

# Joe the Plumber plans to become war correspondent

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) — Joe The Plumber is putting down his wrenches and picking up a reporter's notebook.

The Ohio man who became a household name during the presidential campaign says he is heading to Israel as a war correspondent for the conservative Web site pjtv.com.

Samuel J. Wurzelbacher (WUR'-zuhl-bah-kur) says he'll spend 10 days covering the fighting.

He tells WNWO-TV in Toledo that he wants to let Israel's "Average Joes" share their story.

Wurzelbacher gained attention during the final weeks of the campaign when he asked Barack Obama about his tax plan.

He later joined Republican John McCain on the campaign trail. At one stop, he agreed with a McCain supporter who asked if he believed a vote for Obama was a vote for the death of Israel.



(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

In this Thursday, Oct. 30, 2008 picture, Samuel "Joe The Plumber" Wurzelbacher speaks at a rally for Republican presidential candidate Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. at a Town Square Stop in Washington Park in Sandusky, Ohio.

# Las Cruces man is found guilty

DEMING, N.M. (AP) — A judge has convicted a Las Cruces man of second-degree murder in the shooting death of a second man more than two years ago.

State District Judge Gary Jeffreys on Tuesday found 29-year-old Jeremiah Ordonez guilty in the Aug. 10, 2006, shooting death of 41-year-old Florentino Rodriguez.

Prosecutors sought a first-degree murder conviction, but Jeffreys found insufficient evidence to consider that.

No sentencing date has been set.

Ordonez waived his right to a jury trial just before trial began Monday in Deming.

Jeffreys also convicted him of being a felon in possession of a firearm, but dismissed charges of tampering with evidence and shooting at an occupied dwelling.

## Notice

ARTESIA — The City of Artesia Water Department is currently experiencing problems with their direct phone number.

Human Resources Director Bill Thalman is asking customers who need to contact the water department to call the city's main number at 746-2122 and calls will be redirected to that department.



Submitted photo

## Pet of day

Jen's Pet Palace currently has many animals available for adoption. Of the cat pictured above, Jennifer Van Curen said, "Mittens is a young female kitty that is litter box trained and super friendly." Call 575-746-2050 to see available animals, including dogs.

# NM unemployment calling system clogged

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — More New Mexicans have been filing for unemployment benefits, and the state's system hasn't been able to handle the volume.

During Christmas week, a state-run telephone number for people to call to start unemployment benefits received twice the usual volume of calls, forcing people to wait an average of 40 minutes — if they were lucky enough to get through.

Many callers to the Department of Workforce Solutions' Unemployment Insurance Call Center heard a recorded voice saying the line was busy and to call back later.

On Dec. 28, the system received 95,000 calls — many attributed to people redialing when they couldn't get through the first time, said Carrie Moritomo, spokeswoman for the Department of Workforce Solutions, the state's labor agency.

"Most definitely we're seeing an increase in people engaging in services either through the Internet or through

our call center," Moritomo said Tuesday.

She blamed the volume largely on the federal government's decision to extend unemployment benefits, "so people are engaged in the system for a longer period of time."

There also are more people filing this time of year because, for example, holiday hires are being laid off, she said.

New Mexico's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.3 percent in November 2008, up from 3 percent in November 2007.

The state made 22,457 unemployment benefit payments last week compared to 11,521 payments in the period of Dec. 30, 2007 to Jan. 5, 2008, Moritomo said. On the week of Dec. 14, 2008, the state made 20,321 unemployment payments, up from 18,746 a week earlier and 17,152 the week of Nov. 30, she said.

The labor agency has extended the call center's hours, added two high speed lines that allow the system to

put more callers in queue and hired 15 more staffers, she said.

But, she said Tuesday, "We still are receiving reports of people's inability to get through."

The state encourages people to file online to try to bypass telephone backups. If those filing say they don't have a computer, the agency refers them to computers at public libraries or at the agency's 26 centers in the state.

