

RATON ~ NEW MEXICO NEWS



Photos by Tim Keller

Students check in with yearbook staff to get their books Wednesday.

High school yearbook season arrives as school winds down

By **TIM KELLER**
The Chronicle-News

As summer comes into view over the horizon, the light at the end of the school-year tunnel, yearbooks are distributed at many area high schools. 250 Raton High School students received their annuals Wednesday afternoon in the school's gym when classes were cancelled for eighty-minutes of reading and signing annuals, a longtime tradition at RHS, as at many schools

Though advance sales are encouraged throughout the year with perks and discounts, 40% of those receiving a book Wednesday purchased it right then. Early buyers paid \$35 and got two lines of personalized gold engraving on the cover. In December, the price rose to \$40 and buyers got one line of engraving. Those who waited until spring - or until Wednesday - paid \$45 and got no engraving. (One would hope that the math majors, at least, bought early)

Teacher Dana Medina, completing her 12th year as RHS yearbook sponsor, says, "We usually have a higher percent-

age of sales than lots of New Mexico schools, like those in Albuquerque, for example." Approximately 75% of RHS students received yearbooks Wednesday. Medina says she is pleased with the sales, especially given the state of the economy. Based on past years, she expects to sell more yearbooks over the next couple weeks, too.

"We've never lost money," she says. "Sometimes we make a little, like enough to buy a camera for the next year." Her yearbook students get out to sell ads throughout the area. "Our community really supports us," Medina says appreciatively.

The yearbook class consists of 16 seniors - Kyle Allen, Jordan Carlini, Amanda Encinias, Amber Encinias, Rachel Cimino, Jordan Cruz, John Romero, Anita Rose, Kelsey Fissel, Christina Harrison, Michael Neurauter, Danette Silva, Meagan Pacheco, Melanie Pacheco, Robert Garcia, and Shelby Mares. Medina works so closely with the class that she is able to quickly provide *The Chronicle-News* with all 16 names (and

spell "Neurauter") off the top of her head.

"It's a lot of work," Medina reports. "You come in on week-ends. You stay late after school. I proof everything. Even after we've sent pages off to the yearbook company for printing, I find errors." The class has to turn in 25% of the pages in early November, another 25% in early December, another in early February, and the final installment is due in early March. Approaching deadlines produce a stressful time crunch as Medina and her students buckle down to meet the required deadlines.

The relief was visible on the faces of Medina and her seniors Wednesday as the last yearbooks left the tables and 300 or so students spread out throughout the gym to eagerly look through the new books and get their friends and teachers to write in them. As it all wound down and Medina was left alone at an empty table, she looked like she might sleep for three days. But the next day was another school day.



Photo by Laura L. Brewer

John Taft, animal control officer, coaxes a loose dog near Columbian Elementary School closer to allow him to snare the dog and transport it to the animal shelter.

Animal Control keeps kids safe

By **LAURA L. BREWER**
The Chronicle-News

John Taft, the Raton Animal Control officer, has been rounding up strays, runaways, and lost dogs and transporting them to the animal shelter for the past twenty-two years. Although Raton is a small community, there is never a shortage of work for Taft. Sometimes someone from a neighborhood will call the animal shelter to report a loose dog, but many times Taft will see a dog roaming the streets and he'll stop to pick it up.

On Tuesday, Taft stopped in front of the Columbian Elementary School to pick up a dog without a collar strolling down the street. Although the dog appeared friendly, the safety of the children in the area

was the first priority, and required that the dog be taken to the animal shelter.

Taft worked for about twenty minutes, first coaxing the dog to come closer by offering it a treat. Then, once the dog stepped close enough to the lure, a rope that was placed near the food was used to catch the dog's paw. Once the paw was caught, another rope was secured around the animal's neck. With both ropes holding the dog, Taft then used a long pole with a heavier noose at the end placed over the head and pulled taut. He then quickly lifted the dog into the vehicle. The animal was taken to the animal shelter where it will wait for its owner to contact the shelter and claim it. If it isn't claimed within a length of

time, the animal will be put up for adoption, or taken to another location for possible adoption.

The Raton Humane Society recently took twenty-one dogs to Albuquerque to participate in the Pet Paloosa event. The move was extremely successful with all twenty-one dogs adopted during the widely advertised event. The volunteers for the Raton Humane Society are now looking for other similar events throughout the region so that more of the dogs held in the shelter could find homes. The Raton Humane Society meets every second Thursday in the Holiday Classic Motel. For more information call (575)445-9328.



