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Connecting the Dots...

Serving San Juan, McKinley, and Cibola County Governments for 40 years!

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

MAY-AUGUST 2012

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SPOTLIGHT: GALLUP MCKINLEY VETERAN'S COMMITTEE



The Gallup McKinley Veterans Committee was formed in early 2000 with the mission of building a Veterans Park and a Memorial in honor of our local Veterans from throughout McKinley County. Under the leadership and

Forever grateful for the service and dedication of young men and women who paid the ultimate price for the freedom we enjoy today

volunteerism of members of the Veterans Committee, the Committee works to ensure the recreating of the Veterans Cemetery and the updating of the glass panels on the Pillars in McKinley. The

memorial is located in Courthouse Square and the names of Veterans who served in American Wars and Conflicts are depicted in these glass pillars. There are separate Pillars for Bataan Veterans, Navajo Code Talkers, and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Hershey Miyamura.

With the help of area Legislators earlier this year, an appropriation of **\$185,000** in New Mexico Capital Outlay funds was awarded to the Veterans Committee. The funds set in motion the second phase of work in creating a new Veterans Cemetery. The new cemetery will be located on two acres that encompasses the current veteran's burial area within Hillcrest Cemetery just above Aztec Avenue in Gallup, New Mexico.

Unfortunately, the Committee has been unable to update the glass panel pillars for the past three years, due in part to the recent decrease in available legislative funding, as well as the "Clawback"

in appropriated money in 2010. However, this year, with the help of New Mexico State Representative and Veterans Committee member **Patty Lundstrom**, the Committee was able to secure **\$25,000 from the City of Gallup and McKinley County** for the purchase of new panels. The goal of the Committee is to unveil the panels with names of **170 service members** on Memorial Day 2013.

The COG takes great care and pride in assisting the Gallup McKinley Veterans Committee with the yearly **Memorial and Veterans Days** events. **Bebe Sarmiento** serves as Committee Secretary, and **Jeff Kiely** provides assistance.

With COG assistance, the Veterans Committee planned another successful Memorial Day event on May 28th. Drawing hundreds of spectators from throughout the region in support of Veterans, this year's Memorial Day event featured a flyover by Gallup Med Flight, a US flag folding ceremony, speeches by local elected officials, church officials, Veterans and the traditional ceremony in honor of a local service member Killed in Action.

Among the speakers, Vietnam Veteran, **Jackson Gibson**, who proudly proclaimed his patriotism and loyalty to his country. Mr. Gibson, a current **Commissioner for the New Mexico Department of Transportation**,

gave a moving speech about his current battle with cancer, the after effects from exposure to Agent Orange during his tour of Vietnam, and his great pride in his family's military service. His father served in World War II and his two sons have served in US Conflicts (the Panama Invasion and the other in Iraq and Afghanistan, respectively).

Also, at this year's Memorial Day event, 92-year old **Nick Salaz**, was selected as Grand Marshal. PFC Salaz served with the US Army's 90th Infantry in World War II and participated in the Omaha Beach Landing in Normandy France and in the Battle of the Bulge.

Every year, the Gallup McKinley Veterans Committee selects a **local service member Killed in action (KIA)** and honors him/her on Memorial Day. This year's honoree was US Army Corporal Edward Albert Cabrera. Born in Gallup on April 12, 1948 "Eddie Boy" graduated from Gallup High in 1966. Shortly after graduation, he enlisted in the US Army and began his tour in Vietnam on April 21, 1967. Sadly, he was killed in action on June 5, 1967 in Quang Ngai Province, South Vietnam.



Above: COG's Jeff Kiely & Rep. Patty Lundstrom partake in Memorial Day 2012 activities. Left: Flag Folding Ceremony at Memorial Day 2012

Come Celebrate with Us! Council of Governments 40th Anniversary Gala

Please join us in celebrating **Our Region, Your COG** on August 23, 2012 at the Fire Rock Navajo Casino Banquet Room in Churchrock, New Mexico. Join us in taking a look at the past 40 years and toward the future of regional planning, innovation, and collaboration.

