Chamber talks Skill Ready Doña Ana in Washington, D.C.

Summit explores education and the private, public sector

On Tuesday, Sept. 17, the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce presented its Skill Ready Doña Ana program at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Summit, “Connecting the Dots: Education, Policy, Workforce,” in Washington, D.C.

This year’s summit explored the current role of federal, state and local public education as well as how both the private and public sectors are focusing efforts on the nation’s skills gap. A sold out room of more than 450 professionals were in attendance.

The day was broken up into two major panel discussions: a focus on common core standards and on addressing the skills gap.

In addition, speakers including Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and former U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings discussed the importance education plays in shaping the country’s new economy.

During the day, the U.S. Chamber unveiled its new Profiles of Change video series, which included a segment on The Bridge of Southern New Mexico and the Arrowhead Early College High School. To see the video in its entirety, visit http://profilesofchange.org and scroll down the right side of the screen.

The Addressing the Skills Gap panel included Bill Allen, CEO of the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce; Balaji Ganapathy, head of Workforce Effectiveness for Tata Consultancy Services; Peter Hutchinson, management consultant strategy lead for Accenture; and Wil James, president of Toyota Motor Manufacturing.

The panel was moderated by Andy Van Kluenen, executive director of the National Skills Coalition.

The panelists were selected because each of their organizations have contributed to closing the skills gap in their respective fields. Prior to beginning the skills gap panel, the video on The Bridge was shown, a perfect lead-in to the discussion on Skill Ready Doña Ana.

Feedback from both the panelists and the audience affirmed that we are doing the right thing in Doña Ana County. The key things noted were the collaboration that was evident here in southern New Mexico from both private and public sectors and the long-term focus of our initiative.

It was an honor to represent the Chamber, the business community and Las Cruces community at large in such a prestigious setting and among the people who attended the summit.

Up next is The Close It Summit in November, again in Washington, D.C. This summit will bring together business and education leaders, human resource practitioners, workforce and youth development innovators, social impact organizations and policy experts actively engaged in creating new talent pathways to close the skills gap and bridge the opportunity divide.

Members should be proud of all the national recognition that the Chamber is receiving for its programs and services; and because of what the Chamber is doing in Doña Ana County is being looked upon so positively, both trips are being sponsored.

Thanks to the U.S. Chamber and Innovate-Educate for their support. Stay tuned for a recap on the Close It Summit in the December edition of the Bottom Line.

Learn more about the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Profiles of Change series, and watch a video on The Bridge of Southern New Mexico and Arrowhead Early College High School, at http://profilesofchange.org.
FROM THE CHAIR

Perfect time of year

I t’s fall again – a perfect time of year.

Many of you reflect on the gratitude you feel in your heart that football season has returned after a nine-month hiatus. Others will think of the harvest that is occurring with our beautiful green and red chiles; a quilted pattern of fields up and down the valley. Many of you will think of the return of students to the classroom and the gratefulness that students are reading and learning.

All of these things are good things. In some ways, many of you will walk into our local stores and get a slight panic when you see holiday decorations up – and the uneasiness of already feeling behind. But the truth is fall is about opportunity. Yes, you guessed it – it’s election season.

On Tuesday, Sept. 24, nine individuals announced their intention to run for positions on the Las Cruces City Council and a municipal judge position. Election season provides an opportunity for the citizens and taxpayers of our city to take a hard look at the individuals considering these seats.

Did the incumbent’s voting records reflect the items that are important to you? Do the new candidates know about the importance and the economic impact the business community brings to the table?

Each citizen has an important role when we cast our ballots in November. Please take the time to get to know the candidates and ask them the critical questions that will enable you to decide if they are supportive of business in Las Cruces.

The Las Cruces Greater Chamber of Commerce is hosting a candidate forum to provide you an opportunity to meet the candidates. Please join us on at 5 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 15, in the KRWG studios on the New Mexico State University campus.

If you have any questions you would like presented to the candidates, call the Chamber office at 524-1968.

Finally, it wouldn’t be fall if we did not root for our beloved Aggies.

Leslie Cervantes, Chair of the Board
Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Busy week at Chamber

L ast week was a very busy week at the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce.

Six events in five days kept everyone on their toes and moving from place to place. In looking at the subject matter of a couple of last week’s events, I see that we continue to up our game in support of the business community.

If we really want to go back in time and look at where some of those changes began, we can look at the end of 2010 when we received a four-star accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for our business practices and processes.

To this day, we are still the only accredited chamber in the state of New Mexico. That also puts us in the top 7 percent of the 6,000-plus chambers in the country that have received a four-star accreditation or better.

Since then, we have continued to look for ways to change or add programs and services we deliver to our members that, in turn, deliver a good return for their investment in us. Fast forward to 2012 when we started Skill Ready Doña Ana, a program that is getting national attention because our business community is finding ways to bridge the skill gap for companies hiring in our area.

We also started our Junior Leadership program, designed to help high school juniors develop leadership skills and learn more about our community.