Photo courtesy of Tino Cordova

Raton golf buddies David Swanson, Bob LeDoux, Louis Sandoval, Tino Cordova, and Adam LeDoux, pose with Ernie Valdez from Peoria, Ariz., for a quick photo before taking to the fairway on the Legend of Arrowhead golf course. Taking the picture and not shown is Simon Garcia.

Raton golf buddies share fun in the sun in Arizona

By **LAURA L. BREWER**
The Chronicle-News

For the past four years a group of golf buddies have taken a road trip every spring, usually at the end of February to warmer weather in Arizona.

In February, when snow and ice is still covering the Raton golf course, the weather in Peoria, Arizona where the Legend of Arrowhead golf course is located, gives these avid golfers a few

days to hone their golfing skills while enjoying the great weather. The weather in Peoria hasn't yet gotten too hot and is still about 75 - 80 degrees.

Although the Raton golf buddies usually go to the same course every year, they have ventured off the beaten path to enjoy other courses in Arizona. They have played the Estrella Mountains course in Goodyear, Ariz., Los Gaballaros course in

Whittenburg, Ariz., El Mirage course in the town of the same name, and Falcon Dunes in Waddell, Ariz., to name a few.

The golfers usually spend two days on the road traveling to and from their destination, and four days at the course. Next year, because it is so hard to leave the fun in the sun and return to the cold weather, they plan to spend five days at the course.



Photo Courtesy of Raton Arts Council

Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra will perform at the Shuler Theater on Saturday.

Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra to perform

Special to *The Chronicle-News*

Big Band Music of the 30's, 40's and 50's will be fondly recalled by the audience this Saturday evening, May 2, at Raton's historic Shuler Theater at 7:30 pm. when the fabulous 16 piece Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra appears here as the final performance of the Raton Arts and Humanities Council's current season. The performance has been sponsored locally by International Bank.

The Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra began in the spring of 1934 as the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra jointly led by Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey. In early June of 1935, after a dispute

over the tempo of a tune, Tommy walked off the bandstand, and Jimmy became the sole leader. Jimmy was considered one of the finest clarinet and alto sax players of his day, and was always playing solos that simply amazed his fellow musicians, as well as his audiences. Jimmy died in June of 1957 just after receiving a gold record for "So Rare".

The Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra continued for the next 43 years under the leadership of the great trumpeter Lee Castle and later the baton was passed to Jim Miller. The orchestra is now under the direction of trombonist Bill Tole, whose sweet, smooth, sen-

timental style takes the listening audiences from the 40's right through the decades to the present day. In 1992, Nancy Knorr, the lead singer with the Pied Pipers, became the featured vocalist, recreating a tribute to Helen O'Connell with her own style and ease.

Playing all of their big hits - such as Amapola, Tangerine, Song of India, and Green Eyes - this great 16 piece big band will help you "re-live" your "dreams" from the music of the 40's, 50's and 60's. Tickets to Saturday's performance are still available from the Raton Arts and Humanities Council at (575) 445-2052 or www.ratonarts.org.

Continued from page 1

Others carried a variety of tools. All wore their oxygen tanks on their backs. Raton police arrived to set up roadblocks, directing returning students to the church parking lot across the street and onto the school's practice football field.

At 12:35 pm, Superintendent of Schools Dave Willden emerged from the building with his cell phone to his ear, spreading the word that classes were cancelled for the rest of the day and that students and staff should go home. No one would be allowed to re-enter the building for hours.

Willden had determined, in

conference with Fire Chief Dave Pascuale, that fumes in the building would render it uninhabitable for hours. After an afternoon of cleanup and ventilation, school would reopen as usual on Friday morning.

The school has been a construction zone for several months. Currently, roofers are removing three layers of old roof, then building one new roof. Working above the home economics classroom at noon Thursday, a welder threw sparks into the insulation between a roof beam and the classroom ceiling. A chemical fire extinguisher was used to

douse the smoldering insulation. The chemicals spread fumes throughout the building and set off the school's fire alarm.

Apparently there were never any actual flames and the extinguisher had effectively stopped the smoldering. Firefighters assessed the situation, opened doors and windows to ventilate, and started cleanup operations.

School will be in session as usual Friday. Thursday afternoon, students and staff enjoyed a sudden and unplanned free afternoon under clear blue skies with a temperature of 70 degrees. No complaints were heard.