



Mark Oswald
Capitol Chronicle

Johnson may be trying to make amends

There are signs that Gov. Gary Johnson is trying to repair his damaged relations with the Legislature.

■ Catherine Bedell, Johnson's communications director, has taken on the additional title of legislative liaison. Bedell said she'll be the "point person" to facilitate legislative access to the governor and his staff.

■ Sen. Skip Vernon of Albuquerque, the Republican whip in the Senate — and one of Johnson's harshest critics after the Republican governor's veto outbreak that killed off many GOP bills along with Democratic ones — said there are supposed to be meetings scheduled for legislators to talk with Johnson about their relationship problems.

The latest public flare-up came last Monday, when a Johnson staffer failed to show up as invited for a legislative meeting at Grants on DWI bills.

Lt. Gov. Walter Bradley is trying to help patch things up. He said some stress is inevitable during a new governor's transition period. "The main thing is, we have to not kill each other while we're getting to know each other," he said.

Vernon said he hopes things get better, but he's not confident they will. Talking to Johnson, he said, can be like talking to "a stone oracle" or a pet rock — "it doesn't make a damn if I talk at him if I can't talk with him," Vernon said.

Vernon said Republican legislators need to know what Johnson supports before they take on the chore of passing a bill in a Legislature run by Democrats — especially if Johnson is likely to veto GOP bills that do pass.

And Vernon said Johnson's stated position on vetoes of not considering whether a Republican or a Democrat sponsored a bill may come back to haunt him. Republican legislators may be similarly apolitical when it comes to voting to override some Johnson vetoes in 1996, Vernon said.

"The governor's office appeared to take some pride in setting a new record for vetoes," Vernon said. "Unless the communication opens up, they may set a brand new record, and that's the record for veto overrides."

Two key Republican legislators — Senate minority leader Billy McKibben and House minority leader Robert Wallach — recently helped win a huge new state prison for their hometown of Hobbs by arguing that Southeast New Mexico needed an economic boost.

Some of the economic benefits of building the prison, which is supposed to be ready by early 1998, might find their way to ... McKibben and Wallach.

Already, McKibben's son has taken a \$40,000 a year job as the prison project coordinator for Lea County. "He turned in his resumé for the job like 10 or 15 others," McKibben said recently. The county government led the charge to get the prison and has committed to help finance the project.

Wallach owns a Hobbs concrete company, and there probably will be a lot of concrete sold to build a 2,200-bed prison. Wallach said that if his company were to get the prison contract, it would only be because his firm offered the best price in competitive bidding.

"That never entered into anybody's thinking," Wallach said of his firm's possible participation in the prison construction.

Wallach said there should be competition for the prison concrete contract — there is a second concrete company in Hobbs and general contractors often bring in their own concrete suppliers for construction jobs, he said.

McKibben owns residential rental property — he reported having more than 50 units in Hobbs and Lovington on his 1994 financial disclosure form. The influx of several hundred new jobs to build and staff the huge prison could make that investment more profitable.

"We live here," McKibben said. "Sure I own property. But this is the kind of project that is gonna benefit everyone in the southeast quadrant (of the state). Everyone down to the guy who runs the sno-cone stand is gonna benefit."

No illusions about plan

Wolves will be wild, but not popular

By KEITH EASTHOUSE
The New Mexican

"We will overcome very few of their objections."

DAVID PARSONS
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

David Parsons, head of the Mexican wolf reintroduction program for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is not under the illusion that the Southwest's livestock industry is going to support — ever — the agency's plan to restore the lanky, grayish-white canine to the wild.

"We are not going to sell many ranchers on this," Parsons said last week, as he stood in front of an outdoor enclosure at the Rio Grande Zoo in Albuquerque where two adult Mexican wolves could be seen prowling restlessly.

"We will overcome very few of their objections," Parsons added.

Instead, Parsons said, Fish and Wildlife is going to try, as he put it, "to develop a program that won't affect them."

One element of such a program would allow ranchers legally to do what is illegal: kill an endangered species.