We will also host an Open House at the COG offices at 409 S. Second Street from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. There will also be a Walking Tour of COG related Projects in the Downtown Gallup area. Please see our website (www.nwnmcog.com) for a detailed schedule of events!



COG bids “Farewell” to Michael Sage



Taking a couple of minutes for photos after a Farewell luncheon for Michael Sage... COG staffers were joined by a familiar face, former COG Executive Director, Patty Lundstrom. Left to right: Jeff Kiely, Michael Sage, Evan Williams, and Patty Lundstrom.

The Council of Governments is sad to announce that after a little more than 5 years, COG Regional Planner **Michael Sage** resigned from the

Council of Governments in July.

While Michael was with the COG, he worked on a number of projects and programs over the years, but perhaps the work recognized most

synonymously with the name of Michael Sage is his service to COG member governments, Cibola County, City of Grants, and the Village of Milan. Together, these local governments and Michael worked to bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars annually for many infrastructure projects. It was through this work that Michael also became the COG's CDBG guru, often advising other planners about the CDBG process,

changes, and little quirks that one only learns from experience.

Needless to say, Michael is dearly missed at the COG, but in his own words, “Leaving the COG, but remaining in the region.” He assumed a position as Deputy Director with the Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation.

The COG wishes Michael the best in his new adventure and much success for the future.

McKinley County Comprehensive Plan Update “A Vision and Plan for Prosperity”

Working in conjunction with McKinley County, the COG staff is updating the County's 2003 Comprehensive Plan – Phase I and 2005 Comprehensive Plan – Phase II. A comprehensive plan is a 20-year vision of where the County envisions itself becoming and it creates a systemic roadmap of what it will take to get you there. The Comprehensive Plan is broken into about a dozen key elements like Land Use, Water, Transportation, Economic Development, etc. This project is funded by New Mexico Local Government Division through a Community Development Block Grant planning award of \$50,000.

The project has begun with updating the socioeconomic data and aligning the former plan with present day reality. The COG has been working with the County's Smart

Growth Commission to guide the process, and will be holding several ‘reality check’ sessions with the County staff and community leaders that are knowledgeable about each element section.

One of the overarching goals of the plan is to best utilize our assets and target our investments to create opportunities for “prosperity” for all citizens. The update is scheduled for adoption in September 2012, which will only signify the start of public involvement. The COG envisions an unprecedented public involvement process and dissemination of the updated plan, including a website that is under construction that will assist to involve interested citizens.

www.theprosperitycollaborative.com



McKinley County, New Mexico Comprehensive Plan

THE '360-365' PLAN is taking a "360 Degrees, 365 Days" approach to catalyzing prosperity for families and communities in McKinley County.

Plan: Asset-based approach to creating livable communities

Collaborate: Bringing people & ideas together in a creative partnership and working networks.

Catalyze: Working hard and being accountable for prosperity



WHEN THE RUBBER HITS ROAD: RPO NEWS

As usual, the COG's roads planning continues to remain busy. DOT awarded Safety funding to:

- Eastern Navajo — for signage, pavement markings, and some reconstruction on County Road 1 and County Road 19 which serve approximately 10 chapters.
- Northern Navajo — six safety audits for roads and intersections, including NM371 & N36 intersection and US491 & N36 intersection, and US64 for Shiprock School Zone.

NWRTPO members received presentations on 1) the "Complete Streets Program" — which supports safety and multimodal enhancement improvements to roads, 2) the Navajo Rural Addressing system (in development), and 3) a report from the DOT Transit Program on funding awards.

The Council of Governments developed Bylaws for the RPO, currently under review by our members. We're looking to include the "T" in the organization's name: "Rural Transportation Planning Organization" (RTPO).

