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News Sports Opinion Classifieds Obituaries Business Noticias La Vida Milestones Milestone Forms Archives Locals 2009

Main Menu

- [Home](#)
- [About the VCNB](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
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- [Deaths/funerals](#)
- [Wrongful death lawsuit filed in infant's death](#)
- [LL man arrested after intersection collision](#)

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- [Eagles, Jaguars win, Tigers fall in week one](#)
- [Four-legged kids](#)
- [Lady Tigers start volleyball season with coaching change](#)
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- [Rebels take men's league crown](#)
- [Eagle football to play in Colo.](#)
- [Lady Tigers win by mercy rule](#)
- [Jaguar boys get in win column](#)
- [Lady Eagles fall at Los Alamos](#)
- [Summer trip included swimming with dolphins](#)
- [Peraltans complain of BF officers' tactics](#)
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UNM-VC Cultural Series speaker to recount struggle for literacy

Written by News-Bulletin Staff
Saturday, 28 August 2010 06:00

Overcoming poor literacy skills as an adult is difficult, and Albuquerque native Marten Griego, an advocate for adult literacy, will soon share with Valencia County residents his story of overcoming many challenges.

Griego will start the University of New Mexico-Valencia Campus Cultural Enrichment Series for the fall 2010 semester by telling how he went from great difficulties reading the simplest things to becoming a published author.

Griego's presentation at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 31, is the first event in the cultural series. It will be at the Student-Community Center at UNM-VC.

Just 12 years ago, Griego was at a very low level of literacy. Today, he is the award-winning, published author of "Leaving the House of Tears."

He is also an engaging, dynamic public speaker and the founder and owner of Future Destinations Publishing.

How did Griego make the amazing transition to author, board member, volunteer tutor, workshop presenter, mentor, motivational speaker and entrepreneur?

According to his website, the book captures the gritty details of his painful youth and shows how he ultimately came to terms with the many challenges he faced.

In his blog, Griego writes, "It was March 20, 1959. I was 11-years old. I remember running outside into the dark of night, looking up into the black heaven of hell, and screaming, 'I hate you! I hate you, God!' I became an alcoholic at the age of 11. At the age of 12, I was huffing lighter fluid, gasoline and glue."

Griego's memoir was a finalist for the 2007 New Mexico Book Awards, and renowned author Tony Hillerman introduced Griego at a book reading in Albuquerque.

ReadWest Inc., an adult literacy program in Rio Rancho, conferred honors on Griego two years in a row as the 2007 and 2008 Literacy Advocate of the Year. In 2008, the New Mexico Senate recognized Griego on the floor.

The story behind Griego's success is a compelling one, which he shares in his memoir.

In 2010, Griego is partnering with the New Mexico Coalition for Literacy.

With the help of a grant from the Verizon Foundation, he will take his passion for literacy to 13 areas around the state, making motivational community outreach presentations and specialized workshops focused on adult literacy issues.

Information about Griego, his publishing company and his blog can be found at www.martengriego.com.

Other events in the cultural series will also be held in the UNM-VC Student-Community Center. Sharing the Words will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Oct. 27. The program will feature authors reading from their works.

The Fourth Annual New Mexico Filmmakers Showcase Winning Films Tour is set for 2 p.m. on Nov. 18. Award-winning films by six New Mexico film directors will be featured.

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- [Noticias](#)

A winter concert/fundraiser will conclude the series. The New MexiChords, an a cappella men's chorus, will perform on the campus on a date to be determined in December. The event will also be a fundraiser for the campus' scholarship funds.

Art exhibits at the campus' fine arts galleries are another highlight of the fall series.

The photography of Bob Warren will be featured in the first exhibit, September 1-29. The artist reception is scheduled for 5-7 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 15.

Fiber works by Jo Phillips is the second exhibit scheduled for the gallery from Oct. 6 to Nov. 10. A reception is scheduled for 5-7 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 20.

Contemporary and traditional Santero works by Vicente Telles will be the last exhibit in the fall. Telles' work will be on display Nov. 10 to Dec. 8. A reception for that exhibit is scheduled for 5-7 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 17.

The UNM-Valencia Student Gallery will also feature works by students this fall. That schedule is yet to be determined.

All events, except for the art exhibits, will be located in the Student-Community Center on the south side of the campus. The public is invited to all events, and all events, unless otherwise noted, are free.

For more information about the cultural series, contact UNM-Valencia Community Education Services at 925-8970. For information about the fine arts gallery, call 925-8711.

Contact

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