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OF THE JOURNAL

UNM's Blue Mesa Review Gains Acclaim

In New Mexico literary circles Blue Mesa Review is a known quantity and of known quality — respected and read.

Which means if you're not a devoted reader of literary journals, an English major in college or an English professor, mention Blue Mesa Review and it probably elicits the terse response of "duh."

But Blue Mesa, published annually, has an impressive pedigree. Rudolfo Anaya was its founding editor in 1989.

Anaya, at the time teaching creative writing at UNM, remembers the journal's genesis: "I'm the one who went to the dean's office and said out of the clear blue sky, 'Can you give me \$5,000 and we'll do a literary magazine everyone will be proud of. It's a logical outgrowth of our creative writing program.'

"He said 'OK.' And we've been going ever since."

And with as much money each year.

Knowing the number of writers living in the state and predicting that more would be here, Anaya said, a UNM-

sponsored literary journal would be a natural vehicle to publish their works.

And, he thought, the journal would provide great experience for creative writing students in copy editing, page layout, and just hanging out.

Anaya stepped down as editor last year, passing the torch to David Johnson, an associate professor of English, who had been on the journal's editorial board from the get-go.

The current issue, No. 6, is still warm off the presses. It has short fiction, poetry and book reviews; those categories have been the three staples of the journal over the years.

Though Blue Mesa has published the works of regional writers, Anaya said that hasn't been to the exclusion of writers outside the region or outside the country.

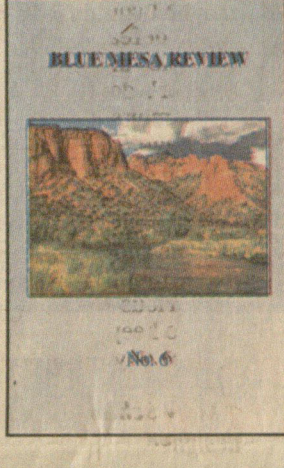
Johnson said he hasn't changed the direction or philosophy of Blue Mesa Review.

However, James Melendez, the managing editor, said Blue Mesa has increased the number of submissions from New Mexico residents by getting local newspapers to publicize the journal.

That doesn't automatically result in more works by New Mexicans. That will depend on the quality of the writing, Melendez said.

Because the submission deadline for the 1995 issue was last month, Melendez and the editorial board are holed up this month reading manuscripts and deciding which to

MORE: See UNM's on PAGE I-11



JEFF ALEXANDER / JOURNAL

James Melendez, managing editor of UNM's Blue Mesa Review