

TALON NOTES

For TALON info,
call Candy 334-1039



Don't forget that TALON really is "community input" - call me about what you'd like to put in TALON. If you think you've missed the deadline, send it anyway; there may still be space available.

San Juan County Homeless "STAND DOWN" Servicing homeless Veterans and Non-Veterans

Saturday, October 27, 2012
7am to 4pm

San Juan College, 4601 College Blvd. Farmington, in the Gymnasium

"LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND" is the theme of this year's event! The purpose of the event is to serve homeless veterans with a wide range of support services providing for basic needs such as personal hygiene, warm meals, and basic medical attention. The overall goal of this event is to help bring those who sacrificed much for our freedoms, OUR VETERANS, back into the main stream of American society!

Our team of sponsors includes VFW Post 2182, several Veterans organizations, NM Workforce Connection, Veterans Administration, San Juan College, cities of Aztec, Bloomfield, Farmington, Shiprock, The Navajo Nation, and several faith based organizations. To include your support with the above team please call VFW 2182 at 327-2182. View Event info on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NMstanddown.

Vote for PRC Reform: Constitutional Amendments 2, 3 and 4

By Fred Nathan

Toward the end of your ballot in this coming election is an opportunity to professionalize and streamline New Mexico's dysfunctional Public Regulation Commission (PRC) by voting in favor of Constitutional Amendments 2, 3 and 4.

This matters because no local, state or federal government agency directly affects more New Mexicans on a daily basis than the PRC.

In addition to approving the prices New Mexicans pay for electricity, natural gas, water, and landline telephone service, the PRC also regulates every type of insurance—ranging from auto, property, life, and title insurance to health insurance. The PRC controls the cost and service of motor carriers (including taxis, moving vans, buses, shuttles, ambulances, and tow trucks); processes corporate registrations; regulates oil, natural gas, and hazardous liquid pipelines; and even oversees the State Fire Marshal's office and ski lift inspections.

As a result, the PRC has the broadest regulatory power of any state agency in the nation, yet the qualifications required of the five PRC commissioners are surprisingly low for such a powerful position. PRC commissioners are only required to be: 1) at least 18 years of age; 2) residents of the state for at least one year; and 3) not convicted felons. That is it.

There are no professional requirements or educational requirements—not even a high school diploma. This is particularly troubling because PRC commissioners must frequently make very complex and technical decisions that require them to understand, analyze, and apply economic, legal, and engineering concepts. The decisions they make affect hundreds of thousands of New Mexicans and tens of millions of dollars. Constitutional Amendment 2 would authorize the legislature to increase the qualifications of PRC commissioners and require continuing education so that the commissioners are better able to fulfill their mission of ensuring fair and reasonable utility rates and service for all New Mexicans.

The PRC would also benefit from being streamlined so that commissioners can focus on their core mission, the regulation of utilities.

A good place to start would be removing the PRC's responsibility for processing the registration of corporations. The PRC's corporations bureau has long been plagued by problems including lost checks, lost paper-

A matter of great importance... by Cheryl Trujillo

Once upon a time, everyone wanted to be different. In fact, many people challenged the idea that people should be alike and they did their best to stand out as individuals thinking that life would be so boring if we all looked alike, thought alike and talked alike. However, it is human nature to judge those who are different from us and those times seemed to have gone out of style.

If we simply look around us, there are so many examples of how far discrimination, intolerance and bullying have gone in the past decade. There is the story about the teenager whose homecoming nomination was initiated as a prank to humiliate her, or the news anchor who was publicly ridiculed about her weight. We shake our heads over the religious groups who hold violent demonstrations against those whose beliefs are different from their own and it appears that the list goes on and on.

Since when was it decided that one person or group had the responsibility to be the judge of what is acceptable in this world? Who has the right to say what gender, religion, language, race, body type, age, or sexual orientation is the right one? So much can be learned about a person's character by how they treat others and it is a fact that there is much to learn from people who are different from ourselves.

We must start by teaching our children to behave respectfully towards other people and make it clear that it is wrong to tease or reject a person because they are different. We must make them understand that it is wrong when some people behave in harmful ways towards others, and that behavior like this should not be

work, and delays lasting weeks and even months. Further confusing the situation, the PRC handles the reporting and registration of only some types of businesses, like limited liability companies (LLCs), while the Secretary of State handles it for others, like limited liability partnerships (LLPs). Constitutional Amendment 3 would consolidate both units into an efficient one-stop shop for all business registrations and filings at the Secretary of State's office, the way 41 other states do it.

Another important reform would be to remove the PRC's authority over the Insurance Division. Under the PRC, every Superintendent of Insurance has either been fired or forced to resign because of the inherent conflicts that arise from working for five bosses with competing political agendas. In addition, the Insurance Division has been placed on probation by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners three times in its 16-year history, in large part because in the past, PRC commissioners had pressured the Division to hire unqualified but politically connected employees. Constitutional Amendment 4 would instead allow the Superintendent to be selected by an independent nominating committee, insulating the regulation of insurance from political interference.

