

FEBRUARY 2020 - TRIBUTE TO ESTHER GARCIA

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Questa Del Rio News

ENCHANTED EATS
IS BACK WITH
BRETT'S BISTRO!

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FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL
EMBROIDERY MONTH!
COLCHA EMBROIDERY

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REDISCOVER
YOUR CLOSET

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QUESTA • RED RIVER • CERRO • COSTILLA • AMALIA • LAMA • SAN CRISTOBAL

Esther García, The Passing of a Legend

By CARRIE LEVEN

"There is something different to see every day. My grandfather used to say, 'There is something bewitching in the mountains that won't let you go.' The peacefulness and beauty draw people in, and they stay because the people here are friendly and generous."

Esther's life and work were shaped by the landscape around Questa, New Mexico, and her grandfather J. P. Rael's words of wisdom about the land and the water that flows through. "Without land, you have nothing, without water there is no life."

"When I grew up there was no running water, so we pulled water from the acequia," Esther said. "We walked to the store, grew our own food, and put up hay for our cattle. We survived because of the land and water, and we need to pass on that connection to each generation."

Putting her beliefs into action, Esther spent years serving with the acequia associations. She never gave up and her voice made a difference on the state and national levels. Her efforts were instrumental in getting \$5.5 million awarded for rebuilding Cabresto Dam at the mountain lake

which has supplied Questa's northern acequias since the 1800s. Esther advocated for the restoration of San Antonio Del Rio Colorado Land Grant so that heirs can freely practice cultural traditions like woodcutting, fishing, herb and pinon gathering, hunting, and horseback riding on common lands.

Esther García loved to sit and gaze at the mountains outside her Village of Questa home, captivated by their tranquil beauty.

Esther consulted with agency officials and attended nearly every public meeting held by the Forest Service. She had a seat at the table and always provided helpful comments on proposals that might impact the surrounding lands and waters. In her ardent support for wilderness designations to preserve the land and water for future generations, she was instrumental in getting the designation



Photo by Carrie Leven

Esther García spearheaded a fundraiser for the St. Anthony's Church restoration, raffled a quilt made by the ladies of the Quilt Guild. The beautiful quilt depicts each of the twelve historic churches.

ESTHER GARCÍA continued page 28

Positive Thoughts

by Donna Mitchell-Moniak

February is Black History Month. If Black History Month was celebrated more, how might it benefit other American populations who have been segregated, marginalized, or dismissed over centuries and still are, even today? PBS offers a

month of historical television features, and libraries highlight black authors, philosophers, and artists. Schools in less segregated parts of the US will focus on the Civil Rights movement or on black leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, or President Barack Obama. There is so much more to the history of black people in America, just as there are untold volumes of history of the Hispanic and indigenous roots of this nation.

Ongoing education and illumination of American history can undo ongoing suppression that, to this day, is the plight of African-Americans, Latinos, and native peoples of this country, as well as women and children. We can champion our children and the schools that serve them, encourage reading, and tell the stories of our families and cultural history.

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Questa Del Rio News

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LOU McCALL Editor

LYNN SKALL Director/ Business Manager

SARA MARTINEZ *Assistant Editor/Editor asistente*

EMILY WILDE Graphic Design & Layout/*Diseño gráfico y delineación*

ROBYN BLACK Food Editor/*Editor de comida*

MARTHA SHEPP Copy Editor/*Editor de copia*

NICHOLAS NAGAWIECKI Americorp VISTA Volunteer

TERESA DOVALPAGE Translator

ROBYN BLACK

DINA COLEMAN

CATHY GALLEGOS

MARIA GONZALEZ

CHARLENE R. JOHNSON

TONER MITCHELL

DONNA MITCHELL-MONIAK

SHARON NICHOLSON

BARBARA TRACY

ELLEN WOOD

MICHAEL YOUNG

Columnist/*Columnistas*

Monthly Features/*Presentaciones Mensuales*

SARA MARTINEZ, Amalia/Costilla

SHELBY WERLEY, Red River

Correspondents/*Correspondientes*

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR CONTRIBUTORS! SEE PAGE 3

CHUCK KROON Distribution Manager/*Gerente de distribución*
chkroon@gmail.com • 575.586.2360

JESSICA ARBOUR Subscription Manager/*Gerente de subscripciones*
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To Inform, Inspire, Connect and Unite the Communities of Northern Taos County.
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

H

APPY FEBRUARY! This newspaper marks the Questa Del Rio News' second anniversary, yay! In a time when small-town, rural, independent news sources are few and failing, it sounded a little crazy two years ago that we were going to start our own little local news source—and on paper. And, now that we have been publishing for two years, it actually seems crazier than ever!

