

# RATON ~ NEW MEXICO NEWS



Senior Amaris Newkirk of Folsom laughs at the comments of auctioneer Ryan Brown. Newkirk brought top dollar Saturday night, \$250 for one day's ranch labor.

(Photo by Tim Keller)

## Des Moines FFA profits from Annual 'Slave Sale'

By TIM KELLER  
Special to the Chronicle

For as long as anyone can remember, once a year each FFA member at Des Moines School pledges one full day of work in exchange for payment committed to the FFA by a buyer at auction. Saturday night's annual "slave sale" in the school gym, following basketball games against Roy, auctioned off the services of 14 students to the tune of \$1,305, which will support FFA activities throughout the year, including attendance at state and national conventions.

The event is the FFA's single largest fundraiser, according to sponsor Raymond Owensby. "The community really enjoys it." He remembers being auctioned off himself when he was a Des Moines student in the early 1980s. His father, Morrow Owensby, class of '65, recalls the event happening only two of his high school years. Once he and his brother were "bought" by his own grandfather, for whom Owensby did daily chores anyway. It was a way to help pay for FFA trips. Saturday night, Owensby bought the services of two

"slaves."

Karen Doherty says, "They get more work out of some than others." Indeed, prices ranged from \$45 for an eighth-grader to the \$250 paid by Morrow Owensby for senior Amaris Newkirk's labor. Tami Stogsdill, Capulin EMT and phone company employee, says, "A lot of people know what the kids are like. They'll pay more for kids they can get along with and who are hard workers."

The slave sale is not unique to Des Moines. Stogsdill recalls being auctioned off for \$60 in the late 1970s when she

attended Karval High School in Colorado. One year she did yardwork; another year she built fences. There's a lot of ranch work: stacking hay, helping with cows and branding, building fences. There's also babysitting and housework.

Roy Lee Green says, "They really work you. Joe Rivale used to buy me. We'd dig post holes and move rocks out of pastures. That was in '67. I think maybe he gave \$20 for me, more than I was worth."

Saturday night's auctioneer, Folsom rancher Ryan Brown, has done that job

every year since 1993, when he was in the ninth grade. Beginning with eighth-graders and moving up through seniors, one student at a time is introduced to the cheering crowd. As Brown runs the prices up, some students perform antics ranging from dance steps and model poses to muscle-flexing and push-ups. A good performance helps drive the price up. In the end, it's an entertainment for a good cause. Of course, the days of reckoning will come in the spring, when fourteen FFA students each owe a hard day's labor.

## Local Renaissance man invents 30-hour day

Continued from page 1

The road is better now, but he still hikes and snowshoes most days. "It is just as fast and more relaxing and healthy to hike or snowshoe," he explains. Hockett picked up the hiking habit in Boy Scouts. One memorable autumn hike a couple years ago lasted from dawn to dusk, 24 miles from New Mexico's Sugarite State Park to Colorado's Fisher Peak and back, getting lost on the return but reaching his car just as dark set in.

A widely respected teacher of languages, Hockett has been asked to evaluate Advance Placement Spanish Language exams for twenty years. He earned his B.A. degree in Modern Languages, his M.A. in Spanish Literature, and his PhD in Renaissance Spanish Literature. He studied ten languages, lived in Spain and traveled all over Europe.

When he has nothing else to do, Hockett enjoys sports and reading.

Arriving at Raton High School at 7:15 a.m. on a recent winter morning, Hockett stashes his snowshoes and hiking poles, then ducks into the boys' room looking like a Mt. Everest adventurer. He emerges looking like Dr. Hockett, but no one calls him that. Arriving students smile and greet him, "Buenos dias, Señor!" Laughter often escapes his classroom, where students are as likely to be enjoying a potluck Mexican fiesta, and breaking piñatas they've made, as they are to be doing vocabulary drills. "Señor" smiles. He's in his element.

Well, one of his elements.

## Sponsors needed for special concerts to benefit NM military veterans

Courtesy of the New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services

Special to the Chronicle

Promoters are looking for co-sponsor of a special two-day event benefiting New Mexico military veterans.

The Rotary Foundation of Santa Fe Centro, in partnership with Tonemark Music, the New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services, and the Mid-Rio Grande chapter of the American Red Cross, is pre-

senting Nashville Underground in Old Santa Fe, a two-evening event to help New Mexico military veterans.

The two-night special event will take place Feb. 17 and 18 in Santa Fe.

