

READY TO BUY?
WE'RE READY TO HELP.

Apply today.

city.bank/mortgage

WE MAKE IT HAPPEN.
YOU MAKE IT HOME.

©2020 City Bank. All rights reserved.
Equal Housing Lender Member FDIC NMLS# 439822



City Bank
MORTGAGE



Ruidoso Downs Race Track thanks
our 2020 Corporate Sponsors!

RaceRuidoso.com

RUIDOSO NEWS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2021 | RUIDOSONEWS.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Sen. John Smith reflects on time in legislature

Served New Mexico citizens for 32 years

Bill Armendariz Deming Headlight
USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW MEXICO

DEMING – A cup of coffee at the same table of the La Fonda Restaurant in Deming is a routine John Arthur Smith carried out for the past 32 years. The retired New Mexico Senator continues his routine and still finds himself as a sounding board for his former constituents in Luna County.

Smith served the New Mexico Senate for 32 years – from 1989 to 2020. His bid for a 32nd year on the Senate came to a close in the 2020 Democratic Primary

against Neomi Martinez-Parra. Martinez-Parra was defeated in the General Election by Republican Crystal Diamond.

Smith filled the District 35 seat (all or parts of Hidalgo, Luna, Sierra and Doña Ana counties) vacated by the Honorable Ike Smalley, a Deming native, who led a rural-dominated New Mexico legislature through the 1970s and '80s. Smith saw a shift in power to the more urban areas of the state by 1990 and beyond.

“One piece of advice Ike gave me before my time in the Senate was to listen. ‘Be a good listener,’ he said,” Smith told the Headlight at the breakfast table.

In 1989 under New Mexico Governor Garry Carruthers, Smith described the House and Senate as a volatile union. “It



Smith

was much like what we are seeing on the federal scale,” Smith said.

It didn't take long for Sen. Smith to open eyes in the roundhouse. He dutifully began to head up committees at the insistence of Sen. Manny Aragon who had taken Smith under his wing. “I guess he saw a lot of what he would do, in me,” Smith noted.

Smith said he did not like what he was seeing in Deming and neighboring rural communities, and that was the push he needed to run for Senate. The big department stores were not allowed

to come in small businesses struggled to grow in communities. There was a lag in economic growth in Luna County. He noticed a trend of interlocking board memberships that had lending institutions in Luna County overlapping.

“If you were rejected for a loan at one financial institution there was a good chance the others would reject you too,” Smith explained.

Smith ran for Senate on that basis. Senate leaders Manny Aragon and Les Houston provided the leadership during Smith's sophomore year. His main goal was to make certain that resources were used as fairly as possible. He was put on the Judiciary Committee

See SMITH, Page 3A

House passes new rules for virtual session

Walter Rubel
Southern New Mexico Journalism Collaborative

LAS CRUCES – The New Mexico House Rules and Order of Business Committee approved new rules Friday, Jan. 22, requiring that all debate during floor sessions and committee meetings this year be conducted by Zoom.

The meetings will be broadcast online, with some ability to provide comments during committee debates. All legislation to be considered by the full House will be placed on a temporary calendar for at least 24 hours in an effort to improve transparency.

“These temporary rule changes are necessary to ensure fair and remote participation by the public and legislators so that the state can pass the critical legislation necessary to recover from COVID-19 and uplift our state,” said House Parliamentarian, state Rep. Daymon Ely, D-Corralles.

The new rules passed on a party-line vote in committee, and will be voted on by the full House Monday, Jan. 25. Republicans have objected to the new restrictions on public participation and have called for the start of the session to be delayed.

Child care

State Medicaid Director Nicole Comeaux warned members of the House Health and Human Services Committee at the start of Friday's Zoom presentation that her 17-month-old daughter was feeling cranky that day, and may make an appearance.

Sure enough, about 15 minutes into the presentation, the young girl crawled into her mother's lap. Comeaux didn't miss a beat as she continued discussing the sharp rise in Medicaid enrolment since the start of the pandemic. The child was patient for about 10 minutes before she started crying.

A man rushed in to grab the young girl as Comeaux explained, “I can only do so much multitasking.” A while later, what sounded like an unhappy dog could be heard whining in the back-

See SESSION, Page 2A



The Mexican Canyon Railroad Trestle emerges from snowy trees with only a few flurries on its tracks on January 25. NICOLE MAXWELL/ALAMOGORDO DAILY NEWS

Snow blankets parts of region



A winter snow dropped several inches of snow in Ruidoso Monday and Tuesday. The National Weather Service predicted Wednesday would emerge sunny and clear. JESSICA ONSUREZ RUIDOSO NEWS

Leah Romero Las Cruces Sun-News
USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW MEXICO

Snow moved through the southern portion of New Mexico, dusting the Organ Mountains in Las Cruces and dropping eight inches of fresh powder in Lincoln County, according to the National Weather Service.

An additional six to eight inches was forecast through Tuesday evening, but the National Weather Service said Ruidoso should expect sunshine on Wednesday with temperatures reaching the low 40s.

Meteorologist Joe Delizio said while Las Cruces was not expected to accumulate very much snow, areas like Silver City and Cloudcroft collected it. Delizio said 6 to 10 inches of snow was expected in the Silver City area Monday into Tuesday. Temperatures were expected to be in the low to mid-teens with wind-

See SNOW, Page 2A

USA TODAY

President Joe Biden signs orders US to end use of private prisons, address housing inequity, and aim to prevent biases. 4A

Weather

High 42° | Low 25°
Sunny. Forecast, 3B

Volume 74 | Issue 81
Home delivery pricing inside
Subscribe 575-257-4001
©2021 \$1.00



0 40901 19701 0