It has been a fun, if not wild, ride. The funnest thing has been working with the communities we serve. When Lindsay Mapes and I first started talking about doing a community newspaper in the fall of 2017, it just seemed right; the right time and the right place. We didn't know what direction it would go, or what form it would eventually take. Where we are now is largely due to the support, cooperation, and appreciation from you, our local readers.

One of the things we love most is working with all the good people that come forward to contribute to making this paper a community project. Your contributions have come in so many surprising ways. First of all, we have great writers, even though we don't yet have the resources to pay them. We have wonderful, loyal advertisers and local businesses and organizations that we work with as media partners. And in the last few months, we have asked our readers to contribute financially to keep us going. Thank you, everyone!

So, this month marks a turning point for our paper. We bid a fond farewell to our founder, Lindsay Mapes, who is stepping down and will no longer be on staff with the paper. We have to remind ourselves not to cry; Lindsay will still be here, doing what she does best—making Questa a better place. She will be devoting her efforts to the Questa Lodging Project, under the auspices of the non-profit San Antonio del Rio Colorado Historic Preservation group. They will be changing the face of housing and lodging in our village with her help. Lindsay will still write articles for the Questa Lodging Project and she will remain a vital member of the community. It has been fun working with you, Lindsay – thank you for your role in creating this paper and keeping it going for two years; not an easy job!

On February 1, Lynn Skall steps in to become the new director of the Questa Economic Development Fund. She has a background and experience in journalism and we expect that our level of excellence will continue to grow with her support and involvement. Please join me in welcoming Lynn, and please read more about her on page 4.

Lots of changes always, that is the way of life... It would be hard for our readers to have missed the news from early January about the passing of Esther Garcia. She was quite a lady. So much so, that we have dedicated this entire issue to her life and works. It started with her obituary and photos, then came letters from our Senators, and that cascaded into a full-blown tribute to Esther Garcia and a life well-lived. There is a lot to say about what Esther did with her time here on earth. May she be a model and inspiration to us all. We have done what we could to give the entire picture of Esther's life in these pages. Please let us know if we missed anything!

Questa lost another great champion last September, with the passing of Senator Carlos Cisneros. News of his sudden death reached us literally at the last minute, so, unfortunately, we couldn't fully honor him in these pages before going to press. Sometime soon we plan to honor Questa's dear friend, Senator Cisneros with a similar tribute, in honor of a special day or event dedicated to him. Stay tuned. This is a time in the Questa area when we cannot lean on our time-honored heroes; they are no longer with us, and it is time for the next wave of movers and shakers to step up and do their part. Good luck, keep up the good work, and let us know how we can help!

Lou McCall

AND ALL THE FOLKS AT THE QUESTA DEL RIO NEWS

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR CONTRIBUTORS TO OUR FEBRUARY EDITION!

LORI ARCHULETA, DEBORAH CHAVEZ, DINA COLEMAN, JIM COX, PETER CRIDER, JUDY CUDDIHY, CHASE DISNEY, ERIN FRYER, LOUISE GALLEGOS, MEGAN JENKINS, DENISE WINSLOW-LAWRENCE, CARRIE LEVEN, BRETT LEWIS, RENEE MARTINEZ, DR. BENJAMIN E. MAYS, BOBBY ORTEGA, MARCELLA PACHECO, MALAQUIAS RAEL, MARIAH RAMIREZ, GEORGE SHANNON, LYNN SKALL, PEGGY TRIGG, MARK WHITE,

MAIL CALL

Last month we published a letter to the editor from Kurt Winchester regarding Kit Carson Electric Co-op's net metering policy, here is KCEC's response:

We saw the letter and have put together a member committee and had our first meeting to discuss the issues and challenges that the cooperative and its members need to address relative to net metering installations. We reached out to Kurt Winchester, the author of the letter, and encouraged him as well as other members of the committee to give us recommendations of how we can create a win-win solution when it comes to solar delivery into our grid. We asked

Mr. Winchester to break into subcommittees and work on his issues with the Kit Carson staff and bring recommendations. We at Kit Carson Electric Co-op take our members' concerns seriously and are working to move ahead toward 100% solar for everyone's benefit.

Luis A. Reyes Jr.
Chief Executive Officer
Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, Inc.

The Questa Del Rio News proves you don't need a huge population center to be a strong newspaper. The reporting and production are top-notch.

