



HOBBS SCHOOLS PHOTOS

Alexis Wormely, above, and Davonte Morgan, below, perform in "The Twelve Labors of Hercules," written by Greg Lawson and Greg Tankersley. The Gregs have been coming to Lea County schools several years to assist students in performing plays as well as learning about history and literature.

Gregs

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braver knowing her friends were in the play with her.

Confidence building is also a big part of what the Gregs do.

"There's a lot more going on than just that play, we know that — it's by design," Lawson said.

Lawson said he and Tankersley began touring with an acting company and found they were mostly touring at elementary schools. When a school approached them about five years ago to work with the students on a production, the Gregs found a new calling.

Though they still tour with the acting company, they also spend much of the year on their own tour, visiting schools across the country.

Elementary fine arts coordi-



nator Tyson Ledgerwood said the Gregs have been working with Hobbs students for three years. The program is state funded through a mandate to provide performing arts edu-

cation at the elementary level, Ledgerwood said.

The Gregs will return to Hobbs in February to work with Southern Heights Elementary students.

Budget

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The city responded with a hiring freeze, cutting some employee positions and putting several capital projects on the back burner.

Spears said many of the capital improvement projects were renewed after a mid-year budget review last week.

A majority of the city's income is generated through gross receipts taxes — money charged on goods and services sold within the city.

City finance officials introduced an unexpected \$10 million jump in revenue to city commissioners during a work session last week and pitched several projects including renovating several parks, repaving several streets and installing new street lights.

City manager Eric Honeyfield said the unexpected \$10 million over the projected budget is both a blessing and a curse.

"Now that we're flush with cash, I have to decide who gets money and who doesn't," he said.

Spears said he estimated the 2010-11 budget based on the previous year's revenue and came up with the figures. The extra \$10 million, he said, could not be counted on a year ago.

"That's the volatility of the oil industry, one year we're at \$42.6 million and the next, it's \$33 million," he said.

But before Hobbs officials begin planning for 2011-12, Honeyfield has an extra \$10 million to pour into projects — and a few personnel positions.

Three of the city's high-profile personnel vacancies are with the Hobbs Police Department, which is hiring school resource officers.

The remaining money will be spread in various projects from planting new trees in public areas to a massive repaving project in south Hobbs.

Honeyfield is also planning to ask city commissioners for input on two uses of the additional revenue: new street lighting and a fund to help qualifying property owners demolish dilapidated buildings.

For street lights, Honeyfield said city traffic and engineering department personnel will look at high volume streets that are poorly lit.

A list of streets that could benefit from increased lighting will be presented to city commissioners during a future meeting, Honeyfield said.

For the demolition of property, Honeyfield said he is proposing to set aside funds for property owners who cannot

afford to demolish condemned buildings on their properties.

The city funds would be used to rent roll-off containers and pay tipping fees, but the property owner would be responsible for the actual demolition, he said.

Honeyfield will propose the demolition fund during the next city commission meeting.

Despite what appears to be a spending spree, Honeyfield said he is anxious to see what the Legislature determines with the so-called "hold-harmless" reimbursements for gross receipts taxes on food and medical procedures.

Since counties and municipalities do not charge taxes on food and medical procedures, the state reimburses them. Hobbs is reimbursed about \$2.2 million.

Honeyfield said if the Legislature decides not to reimburse cities, Hobbs will still be in good financial standing because of the \$10 million surge in gross receipts taxes.

"We're better off financially than most New Mexico cities," he said.

But if the state continues the reimbursement, Honeyfield said Hobbs will be in "excellent shape" for 2011-12.

"The 900 pound gorilla is going to be if the Legislature leaves us harmless," he said.



KELLEY MCMILLAN/NEWS-SUN PHOTO

Fencing club organizer Brian Henning shows Shannon Thompson, left, how to use the equipment while Samuel Smith, right, assists.

Fencing

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Whether he's providing classes for young fencers or older individuals who just want to pick up a new hobby, Henning

said he hopes to have the group meet two-three times a week so anyone interested can find time come practice.

Henning said anyone interested in the club can email him at bjh986@msn.com.

Stabbing

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Garza reportedly told detectives the victim has stolen four bicycles from him and, "he was tired of (the victim) not respecting his mother," Hobbs Police Department Detective

Corey Helton wrote in a report.

Investigators found a small folding knife that reportedly belonged to Garza at the scene.

The stab wound was not life-threatening and the victim was treated at Lea Regional Medical Center.

At least 35 die in Russian terror attack

MOSCOW (AP) — Terrorists struck again in the heart of Russia, with a suicide bomber blowing himself up Monday in Moscow's busiest airport and turning its international arrivals terminal into a smoky, blood-spattered hall of dismembered bodies, screaming survivors and abandoned suitcases. At least 35 people were killed, including two British travelers.

No one claimed responsibility for the blast at Domodedovo Airport that also wounded 180 people, although Islamic militants in the southern Russian region of Chechnya have been blamed for previous attacks in Moscow, including a double suicide bombing on the capital's subway system in March 2010 that resulted in 40 deaths.

President Dmitry Medvedev called it a terrorist attack and immediately tightened security at Moscow's two other commercial airports and other key transportation facilities.

It was the second time in seven years that Domodedovo was involved in a terrorist attack: In 2004, two female suicide bombers penetrated the lax security there, illegally bought tickets from airport personnel and boarded planes that exploded in flight and killed 90 people.

MCCARTHY NM

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