This year, we rolled out our free prescription cards, which will save employers, employees and their families money on prescriptions. Members should be receiving one shortly in a large mailer that is due out the beginning of October and they are also easily downloadable on our website.
“The Michigan car business was shaky and the winters were getting colder and colder,” said a smiling Lou Sisbarro, recalling his 1981 move to Las Cruces to open a car dealership. “That was 32 years ago. I think we made the right move.”

With more than 85,000 new and used car sales under his belt, Lou Sisbarro continues to smile.

Employing 200 people, The Sisbarro Dealerships’ automotive sales, service, parts and accessory operations stretch along the Interstate 10 in New Mexico from Deming to Las Cruces and into Sunland Park. Sisbarro’s new car and truck lines include Buick, GMC, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Volkswagen, Mitsubishi, Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep. Sisbarro has been ranked as southern New Mexico’s top volume used car dealer since 1991, according to Polk Cross-Sell data.

However, what makes Lou Sisbarro smile more than anything else is his advertising slogan – “Nobody beats a Sisbarro deal” – has come to mean much more than the price of a vehicle. The slogan also represents a commitment to his customers and community.

Lou Sisbarro has been a longtime supporter of the Las Cruces community, from the arts to youth activities and New Mexico State University athletics. His family’s involvement in local causes mirror his own.

His wife, Pat Sisbarro, was a founding co-chair of the NMSU Aggies Are Tough Enough To Wear Pink campaign, which, between 2007-12, generated more than $2.5 million for breast cancer research in southern New Mexico.

Son Dan Sisbarro and daughter Nicole Ikard, in addition to holding down key management positions in the Sisbarro dealership organization, are active on local boards and volunteer committees. Another son, Chip Sisbarro, is a teacher in Phoenix.

“There was a time when a car dealership was a central, driving force in a local economy, and dealers put a lot of money back into the community,” Lou Sisbarro said. “That’s what my wife, Pat, and I have done since we got here. It is so important to be involved and to give back to the people who have supported our business for so long.”

What does the future hold for the Sisbarro family and The Sisbarro Dealerships?

“I see our business growing and changing with Las Cruces and southern New Mexico,” Lou Sisbarro said. “You can’t convince me there is a better, more prosperous place to live.

“As we finish our 30th year in business, I hope my children continue the Sisbarro name. But they may have to wait because I have another 30 years left in me.”

Nobody beats a Sisbarro deal ... guaranteed!
Understanding ACA

U.S. Chamber offers insight into health insurance

The first big requirement under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has passed. Employers faced a compliance date of Oct. 1 and needed to provide a notice of coverage options to each employee, regardless of plan enrollment status (if applicable) or of part-time or full-time status. Although the ACA’s employer mandate was delayed, the delay had no effect on the requirement for employers to provide this form.

Current employees should have received the notice by Oct. 1. In addition, from that date forward, employers must provide the notice to each new employee at the time that he/she is hired.

For 2014, the Department of Labor (DOL) will consider a notice to be provided at the time of hiring if the notice is provided within 14 days of an employee’s start date.

The notice informs the employee of:
- The existence of the Health Insurance Marketplace (Marketplace), also called an exchange
- A description of services
- How to contact the Marketplace
- Additional required information

The notice also provides information about the employer’s health plan, or lack thereof.

The DOL issued temporary guidance on what it will consider as compliance with the notice requirement.

Model notices

The DOL also created two model notices: one model for employers who do not offer a health plan and a second model for covered employers who offer a health plan for some or all employees.

Employers covered by the notice requirement

The exchange notice requirement applies to all employers covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Generally, the FLSA covers employers that employ one or more employees and who are engaged in, or produce goods for, interstate commerce. For most firms, a test of not less than $500,000 in annual dollar volume of business applies. The FLSA automatically covers some specific entities, including federal, state and local government agencies, hospitals and most schools.

The DOL provides a tool to help companies determine the applicability of the FLSA.

Specific questions about whether your organization is covered by the notice requirement should be directed to your benefits administrator or other benefits expert.

Delivery of notice

Business owners must provide the notice in writing, and in a way that is understood by the average employee. The notice must be provided free of charge.

See ACA on following page
MANN

WSMR welcomes new director

Mann takes over position left vacant in March

Paul Mann has been named the White Sands Missile Range executive director and began his duties on Sept. 9.

He fills the position previously held by Robert Carter. Carter left WSMR in March to become the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command Executive Technical director/deputy to the Commander in Aberdeen, Md. ATEC is the higher headquarters for test operations at WSMR.

White Sands Missile Range Commander Brig. Gen. Gwen Bingham said, “Mr. Mann joins TEAM WSMR with superior experience spanning a 30-year career with the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Office of the Secretary of Defense.”

Mann’s most recent assignment was as director, Land Warfare & Munitions, Strategic and Tactical Systems, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense, Acquisition Technology and Logistics, The Pentagon. Prior to his OSD assignment, he served as the Joint Program Manager for the Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) Vehicles Program when the program was at its peak activity level in response to urgent requirements coming out of Iraq.

Mann was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 2010. During his career he has also served in the Naval Sea Systems Command as division director (SEA 61) Warfare Systems Engineering and Architecture and division director (SEA 62) and Force Readiness, Test and Certification for the directorate (SEA 06).