"We've definitely seen an increase in people using the Internet," Moritomo said.

There also are certain hours each night when people can't file because the same system has to be used to process payments, Moritomo said.

"Our biggest challenge is that we are working within the constraints of our federal budget," she said. "This portion of our agency is completely federally funded, and we've had a flat budget for 10 years, if not longer. We're offering more services and engaging more people with the same amount of financial resources."

# Man linked to Richardson also donated to Obama

WASHINGTON (AP) — A prominent businessman caught up in a grand jury probe whose political donations ended any role for New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson in the Obama administration also was a generous contributor in support of the president-elect.

David Rubin gave \$26,200 to the Democratic Party on Sept. 19 and \$2,300 to Barack Obama's campaign on Sept. 30, according to records filed with the Federal Election Commission. Last February, Rubin gave another

\$1,000 to Obama's campaign.

Rubin and his company donated \$100,000 in 2003-2004 to the political committees of Richardson. The contributions came both before and after Rubin's company won a state contract in New Mexico to help finance \$1.4 billion for highway and transportation projects, a contract that brought \$1.5 million in business for the company, CDR Financial Products.

While the CDR investigation has put CDR in the spotlight in New Mexico, CDR has been

under investigation for its business practices around the country by the Justice Department's Antitrust Division, the Internal Revenue Service and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

On Sunday, Richardson withdrew from consideration as commerce secretary amid the grand jury investigation. The federal criminal investigation of CDR's work for the state of New Mexico had been the subject of reports in the news media since August.

## Public Record

### ARTESIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jan. 6  
ARREST

11:26 p.m. — Martin Alfaro, 42, of Austin, Texas, arrested at Heath Street and Centre Avenue and charged with DWI.

NON-TRAFFIC CITATION

4:08 p.m. — Jennifer Lynn Sanford, 30, of Artesia, issued a non-traffic citation at Kmart for shoplifting.

JUVENILE CITATION

6:30 p.m. — Fabian Fernando Ponce, 14, of Artesia, issued a juvenile citation at Kmart for shoplifting.

LOST OR STOLEN

10:42 a.m. — Officer dispatched to the APD lobby in reference to a walk-in report of stolen medication.

ASSAULT

11:46 a.m. — Officer dispatched to the 1600 block of West Briscoe Avenue in reference to an assault.

### DOMESTIC

1:31 p.m. — Officer dispatched to Wal-Mart in reference to a domestic dispute inside a vehicle.

SHOPLIFTING

3:58 p.m. — Officer dispatched to Kmart in reference to a report of shoplifting. A citation was issued.

DISORDERLY

5:06 p.m. — Officer dispatched to Liberty Financial, 516 W. Main St., in reference to a disorderly employee who was inside the building earlier in the day.

BURGLARY

5:08 p.m. — Officer dispatched to 1304 W. Bush Ave. in reference to a burglary.

SHOPLIFTING

6:14 p.m. — Officer dispatched to Kmart in reference to a juvenile shoplifter in custody. A citation was issued.

ACCIDENT

8:30 p.m. — Green Ford F-150 pickup driven by Martin Alfaro of Austin, Texas, collided

at Heath Street and Centre Avenue with a gray Honda driven by Aaron Ortega of Artesia. Minor injuries reported. Alfaro arrested for DWI.

ASSAULT

9:12 p.m. — Officer dispatched to Bulldog Pit in reference to threats made.

Jan. 5

JUVENILE CITATION

2:30 p.m. — K'Land N. Underwood, 16, of Artesia, issued a juvenile citation at Artesia Junior High School for disorderly conduct.

EDDY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Jan. 2

SUSPICIOUS

1:41 a.m. — Deputy dispatched to the 1600 block of North Oak Drive in reference to a suspicious person.

Jan. 1

ERRATIC DRIVER

12:06 a.m. — Deputy dispatched to County Road 53 in reference to an erratic driver. Deputy unable to locate.

