

RATON ~ NEW MEXICO NEWS

Raton Schools Wall of Fame to honor ten new members

By **TIM KELLER**
The Chronicle-News

Ten new distinguished members will be inducted into the Raton High School Wall of Fame Friday evening in a ceremony immediately preceding the school's annual graduation exercises. Beginning at 6:15 pm, the event will take place at Tiger Stadium if weather permits; otherwise, all ceremonies that night will be held in the Raton High School gym.

This is the second annual Wall of Fame ceremony. The Wall of Fame will consist of commemorative plaques lining a wall in the new John Krivokapich Media Center at RHS. The brainchild of RHS principal Mike Sparaco, it's designed to honor former Raton students "who have distinguished themselves through recognition, honor, and distinction during their lives" after they left Raton schools.

The by-laws continue, "It is hoped that this display will serve as a motivational and inspirational tool for current and future students of Raton High School. By recognizing and honoring these individuals, future generations of graduates will have a wall of role models from which they can help formulate their future plans and career choices."

Nominations are open to all, with nomination forms available at RHS. The nomination deadline for 2010 induction is January 1, 2010. Broad categories have been established for nominees in Arts, Education, Athletics, Entrepreneurship, and the Military. An At Large category is intended to cover accomplishments in other areas. Those submitting nominations have included family members, former classmates, friends, and others.

Early each year, an anonymous committee of 8-10 members meets, chaired by Sparaco, to evaluate, rank, and select from the nominees. In order to speed the creation of the Wall of Fame, 17 members were inducted in 2008, the first year. This year 10 new members will be inducted. Beginning in 2010, 4 or 5 will be inducted each year.

The initial inductees included John Davidson, Tom Popejoy, and Bernard J. Salvo in the Education category; James T. Roper, Stanlee Gatti, and Bill Serazio in Entrepreneurship; Mary Lynn Roper, Lynn French, and The Fireballs in Arts; Loretta Rose Encinias, Noel Mazzone, and Monty McGowan in Athletics; Austin Brunelli, Bernard Leon Johnson, Jesse Ridenour, and Gary K. Walton in Military; and Faron Segotta in the At Large category. Those honorees graduated as early as 1921 - Tom Popejoy - and as recently as the 1990s - Lynn French, Monty McGowan, and Jesse Ridenour.

Friday evening, the 2009 inductees to the RHS Wall of Fame will be honored in a ceremony at 6:15 pm. Their names follow, with comments from their nomination forms.

Mr. Kenny Montoya, Brigadier General, Military Category

As the Adjutant General, Kenny commands the Army and Air National Guard, as well as the New Mexico State Defense Force. In his Federal capacity, General Montoya is responsible to the National Command Authority to provide combat capable units to the army and air force for national defense. As the cabinet secretary of the State of New Mexico Department of Military Affairs, he serves as the military Chief of Staff to the governor and as the Governor's principal advisor on military affairs. In addition, he is the president of the state armory board and provides oversight of the New Mexico Civil Air patrol.

John Anthony Jellico, Arts Category

John Jellico loved, ate and drank art from the time he was in grade school. John was the founder and leader of the Art Institute of Colorado in Denver. He authored books on art and poetry as well. His influence on friends, family and students is well documented throughout his illustrious career. Examples of his work are on display at the Colorado Institute of art, the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City, St. Patrick's Church in Raton as well as in the White House in Washington, DC.

Jose Antonio Aguiar, M.D., Education Category

Jose once wrote "It's a pleasure and a privilege to motivate the young Ratonians to pursue something other than war". This is a man who has elevated his aspirations to the absolute top of the medical field while working in some of the top educational facilities in the country. Dr. Aguiar has received accolades in neurological surgery that is reserved for a very few individuals. His appointments professionally, research, publications, service and other activities have distinguished him as being at the head of his class and a proud representative of his Hispanic heritage and the Raton Public Schools who he attributes the beginnings of his motivation to aspire from exceptional teachers he was fortunate to learn from while a student in Raton.