ACA

Continued from page 4

Employers are not required to provide a separate notice to dependents or other individuals who are, or may become, eligible for coverage under the plan but who are not employees.

The notice can be provided by first-class mail or electronically. Electronic delivery of the notice must meet the requirements of the DOL’s electronic disclosure safe harbor. Generally:

• The administrator of the employee benefit plan must ensure that the system used to furnish the documents results in actual receipt of transmitted information (such as using a return-receipt or bounce back feature) and protects confidentiality of personal information relating to the individual’s account or benefits.

• Electronic notification can be provided only if the participant has regular access to the employer’s electronic information system as part of his/her job duties, or has provided affirmative written consent to receive an electronic distribution.

This is just a general overview of the electronic notice requirements. More information about these requirements can be found by reading the existing regulation 29 CFR 2520.104b-1(c). Questions should also be directed to your benefits administrator or benefits expert.

Things to know

• The exchange notices require employer input.

• The model notices can be modified as long as they provide the required content. Refer to DOL’s temporary guidance document for what needs to be included and consult with your benefits expert before making changes.

• The notice must be provided to all employees, full time and part time.

• Some of the information on the forms is optional. Your company may want to include the optional information if it is helpful to employees and will give them a better understanding of the exchange and of any company-offered coverage.

• Some employers choose to provide additional information to employees along with the notice. For instance, some employers choose to provide additional general information regarding the ACA’s implementation or to explain the ACA’s actual effect on their employees. Again, consult with your current benefits administrator or other benefits expert as to any additional information you wish to provide.

Incorrect completion of Form I-9 proves costly

All employers must complete a Form I-9 for each employee, verifying that he/she is legally authorized to work in the United States. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals recently upheld $172,000 in fines against an employer who failed to correctly complete the Form I-9.

Compliance with Form I-9 requirements is an essential business practice. In the case of Ketchikan Drywall Services Inc. v. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2013 WL 3988679, demonstrates, “Where KDS chose to hire employees who failed to fill out Section 1 completely, it did so at its own peril,” said the court.

KDS argued that it was not responsible for errors or omissions of its employee. But federal law, as the Ninth Circuit pointed out, clearly makes employers responsible for reviewing and ensuring that the employee fully and properly completed Section 1.

“Where KDS chose to hire employees who failed to fill out Section 1 completely, it did so at its own peril,” said the court.

KDS was also penalized because of errors it made in Section 2 of the Form I-9, the section that the employer must fill out. Critically, the employer representative failed to sign the Form I-9. The employer must have a representative sign and date Section 2 attesting under penalty of perjury that:

1. The representative examined the original documents

2. The documents appeared to be genuine

Things to know

• The exchange notices require employer input.

• The model notices can be modified as long as they provide the required content. Refer to DOL’s temporary guidance document for what needs to be included and consult with your benefits expert before making changes.

• The notice must be provided to all employees, full time and part time.

• Some of the information on the forms is optional. Your company may want to include the optional information if it is helpful to employees and will give them a better understanding of the exchange and of any company-offered coverage.

• Some employers choose to provide additional information to employees along with the notice. For instance, some employers choose to provide additional general information regarding the ACA’s implementation or to explain the ACA’s actual effect on their employees. Again, consult with your current benefits administrator or other benefits expert as to any additional information you wish to provide.

Employers responsible for errors made by employees

Many of KDS’s Forms I-9 contained numerous errors in Section 1; the portion of the form filled out by the employee. These errors included:

• Failing to check any box attesting to the employee’s status as an employee eligible to work in the United States

• Checking multiple boxes attesting to conflicting statuses

• Failing to provide alien registration numbers (for lawful permanent residents)

An employee must check a box attesting to the specific category of employment eligibility into which he/she fits. This is a substantive requirement. Attaching a copy of identity and work authorization documents is not an acceptable alternative to fulfilling this requirement.

KDS argued that it was not responsible for errors or omissions of its employee. But federal law, as the Ninth Circuit pointed out, clearly makes employers responsible for reviewing and ensuring that the employee fully and properly completed Section 1.

Best practices

This case highlights the need for employers to pay close attention to correctly completing the Form I-9.

• Ensure that you use the correct version of Form I-9. The USCIS recently published a new version of Form I-9. Beginning May 7, employers must use only the new Form I-9. Previous versions will not be accepted.

• Visit the HR Library for information on completing the Form I-9.

• Review the Form I-9; the form itself includes six pages of instructions.

• Make sure that any employer representative who collects, completes and reviews Form I-9s is properly trained on how to complete the form and what constitutes acceptable documentation.

• The USCIS makes the “Handbook for Employers, Instructions for Completing the Form I-9 (M-274)” available for employers to consult for additional information on completing the Form I-9.
Mission: To serve Doña Ana County by providing free and confidential pregnancy tests, STD tests, ultrasounds, options counseling, mentoring and education.

Purpose: To promote God’s design for cherishing life.

Key goals: Restoring a hope and a future for young men and women in our community.

