

# PASA DAY

- ◆ Rivera's new 'Lightning Boy' sculpture
- ◆ Bassists McBride, Meyer battle at Lencis
- ◆ New Orleans' rise to U.S. opera capital
- ◆ 'Breaking Bad' comedian breaks barriers

INSIDE THIS WEEK'S PASATIEMPO



Tulsa ends Lobos' season in NIT semifinal

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New Mexico DOT releases designs for Rio Grande Gorge Bridge railings

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MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PRAEVALEBIT

# SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN

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**YouTubers Mercius Louis, left, Ali Affi and David Nguyen go through the contents of a backpack they said was confiscated when they were detained by private security for trespassing at Zorro Ranch last month.**

JIM WEBER  
THE NEW MEXICAN



## YouTubers: Shots fired at Zorro

Men accused of trespassing at Epstein ranch say property manager took aim at them

By Clara Bates  
[cbates@sfnewmexican.com](mailto:cbates@sfnewmexican.com)

A 19-year-old seeking YouTube fame at the former Zorro Ranch last week found himself dodging cactuses and sliding down a ridge to escape a ranch

manager who, he alleges, fired a gun in his direction.

Mercius Louis said in an interview about the March 26 incident he thought he was going to be killed.

Louis drove from Colorado to the late Jeffrey Epstein's ranch in southern Santa Fe County to film a video of him trespassing, alongside friends — YouTuber Ali Atfi, 21, and cameraman David Nguyen, 22 — but got separated from them in the scramble to evade security.

While YouTube videos of people trespassing on properties owned by the sex offender and disgraced financier have become a viral trend in recent months — including at Zorro Ranch — the March 26 incident sheds light on what can happen when the visitors don't, in fact, escape.

The three Coloradans were detained by ranch staff and security guards, and

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## State officials celebrate start of construction for new courthouse

Santa Fe County Magistrate Court building will have more than four times the space, along with more parking, better security

By Nicholas Gilmore  
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After a wait of more than a decade, the construction of a new courthouse on Santa Fe's south side is finally moving forward.

Judges and other officials from the New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts celebrated the project's progress Thursday at the site of the future new Santa Fe County Magistrate Court on Camino Entrada.

The courthouse, at 48,000 square feet, will have more than four times as much space as the cramped and aging building on Galisteo Street that has housed the court for 25 years, along with double the number of parking spaces and better security features, according to the state agency.

Thursday's "groundbreaking" celebration was largely symbolic — a contractor for the long-awaited construction hasn't yet been chosen — but marked a significant step. While plans for a new facility began years ago, construction costs skyrocketed after the designs were completed, leading to delays as the Administrative Office of the Courts sought more funding from the Legislature.

The new courthouse was estimated to cost less than \$16 million in 2019, a number that grew to a current estimate of \$50 million. The Legislature has appropriated the

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## Trump fires Bondi as attorney general

President's support for Cabinet member eroded after her fumbles with Epstein files

By Tyler Pager and Glenn Thrush  
*The New York Times*

President Donald Trump fired Attorney General Pam Bondi on Thursday, removing the nation's top law enforcement officer after privately venting his frustrations for months over her handling of the Epstein files and her failed efforts to prosecute his political enemies.

### INSIDE

◆ Hegseth orders Army's top uniformed officer to resign. **PAGE A-3**

In a social media post, Trump said he was replacing Bondi with Todd Blanche, her deputy, on an interim basis.

"We love Pam, and she will be transitioning to a much needed and important new job in the private sector, to be announced at a date in the near future," Trump wrote.

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## 'A PLACE VERY SPECIAL'

Tens of thousands of faithful expected to participate in Holy Week pilgrimage to El Santuario de Chimayó



PHOTOS BY GABRIELA CAMPOS/THE NEW MEXICAN

ABOVE: Dimitri Kadiev, an itinerant artist, walks along U.S. 84/285 past images of different creatures of the desert Wednesday on his journey to El Santuario de Chimayó. BELOW: Visitors enjoy a break from the rain and the peace and quiet of El Santuario de Chimayó on Wednesday.



By Cormac Dodd  
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### CHIMAYÓ

Beneath crosses set in the hills on the road to Chimayó, Joseph Suina spoke of the wounds he nursed during his second tour in the Vietnam War in the 1960s.

Suina, 82, a Marine Corps veteran and former governor of Cochiti Pueblo, had thought of home then. He vowed all those years ago that he would join the sea of pilgrims who head to Chimayó on Holy Week if he ever returned.

Eventually, he came back from the conflict on crutches he later hung at

El Santuario de Chimayó.

Suina — a longtime tribal official who also had a long career in education, serving many years as a professor at the University of New Mexico's College of Education and as director of the Institute for American Indian Education — navigated the road this week as a much older man.

He is one of tens of thousands of people — faithful from across Northern New Mexico and worldwide — who are expected to participate in the annual pilgrimage to the shrine about 30 miles north of Santa Fe, an excursion that culminates on

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## Pasapick

[pasatiempomagazine.com](http://pasatiempomagazine.com)

### 'Luck Be A Lady'

Jerry Labinger's tribute to the music of Frank Loesser's *Guys and Dolls*; 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday; Teatro Paraguas, 3205 Calle Marie; [teatroparaguasnm.org](http://teatroparaguasnm.org); \$25, youth \$15.

More events Fridays in Pasatiempo



### Today

Sunny during the day and clear at night. High 59, low 28.

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