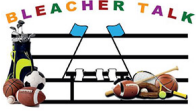


## Those Who Serve are Real Heroes

Written by By Tom Hartsock Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 16 October 2015 01:43

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I have always been grateful to people like Eric Taylor, Sammy Chioda, Greg Kirk, all of the Service Clubs, and many other individuals who serve as unpaid volunteers in the Gallup area. This includes game officials, who are paid very little for a very tough job, and many other groups that we don't associate with sports or athletics: the Quilting ladies, Pantry volunteers, recycling proponents, and the like. The latter seldom get a mention until a more dramatic story develops, but they are vital to the community.

Taylor's introduction as head coach of the Rehoboth Lady Lynx Coach this year is a prime example of someone who has raised the bar, not just for himself but for his players and the school they attend. His inaugural Soccer Showcase may have started small according to some, but that is the nature of all new endeavors. It is in the continuation of these events that success is seen.

Gallup now has established a new niche to add to the annual soccer tournament at Rehoboth, and is an addition to the Four Corners Football Tournament, the GABSA regional tournaments of the past two years, and the Gallup High Boys' and Girls' basketball tournaments on both side of the Wingate High School Holiday Classic. Then there is the rodeo season, with the Lions Club leading the way for volunteer efforts, and the Scholarship Banquets sponsored by the Rotary Club.

If Gallup is indeed the 'Adventure Capital' of New Mexico, it is due in large part to these above mentioned activities in conjunction with Ballooning, Bicycling, Rock-Climbing, and other activities. I feel like I left something out of this diatribe, but not on purpose.

In my time as an informer to the public, specifically in sports, I have covered in addition to those listed; bowling, kayaking, archery, tennis, cross-country, track and field, swimming, wrestling, MMA fights, boxing, billiards, motor sports, and surely other activities that escape my tired brain at this time. The point is, there are many other opportunities for Gallup's adventure-minded to

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explore, and enhance the reputation we have already earned.

One of the best columns I have read on this subject came from Joe Schaller, who also writes for the Gallup Sun. His idea was for the city or other entity to establish a series of different events throughout the summer months as kind of the ultimate challenges in a variety of fields, perhaps even a contest that would take an athlete from their most familiar to a competition in another. For instance, swimmers in a foot race, or cyclists in a basketball game. Overall winner, based on points, would be awarded an honorary title for the year, boosted by supporters morally and perhaps even financially by some businesses.

Those thoughts, and actions, of a few is what pleases me the most in my life. I have attempted to assist with some of these projects in my time, but now is when younger, smarter, more-involved residents need to step up and advance their own causes to benefit not just the younger ones, but all of us.

Easy? Not! It requires effort, thought, and others of a like mind to advance a program of this nature. So what are you waiting for, me to kick start you in the hindquarters?

The nights have grown colder and the crowds in the stadium for football more sparse, but the players are still giving their all on the field. Soccer players are still running up and down the pitch, even with little in the Win column to show for it, and the Cross-Country runners are still getting in their mileage on the courses they run. I regret that I am but one person and can not attend all these simultaneous events every day, but that doesn't mean I won't see you in the bleachers, sometime. Keep your hair combed, as I do, just in case I'm carrying my camera.