History: Turning Point of Las Cruces Inc. opened its doors in October 2010. Since then, it continues to double the number of clients seen on a quarterly basis. Turning Point has developed partnerships within the community to serve those who need its services.

Key people to know:
- Volunteer Medical Director Anthony Levatino, MD
- Executive Director Deborah Taylor
- Stan Richardson, owner of King’s Treasure, a thrift store on the corner of Missouri Avenue and Solano Drive that was opened to help support Turning Point

Events and activities:
- Turning Point will hold a Baby Expo in March 2014. Organizers are looking for sponsors for this event. This will be an everything-baby-related event – everything young parents need as far as OB/GYNs, early intervention agencies, photographers, reading programs, etc.

Future plans:
- Turning Point’s future plans are to implement programs to support the young people it sees becoming parents, such as Earn While You Learn, where parents can earn “points” for attending classes related to healthy development for the baby and the parents, as well as classes including birthing, breastfeeding, bonding, parenting and marriage. They return to Turning Point with the “points” and exchange them for baby items.

Since opening its doors in 2010, Turning Point of Las Cruces Inc. has provided Doña Ana County with a variety of resources and educational opportunities.

Nonprofit of the Month - October 2013

Turning Point of Las Cruces Inc.

2906 Hillrise Drive • 575-520-1147 • WWW.PREGNANCYLASCRUCES.COM

President

Continued from page 2

Back to last week, Tuesday, Sept. 24, we held our first Candidates Training class, a session designed to inform both candidates – current and prospective – and campaign supporters who are interested in the best ideas out there in order to be successful in their political ambitions. We will be following this up with our Candidates Forum – held at the KRWG studios – where we will ask the candidates for the three city council spots their take on business-related issues.

Thursday, Sept. 26, we held our second event centered on the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare. It’s coming, and by the time you read this, one item that needs employer involvement will already be in place.

We have one more event on this topic planned for late October, as things are changing almost daily on this subject.

All of this is incremental to the great things that we have delivered for years – and we have done all of this without increasing staff. We continue to get more efficient in our day to day processes.

So what’s next? We are testing a new database program that we feel will be of great benefit to our members as well as our staff. One feature our members should take advantage of, and we will be putting on training sessions on a monthly basis on this, is a member login feature that will allow you unprecedented access to your information and give you the ability to place special offers to fellow chamber members on our website that they will see when they log in to their space.

This will serve as a great “shop local” feature. We are also implementing a completely redesigned website at the same time. I think that you will really like it.

Our plan is to go live with this on Nov. 1. You will be seeing and hearing more on this great new benefit.

Bill Allen
President/CEO
Greater Las Cruces
Chamber of Commerce
2013 has been great in so many ways. Each month, I am amazed at the support and passion the Conquistadores give to the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce’s members, each other and the community.

I continue to be a proud member of the Conquistadores and have been honored to serve as chair for the group. Throughout the year, our Conquistador membership has grown to more than 60 members.

I would like to thank the entire Conquistador membership for giving their time, talents and treasures to the Conquistador program. This group educates new members, recruits, donates back to the community, hosts Las Cruces Day in Santa Fe and participates in ribbon cuttings, special projects and so much more.

I would like to personally thank the executive council for all of their hard work. Thank you to Rick Jackson, Sarah Stegall, Charissa Paskowski, Mary Iadicicco, Karissa Doan, Kari Shepan, Bruce Drum, Leslie Martinez, David Telford and Troy Tudor.

The next three months will continue to be a busy season for our group. Make sure to register for 2014 Las Cruces Day in Santa Fe in February next year. This is an advocacy trip you will not want to miss. For more information, visit www.lcdsf.com.

Over the next three months, I am looking forward to welcoming new members to the Chamber, seeing you all at a networking event and helping our local business community grow and flourish.

If you are interested in becoming a goodwill ambassador for the Chamber, serve a vital role for the membership or enhance your leadership skills, contact the Chamber office at 524-1968 and learn how you can get involved.

Thanks for all that you do!

Stacie Allen,
Chair of the Council of Conquistadores 2013
Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce

Chamber offers training to candidates

The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce held its Candidate’s Training event Tuesday, Sept. 24, at the Cineport 10 Theatre in Mesilla Valley Mall. This was the only event of its kind held in southern New Mexico. The training was conducted by two attorneys who practice law throughout the state of New Mexico, Chris Saucedo and Mo Chavez of Saucedo Chavez P.C., an Albuquerque-based law firm. In addition to topics that included the campaign team, the campaign plan, fundraising, campaigning and Election Day, the two attorneys gave real-world examples of things to do and things to avoid based on their vast experience—both as a candidate for office, in Saucedo’s case, and as campaign supporters working for both parties.

The Chamber was proud to be able to put on an event of this kind for local politically minded individuals. The follow up event to this will be the Candidates Forum to be held Monday, Oct. 28, at the KRWG studios on the New Mexico State University campus.

Mo Chavez, Bill Allen and Chris Saucedo set the stage for what will be discussed during the Chamber’s Candidate Training session.

