

# APS failed to turn over three guns to city police

Partnership between district, APD is supposed to trace weapons' origins

BY NOAH ALCALA BACH  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Three guns recovered from Albuquerque Public Schools campuses sat in evidence lockers — instead of being traced and tested — for nearly a year after being seized from students at three different high schools. Since 2023, APS police have had

an agreement to turn over seized firearms to the Albuquerque Police Department to see if they were involved in a crime or had been stolen. APS Police Chief Steve Gallegos called the three guns that were not turned over “outliers.” “We typically turn firearms over

to APD quickly and will strive to do that with all firearms in the future,” Gallegos said. He said the guns were turned over to APD on Aug. 15. Gallegos declined to comment further. In separate September 2024 incidents at Volcano Vista, Valley and ACE Leadership high schools, district police recovered those firearms from a student. In the Valley High School incident,

See **GUNS** >> **A6**



EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL

A gun-free zone sign hangs at the entrance of West Mesa High School in Albuquerque in this file photo. Three guns that were supposed to be turned over to APD sat in district police's evidence lockers for around 11 months.

## LEADING NEWS

**STATE POLICE** defend traffic stop of a truck driver involved in a deadly Florida crash. **A3**

**FOR THE SECOND TIME** in just over a year, a judge has declared a mistrial in the case of a man charged in a 2022 shooting death. **A3**

**MORA COUNTY** commissioners make a disaster declaration after flooding washes out roads. **A3**

**CNM CELEBRATES** its 60th anniversary with the opening of a new trades and technologies center. **A3**

## BUSINESS OUTLOOK

**TXNM ENERGY** President and CEO Don Tarry talks of “thinking differently” during a Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce gathering. **A5**

## SPORTS

**LOBO FOOTBALL** released its two-deep report, and some unusual names grace the list, from Forrest Gump to Jack Reacher. **B1**

**HOLLY HOLM'S** next bout may be in doubt after her scheduled opponent, Stephanie Han, was injured in her previous fight. **B1**

**LOBO VOLLEYBALL** starts with a BANG, as UNM hosts the Lobo Invitational tournament at Johnson Center this weekend. **B1**

## NATION & WORLD

**AUTHORITIES** are working to learn the motive of the shooter who fired into a Minneapolis Catholic school's church during Wednesday's Mass. **A2**

## INSIDE

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# After a record-breaking 2024, NM braces for drop in tourism



EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL

Joe and Tina Privette, from Branson, Missouri, shop in The Breaking Bad Store in Albuquerque on Tuesday. A co-owner of the store said lately the store has been seeing fewer foreign tourists.

Business owners, tourism officials point to political and economic uncertainty for the slowdown

BY NATALIE ROBBINS  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

ABQ Trolley Co. is having its slowest summer in recent memory, said owner Mike Silva. The company offers guided tours via trolley and party bike of Albuquerque's cultural offer-

ings, and after a healthy 2024, Silva says business has grown quiet. “Last year, I think there was a rebound... I was chalking it up to somewhat returning to normalcy,” Silva said. “This year, it's been the slowest July and

into August that we've had since pre-COVID.” New Mexico had a record-breaking 2024 for tourism, according to a report released this month by the New Mexico Tourism Department. Visitors from across the world made 42.6 million trips to the Land of Enchantment, where they spent \$8.8 billion — the highest numbers ever recorded. But this year, things are far slower, business owners and tourism officials say — the result of political and economic

uncertainty. “Obviously, we recognize that this year is not last year,” said state tourism spokesperson Cody Johnson. “It is a reality that there has been a softening in the tourism space across the country.” The visitor economy sustains 95,219 jobs in New Mexico, 8.1% of the state's workforce, according to the report, and tourism accounts for 4.3% of New Mexico's economy.

See **TOURISM** >> **A6**

# ABQ City Council candidate alleges bribery, extortion



Stephanie Telles

Board to hear claims against campaign manager for another candidate in the District 1 race

BY GILLIAN BARKHURST  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

A candidate for Albuquerque City Council alleged that her opponent's campaign manager, a longtime political consultant in New Mexico, tried to pay her to drop out of the race, according to documents submitted to the city's Ethics Board.

“I think the idea of ‘politics as usual’ has been an excused behavior for this type of thing,” District 1 candidate Stephanie Telles said Wednesday. “It has become so normalized that it's not even seen as unethical. It's just become far too easy for people to sacrifice ethics when power is on the line.” In a letter to the Ethics Board and City Clerk's Office, Telles alleged that Scott Forrester, the campaign manager for Ahren Griego, another candidate, offered to “retire” her campaign debt if she with-

drew an appeal for a recount of her signatures submitted to qualify for the ballot. There are four candidates hoping to win the District 1 seat representing Albuquerque's central West Side. Councilor Louie Sanchez is leaving the seat to run for mayor. Telles, as it stands, is seven signatures short of the 500 minimum, according to the City Clerk's Office, while her three competitors have all formally qualified.

See **BRIBERY** >> **A6**

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