

K.E.N.W. F.M. **News** Community Issues Report

Third Quarter 2023

Education:

7/10/2023 With the summer winding down and school just around the corner libraries in Roswell held a “Back to School” reading initiative to get children and teens ready. The effort included educators sitting down with students entering their next grade to help them prepare for their return to the classroom.

9/24/2023 Students enrolled in Science classes at Portales Middle School paid a visit to Black Water Draw Museum to learn more about pre-historic Eastern New Mexico. After the field trip students were to apply their learning to curriculum in the classrooms.

Public Safety:

7/13/2023 With a reduction in funds for local law enforcement agencies city leaders in Texico, New Mexico began recruitment of local residents as part of their Community Policing Program, including expansion of neighborhood watch programs to deal with potential crime during peak hours.

8/16/2023 Faced with a huge increase in traffic accidents the Portales Police Department unveiled a new program which included cameras in high traffic areas of the city. The installation of the technology followed a community campaign aimed at drivers slowing down, respecting other motorists on the road and following traffic rules.

Health:

8/3/2023 As concerns increase over the release of “forever” chemicals into the water supply of Clovis, Portales and Elida by Cannon Air Force Base cleanup efforts began, including the installation of filters for water used by farmers and ranchers in the area. The air force base also set up a citizen concerns helpline to help answer questions about the contaminated groundwater.

9/17/2023 Despite the huge need in Southeastern New Mexico for mental health programs the construction of a mental health center in Hobbs was put on hold, due to the dismal recruitment efforts of mental health professionals. In response New Mexico Junior College in Hobbs developed mental health programs for students wanting to enter the field, free of charge, courtesy of a community funding initiative.

Governmental

7/26/2023 With an unusually hot summer came increased water use in Portales, prompting city leaders to initiate a water rationing and enforcement policy which restricted use of water for lawns, gardens, washing cars and filling pools. The Portales City Council also moved forward with a plan to study the possibility of a larger storage tank which could be filled at times that water usage is down.

8/31/2023 A major pipeline is completed that will help Eastern New Mexico communities deal with increasing demand for water, drought and a depleting aquifer. The pipeline is part of the Ute Lake Water Supply Project, funded by local, state and federal government agencies to meet future demands for water in the area. The project is expected to be completed in the Summer of 2027

Environmental:

8/18/2023 Remediation efforts continue in Las Vegas, NM following devastating wild fires which swept through the area in late 2022. FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, has received more than 300 million dollars as local leaders continue to work with residents to help in assisting them with losses and cleanup efforts. A percentage of the money is also allocated to environmental quality issues impacting soil and water.

9/22/2023 Community leaders in Carlsbad come together to express concerns over small earthquakes they believe are caused by oil and gas fracking efforts in Southeastern New Mexico. The EPA, Environmental Protection Agency, is looking into the quakes and pockets of methane forming as a result in places like Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

History:

9/27/2023 Eastern New Mexico University in Portales prepares to celebrate 90 years as a higher education institution as the university sees a 20 plus percent increase in student enrollment. Students, staff and community members are being asked to help plan the celebration slated for the Fall of 2024.

Business:

8/21/2023 Concern continues over the future of Mesa Lands College in Tucumcari, NM as the school faces a budget shortfall in the tens of millions of dollars. The college faces potential closure if funding is not found by the Spring of 2024. New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, NM and Eastern New Mexico University in Portales, NM have both expressed interest in making the college one of their satellite campuses.