Conquistadores a vital part of Chamber

Governor’s Update Luncheon

Staying informed about upcoming legislation is vital to the success of business. This luncheon provides an important opportunity for the business community to hear from Governor Susana Martinez and get updated on the current legislative session as well as a “state of the state,” address.

The Governor’s Update Luncheon is the fifth event in the Chamber’s Membership Update Luncheon series that works to keep the business community informed on the issues and developments that effect owners and employees.

October 18, 2013
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 pm
Las Cruces Convention Center

Tickets are $30 for members and $60 for non-members. To RSVP, contact the Chamber at 575-524-1968 or register online at www.lascruces.org
The rains of risk
Floods were a common part of the cycle

By Stephen L. Wilmeth

Growing up listening to rain on a tin roof in the dark of county nights remains a reassuring memory.
Those nights sleeping out on the screened porch will be the best of times. They were spent at my grandparent’s home where rain was tied inexorably to survival. Rain meant grass and grass meant survival to ranching families. You knew from the demeanor of everybody that the seasonal drought had broken and the cycle would begin anew.
The floods were also part of the cycle. We knew from stories of the impact of the flood of 1941 to the communities along the Gila. We experienced smaller floods and the aftermath was striking.
When the first monster flood came along in my life, 1972, the immensity and the anger of that flood were breathtaking. From bank to bank in the narrows, it devoured the valley.
Those deep waters were not at all quiet. Rather, the immensity of the waters was like zippers and fields leveled and protected for years were cut and scourered.
Stories circulated of how residents in lower areas awakened to the advancing waters much like listening to an approaching locomotive. One fellow at Red Rock was awakened when his dog jumped onto his bed wet and trembling. Irritated, he kicked the dog off the bed realizing the sound of the splash was right there in the room with him. His home was inundated.
He stumbled to his barn in freezing, chest-high water to open the gates to his horses. The first horse bolted by him and off into the night. He caught the second and swung up on him and rode to the bridge below his house. Miraculously he stayed on the road bed and crossed the bridge as waters flowed over the top of it, covering any indication of guard rails and the savage waters beyond.
The Mesilla Valley floods of the late 1950s approached the ferocity of the still unprotected Gila watershed. The giants in the days before Elephant Butte no longer ravage the watershed, but downstream flooding in the Rio Grande is not a thing of the past.
The flood of 2006 in Hatch stands as a stark reminder to all residents. The potential remains unchecked, and the lurking danger floods pose to a growing community downstream cannot be disregarded.
The breach of the dam that flooded parts of La Union should serve as a wake up call to leaders. A privately built dam, it is one of more than 100 dams built in the last 60 years to protect farmland. Like the others, it was not intended to protect lives and personal property. It was intended to diminish the threat to farmland.
Because residential growth has been forced into that farmland, these dams have become the only protective devices for homes and personal property. They were never intended to serve at the higher protective levels afforded residential construction, but they are the only protective structures.
Every component of watershed in the county faces the eventual flood experienced by Hatch. Only a handful of the dams can be relied upon to provide adequate protection.
The La Union dam is a case study of expectations to come. The dam, highly silted, had to withstand the onslaught of water without accompanying upslope structures to slow the water, spread the water and alter the impact intensity to the dam. That is exactly the problem facing the entire county when restrictive federal land designations disallow, impede, or restrict access to areas upslope from those dams.
The only recourse is to receive the floodwater at full intensity and seek highest cost protection in the future. By relying on these large dams only, the only course of action without upslope access is to build them bigger. Where those funds come from is an unknown.
What is known, though, is that floods will continue. They are an inevitable risk that our citizenry face in living in a narrow river valley. They also pose the least desirable approach on the basis of system stewardship. In arid conditions, the mission of watershed management should be “Runoff must be managed and minimized, and retention addressed and maximized.”
Brush control projects; numerous and strategically placed retention, spreading, and settling devices; and transition structures tied to Elephant Butte Irrigation District’s distribution system are the answers to the matter of real stewardship. They are also the least expensive approach to comprehensive flood management and system health.
They are threatened by the restrictive measures of federal protective land management designations. Without full and unencumbered access to all upper reaches of our watershed, our citizenry is at high risk. Passion for protection is one thing, but jeopardizing community safety is quite another.

Stephen L. Wilmeth is a rancher from southern New Mexico.
Laura Smart’s goals are pretty simple – educate people, inspire health and wellness, extol the virtues of proper nutrition and keep people away from the doctor’s office.

How does she plan to do that? Well, she believes that Arbonne’s products are one way to do just that.

Why Arbonne? Arbonne is a 34-year-old company that focuses its efforts on gluten-free botanical based products. With more than 260 different products available, there is something for everyone – men, women, babies and seniors. The product mix is varied, including beauty and nutrition items.

With this home-based business, Smart is able to structure her schedule to meet her client’s needs; preferring to sit one-on-one with people in order to best help them.

For those of you who know Smart, you already know how much she gives back to the community. Arbonne is highly geared toward non-profits, with Big Brothers Big Sisters being one entity it supports. Smart herself believes in giving back and it is very rare she does not attend a ribbon cutting representing the Conquistadores or does not have a spa package as part of a silent auction at a non-profit event around town.