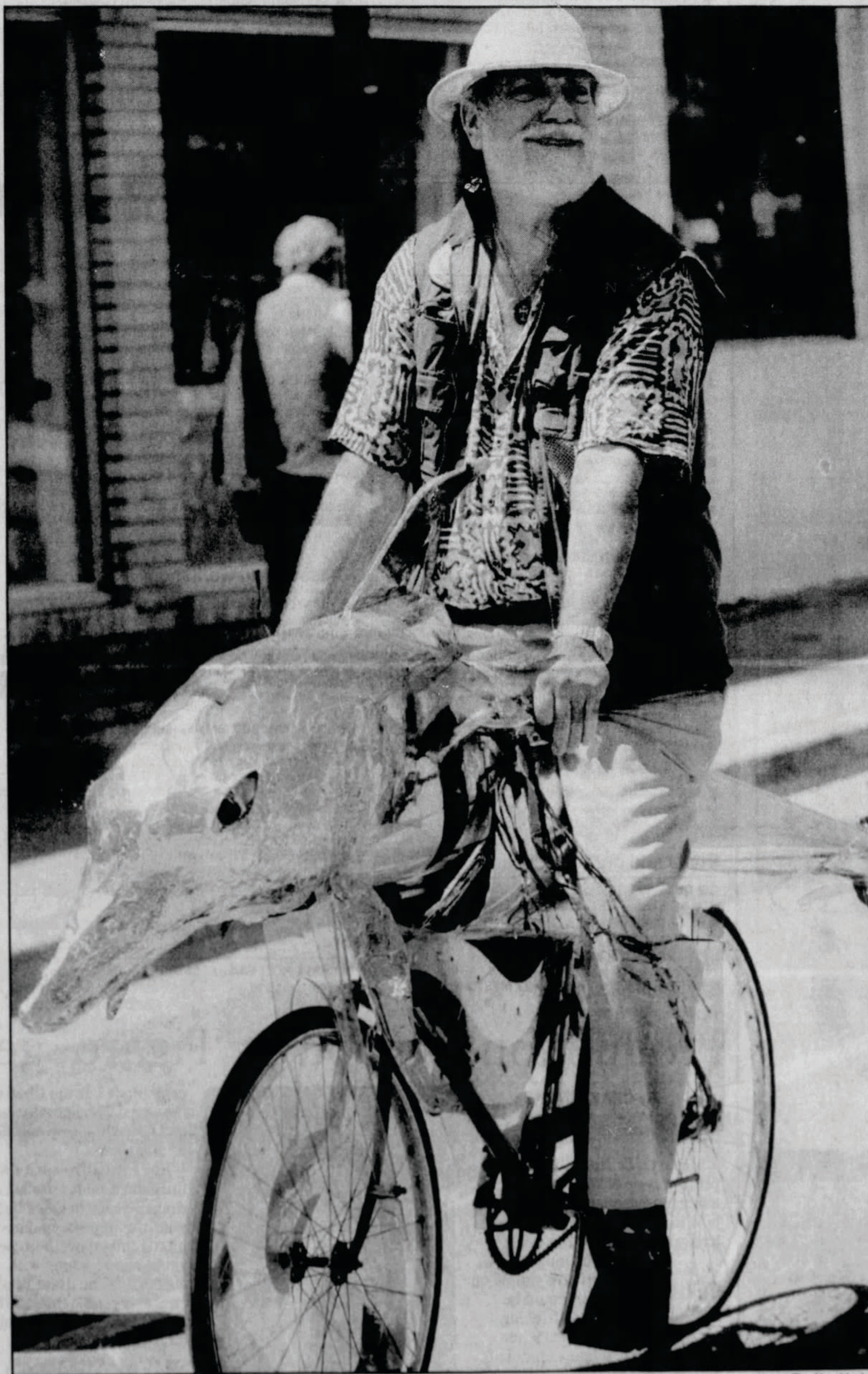
The agency will designate the 100 or

so Mexican wolves that it plans to place in White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico and in the remote Blue Range in Eastern Arizona as an "experimental, non-essential" population.

That will give ranchers the freedom to kill a wolf that has preyed on their cattle or sheep — as long as they report the killing to agency officials within 24 hours and can prove to the satisfaction of agency investigators that the wolf did the killing.

The "experimental, non-essential"

Please see WOLVES, Page B-3



Uriel Starbuck of St. Louis takes a spin around Bridge Road on his dolphin bicycle Sunday at the Las Vegas Fiestas.

A bicycle built for you

FIESTAS MAGIC

By H.L. LOVATO
The New Mexican

LAS VEGAS, N.M. — Cruising a metallic gold dolphin down Bridge Street Sunday, St. Louis sculptor Uriel Starbuck roused the attention of spectators attending the 107th Annual Fourth of July Fiestas.