STEVE FUHLENDORF
TAOS PUBLIC RELATIONS
AND MARKETING

DOLLAR GENERAL

We wish to thank the *Questa del Rio News* for publishing the informative articles and letters regarding plans of Dollar General to build a store in the center of our town. These pieces were informative, thought-provoking, and gave our residents the opportunity to express their concerns to the leaders in our government, regarding possible impacts on the well-being of our citizens in the Questa community. We appreciate everyone who took the time to read and sign the petitions displayed by our local merchants or online.

We are especially grateful to the energetic volunteers, who wrote, placed

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online, and distributed those petitions (or wrote letters) - especially Jeannie Masters, Jonathan & Daniel Hutchison, Cathy Hope, Diane de Fremery, Betty Richter, our local businesses, and many others. This has been a true community effort!

These petitions and the *Questa del Rio News* articles have been sent to the Chairman and CEO of the Dollar General, the 12 Oaks Development Corporation (in Tennessee), the New Mexico Dept. of Transportation, Senator "Bobby" Gonzales, Governor Michelle Lujan

Grisham, and the Advocacy & Intervention Dept. of New Mexico. We are awaiting their replies.

Our hope is that Mayor Gallegos and the Questa Village Council will seriously consider establishing regulations for future proposed business developments, to have some legal leverage when considering new developments. We appreciate our Village leaders for listening to our concerns.

—CITIZENS CONCERNED FOR QUESTA'S FUTURE

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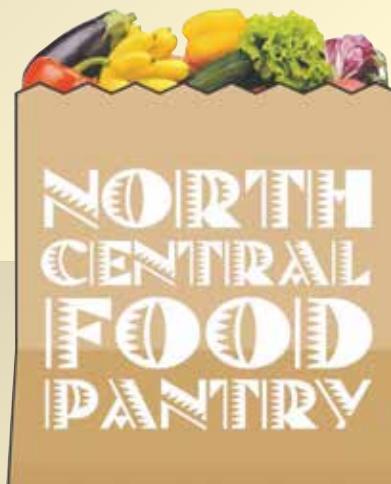


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Welcome Lynn Skall, Our New QEDF Director

By LINDSAY MAPES

The Questa Economic Development Fund is excited to announce its new Economic Development Director, Lynn Skall of El Prado. "We are very pleased that such a qualified candidate was in our back yard," said Malaquias Rael, Jr., QEDF Chairman of the Board.

"I am honored and excited to be selected for this position! I look forward to meeting everyone in the community, building on the many accomplishments already realized by the QEDF, and making contributions to the Village of Questa that will be a part of the community's new legacy," said Lynn.

Lynn has lived in El Prado since 2016 when she moved to the area from Breckenridge, Colorado. There, she was executive director of the Summit County Chamber for six years where



Photo by Phoenix Photography of Taos

Welcome, Lynn Skall of El Prado, our new QEDF Director!

she launched and oversaw two visitor centers. Upon moving to Taos County, she worked as the director of sales at El Monte Sagrado in Taos. She recently started a small writing and marketing

business called Ink Well. Lynn has two grown sons and enjoys writing, hiking, and spending time with her husband, Burt.

Having the luxury of an applicant that is familiar with the area means Lynn will be able to hit the ground running. In addition to her network of contacts through her position at El Monte Sagrado, she is a very active and engaged board member of the Taos County Chamber of Commerce.

The hiring process included 11 applicants, primarily from Taos County. A panel of two board members and the former Economic Development Director interviewed six applicants. From there, the panel narrowed it down to the top candidate, who accepted the position. "We were lucky and surprised at the high quality of applicants that applied and that most of them live here already,"

said Christian Isely, the Economic Development Advisor for Chevron and ex-officio board member of the QEDF. "This tells us that Questa is an attractive community to work in and the QEDF has developed a good track record as an employer," he added.

The previous Economic Development Director, Lindsay Mapes, was under contract with the QEDF since March of 2017. After developing the Questa Lodging Project under the San Antonio del Rio Colorado Historic Preservation group, she has transitioned to launch that initiative. "Because Lindsay will still be working in Questa, there will be continuity of QEDF projects," said Malaquias.

Please stop by the QEDF building in downtown Questa or email Lynn@QuestaEDF.com to welcome Lynn Skall to our community!



STITCHING RITES; COLCHA EMBROIDERY ALONG THE NORTHERN RIO GRANDE

By DR. SUZANNE MACAULAY

In the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado, there thrives a folk tradition with links to both the past and future. In the first book on this craft, Dr. Suzanne MacAulay provides a detailed account of this folk-art tradition that is both old and constantly renewing itself.