Smart said she feels that Arbonne is the best kept secret in the world as they don’t do any corporate advertising. It is currently sold in the United States, Canada, Australia and United Kingdom with plans to expand into a Latin country in the near future.

Smart is also a perfect example of a successful business woman who has used networking to the fullest. Most of her clients come via referral, which is easy to understand given the industry that she serves.

At the same time, just like everyone else, she needs to ask for the referral. With a growing client base, what would Smart like to accomplish?

“Eliminate obesity,” she said without hesitation.

She said, “New Mexico is ranked as the 47th healthiest state in the country” nothing to crow about and I would like Las Cruces to be the pioneer of healthy lifestyles in the state.”

That sounds like a great cause.

New Mexico obesity rates

- 59.8 percent of adults are overweight
- 25.1 percent of adults are obese
- 29.8 percent of adults reported having consumed fruits at the recommended level of two or more times per day.
- 27.3 percent of adults reported having consumed vegetables at the recommended level of three or more times per day.
- 48.6 percent of adults achieved at least 300 minutes a week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity or 150 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (or an equivalent combination).
- 22.4 percent of New Mexico’s adults reported that during the past month, they had not participated in any physical activity
- 14.6 percent of adolescents are overweight
- 13.5 percent of adolescents are over weight

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Laura Smart is an Arbonne distributor and advocate for the Las Cruces community.
Leadership Las Cruces visits Spaceport America

Ag Day looks at NMSU’s work at experimental site

By Bill Allen

The September Leadership Las Cruces topic was agriculture. In addition to some very interesting ag education, the class also got a tour of Spaceport America.

You might be struggling to figure out how those two areas meet up. So was I when the team assigned for this month called and asked if they could deviate from the norm and what is on the horizon as next year marks its inaugural flight.

For the majority of the class, it was their first trip out to spaceport and it put a lot of what they have heard into perspective, especially the current discussions on the need for the “southern road.”

During the bus trip, we used the time to educate the class on several ag topics including the production of New Mexican cheese, honey, pecans, wine and red chilies utilizing a DVD called “Field Trip,” which was produced by KRWG with the support of the Cooperative Education Service at New Mexico State University and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture.

From there we went to the Leyendecker Experiment Station at NMSU for a tour. Everyone was surprised to hear about the work being done with cotton seeds and all the things that the seeds can produce – including salad oils, crispy treats such as Cheetos, aquaculture food and how the scientists have found ways to even use the byproducts from the seeds to produce bio diesel fuel and soap.

It was a great discussion that started by talking about cotton producing T-shirt and blue jean material. Don’t be surprised if in a few months you see locally grown shrimp – yes shrimp – which are being raised at NMSU and fed with cotton seeds or aquaculture food.

I thought that this change from the standard was a great display of Leadership – just what this class is all about.

Chamber welcomes new Junior Leadership class

Participants to experience eight months of training

The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce is pleased to welcome its 2013-14 Junior Leadership participants – 22 high school juniors from area public and private schools. The year will kick off with orientation Wednesday, Oct. 8.

The Junior Leadership program, modeled on the Chamber’s highly successful Leadership Las Cruces program, takes area students on seven all-day training sessions throughout the school year. The training sessions run for eight months and involve speakers, field trips and events. The program’s mission is to help shape tomorrow’s leaders today.

Throughout the year, the class will spend each day focused on a specific segment of the Las Cruces area’s economic engine, including economic development, health care, education, military, agriculture, state and local government and other community topics such as the arts, tourism and nonprofit organizations.

The Junior Leadership program is led by Chamber President/CEO Bill Allen and co-chairs and Leadership Las Cruces alums Stacie Allen, Charissa Paskowski, Eric Montgomery, Mandy Leatherwood and Swanne Griffin.

A big thank you to the sponsors who are investing in the future and helping the Chamber provide a strong leadership program for these young adults. Thanks goes out to MountainView Regional Medical Center, Memorial Medical Center, El Paso Electric Co. and Hotel Encanto de Las Cruces.

Other sponsorship opportunities are still available for Junior Leadership. For more information on available sponsorships, contact Chamber Vice President of Development Troy Tudor at 524-1968 or ttudor@lascruces.org.

2013-2014 Junior Leadership class

Arrowhead Early College High School
Mario Alderete
Nicole A Cano
Jocelyne Chavez
Johnathan Delgado
Karis Funk
Isahah Gutierrez
Bethany Hays
Yesina Rodriguez

Centennial High School
Sofia Bali
Allison Denny
Addison Pedraza

Las Cruces High School
Felivola Abudushalamu
Priscilla Amaya
Connie Hu
Nathan Sanchez

Mayfield High School
Kelli Duran
Sophia Estrada
Molly Olson
Anthony Soto

Oñate High School
Lauren Anderson
Alyssa (Nikki) Ruiz
Matthew Sierra

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BUSINESS AFTER HOURS AT DE LA VEGA’S

Raquel Pando joins The Hooligans performing on the outdoor patio De La Vega’s Pecan Grill & Brewery during the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours Thursday, Sept. 26.