Kicking off the festivities will be a gala Cigar Dinner-Dance, Fashion show and concert at the Bishop's Lodge Resort on Tuesday, Feb. 17. Ortega's on the Plaza is sponsoring the fashion show, which will showcase jewelry by several world-renowned local and

international artists. Several top international cigar makers including - Ashton and Bucanero - will also be on hand sampling out their wares.

Capping the evening is a performance by top country music singer and songwriter Chuck Cannon, who's written chart-topping country hits such as "American Soldier" and "How Do You Like Me Now" for Toby Keith and "I Love the Way You Love Me" for John Michael Montgomery.

On Feb. 18, Cannon and

Grammy-Award winning artist Billy Dean will highlight another concert at the historic Lentic Theater in downtown Santa Fe. Dean sung the chart-topping country-music hits "Billy the Kid" and "Somewhere in my Broken Heart." Other local artists are also scheduled to perform.

The promoters of the concert are seeking partners to help co-sponsor this two-day event. Sponsors will get a special table at the Feb. 17 event and will also be thanked and

recognized. Organizers are also selling blocks of tickets to the concert and tables to the Gala.

All profits from the two-day event will go towards organizations helping military veterans, along with the Red Cross and the Santa Fe Rotary Foundation.

For more information about the event and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Tony Sanchez at (505) 328-2918.

## Lt. Governor Diane Denish announces year-end statewide statistics for crimes against children on AMBER Alert day

Special to the Chronicle

Lt. Governor Diane D. Denish announced a 25 percent decrease statewide in sexual crimes against children from 2007 to 2008. In 2007 there were 154 reports of criminal sexual penetration of a minor, criminal sexual contact of a minor, and computer crimes involving children. That number dipped to 116 reports in 2008.

"The message is clear: We will not tolerate crimes against children. Tough new laws, increased awareness, and vigilance in our communities are helping to make New Mexico a dangerous place for those who would harm children," Lt. Governor Denish said.

New Mexico State Police

Chief Faron W. Segotta, and Education Secretary Dr. Veronica C. Garcia joined the Lt. Governor to deliver the message and to kick-off an AMBER Alert Awareness Campaign. Fifth grade classes across New Mexico are participating in the national awareness poster contest: Bring Our Missing Children Home. Students at Lew Wallace Elementary crafted their posters with safety tips provided by Secretary Garcia.

"AMBER Alert Awareness Day is an excellent time to initiate conversations with students about safety and to involve them in an important national competition," said Secretary Garcia. "I know there is great talent in New Mexico and we hope to send one of our stu-

dents to Washington, D.C."

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Child Protection Division, sponsors the annual contest that represents America's united goal to bring missing children home safely. The winning artwork will be displayed at the National Missing Children's Day ceremony, to be held on or about May 25. The national winner will travel to Washington, D.C., along with his/her parents and teacher to receive an award and participate in the ceremony.

"It is not every day that we can bring New Mexico fifth grade students and school administrators together to compete in a national competition

based on the well being of our children," said Chief Faron W. Segotta, of the New Mexico State Police.

**AMBER Alerts and Amber Hagerman:** The AMBER Alert Program began in 1996 when Dallas-Fort Worth broadcasters teamed with local police to develop an early warning system to help find abducted children. AMBER stands for America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response and was created as a legacy to nine-year-old Amber Hagerman, who was kidnapped while riding her bicycle in Arlington, Texas, and then brutally murdered. Other states and communities soon set up their own AMBER plans as the idea was adopted across the nation. Over 400 children

nationwide have returned home safely since the AMBER Alert program began in 1996. For more information about the program, visit [www.amberalert.gov](http://www.amberalert.gov).

**National Missing Children's Day and Etan Patz:** On May 25, 1979, six-year-old Etan Patz grabbed his school books and gave his mother a goodbye kiss before leaving to catch the bus to school. Etan's mother was never to see him again. In the months and years that followed, Etan became the symbol for lost children all over America. Then, in 1982, President Reagan proclaimed May 25, the anniversary of Etan's disappearance, as National Missing Children's Day.

### Fun Fact:

*The thin line of cloud that forms behind an aircraft at high altitudes is called a contrail.*

## 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.

**Jan. 30 -** Red River Ski Area is hosting a 50th Anniversary Gala from 7-11 p.m. There will be dinner at the Main Chalet, drinks, dancing, fireworks, night skiing and more surprises. RSVP by Jan. 20. For more information or to purchase tickets, call Jessica at (575) 754-2223 ext. 200 or Lauren at [laurenhouse@redriver-skiarea.com](mailto:laurenhouse@redriver-skiarea.com)