Stitching Rites reveals how art, history, and memory interweave in a rich creative web. Based on archival

research and extensive interviews with artists, the book examines embroiderers and their relationships with their work, each other, and with their community. Through stitchers like Josephine Lobato and the San Luis Ladies Sewing Circle, MacAulay shows how colcha creation is bound up in a perpetual round of cultural commentary and self-reflection.

Through this picture of a community of embroiderers, MacAulay helps us to understand their stitching rites and sheds new light on the relationship between Hispanic and Anglo cultures.

(See related story, page 10)

ESTHER GARCIA OBITUARY



Esther Garcia, age 74, a resident of Questa passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving family on January 5, 2020. She is preceded in death by her parents, Max and Tessie Ortega and sister Betty Ortega. Esther was a strong-minded and outspoken woman who cared dearly for the people and the community of Questa and Northern New Mexico. She served for numerous years as the first female Mayor of Questa. She also played an important role in the restoration of the St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Questa. Esther was one of the primary traditional voices driving the designation of both the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument and the Columbine Hondo Wilderness. Esther was a tireless advocate for the

preservation of traditional land and water uses on public lands as well as the conservation and protection of clean water, healthy watersheds and healthy wildlife populations.

Esther was incredibly wise, funny, deeply spiritual, kind, diplomatic, brave, passionate, fierce and just a lovely human being all around. She was truly a peacemaker and a bridge builder. She loved all her family dearly and will be missed by all who knew her. Esther is survived by her husband of 55 years, Eugene Garcia; children, Myra Garcia, Christine Rodriguez (Ricardo), Lori Archuleta (Juan), grandchildren, Caitlin Garcia, Megan Archuleta, Kelsey Rodriguez, Nicholas Rodriguez, Marissa Archuleta and great-granddaughter Alanna Favre-Bulle; siblings, Max Ortega Jr. (Monica), Robert Ortega Sr, and Julie Lucero (Mark) along with sister-in-law Andrieta Ortega, plus many loving nieces, nephews, relatives and friends. Rosary was recited on Thursday January 9, 2020 at 6:30pm at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Questa. Mass of Christian Burial was held on Friday January 10, 2020 at 10:00 am at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Questa with burial to follow at the El Pueblito Cemetery. The family of Esther Garcia entrusted the care of their loved one to DeVargas Funeral Home of Taos.



Business Profile

REDISCOVER YOUR CLOSET
WITH ELISABETH WHITE
BY LOU MCCALL

Do you feel like your closets and drawers are crammed full of clothes and yet you don't have anything to wear? Many of us could use help getting our clothes sorted out. Elisabeth White, whose business is called Rediscover Your Closet, can help shift your perspective to find an entire new wardrobe, right there at your home!

There is a lot of media attention now about decluttering and simplifying our lives; reducing, reusing, recycling, tiny houses, energy conservation. Our culture is starting to understand that more and more stuff does not bring more and more happiness. In fact, have you ever cleaned out your closet and taken big black bags full of stuff to charity? It is a good feeling. Elisabeth can help you create that feeling by taking a good look at what you have and what you want to create in your life. An essential element is being honest with yourself and looking at what doesn't work for you. What are you hanging on to and why? And what is holding you back, not just in your closet, but also in your life patterns and relationships?

This process can be simply about looking at your lifestyle – what you wear and don't wear – and cleaning out your closet. But it can also become a process of personal transformation if you take it to heart. Elisabeth, the "Closet Therapist," can shift your lifestyle paradigm considerably in an hour-and-a-half to two hours, and get you started on a journey to a new you. It is a fun process, like sharing clothes in junior high, playing dress-up again, or going shopping and finding exactly what you need.

When your closets and drawers are overstuffed, finding something to wear can be frustrating and waste a lot of time. Taking everything out, seeing what you have already and organizing them, makes your clothes accessible. This process can bring stress reduction and can offer a time-saver element to streamline your daily life. Do you have piles of beautiful clothes that look great on you that you never wear? It may be time for you to create a new look or up your game. It could be time to maximize what you already have and put things together in ways that you hadn't thought of be-



Elisabeth White shows a closet that has recently been "rediscovered!"

Courtesy Photos



Organizing your drawers, before and after.

I love to share information about reusing, repurposing, reinventing, and conscious consumerism – sharing my passion for making positive decisions about what to buy and looking for solutions to the negative impact consumerism is having on our world.

fore. Contrary to what some lifestyle experts say, Elisabeth says there are no real rules, but she does have simple tricks and formulas for organizing. Once you clean out your drawers and closets full of clothes, you can start to declutter other areas of your life, one space at a time.

