

## Letters to the Editor . . .

### Newspaper Evolution

Sylvia, Diego and other VIPS,

Thank you for being strong, adaptable and de-

termined to help the public be informed! We are blessed to have all of you among us! I'll miss being able to walk-in, converse with professionals, laugh,

ask questions and feel welcome. Next to librarians, you're the most informed. Best of luck in the next chapter of the newspaper's evolution.

Thank you for your graciousness, co-operation and allowing the group of movie and book lovers to have a presence in the papers' content.

\*Newsflash\*

Four applicants are being interviewed for the position of NMSU Librarian, and one may be announced by May.

Like me, this old paper is aged and marred, but it still serves its purpose!

Ed. U. Cator  
Grants, NM

## Get Your H.A.T.

### Celebrating the Divine Role of Mothers

"All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother." - Abraham Lincoln

As we celebrate Mother's Day, we are reminded of the significant role mothers play in our lives. In the Ten Commandments given to us by God, the fifth one instructs us to honor our parents, a directive that not only carries the promise of a long life but also a life blessed with wisdom and understanding. This is especially true when we reflect on the invaluable contributions of mothers.

Mothers embody the essence of nurturing love, a unique and protective bond

that shapes our very being. From the moment life begins, they are our first teachers, instilling values and beliefs that will guide us throughout our lives. Proverbs 1:8 remind us of the significance of this instruction, urging us to listen to our mother's wisdom. The legacy of faith passed down through generations is captured in 2 Timothy 1:5, where Paul reminds Timothy of the sincere faith that dwelt first in his grandmother and mother. It's a reminder that the influence of a mother extends far beyond the immediate and into eternity.

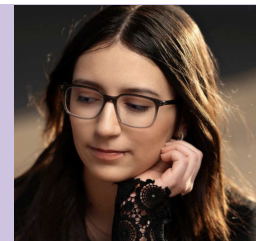
The value of a mother is eloquently described in Proverbs 31, which portrays the godly woman as strong, dignified, and priceless - **She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her. Proverbs 31:25-28.** In a world often focused on achievement and wealth, this passage reminds

us that the true treasures lie in love, guidance, and living a godly life. It is through these qualities that mothers cultivate a nurturing environment where children can flourish and thrive.

When we consider the Biblical call: **Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6,** we recognize the critical role a mother plays in shaping the future. A mother's teachings lay the groundwork for her children's decisions, morals, and paths in life. Similarly, Psalm 139:13-14 highlights the miraculous process of

life as mothers "knit together" their children in the womb, emphasizing the deep and sacred connection that begins before our first breath.

The teaching in Titus 2:4-5 encourage women to love their children and manage their households with wisdom and grace. It's a call to not only cherish the joys of motherhood but also to embrace the responsibilities that come with it. The essence of motherhood reflects a divine comfort, as illustrated in Isaiah 66:12, where God's compassion is compared to that of a mother comforting her child.



Amerika Rougemont

This Mother's Day, let us take the time to show our appreciation for the women who nurture and love us, and who are the very heart of our families. Whether through a simple act of kindness, a heartfelt message, or a moment of quality time, let's honor the incredible impact of mothers in our lives. Their love, wisdom, and unwavering support deserve to be celebrated not just on Mother's Day, but every day.

"Motherhood is the greatest thing and the hardest thing. It is God's way of showing us His selfless love." - Rick Warren

## OP-ED

Community loses its definition the moment we go deaf to our neighbors.

The slow drive into Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort & Spa winds long and quiet through the Rio Grande bosque. The road snakes through land that was named and known long before anyone thought to pave it. The river stays close but hidden. By evening the Sandia Mountains pull something pink out of the atmosphere and hold it just long enough to mean something before the desert goes dark and still. It is the kind of ground that has outlasted a great many arguments about what matters.

From April 20 to 22, the Clean Energy Association of New Mexico convened the inaugural Nuclear in New Mexico conference at the Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort & Spa on the Santa Ana Pueblo. Three days. Uranium executives, national laboratory researchers, tribal leaders, state legislators, federal regulators and community members across the same tables. The sessions covered ISR (in-situ recovery) technology, New Mexico's role in the domestic nuclear supply chain, energy policy and cultural exchange. On Earth Day, the

third morning of the conference, protesters gathered at the corner of Tamaya Boulevard and U.S. 550. Their signs read "Water is Sacred." The conversation was happening on both sides of the road.

My name is Janet Lee-Sheriff. I am the president of the Clean Energy Association of New Mexico, also known as CLEAN. I have been doing this work long enough to know you don't go where you are not wanted. We came to New Mexico a decade ago to assess whether it was time to talk about uranium extraction. We met with Diné from the Navajo Nation. We decided we were too early and we left. We came back slowly, going to community meetings, not pushing anything, listening more than talking. Someone asked me recently why they hadn't heard of us a year ago. I asked them whether they would rather a stranger come in and build a 10-foot fence beside them or meet that neighbor first and then decide together whether the fence makes sense.

That is the only approach I know that works.

While the conference ran, messaging was moving through the community.

Water. Cultural preservation. What this state has already been through with uranium. Those concerns are earned and they deserve to be said out loud.

New Mexico has 23 sovereign tribal nations. Many of them carry this history in their bodies. The Church Rock spill of 1979 was the largest radioactive release in American history. The Grants Mineral Belt left a generation of conventional miners sick and a landscape of abandoned sites nobody came back for. The Trinity Downwinders waited decades for recognition that finally came through the reauthorized Radiation Exposure Compensation Act in 2025. Diné families who lost loved ones to uranium mining in the 1960s and 1970s are still looking for specialized cancer care. Some of them are driving to Las Cruces to find it.