Joe V. Aldaz, Jr., Military Category

After graduating from Raton High School, Mr. Aldaz received an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy form where he graduated in 1983 and proceeded to a 21 year career as a Space Operations Officer and Director of Athletics and retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2004. Mr. Aldaz worked and coached the Air Force Academy Prep School to unparalleled success. His leadership and oversight provided the men's basketball program with their first 20 win season which eclipsed a 31 year record. Additionally, Mr. Aldaz the commissioner for Basketball for the Rocky Mountain State Games, and Olympic style festival which includes over 8,000 participants in 31 sports. He has also served as the president and CEO of the Colorado Springs Stars B-Ball Academy and of the Colorado Springs Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. His work with the USO has provided morale, welfare and recreational services to military personnel and their families.

Richard Joseph Bonahoom, Entrepreneur Category

Dick Bonahoom was forced to quit school to help in the family mercantile store and on the family ranch east of Raton. In 1934 he became a night patrolman for the city of Raton in 1939 he became a special officer for the AT&SF railroad. Returning to Raton in 1940 Dick became chief of Police and remained in this position until his death in 1966. Chief Bonahoom was well respected, fair yet stern in dealing with law breakers. He was identified in the New Mexico Law Magazine as the oldest police chief in the state of New Mexico, a record that stands to this day.

Richard Newman, Entrepreneur Category

Mr. Newman's interest in police work began while he was in the United States Air Force. Richards work was in general police duties and securing military assets in the Security Police Squadron. Following his honorable discharge he became a state police officer. His promotions from State Police officer to Sergeant, to Lieutenant,

to Captain where he served as a Commander was all accomplished in a period of just fourteen short years. Richard was then promoted to Police Adjutant Chief, a position in which he serves in to this day. He oversees the day to day operations of the department and is responsible for the work of approximately 700 individuals. Even with the tough and crucial schedule Richard had in performing his duties as a State Police Officer he made time to attend night and weekend college classed to accomplish his one big goal, a Masters Degree in Public Administration. This goal was accomplished recently.

Richard Montgomery Strong, Military Category

Richard was one of the many brave infantry whom were killed in action during the Second World War. For his bravery Richard was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross as well as the Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a second Distinguished Service Cross. The President of the United States said that Richard displayed heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy while serving with the 179th Infantry Regiment. His personal bravery and zealous devotion to duty at the cost of his life exemplify the highest traditions of the military forces of the United States and reflect great credit upon himself, the 45th Infantry Division and the United States Army.

Richard D. Cimino, Military Category

Richard received two congressional nominations and an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. Following his graduation from the academy he began his career as an Air Force Intelligence Officer. He was promoted to Captain four years later and Major in 2004. He is responsible for gathering strategic intelligence data and preparing briefings for Generals and has personally briefed Vice-President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Richard was recently promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and is currently working in the Department of the Air Force at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Gordon Robertson, Academic Category

Gordon served in the United States Army as a near east intelligence analyst. Following his college and military obligations he returned to Raton practicing law with his father, Robert Skinner, and robin Blair. Gordon was a director of the Sun West ban of Raton and was active in the Raton Public Service Company and in the formation of the Arkansas River Power Authority. After his early death the Honorable Judge Leon Karelits, during a special hearing, recorded Gordon's contributions to the practical application of the laws of New Mexico.

Harold Honeyfield, At Large Category

After graduation from Purdue University, Harold became employed by the USDA soil conservation service as the design engineer. He was selected to serve on a team in an overseas assignment to Afghanistan and charged with the duty of planning and designing drainage systems to reclaim saline soils for the improvement of cultivated land. He worked to work in the western United States as the engineer for recovery work. Many of the projects her worked on bear his name. After his retirement Harold continued to work overseas as consultants on many projects which are still in use today and also bear his name.