New seasonal and corporate memberships available, starting at $230 per month.*

6861 Via Campestre, Las Cruces, NM 575.523.8641 • www.picachohillscc.com

*Certain restrictions apply. Please call for details.

You deserve a view.

80 hours at work. 160 hours of stress. 3,426 emails.

Ashley Springer, De La Vega’s director of operations, and Dominic Silva

Audrey Valdez, Pamela Fletcher and Bruce Drum

Anna Mae Evans, Darlene Stalder, Reese Carson and Tracy Alexander

Boxer Austin Trout and Chamber CEO Bill Allen

Paul Mann, new executive director of White Sands Missile Range

Russell Allen and Ron Camuñez
RIBBON CUTTINGS

LAS CRUCES ARTS ASSOCIATION – Sept. 6, 2013, 138 W. Mountain St. – Assistant Director Annette Paajanen holds the proclamation while September Artist of the Month Wendy Baldwin and Director Cecy Wren cut the ribbon.

SCHLOTZSKY’S – Sept. 26, 1763 E. University Ave., Suite A – Manager Mike Melendez holds the proclamation while Leo Galvez, general manager, cuts the ribbon.

WESET – Aug. 26, 221 N. Main St. – Mainstreet Business Center CEO Doug Campion and Program Coordinator and Trainer Jo Ann Garay hold the proclamations while Regional Director Jennifer Craig cuts the ribbon.

ROADRUNNER FOOD BANK, SOUTHERN BRANCH – Sept. 13, 2001 Copper Loop – Manager of Community Relations Valerie Torres holds the proclamation while President and CEO Melody Wattenbarger cuts the ribbon.

MISSION LUTHERAN SCHOOL – Aug. 26, 2752 N. Roadrunner Parkway – Principal and Music Director Ruth Staffeldt holds the proclamation while fifth-graders Diego Avena and Noah Raess cut the ribbon.

ALAMEDA STREET GRAND RE-OPENING – Sept. 12 – City Councillor Nathan Small, District 4, holds the proclamation while City Councillor Miguel Silva, District 1, Mayor Pro-Tem Sharon Thomas District 6 and Suzanne Tent, owner of the Alameda House, cuts the ribbon.

MISSION LUTHERAN SCHOOL – Aug. 26, 2752 N. Roadrunner Parkway – Principal and Music Director Ruth Staffeldt holds the proclamation while fifth-graders Diego Avena and Noah Raess cut the ribbon.

NEW MEXICO’S EXPERTS IN WORKERS’ COMP.
New Members

New Mexico Educational Assistance Foundation  
Oscar Garcia  
505-761-2030

Raymond James Financial Services  
Frank Szalay  
526-9006

Rio Grande Estate Sale LLC  
Mark Leitch  
993-1699

Consolidated Solar Technologies  
Bruce Ball

American Medical Response  
Joaquin Graham

Amped Electric  
Natalie Chadborn

Arbonne International - Laura Smart  
Laura Smart

Arbors of Del Rey  
Michael Manzanares

Arrowhead Executive Office Center  
Michele Ungvarskey

Brenda Alvarez  
Brenda Alvarez

CC’s Bath Bar  
Natalie Chadborn

Cervantes Enterprises Inc.  
Dino Cervantes

City of Las Cruces - Executive Staff  
Janice Jones

Coas Books Inc.  
Michael Beckett

Consolidated Solar Technologies  
Bruce Ball

Cupit & Company Inc.  
Renee Cupit

DACC Career Services  
Rosa De La Torre-Burmeister

Doña Ana County  
Sue Padilla

DreamCatcher Inn B&B  
Anita McLeod

Electrical Contracting Services  
Mel Holguin

Exit Realty Horizons - Bruce Crichton  
Bruce Crichton

Featherlite Building Products  
Martin Diaz

Fillmore Eye Clinic  
Parley Fillmore

Hampton Inn & Suites  
Imesh Vaidya

Holiday Inn Express-Las Cruces North  
Victor Delgado

Indelible Enterprises LLC  
Julie Seton

Las Cruces Bulletin  
Richard Coltharp

Las Cruces Convention Center  
David Hicks

Las Cruces Public Schools  
Leslie Cervantes

Las Cruces Security Services Inc.  
W. Pete Hampton

Mary Beth Reinhart  
Mary Beth Reinhart

Mesilla Valley Christian Schools  
Lori Conn

Mesilla Valley Insurance Group  
Patricia Wood

Mesilla Valley Maze LLC  
Anna Marie Lyles

Mundy Appraisal Services  
Karen I. Mundy, MAI

NAI 1st Valley  
Randy McMillan

New Mexico Health Insurance Alliance  
Michael Nunez

New Mexico Workforce Connection  
Richard Wagner

NRC Business Services  
Natalie Chadborn

RT Electric Inc.  
Tim Shoffstall

Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary  
Lorna Harris

Scott Hulse, PC  
Anna Moncada

Sports Accessories Inc.  
Brian Cox

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Larry Martinez

Telstar Networks  
Jodie York

Torres Welding Inc.  
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The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce is the primary advocate for the greater Las Cruces business community, dedicated to fostering growth and opportunity by focusing on communication, education and participation.