COG Director Jeff Kiely and RPO Planner Bob Kuipers met with Sandoval County Public Works Director Ricardo Campos regarding opportunities for collaboration of mutual invest-

ment in Eastern Navajo (McKinley, San Juan & Sandoval Counties).

Churchrock Chapter was awarded a TIF planning application of \$50,000 for a feasibility study with a focus on ROW issues along the NM118 (Route 66) Rehoboth-to-Churchrock corridor (just east of Gallup). The Navajo Nation has developed several economic ventures (the Fire Rock Navajo Casino and a business incubator) along this corridor, which along with other businesses (Red Rock Park, Hamilton Construction, and Cabinets Southwest), have caused congestion and safety concerns.

There are major changes coming down the pipe from the new transportation bill, MAP-21 (*Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century*), which will consolidate 12 to 15 previous discretionary programs into one category of "Transportation Alternatives." Programs that would be consolidated are Safe Routes to School, Scenic Byways, Public Lands Roads, and others. This could have far reaching impacts on some of the funding alternatives for transportation infrastructure to our region. The COG will keep abreast



Above: RTPO Planner Bob Kuipers poses with Ray Matthews NMDOT. Ray retired last month and is moving to Tennessee. Congratulations and enjoy retirement Ray!!!

of the changes.

And, finally, a quick update on the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway: The Byway was approved for \$15,000 in funding for interpretive kiosks at the Northwest Visitors Center in Grants (National Park Service), and the Manuelito Visitors Center (New Mexico Tourism Department). A variety of DOT clearance certification documents and informal bids have been obtained; these documents will assist in encumbering this funding from the FHWA National Byways Program.



Sheepsprings Navajo Micro-enterprise Incubator Program

Aerial: Sheepsprings Tourism Welcome Center



Building Skills Through Collaboration & Partnership

The COG received a **\$29,000 subgrant** from New Mexico Community Capital under a W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant to support women in enterprise in New Mexico. The COG's partner and subcontractor in the field will be Tohatchi Area of Opportunity & Service, Inc. (TAOS). TAOS who will plan and carry out the program at the new Sheepsprings Tourism Welcome Center on US Highway

491. The Tourism Welcome Center will open shortly. The COG partnered with TAOS and the Navajo Nation over the past year to get the Welcome Center project moving. The project serves a rural, contiguous seven-community region with a population of roughly 6,200; there is also high poverty (34%) and unemployment rates (averaging 20%), along with a significant number of female single-parent households. Many of these households often live with parents or draw support from extended family circles. Many possess strong skills related to arts, crafts,

silversmithing, weaving, culinary, etc., yet weak entrepreneurial skills related to business development. It is typical to peddle crafts at various traders, or directly to the public. **The small-scale Incubator Program specifically targets 30 single-parent/head-of-household women;** the goal of the Program is to achieve an increase in sales by 75% for at least half of the women.



2012 FACTBOOK IS NOW AVAILABLE

The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments has updated the Northwest New Mexico Factbook which is now available. The last formal update of the Factbook was in 2003, and was primarily based on data from the 2000 Census. The 2012 Northwest New Mexico Factbook, much like the 2003 version is again primarily based on information gleaned from the recent 2010 Census. The Factbook was produced as part of obligations in annual contracts with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA).

The purpose of the Factbook is to provide a demographic "snapshot" of the Northwest New Mexico region for a diverse audience, such as a student conducting research, or an economic developer searching

for information on our region, or a grant writer needing data for a proposal. The Council of Governments has strived to bring together a Factbook that provides useful and as-accurate-as-possible information in a quick, one-stop and easily accessible format.

