

The Luna Light



*“The People’s College”
Becoming The Premier Rural Community College in America*

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Varela wants another shot at nationals *LCC student restores Mustang Convertible*

Earl Varela has a lot of patience.

Back in 1995, after he graduated from high school, Varela came across a 1988 Ford Mustang Convertible GT. It had one major problem—no motor. Perhaps two major problems—the body of the car needed work.

Last Thursday Varela, a second-year Luna Community College Auto Collision student, culminated his 16-year project. He restored it to almost-mint condition which included a new motor, transmission, an upgraded rear-end and an outstanding electric blue paint job covered by candy oriental blue with a blue pearl.

“I love it,” says Varela. “I am a car enthusiast. Whether it be an old car or a new car, I love working on vehicles.”

Varela first attended Luna Community College last year after finding out that New Mexico Law was leaning toward mandating that collision companies have certified technicians before releasing insurance premiums on cars that needed repair work.

“It’s something I’ve always liked to do,” said Varela. “I’ve learned a lot here at Luna. There is not one day I don’t learn something new. Someone always has a different method of doing something.”

Varela is looking forward to winning back-to-back SkillsUSA championship at the state level in hopes to qualifying again to nationals in Kansas City where he finished a disappointing 19th in auto refinishing.

“I know I could have done a lot better,” says Varela. “If I get another opportunity I know what to expect now. I know I can do better.”

Varela is preparing a little different.

“This year I know what the judges are looking for,” says Varela.

As far as his refinished car, Varela intends to put a new interior and a convertible top.

“My intentions are to give it to my son,” says Varela. “His only 10 years old now, but he knows it’s his.”



Luna Community College Auto Collision student Earl Varela shows his newly restored 1988 Ford Mustang Convertible GT. Varela says he intends to give it his son.



The Adult Education GED Program celebrated Ernest Torres' (giving a thumbs up) birthday on Oct. 10. Torres, a GED student, is a very giving person who is loved by all; he is friendly, affable, thoughtful, and caring. His birthday was celebrated by previous GED students and many staff members from different departments throughout campus.