Two New Members Elected to UNM-Gallup Local Board

Two new members have been elected to the UNM-Gallup Local Board. They are Francis D. Becenti, who was elected to Position 1 for Gallup/McKinley, and Virginia R. Chavez, who was elected to Position 4 in Zuni.

Theresa Dowling was re-elected to Position 5, the at-large position for McKinley County.

Becenti, who takes over the position formerly held by Brett Newberry, won 1092 votes over William D. Bright, who had 646 votes. Chavez defeated incumbent Ruby T. Wolf, with 216 votes to Wolf’s 100 votes.

Dowling was elected without challenge by 1755 votes.

The new members join Dowling and incumbents June Shack of Zuni and Gloria Skeet de Cruz of Gallup/McKinley. The new board members will be sworn in at the March 28 during the Board meeting by Judge Kenneth Howard Jr. in the Director’s Conference Room in Gurley Hall at 6 p.m.

Two Students Nominated To All USA Academic Team

Two University of New Mexico-Gallup students have been nominated to the All USA Academic Team. They are Alvin Harvey and Joel Yazzie. Sixty team members will be selected in May from all the nominees across the nation, to be on the first team, second team and third team.

Alvin Harvey, who is currently working toward an Associate’s Degree in Criminal Justice, was born in Fort Defiance, Arizona. He was brought up in Three Turkey Ruins, near Canyon De Chelly, and attended the Nazlini Arizona Boarding School and Kinlichee Boarding School, and public schools in Chinle.

He joined the Gallup Army National Guard in 2000 and did a 15-month tour of duty in Iraq, for which he received an Army Commendation Medal for exceptional meritorious service.

He has been on the Dean’s List seven times, and in Spring 2006 received a UNM-G Excellence in

Grant for Ceramics and Soup Awarded

The campus has been awarded $2300 from UNM as a “Teaching Allocation Grant” to purchase four potter’s wheels for the creation of an “Empty Bowls” program. Students will make the bowls, and a donation of soup obtained.

The bowls and soup will be sold with all proceeds going to a local charity, announced John Zimmerman, manager of the Ingham Chapman Gallery and an art faculty member.

Campus Voice Now Online

The Campus Voice, UNM-Gallup’s student newspaper, is now accessible online at www.gallup.unm.edu/campusvoice.

Versailles Benally, the editor, said efforts are currently under way to archive past issues.

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Dr. Beth Miller

Last Fall our campus community was introduced to AQIP during Convocation. Sally Pearson, from Central New Mexico Community College, came to our campus to help us kick-off the AQIP program. AQIP is a formal program of the Higher Learning Commission that emphasizes establishing processes of continual improvement in college organizations. More than 170 colleges throughout the United States are participating in the program. AQIP institutions are eligible for accreditation through their participation in the program as opposed to the traditional self-study system used by the HLC.

Our Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by Robert Hoffman, has taken the lead in implementing the AQIP process on campus. One of their first actions was to conduct the AQIP Examiner on-line survey. This survey asked all faculty and staff for their views on a wide variety of campus issues. Results of the survey, which were sent to all faculty and staff members, along with a campus faculty/staff retreat have been used to help guide planning for creation of AQIP Action Projects. AQIP asks a college to identify 3-4 key projects that are intended to help improve key processes on campus. The projects are to be focused and have definite beginning and ending dates with key milestone measurement throughout the process.

Based on results of the campus-wide survey and the faculty/staff retreat the Strategic Planning Committee has identified three key action projects:

- Enrollment – create a cross-division management process to sustain and increase college annual enrollment.
- Governance – define the current state of shared governance through mapping of decisions.

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Student Leadership Award. He also received a Recognition Award from New Mexico Secretary of State Rebecca Vigil-Giron for “exemplary dedication and service in enhancing the quality of life among all the peoples of the Land of Enchantment.”

Currently Harvey is serving as the UNM-Gallup Student Senate President, and helped establish the UNM-G Collegiate Veteran Association, along with the Veterans’ Memorial Gallery. One of his plans is to “create a cohort of [student veterans] to acquire funding to assist student veterans that are in financial need to purchase books and other school supplies.” He also established the UNM-G Basketball Club in Fall 2004.

The father of a son, Harvey became interested in the plight of children he saw while in Iraq. Along with his plans for a career in Social Work and Law Enforcement, he says he may focus on working with children. He has already interned with a local government agency to work with children and families. The future may also hold a career in internal affairs with the BIA, he says. His current goal is continue his education and obtain a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Social Work.

A member of the Gallup Sunrise Kiwanis, he has helped with various Kiwanis projects, and also helped plan events with the National Indian Youth Leadership group. He is also a professional Native American jewelry inlayer.

