

News-Sun

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50 cents

Community News

Country music star Lee Greenwood will be the highlight of the Hobbs July 4th community celebration Monday at the Lea County Event Center.

For more information, call 397-9291.

The scheduled events are:

- Family games from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. A bike and wagon decorating contest at 1 p.m. Diaper derby at 2 p.m.
- Tribute to Veterans at 3 p.m.
- Proclamation and fly over at 6 p.m.
- Lee Greenwood concert from 7-8 p.m. at the Lea County Event Center.
- Fireworks will be set off at Zia Park Black Gold Casino at 9:15 p.m.

Lovington's Fourth of July Party in the Park will be Monday. For more information or registration, contact the Lovington Chamber of Commerce at 396-5311.

Scheduled events include:

- Leaco Fishing Derby at 7:30 a.m.
- Flag raising at 8 a.m.
- The Kiwanis club treasure hunt, D&T backhoe bubble station and chalk art contest will be 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Lovington Leader lizard race will be at 2 p.m.
- A fireworks show will be at 9 p.m.



Health fair

Desert Gardens recently held a health fair. Above, from left, are June Long, Dale Haes, Moe Mosley, Mary Ryan and Brooks Easter.

At left are Bob and Mona Littlefield.

JENNA ARTHUR/NEWS-SUN

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Under one roof

Dispatchers for HPD, sheriff consolidated

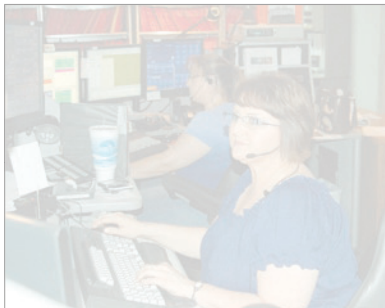
Hobbs and Lea County dispatchers are now under one roof in the former Hobbs Police Department.

The two sets combined Monday. Area residents who call HPD, the Lea County Sheriff's Department or 911 now hear someone answer the phone with, "communications authority."

The wording may be different, but the services are the same, HPD spokesman Officer Mike Stone said.

"We still get the calls," he said. "It's just like it was before only they answer the phone differently." The combined dispatching center, now called the Lea County Communications Authority, handles dispatching and emergency radio traffic for HPD, the Hobbs Fire Department, county fire departments and the Lea County Sheriff's Department.

Communications authority dis-



Emergency Communication Specialist Delana Riley and Chay Dunlap answer emergency calls Thursday at the Hobbs Police Department. Emergency calls to the Lea County Sheriff's Office and HPD are now answered in one location.

Dispatchers moved to HPD as a prelude to the opening of a combined Hobbs-Lea County Emergency Operations Center next year.

The \$4.5 million building is under construction on College Lane near Lovington Highway.

Eventually, the communications authority will move to the new location, but Tom Dunford said the operations were com-

pleted by the move to iron out any potential wrinkles. Dunford is the training coordinator for the Sheriff's Department who helped oversee the transition from two separate entities into one.

The transition began months ago, but all equipment and personnel were in place by Monday.

SEE DISPATCH, Page 4

NMJC to expand alternative energy program

BETH HAHN NEWS-SUN

New Mexico Junior College will harness two of the area's most abundant energy sources to help power part of the campus — and give students real world experience working on wind and solar equipment.

The college, in partnership with Marathon Oil Corporation and DCP Midstream, will install wind turbines and solar panels on the western edge of campus near the oil and gas training area.

Marathon Oil and DCP Midstream gave NMJC about \$200,000 in grant funds for the project. The college will add about another \$200,000 to complete the installation.

The project carries a \$116,000 price tag.

Robert Rhodes, vice president of training and outreach, said the installation will provide some electricity for the campus.

"The primary goal is to provide training for the students," he said. "But it could offset some power (usage) on the water well and the western side of the campus."

Rhodes said the wind and solar installation will power the school's rodeo arena, the Larry Hanna Training and Outreach building and a few other buildings in addition to the water well.

Rhodes estimated the renewable energy could save the college as much as \$1,500 a month on its electric bill.

The wind turbines and solar panels will be located on an eight-acre parcel on the western edge of campus. Rhodes said the area was

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Former Jal manager bound over for trial

ALMA OLIVAS-POSADAS NEWS-SUN

Former Jal City Manager Eva Sanchez, who is charged with allegedly attempting to embezzle \$150,000, appeared at the Hobbs Magistrate Court Thursday for a preliminary hearing that resulted in the case binding over to District Court.

Judge Richard Van Dyke found probable cause and bound the case to District Court. She is charged with embezzlement of \$150,000, a second degree felony.

On June 1, 2010, Sanchez allegedly deposited a check in the amount of \$150,000 into her personal account with Bank of America in Hobbs. Lea County wrote the check out to the City of Jal on May 27, 2011, as a grant to be used for repairs on the rooftop junior high.

Sanchez's attorney, Barry Crutchfield, said on Thursday his client deposited the check made out to the City of Jal into her personal bank account by mistake.

The City of Jal banks with Wells Fargo Bank. Jim Burke, director of administrative services and special projects of Lea County, was called to testify by district attorney Dianna Luco.

Burke said the agreement between the county and the City of Jal requires for the grant funds to be spent within two years.

Laura Ontiveros, the accounts payable specialist at the Lea County courthouse, testified she was told to contact Sanchez as soon as the check was ready to be picked up.

Maria Castillo, manager at the local Bank of America, said she came in contact with Sanchez on June 2, 2010. Castillo said Sanchez was inquiring about a check and she directed her to the customer service phone line.

Crutchfield said his client contacted the Bank of America's customer service line to inform them she had mistakenly deposited a check into her account.

Jal Mayor Cheryl Chance testified Thursday

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