vehicles would be exempt from her proposed ban.

The National Safety Council has been pushing for a total ban on cell phone use while driving - both regular and handsfree talking.

Six states - California, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Utah and Washington - and the District of Columbia - and the District of Columbia ban the use of hand-held cell phones behind the wheel, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Seventeen states and the district restrict or ban cell phone use by new drivers.