Raton Commission reviews budget

By **Marty Mayfield**
Trinidad Chronicle News

Raton city commissioners took a look at the preliminary budget figures for fiscal year 2009-2010 Tuesday afternoon at a special budget meeting.

The first item was a presentation by Diane Valdez the new director of the Raton Recreation and Education Center who gave a rundown of the upcoming summer programs. So far this year there have been 36 applicants for programs of which 34 have applied for scholarships to attend some of the 41 classes or programs the RREC will offer over the summer.

In light of the current economic situation the RREC is offering a special for \$50 for each session per month for a total of \$200 for the summer season. If a child was to attend all the programs or classes the cost would total \$435 for the

summer. The RREC is budgeted for \$15,000 this year which is one of the few items on the budget to see an increase over last year's funding of only \$7,500.

Commissioners then took a look at the preliminary figures for next fiscal year, and again it was noted that the city will see reduced revenues. City clerk Michael Ann Lannon told commissioners that department heads were told to hold a flat budget and that the only increases in salary were those under union contracts.

The city is hoping to see \$3,994,931 from gross receipts taxes while fees for services that are charged will bring in \$616,200. Miscellaneous income will include grants and other items totaling about \$315,432. Bringing the total revenues to \$4,926,563 estimated.

Expenses however, are up and are totaling \$5,025,364 a dif-

ference of \$98,801 over revenues. The city will look at fees and services such as dispatching services for other departments and see if they are in line or need to be raised. There are several buildings that need work and it is hoped that some of the stimulus money that is coming can be used to make those repairs.

The biggest expense for the city is Police (\$1,616,466) and Fire (\$1,250,432) followed by the Executive branch which includes city hall (\$565,645). Public works will see the biggest decrease in expenses, about \$66,000.

Fiscal year 2009-2010 is hoping to see increases in gross receipts taxes from construction projects that are under way or should be starting in the near future. Commissioners will meet again on May 26 for their regular meeting.



Columbian Elementary School 2nd Grade Students of Character for April are: Bottom Row: Esperanza Casas, Brandon Decker, Zeb VanSweden, Krystal Fenton, and Marissa Bernal. Top Row: Thomas Mondragon, Felix Paterson, Theodore Williams and Natasha Madrid.



Columbian Elementary School's 3rd Grade Students of Character are: Bottom Row: Tyler Topping, Cheyenne Fiorino, Sarah Valdez. Top Row: Brian Record, Mark Lucero, Jesse Espinoza, Devon Baker and Augustina Reill.

Rep. Luján Votes to Reform Wall Street, Increase Accountability

Special to The Chronicle-News

Washington, DC - Today, Rep. Ben Ray Luján joined his colleagues in Congress to demand accountability for mortgage and corporate fraud by voting for the Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act, which takes common sense steps to address and fix the causes of our current economic crisis. The legislation gives law enforcement resources to investigate and prosecute fraud that may be a cause of larger financial problems. The legislation will also establish a bipartisan commission to investigate the causes of the collapse of our financial system and the ensuing recession. The legislation has passed the House and the

Senate, and it now heads to President Obama's desk for his signature.

"Too many New Mexican families are struggling because of corporate and mortgage fraud and irresponsibility," said Rep. Luján. "The Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act takes steps to protect the people of New Mexico from fraud and abuse. This bill safeguards taxpayers by establishing a commission to investigate the causes of our current financial crisis and by providing law enforcement with the resources to investigate and prosecute fraud. The bill increases accountability and improves protections against actions that can compromise our financial

system and hurt families in New Mexico."

"Our current economic situation was made even worse by fraud and irresponsibility," said Rep. Luján. "We must hold corporations accountable when they try to take advantage of New Mexicans. The regulations we have in place are not working and the commission established by the Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act will help us to understand the weaknesses in our system that led us to our current economic crisis. This is an important step toward reform that can help prevent future crises."

The legislation passed the House by a vote of 338 to 52.