

ABQ FREE PRESS

VOL III, Issue 16, August 10–23, 2016

Dispensing Journalistic Justice Since 2014

‘We Are This City’



Saul Knocks it Out of the Park

BY JOHNNY VIZCAINO

Season 3 of the Albuquerque-based AMC drama “Better Call Saul” doesn’t begin filming until late September, but that didn’t stop the show’s star, Bob Odenkirk, from paying the 505 an early visit.

Aug. 6 was officially “Better Call Saul Night” at Isotopes Park, where hundreds of fans lined up for autographs and pictures with the Emmy-nominated actor who plays the show’s protagonist, Jimmy McGill.

The event was marked by custom-ized game jerseys featuring a portrait of Odenkirk’s character. “That’s a lot of me, that’s a little too much me,” Odenkirk said of the jerseys during a press conference the day before the game, “I don’t know if my mom would like that much of me.”

Odenkirk said he was “blown away, honored, tickled and embarrassed” by the recognition.

“I hope those baseball players don’t mind wearing my big head on their bodies” he said. “They’re going to wear these?”

The game-worn jerseys were auctioned off during the game.

Proceeds from the auction benefited the New Mexico Autism Society.

“It’s really amazing, everyday you look up and go ‘wow,’” Odenkirk said, “but nothing beats the spirit of the people of Albuquerque, and the pride they have in their town, and the love they have for their town.”

Johnny Vizcaino is an ABQ Free Press editorial intern.



Johnny Vizcaino



Johnny Vizcaino

DOJ: APD Not Likely to Meet Reform Deadlines

BY DENNIS DOMRZALSKI

Despite the celebratory picnic that U.S. District Judge Robert Brack threw in his courtroom on July 28 for the parties in the Albuquerque Police Department’s reform effort, some grim news came out of the hearing.

It will take longer than the originally planned four years for APD to complete the reform process called for in APD’s settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice. Exactly how much longer isn’t clear, but several people who addressed Brack conceded that four years was too optimistic. With the schedule calling for APD to be in substantial compliance by November 2016 with the settlement agreement it signed with the DOJ, the prospects look even grimmer.

“I don’t think it [compliance timetable] is sustainable,” James Ginger, the independent monitor in the case, told Brack. “Everything is due in four months. We can’t cram all this stuff into an accelerated timetable. It’s a very aggressive timeline. I’m not saying the city can’t do it, but we have a huge amount of work due in four months.”

U.S. Attorney Damon Martinez was more specific about the progress, or lack thereof, that APD has made so far. He said that APD is in operational compliance with only 13 of the 278 areas, which means that APD has written policies, has trained officers to those policies and is holding officers accountable for failing to abide by those policies.

“In sum, the city is in operational compliance with only 5 percent of the tasks that need to be met fully with the court-approved consent agreement,” Martinez said. “These facts indicate that we have many more days in front of us in this effort than behind us, and that the four-year time frame is very unlikely to be met.”

The city signed the settlement agreement in November 2014. It calls for APD to engage in constitutional policing efforts centered around the practice of community policing.

Martinez also hinted that APD was still stubbornly resisting

change and that the department’s top brass had scuttled a planned meeting between DOJ officials and beat cops.

“It is critical for the Department of Justice to continue having direct access to officers, like all other stakeholders, to obtain their candid and open opinions,” Martinez told Brack. “It is important to foster and encourage this type of dialogue, rather than restrict or obstruct it. The city has expressed concern with the DOJ’s access to officers. ... We will work through disagreements with the City of Albuquerque. However, we will not let the city make unilateral decisions on our behalf or to speak for us.”

During a break in the hearing, Martinez told ABQ Free Press that APD had indeed called off a meeting that the DOJ had scheduled with beat cops. He added that one of the ways the DOJ can truly gauge what officers in the field need in the way of policies and training is to talk with them.

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Published every other week by:
Great Noggins LLC
P.O. Box 6070
Albuquerque, NM 87197-6070

Publishers
Will Ferguson and Dan Vukelich

On the cover:
Brian Thomas Bailey’s ABQ Balloon Blast Print, which is for sale at wearthiscity.com. For more on the mission of We Are This City, see the article on Page 20.

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SPOTLIGHT PICKS

A Venue of Vultures at ABQ BioPark

BY M. BRIANNA STALLINGS



Pixabay

The first Saturday in September each year is International Vulture Awareness Day. Yes, you read that correctly.

There is an international day of awareness for a bald, scavenging bird that flies in a circle high above carrion before dropping in to feast. As foul as that may sound, carcasses are a vital food source for vultures, as well as for other scavenging animals such as hawks, eagles and coyotes -- which means that vultures are, in turn, vital for the environment.

Amateur ornithologists are invited to participate in International Vulture Awareness Day, featuring a vulture beauty contest, games and crafts, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 3, at ABQ BioPark Zoo. Visit the aviaries in the zoo’s Africa Exhibit to learn more about these bald birds, how biologists study them and why they need your help.

The price of attendance is included with admission. General admission is \$12.50 adults (13-64); \$5.50 seniors (65+); and \$4 children (3-12). N.M. resident prices are \$9 adults (13-64); \$4.50 seniors (65+); and \$4 children (3-12). Admission is free to all kids under age 3. Combo and member rates, military discounts and other discounts also are available. For more information about International Vulture Awareness Day, visit vultureday.org.

International Vulture Awareness Day
Saturday, Sept. 3, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., general admission prices
ABQ BioPark Zoo, 903 Tenth St. SW
Vultureday.org

Indian Market Haute Couture

Coming to Santa Fe later this month is Indian Market EDGE, a contemporary Native American art show that will run concurrently with the Santa Fe Indian Market, which turns 95 this year.

A fast-growing part of Indian Market weekend is Native American-designed fashion that will be showcased in the courtyard of the Santa Fe Convention Center (201 W. Marcy St.) at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 20.

The contemporary fashion show will include designs by Jamie Okuma, the youngest artist to win “Best in Show” at the SWAIA Indian Market, and the only artist to win first place three times; and Patricia Michaels, who garnered international attention as a first-runner-up on “Project Runway” Season 11, which aired on the Lifetime network in 2013.

Standing room at the fashion show is free. Tickets for seating are \$10.

If you’re a mingler, check out the Indian Market EDGE preview reception and wine tasting, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 18 at the Convention Center, where creations of designer Maya Stewart will be on display. Her designs have been featured in Vogue, W Magazine, Elle and Vanity Fair, and worn by such celebrities as Jennifer Lawrence and Anne Hathaway. Tickets to the preview are \$50.

Santa Fe Indian Market/Indian Market EDGE
Tuesday, Aug. 16 through Sunday, Aug. 21
Santa Fe Plaza, Santa Fe Convention Center
Tickets or more information: swaia.org



Courtesy of SWAIA/Santa Fe Indian Market

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The project described was supported by Funding Opportunity Number IE-HBE-12-001 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The contents provided are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HHS or any of its agencies.