That history does not get managed or minimized. It sits at the center of the table. But it cannot be the only thing on it. The question is what we build from here. The communities that absorbed the worst of the last chapter have the most right to shape the next one.

Water is where this argument holds or it collapses.

It is the right place to press, and it deserves a direct answer.

ISR uranium extraction is only permitted in aquifers regulators have already designated as unsuitable for use. Naturally occurring mineral content, uranium among it, makes them undrinkable and unfit for irrigation or domestic use. That was true before any operator arrived. The technology works within those already-compromised formations. It does not reach viable water zones by design and by law. Protecting surrounding water quality is not a goal operators pursue when convenient. It is the condition under which they are permitted to operate at all. Federal and state agencies require continuous monitoring for the life of every project. That standard does not bend.

None of that means the public should take anyone's word for it. It means the public should demand the data, show up to comment sessions, ask the hard questions in rooms where the answers are on the record.

I learned something working with First Nations in Canada that I have never forgotten. You do not walk into a room representing

government or industry and expect to lead. You go to the community first. You build a path together. Then you walk into the larger room as one voice. That is the only way to survive any administration, any political season, any change in the wind. If the people have a plan, the governments must work with the people.

I think of trust the way I think of a bank account. You put a little in every day. You build it up. You do something careless and it empties fast. Consistency is the only thing that keeps the balance. Boots on the ground. Showing up again. Showing up again after that.

I am not a box checker. This conference was not a consultation exercise or a compliance event. It was the beginning of something harder and more necessary. The nuclear conversation in New Mexico belongs to New Mexico's communities, particularly the ones closest to the land, and the industry's job is to earn a seat at that table, not assume one.

I heard a line once from a Lakota Sioux medicine man. He said he was but a little hollow reed. It stayed with me because it puts things in their right proportion. You are not here for

long. What matters is what you help flow through you toward something better.

Two days before the conference opened, I told my husband I was still surprised it had all come together. He said he was not surprised at all. That gap, between the people who believe something is possible and the ones still waiting to see, is exactly the ground this work is trying to cross.

The neighbors we stop hearing don't go away. They just stop trusting us. And once that account is empty, it takes a very long time to build back up.

The first voice heard at this conference was not mine. It belonged to a member of the Tamayame, who welcomed us to Tamaya in Keres and asked us to honor the land we were standing on.

To the Tamayame, thank you. For the ground you let us stand on, the language you opened with, and the trust you extended to a conversation still finding its footing.

Janet Lee-Sheriff is the President of the [Clean Energy Association of New Mexico](#) (CLEAN) and the Chief Executive Officer of [Verdera Energy Corp.](#)



Janet Lee-Sheriff, President & Director of the Clean Energy Association of New Mexico (CLEAN) and Chief Executive Officer & Director of Verdera Energy Corp.

## Water Is Sacred. So Is the Truth.

## The Postscript Cause for Celebration

Last week, we went out to celebrate with my oldest and most curmudgeonly friend, Andrew.

Andrew is a tax preparer, so even if I hadn't been in Mexico for the last three months, I still would not have seen much of him. He makes a good living by working insanely hard during the tax season and then teaching and taking a few classes the rest of the year. Andrew is very worn out by April 15th, so after he had recovered, my husband, Peter, and I took Andrew out to eat at a favorite Italian restaurant.

We had a lot to celebrate.

Andrew had made it through another tax season. I had just signed the contract for "The Turnip House," and "Loon Point" was doing well. Peter gave me a small stuffed loon that calls when you press its belly.

"Whoo-hoo!" the loon said.

"That is so great," I told Peter. "This will be my emotional support loon!"

"You are going to have to write more books," Andrew said, cleaning his plate, "so we can do this more often."

Peter and I used to have a neighbor, Joe, who made fun of us. "You two are always celebrating some-

thing!" Joe would say, and I knew he thought we were a little ridiculous.

But I think it's important to celebrate the milestones in life. I don't think a celebration needs to involve buying anything larger than a loon plush toy or anything fancier than a plate of spaghetti with an old friend, but I think it's important.

Peter and I married late. Peter is 10 years older than me, and even though he solemnly promised when we married to live to be 105, we know that time is uncertain, and we can never know how much of it we will have to-

gether. We've now been married 11 years, and we have found things to celebrate throughout the year, every year. No matter what Joe thinks about it, we will continue to look for reasons to celebrate.

Andrew's mother died right at the start of the tax season. I wrote to him and asked if it made it easier or harder for him, being so busy after such a big loss. He said it was good to be busy, but when a client came in who had just lost someone close to them, he said he would tell them about his own loss, and that was hard.

Carrie Classon



But most of Andrew's clients have been coming to him for years. Doing their taxes, as he does, Andrew knows a lot about their lives and the changes that have happened over the years. Sharing his own loss with these people who trust him with their finances seems appropriate—even if it is hard.

Next week, I will go to a celebration of life for Andrew's mother. It will be another celebration—if a sad one. She lived to be 94, and she had become more infirm in the last year. She had talked with Andrew about dying, and she knew the time

was getting near.

We will get together and hear stories about her life from the people who cared about her. It will be a small affair, Andrew says, and nothing fancy. Andrew is bringing the food.

But I will be there for Andrew because he has been there for me. What Joe doesn't understand is that we celebrate everything—the good and the bad and the unusual, and the inevitable. We celebrate because, even if we live to be 105, life is short, and it is cause for celebration.

Till next time,  
Carrie