

Local news in brief, Jan. 6, 2011

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Public safety unions back candidates

Unions representing public safety workers in the city of Santa Fe issued endorsements Thursday for candidates in the March 6 municipal election.

The Santa Fe Firefighters Association and the Santa Fe Police Officers Association endorsed District 1 incumbent Councilor Patti Bushee; District 2 candidate Bob Sarr; District 3 candidate Chris Rivera, a former city fire chief; and District 4 candidate Bill Dimas, a former police officer and magistrate judge.

Carl Schmitt, president of the firefighter's union, said candidates were invited to speak with members of the union at an open meeting, then those in attendance voted on which candidate to endorse. Three of the four candidates are using the city's public campaign finance system, and Dimas, who's not using the system, turned down a small donation the union offered, he said.

Adam Gallegos, president of the Santa Fe Police Officers Association, said unions voted independently and came to the same conclusions.

Early voting begins Jan. 31. The last day to register to vote is Feb. 7.

Change in charges in Unser Jr.'s DWI case

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ALBUQUERQUE — Racing legend Al Unser Jr. faces new charges in connection to a DWI case from last fall.

Because of a prior DWI conviction, his charge has been changed from aggravated DWI 1 to aggravated DWI 2.

Police say Unser Jr., known in racing circles as "Little Al," was caught driving his SUV at more than 100 miles per hour while racing another vehicle on Paseo del Norte.

KOAT-TV reports Unser Jr. previously pleaded no contest to another DWI charge in Las Vegas, Nev., in 2007. Unser Jr. is set to go trial March 5.

N.M. basset hound eats \$4,500 wedding ring

ALBUQUERQUE — A New Mexico couple has found their suspect in the disappearance of a \$4,500 wedding ring — their 10-month old basset hound.

KOB-TV reports that a veterinarian recently removed the ring from the dog named Coraline after X-rays showed that the ring lodged deep in her stomach and wasn't coming out on its own. The veterinarian knock Coraline out then fed an instrument down her throat into her stomach to get the ring back.

Albuquerque resident Rachelle Atkinson said she and her husband, Scott, had searched everywhere for the expensive ring, until Coraline started to look guilty.

The vet said basset hounds have a tendency of eating rocks.

Rachelle says she now hides her \$4,500 ring out of sight while Coraline is off munching away at anything she can find.

Billy the Kid letter shown at history museum

Hand-written letters from Billy the Kid to Gov. Lew Wallace are on display to celebrate New Mexico's 100 years of statehood at the New Mexico History Museum in Santa Fe.

In the letters, the legendary outlaw asks for a pardon. The museum said there are theories that Billy the Kid may have penned the letters while he was shackled, but nobody knows for sure.

The infamous outlaw never got a pardon, and former Gov. Bill Richardson declined to grant Billy the Kid a pardon after a campaign in support of the move.

The New Mexico History Museum will kick off its centennial celebration Friday.

Guantánamo film to screen Monday

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The local Amnesty International group is marking the 10th anniversary of the Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, detention camp with a screening of a film Monday at the Center for Contemporary Arts.

The film, *Outside the Law: Stories from Guantánamo*, was written by British journalist Andy Worthington, who has reported on the camp since its inception.

The event is at 7 p.m. at CCA, 1050 Old Pecos Trail. A \$10 donation is suggested.

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