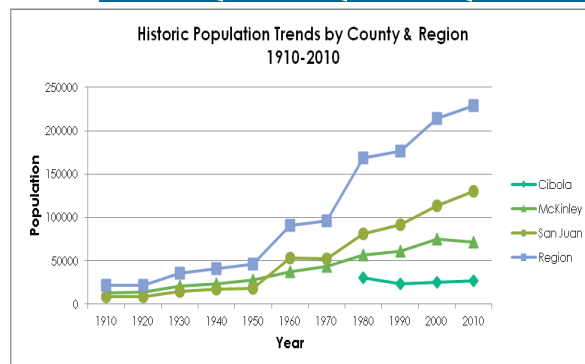
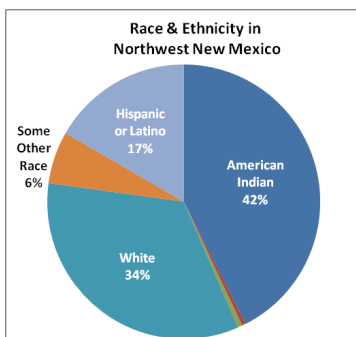
The format of the Factbook is a little different from the previous version in that it is a departure from the overwhelming tables and graphs of information that can be typical of a Factbook. It is hoped that this new approach presents a

useful and valuable document for many inside and outside the region.

As noted previously, the majority of the information is derived from the 2010 Census and from other sources such as the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, and the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of New Mexico. As such, it is intended as a broad-based regional platform of Census-based data, and not as a deeper drill-down into each political, demographic or categorical unit. The COG will

continue forward with an ongoing, dynamic data site which can be amended and enriched as specific data analysis is done in future months and years.

The latest update of the Northwest New Mexico Factbook 2012 is now available. If you're interested in obtaining a copy, please visit our website (www.nwnmcog.com) and click on the "Regional Data" link. A pdf version of the Factbook may be downloaded.



SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH FOR THE FOUR CORNERS GEOTOURISM MAPGUIDE INITIATIVE



The National Geographic's Four Corners Geotourism Project Launch took place at Aztec Ruins National Monument on Saturday, June 2. This launch brings together roughly two years of planning, development, and a \$250,000 investment from the Four Corners Geotourism Stewardship Council. The Four Corners Stewardship Council is broadly represented by major tourism stakeholders in both the public and private sector from all four states (*Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona*). The project has produced hardcopy mapguides of premium quality aimed at marketing the Four Corners region. The themes of the mapguide are: 1) archeology, 2) art, music & culture, 3) outdoor recreation, and 4) water & geology; and, on the other side, the map cites locations of the top attractions for our region. The project has also produced an interactive website (www.fourcornersgeotourism.com) now identifying the Four Corners region. Our Four Corners region is now one of only 17 of the Magazine's "world class destinations" where unspoiled and authentic geography, history and culture can still be experienced by visitors.

The project is expected to significantly leverage tourism, marketing to a particular niche of visitors; who prefer to thoroughly explore and experience the area's natural, cultural, and historical sites and making a deeper and longer connection with our region which may entail visits of extended stays. The longer visits may result in making a much larger investment in our local and regional economy. The website currently features about 800 attractions in a wide variety of categories, and as time goes on, we anticipate upwards of 2,500 attraction sites!

The event on June 2 featured speech presentations in the Great Kiva of Aztec Ruins from a variety of local and regional leaders including Larry Turk and Lauren Blacik of Aztec Ruins National Monument, Aztec Mayor Sally Burbridge, Cliff Spencer, Mesa Verde National Park, Susan Thomas, Four Corners Geotourism Council Director Susan Thomas, National Geographic project leader Jim Dion, BLM's Tourism & Community Services-NM Director Angela West, & Zuni Pueblo Councilman Mark Martinez. The final keynote presentation was provided by the COG's own Bob Kuipers, who serves on the FCG Stewardship Council. Mr. Kuipers cited the spirit of geotourism in his speech as "tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents." Estimates of more than 2,500 persons from around the Four Corners region and beyond attended this celebration of extraordinary collaboration and coordination.

"...working to protect the world's distinctive places through wisely managed tourism, and enlightened destination stewardship."