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Re-Treeing Ramah: UNM-G Instructor Seeks to Replace Aging Giants

Driving into the Ramah Valley on a late spring or summer day is always a surprise. Visitors are struck not only by how green the valley is, but also how tall are the trees that grace this small village on Highway 53. Tourists stop and gaze up at the lofty giants – Lombardy poplars in most cases, but Carolina poplars west of the Ramah museum. The Lombardy poplars, towering over the village at heights of 100 feet, were planted in 1910.

However, the careful observer will note on closer examination that all is not well with the poplars. Many are showing signs of deterioration and disease, while some are dead already – great sawed-off stumps that leave gaps in the straight ranks of poplars. So what's going on here?

Linda Burson, an adjunct lecturer in Business Technology at UNM-Gallup's South Campus in Zuni, and a longtime resident of Ramah, has the answer – and she hopes, a solution to what appears to be the inevitable decline of the huge poplars.

The poplars were planted by Mormon pioneers in irrigation ditches as windbreaks, Burson explains. Twelve years ago the irrigation ditches were covered to control mosquitoes. Thus, the trees – heavy drinkers – were cut off from the bountiful source of water that had allowed them to grow to such great heights during the 20th century. Further, the average lifespan of the poplars is about a century, so many of those planted by the Mormon settlers have reached the end of their natural lives. And finally, drought, storms, and high winds have taken a toll over the years – damaging the trees so that they are weakened and less able to withstand disease and other trauma.

Seven years ago, Burson began trying to address the decline of the poplars in Ramah.

“I began a service-learning project with my UNM classes in Ramah called the Adopt-A-Tree program,” Burson said. “Originally the project was meant to be a one-time effort to provide trees at low cost to the community to plant in individual yards. However, the response was so positive that I have continued the tree project on an annual basis for the past seven years. Each year, the response of community members has been wonderful and the project has turned into a huge effort that has had to be divided into three separate mini-programs.”

Every spring, Burson’s UNM students at Ramah High take orders for ornamental shrubs, shade trees and fruit trees. The shrubs and shade trees are packaged and delivered around the first week of April. Fruit trees follow two weeks later. Evergreen orders are taken in the fall. All trees are sold at cost (that includes shipping).

Last year, the Ramah Adopt-A-Tree program reached the 10,000-tree mark, Burson said.

“Trees have now been placed in many communities, including a few in Grants and Gallup.” The majority of the trees have been planted around Ramah, Timberlake, Zuni and Pine Hill.

“If we continue to care for these trees, the shady lanes of Ramah will still be as beautiful and sheltering for the next generation as they are for us,” Burson said.
Enroll today in Spring 2007 Community Education classes.

Classes in the following: Gift Basket & Bow Making, Monday evenings, May 7 & 14, 6-8 p.m.; Beginners/Advanced Computer, April 9, 16, 23, 30, May 7, 14, 6-8 p.m. Monday evenings; Native Drum & Song, call 879.1239 or 863.7640 for more information.

Around the Campus

Maggie Robinson has joined the Bachelor and Graduate Programs as Student Program Advisor RN-BSN Bachelor’s of Nursing, advisement and recruitment. She worked for UNM Gallup seven years... Adult Basic Education is now reopened Monday through Thursday from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. in Gurley Hall, Room 2209-2211 (second floor). ... Florentin Smarandache, associate professor of mathematics, recently gave a presentation in Brussels at SensorFusion Europe, a conference on assuring accessibility of information for the warfighter. The conference and Smarandache’s attendance was sponsored by Marcus Evans company. ... Dean’s List T shirts are available in the Bookstore and Dean’s List students receive a voucher that they can exchange for a T shirt. ... Mary Snaden, Chair of Title III and Interim Chair of Transitional Studies, announced that the program has received 130 laptop computers for the students in the learning communities. The laptops, which have the UNM logo etched on top, come in a carrying case that also has the UNM logo embroidered on the front. Each student is being loaned a computer for the semester and will return it before the end of the semester. The computers all have CD burners and DVD players, as well as a wireless internet card. ... Campus Connections has been launched as a new mentoring program involving staff and students who volunteer to mentor two students each. A reception for mentors and mentees was held on February 20. ... The Information Technology Department of UNM-Gallup is planning to equip the campus with WIFI technology, so that students, faculty, and staff will be able to access the internet wirelessly. The projected date for completion is late May.

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Classroom Technology – to install key instructional technology in all classrooms.

In addition to beginning work on these action projects, each led by a team of campus faculty and staff, we are working closely with the Provost’s Office on Main Campus to coordinate our AQIP activity and the re-accreditation self-study that Main Campus has to submit in 2008 to the Higher Learning Commission.

AQIP is an exciting program that can help our campus colleagues to work closely together to help improve our processes and performance on behalf of our students.

Education Student Wins Free Gateway Computer

Francisco James of Zuni, a freshman Education student, won the drawing for the free Gateway computer that was given away in the spring. At left is Beth Miller, Executive Director of UNM-Gallup. The college gives away a free Gateway computer every spring and fall as an enrollment incentive.