### DISTURBANCE

2:43 a.m. — Deputy dispatched to the 1100 block of South 19th Street in reference to a fight/disturbance.

ERRATIC DRIVER

9: a.m. — Deputy dispatched to west U.S. 82 in reference to an erratic driver. Citation issued.

LARCENY

1:03 p.m. — Deputy dispatched to 1603 N. First St. in reference to a larceny/theft.

ASSIST

3:14 p.m. — Deputy dispatched to 33rd Street to assist the Artesia Police Department.

WELFARE CHECK

5:54 p.m. — Deputy dispatched to Square Lake Road in reference to a requested welfare check.

BURGLARY

6:04 p.m. — Deputy dispatched to 38 Billy Drive in reference to a burglary/breaking and entering.

ARTESIA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Jan. 6

7:30 a.m. — EMTs dispatched to the 300 block of West Washington Avenue in reference to a 31-year-old male who was unconscious/fainting.

8:30 a.m. — EMTs dispatched to Atoka Grocery Store in reference to a 28-year-old male with convulsions and seizures.

9:01 p.m. — EMTs dispatched to a traffic accident at Heath Street and Centre Avenue. A 42-year-old male sustained minor injuries and was transported to Artesia General Hospital. A 26-year-old male, a 22-year-old female and a 9-month-old male were assessed by EMTs but refused medical transport.

Jan. 3

1:38 a.m. — EMTs dispatched to the 700 block of West Hermosa Drive in reference to an 83-year-old female who fell.

Jan. 2

7:12 a.m. — EMTs dis-

patched to the 800 block of South Second Street in reference to a patient who was unconscious and fainting.

7:26 p.m. — EMTs dispatched to the 300 block of North Fourth Street in reference to an 87-year-old female with abdominal pain.

7:46 p.m. — EMTs dispatched to the 3400 block of McGuire Street in reference to an 82-year-old male with a diabetic problem.

## Lottery

Tuesday's Winning Lottery Numbers

Roadrunner Cash: 3-5-12-21-33 Bonus-23

N.M. Pick 3: 0-4-0

Texas Cash Five: 15-32-33-34-37

Saturday's Powerball: 17-22-24-38-55 PB-24 PP-3

Saturday's Hot Lotto: 10-12-14-24-32 Hot Ball-17

Start the **NEW YEAR** off Right!

Start the New Year off right by registering at New Mexico State University Carlsbad to build a brighter future for you and your family.

For info call 234-9221 or visit [www.cavern.nmsu.edu](http://www.cavern.nmsu.edu).  
Classes start Jan. 14<sup>th</sup> and are available days, nights & on line.



**NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY**  
1500 University Drive  
Carlsbad, NM 88220

## Deeper Life Conference

January 9th-11th

*Get a Fresh Start with God in 2009...*  
3 days of refreshing and going deeper with God!

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 9TH**

- 6:00pm Barbeque Banquet
- Session 1

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 10TH**

- 8:30am Continental Breakfast
- Session 2 (message & music)

Break.....

- Session 3 (message & music)

Break.....


- Session 4 (ends at Noon)

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 10TH**

- 10:15am Session 5

Dismiss.....

- 6:00pm The Atens in Concert!



Tom Blitt currently serves as the International Mission Board's Senior Vice President for Spiritual Nurture and Church Relations. In addition to his work with the IMB, Tom pastored for forty-two years, and also served as the president of the SBC Pastors Conference and two terms as president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The author of nine books, Tom has spoken in conferences and crusades around the world. Blessed with four children and twenty-three grandchildren, Tom and his wife, Jeanne, have been guests on such widely received programs as Family Life Today, Focus on the Family and For Faith and Family.

The focus of Aten Ministries is to be instruments and vessels of worship, not entertainment...and to encourage the family unit in spiritual & practical ways relevant to living in the 21st century

*First Baptist Church, Artesia*  
Corner of Roselawn & Grand