**FULFILLING THE COMMUNITY NEED**

The following statistics from the past 30 days indicate the number of individuals interested in learning more about the chamber by visiting the website. Those who have visited the site inquired about relocation advice as well as the approximate number of member business referrals by chamber staff members.

19,436 people visited the chamber’s website

52 people inquired about relocation

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**Las Cruces Quick Facts**

**HOUSING PRICE INDEX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>June ‘12 Median</th>
<th>June ‘13 Median</th>
<th>% change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Las Cruces (Doña Ana County)</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$188,800</td>
<td>$214,200</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
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**CHAMBER BY THE NUMBERS**

**RESERVE SPACE NOW**

CALL 575-680-1979

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**2014 SOUTHWEST NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE GUIDE**

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Sunspot ranked among top solar contractors in nation

Locally owned and operated Sunspot Solar Energy has been recognized among the nation’s top solar energy contractors by Solar Power World magazine in its September issue. Ranked by the total amount of megawatts (MW) they installed in 2012, Sunspot was number 40 among residential contractors nationwide and 128 among all contractors. Each year, Solar Power World ranks solar energy contractors across the nation based on the total megawatts of new installs in the previous year. Commercial systems installed by Sunspot in 2012 accounted for .517 MW and residential installations reached .893 MW, for a combined total of 1.41 MW. That makes Sunspot the highest-ranked New Mexico-based residential solar contractor on this year’s list.

El Paso Electric employees honored for contributions to the community

El Paso Electric Co. employees have contributed more than 14,000 hours to their communities in the past year. This accomplishment was cause for celebration at EPE’s Annual Volunteers in Action Breakfast on Friday, Sept. 20. EPE employees were honored for their contributions to the community and four awards were presented to recognize exceptional community leadership.

El Paso Electric’s MegaWatt Award is presented to those employees who have demonstrated Excellence in Community Service. This year’s recipients are: Kirk Clifton, senior project manager finance; Patricia Carrillo, customer service representative; John Hupfer, employee communications specialist; and Joe Garibay, director of customer service.

Doña Ana Community College receives $100,000

The Hunt Family Foundation, founded by Woody and Gayle Hunt from El Paso, TX, has awarded a grant for $100,000 for the Doña Ana Community College Scholarship Program, which is administered by the NMSU Foundation. The $100,000 will be matched with earnings from the John Wynne scholarship endowment at the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico.

This scholarship is to benefit the students from Doña Ana County, in particular high school graduates from the Gadsden Independent School District, with a declared major in business, information systems, health and public services, or technical studies.

The check presentation and reception took place Monday, Sept. 23, at the DACC Gadsden Center.

Las Cruces Dunkin’ Donuts joins 2013 TETWP campaign

New Mexico State University Aggies Are Tough Enough to Wear Pink organizers announced that the new Dunkin’ Donuts store at 2527 N. Main St. has joined the 2013 TETWP campaign with a special offer on coffee.

“Dunkin’ Donuts is anxious to really be a part of our wonderful community,” said TETWP volunteer Marsha San Fillipo. “Once we made contact, things happened fast. We are really excited about their participation.”

According to a promotional flyer, Dunkin’ Donuts will contribute $5 from every sale of a special TETWP travel mug to the 2013 campaign. After the purchase of the mug, Dunkin’ Donuts will provide free coffee refills from October to November.

“This is yet another example of how the Las Cruces business community rolls up their sleeves and makes things happen for us,” said TETWP co-chair Pat Sisbarro. “Marsha San Fillipo and the Dunkin’ Donuts team put out this together in record time and we are really looking forward to them on our team.”
You are invited
31st ANNUAL
Cowboys for Cancer research

Dinner • Dance • Silent Auction

31st ANNUAL
Cowboys for Cancer research

FRIDAY OCTOBER 11, 2013
DOORS OPEN AT 5:30PM
HAPPY HOUR FROM 5:30PM-6:30PM
DINNER AT 7:00PM
AT LAS CRUCES CONVENTION CENTER

Music by: The Delk Band
Single Tickets: $100 (Open Seating)
SINGLE TICKETS are available at
Horse N Hound Feed N Supply
at 991 W. Amador or 575-523-8790
Reserved Tables of 10 Guests: $1,200
To purchase RESERVED TABLE tickets only,
Please call: 575-526-2887
Credit Cards are accepted.

STEWARD OF THE SADDLE
is a Cowboys for Cancer Research (C4CR) tradition established in 2010, that consists of a prestigious group of C4CR supporters. Membership to this prestigious group is obtained by winning the trophy saddle during the live auction held during the C4CR Dinner and Dance. The highest bidder is declared the “Steward of the Saddle”, and will retain the saddle (and braggin’ rights) for one year, as well as receive a custom made trophy buckle to keep. Don’t miss your chance to become the Steward of the Saddle!

Proceeds support cancer research at NMSU and UNM Cancer Center.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO CANCER CENTER
NM STATE UNIVERSITY
UNM HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

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