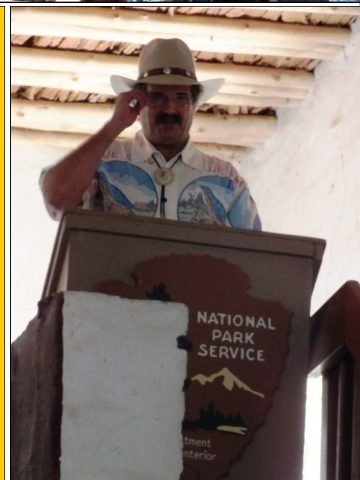
—National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations



Above: A large audience inside the Great Kiva at Aztec Ruins National Monument.

Right: COG Planner Robert Kuipers gives a keynote speech.

Below: Festivities included a luncheon to kick off the Geotourism MapGuide.





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**Advancing Northwest New Mexico
by serving local governments through
regional partnerships since 1972**

Important Dates	Date	Time	Place
Brownfields ARC Outreach & Grant Training	August 29	1:00 PM	Gallup-McKinley County School District Board Room Gallup, New Mexico
RPO Meeting	September 12	10:00 AM	Gallup, New Mexico
COG Annual Audit	October 9-10,	—	COG Offices Gallup, New Mexico
NADO Annual Training Conference	October 13-16	—	Las Vegas, Nevada
CDBG Application Workshop	October 16-17	—	Albuquerque, New Mexico
NM Infrastructure Finance Conference	October 23-25,	—	Taos, New Mexico



Notes from the Director...

Dear Friends,

A good Summer. A tough Summer. Some struggle, some stretching, some miscues ... with some rewards and blessings in the form of new opportunities and remarkable regional events and achievements (not to mention some welcome monsoon rains!). To name just a few:

- We welcomed our long-time Senior Planner Evan Williams to his new role as our Deputy Director – well-appreciated by our Board and our many customers and colleagues who benefit from Evan's passion, creativity, hard work and remarkable talent for "connecting the dots" (guess who named our quarterly newsletter?!).
- We experienced the "launch" celebration of National Geographic Magazine's "Four Corners Geotourism MapGuide" initiative, held in June in the mystic environs of the Aztec Ruins, showcasing a world-class geotourism map and website and a partnership stretching across Four Corners states. [Thanks to Mayor Sally Burbridge, Aztec City Commission, National Geographic and National Park Service for hosting us!]
- Also in June, we saw the historic

ribbon-cutting north of Gallup for the first construction phase of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project under the new Federal authorization and funding.

- We learned of the designation of Gallup-McKinley County's "High Desert Trail" by the Department of the Interior as one of America's top trails.
- We witnessed the emergence of two new economic development entities:
 - 1.) in San Juan County, "Four Corners Economic Development," a new evolution of San Juan Economic Development Service – now resourced, energized and strategized for proactive work in diversifying and strengthening the San Juan Basin economy;
 - 2.) in McKinley County, the "Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation," now led by our former Director Patty Lundstrom as its Executive Director and staffed by our former Planner Michael Sage as its new Deputy Director. Both of them a loss to the COG, but a continued gain for the community – and friends and partners always.
- We received a couple of subcontracts from Kellogg Foundation funding in New Mexico for some innovative work in the region:
 - 1.) from New Mexico Community

Capital, a subcontract to partner with Tohatchi Area Opportunity & Service, Inc. (TAOS) on a Microenterprise Incubator at Sheepsprings Tourism Welcome Center along Highway 491;

2.) From the Tides Foundation and the New Mexico Impact Fund, a collaborative with South Valley Economic Development Center and Prosperity Works in Albuquerque to look at metrics and methods for measuring economic impact of microenterprise support programs.

We built momentum in moving significant Stimulus dollars to achieve results in our Energy Efficiency Block Grant work with McKinley County (excellent report from our contractor, Eaton Energy Solutions) and our Brownfields Assessment work (many sites starting to get assessment reports in from our three environmental contractors).

Best wishes to all for a safe and rewarding late Summer and Fall,

Jeff Kiely,
Executive
Director