The Banana Bike Brigade, a group of nationally known "bicycle artists," are transforming local bikes into rideable works of art that will premiere in the Las Vegas Fiesta Parade at 10 a.m. Tuesday.

The Las Vegas festival combines two cultures, with everything from an old-fashioned parade to a fiesta. Initially religious observances in honor of Our Lady of Sorrows, the patron saint of the community, *las fiestas* evolved as the town grew and changed with the coming

of Anglo settlers. The Fourth of July festivities were incorporated into the fiestas.

The present day weekend-long party combines aspects of both celebrations. Daily activities from 10 a.m. to midnight are scheduled at the Plaza gazebo. Fiesta organizers expect thousands of people Tuesday, the busiest day of the festivities. A traditional fireworks display wraps up the activities at 8 p.m. at the university's golf course.

Today is the final day of the free workshop Starbuck has been offering since Saturday.

At Sunday's festivities, Starbuck's "Dr. Seuss' Art Bike with a Cornucopia Bubble Maker" intrigued children and adults alike. The cone-shaped cornucopia spanned the length of the bike and overflowed with bubble making equipment, including a motorized wheel of bubble wands that dipped into a receptacle of soapy wa-

Please see FIESTAS, Page B-3

Medical journey reaches a close

By CHRIS ROYBAL
The New Mexican

LAS VEGAS, N.M. — Across the street from the Carnegie Library in the Las Vegas Medical Plaza, Dr. Laszlo Zold has seen the last patient of his career.

After almost 40 years of practicing medicine in Las Vegas, Zold is retiring.

Zold escaped his homeland of Hungary after the uprising against the Soviets in 1956.

Zold was arrested three times in Hungary for political protest, he said.

"We were students, and we were against government," Zold said. "I couldn't get along with Communists or Nazis, and I wouldn't shut up."

"Uncle Sam brought us to New York and from there to Cimarron," Zold said. He brought his three children, his wife, Jan, and his ailing mother.

The town of Cimarron was in need of a doctor, and Zold was willing to be anywhere other than Hungary, so he settled in Cimarron to practice medicine.

Zold, who specializes in internal medicine, had entered medical school at 20 and studied medicine in Budapest, Hungary. He graduated in 1949.

"I did not speak a word of English, it took me three years to learn the language," Zold said. From 1957 to 1961, Zold was employed as a physician in Cimarron and at the state hospital in Las Vegas. He commuted between Cimarron and Las Vegas before beginning his private practice in Las Vegas in Janu-

Please see DOCTOR, Page B-3

Fourth of July festivities

The New Mexican

For many Santa Fe residents, the Fourth of July means not only fireworks, picnics and parades, but also pancakes on the Plaza. The 20th annual Fourth of July Pancake Breakfast, sponsored by the Santa Fe County Chamber of Commerce and Los Compadres, begins at 7 a.m. Activities and free entertainment will continue on the Plaza until 5 p.m. The pancake breakfast, which includes pancakes, ham and beverages, costs \$4.

Picnickers might need rain gear, at least in the afternoon. The forecast calls for fair to partly cloudy skies Tuesday with a slight chance of late afternoon and early evening thunderstorms. Caution is advised on area lakes due to breezy winds expected to gust 15 to 25 mph. The high in Santa Fe should be in the mid-80s, and the low near 50.

Here's a list of other activities going on Tuesday for Independence Day:

- Fireworks display, The Downs at Santa Fe. Entertainment, food booths and carnival games begin at 5 p.m.; fireworks, 9 p.m. \$2 adults, 12 and under free. Free parking.
- Discussion of the opera, Countess Maritza. St. Francis Auditorium in the Museum of Fine Arts. 3 p.m. Free
- Fireworks display, Española, Industrial Park. 8 p.m. 983-6722
- Nambé Pueblo. 35th Annual Fourth of July celebration. 10 a.m. to sundown. Indian dances, food booths, arts and crafts fair, water games in the lake. \$3 adults, \$2 children. Fishing extra. 455-2306
- Fireworks display, Española, East of OH-KAY Casino on N.M. 68. Fireworks, 9 p.m.. Free admission and parking.
- Spirit 95. Fireworks, entertainment, activities. Kirtland Air Force Base, Albuquerque. 4 p.m. \$5 per car (free with parking pass available through sponsors). 243-2285