Three of the five current PRC commissioners—Chairman Patrick Lyons, Commissioner Doug Howe, and Commissioner Jason Marks—have joined with Think New Mexico to advocate for the passage of Constitutional Amendments 2, 3 and 4 as essential first steps toward turning around the PRC.

Lyons is a Republican, Marks is a Democrat, and Howe is an Independent. This tri-partisan cooperation reflects the fact that this package is about enacting common sense reforms, not politics.

Please encourage all of your friends and family to vote in favor of Constitutional Amendments 2, 3 and 4 (on the second side of your ballot). If you would like to learn more about these constitutional amendments to reform the PRC, please visit Think New Mexico's website at www.thinknewmexico.org.

Fred Nathan is Executive Director of Think New Mexico, an independent, results-oriented think tank serving New Mexicans. Think New Mexico released a report last October entitled "Rethinking the PRC."

tolerated.

It is only human nature to notice those people who look different, or worship different, or talk differently. Familiar things are so much more comfortable but even the early patriots knew the danger of intolerance when they set out to make a list of common sense rules that would document every person's rights.

As American citizens, we have the obligation to follow the laws set down by our forefathers in the pre-ambule to the Declaration of Independence, which states; "disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind."

Being kind and accepting of others, regardless of another's race, religion, culture, gender, or economic background is one of the most essential responsibilities that we have as human beings.

Political Signage

It is that time of year. Fall is in the air and local, state and national elections are right around the corner. The City of Farmington would like to remind you that **tampering with or stealing campaign signs is a crime**. If caught, perpetrators could be punished with up to a \$1000 fine and 364 days in jail. Please avoid breaking the law and respect free speech and property rights of others. Citizens who witness suspicious individuals or activity around political signage are encouraged to call Crimestoppers at 505-334-8477.

Citizen Input Meeting PROPOSED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

San Juan County will be holding a Citizen Input meeting on **Monday, Oct. 22nd from 4pm-7pm** at the McGee Park Multi-Use Building, Classroom C, located at 41 Road 5568 Farmington, NM to take comment on a proposed Land Development Code. The meeting is an open house so citizens are encouraged to attend anytime between 4pm-7pm. For more information on the proposed code, please visit the county website at www.sjcounty.net or the County Executive Office in Aztec.

To the Editor:

We have worked together since 2003 to create a NM Office of Peace to promote nonviolence in our homes, schools and communities.

Legislation sponsored by Senator Ortiz y Pino in 2013 proposes to develop peace education in schools statewide, including dialogue, mediation and restorative justice (RJ).

RJ helps people take responsibility for their behavior, acknowledge harm done and create ways to repair the harm, restoring relationships and community. It works well in classrooms and the juvenile justice system.

The Office of Peace will also promote a sustainable peace economy and support veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Momentum has built since 2003 and the House passed the Office of Peace Act in 2005.

Can you help pass this bill? Contact your state legislators and candidates now, and again during the 2013 Legislature, along with the governor's office. Ask them to support the Office of Peace bill. Please visit: www.thedepartmentofpeace-nm.org. Together we can create a culture of peace, improving safety and quality of life for families.

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•The TALON Regulars•

Susan Barnes, Natural Health	
Bert Bennett, Fire Department	334-9271
Mike Heal, Chief's Corner	334-7620
Book Nook, Library Staff	334-7658
Superintendent's Corner, Kirk Carpenter	
John Rees, Bird Talk	632-8335
Oil & Gas Basics, Susan Franzheim	
Bruce Salisbury	334-2398
Cindy Iacovetto, Senior Center	334-2881
Sustainable Living, Elisa Bird	334-1840
Water, Robert Oxford	330-2284
Recreation w/ Ryno, Ryan Lane	tryanlane@gmail.com

These folks share their time on a regular basis to write in their field of interest. If you have subjects and tidbits they might be interested in, give them a call. If you would like to try your hand at writing, give us a call at 334-1039. Many others have submitted stories, poems and information on an occasional or one-time basis. Thanks to everyone, it sure makes for good reading.

Don't Be Left Out Next (preferred) deadline for the 1 November issue of TALON:

October 23rd

You are encouraged to send your articles, photos, ads, etc. in early (but send in even if past deadline, if there's room it could run).

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TALON The Aztec Local News



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6500 copies of The Aztec Local News are delivered to over 150 locations in the area for free pickup and mailed to those who prefer the convenience of a subscription.

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If information is presented as fact and it is relevant to you, verify it. Although we strive for correctness and honesty, this community paper does not have the resources to check all incoming info. Be aware also that what's in TALON, ends up on the internet..

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