Do you feel you need to buy new clothes and can't afford to or don't know where to start? Buying new clothes is not necessarily going to solve your problem. In fact, spending money on new clothes can add more clutter in your already jumbled life. Do you think you can't afford to pay a professional to help you create a new wardrobe? The money you save from not buying one new outfit could pay Elisabeth to help you create many new looks out of what you already own and actually save you money. "While rediscovering your clos-

et, I will work with your style and your energy, leaving you feeling empowered and confident," she says. Elisabeth can also help with planning and packing a travel wardrobe.

From a holistic perspective, it is energy work, and it begins with the physical. It is a creative process of reinventing yourself by what you wear. Clearing your space also creates a lighter you, which affects how you carry yourself and how you look in your clothes. Maybe you have a bombshell dress in your closet that you are finally ready for!

Elisabeth recently moved her business, Rediscover Your Closet, to the Enchanted Circle from Dallas, Texas, where she offered lifestyle consultations and classes. She has a degree in fashion merchandising and has worked in the fashion and clothing world in different

capacities. Elisabeth has also explored personal transformation modalities that affect how we live and present ourselves.

Elisabeth's family first started visiting Red River to ski when she was a young girl, and she has always felt at home here. She started skiing at age six in New Mexico and Colorado and her heart has belonged to the mountains ever since, so here she is. Elisabeth is excited to call northern Taos County home. In addition to Rediscover Your Closet consultations, she offers private ski instruction. If you are interested in rediscovering your closet with Elisabeth, find out more at <http://www.redcoveryourcloset.co/>, check out the Facebook page Rediscover Your Closet by Elisabeth White, or contact her directly at (214) 908-0868 or redcoveryourcloset@gmail.com. This could be the beginning of something big!

Agriculture and Natural Resources Trust Fund

By TONER MITCHELL

People in Questa understand deeply the value of healthy land and watersheds to agriculture, hunting, fishing, and to the overall quality of life in a rural village. The fact that the village has taken such a committed interest in the proposed Questa to Red River Trail, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout, and to the continued restoration of the Red River reinforces this fact.

Unfortunately, funds to invest in the enhancement of regional natural resources is in short supply. In the meantime, erosion gullies become more incised, forests grow thicker and more fire-prone, and upland grazing pastures suffer from lack of important infrastructure. Healthy precipitation trends have been a boon to the north, perhaps masking some land health issues. Elsewhere in New Mexico, however, there are wounds on the land that require immediate attention.

To be considered in the upcoming legislative session, the Agriculture and Natural Resources Trust Fund Act proposes to address landscape scale problems by creating a funding mechanism for the enhancement of open lands either directly, or by leveraging other (mainly federal) funding sources.

The Act would create an endowment



Photo by Toner Mitchell

River restoration is just one of the many types of regenerative projects that would be funded by the Agriculture and Natural Resources Trust Fund Act.

fund where only the accrued interest will be used to conserve and enhance land, water, and habitat across New Mexico. Ideally, the fund will grow to \$400 million through a combination of surplus oil and gas revenues and other sources of public and private funding. A board representing different regions and areas of expertise would be created to evaluate, rank, and select projects. This board will submit periodic progress reports to the Governor and legislature.

Endowment funding would be available for projects on public, private, and tribal lands, and might cover anything

from Russian Olive removal, erosion mitigation, to stream work. On the other hand, the reintroduction of endangered species would not be funded, nor the acquisition of land or water rights, although conservation easements would be eligible for funding.

Consider that New Mexico loses an average of 50,000 acres of undeveloped land per year to various forms of degradation, wind and water erosion, the expansion of noxious weeds and invasive species, climate change impacts such as early runoff, drought, and increasingly violent storm events. These forces

If you are interested in advancing the Agriculture and Natural Resources Trust Fund Act, contact your state representative or senator to express your support for restoring health to our water and land. For the Questa area and House District 42 contact Rep. Daniel R. Barrone at (575) 758-1506 or daniel.barrone@nmlegis.gov. For Senate District 6, contact Bobby J. Gonzales at (575) 758-2674 or roberto.gonzales@nmlegis.gov. If you live outside these legislative districts and would like to contact your legislators, find them at https://www.nmlegis.gov/members/find_my_legislator.

threaten our agricultural way of life and the habitat so critical to the wildlife that provide food and economic opportunity.

Simply preserving land is not enough to prepare us for a future of higher temperatures and unpredictable precipitation. We need to enhance currently functioning ecosystems and restore ecosystems whose function is impaired. We need to leverage federal dollars (Farm Bill, Pittman Robertson, Dingell Johnson), just like we did when the recent Red River restoration project was completed. And we need to create a restoration economy, adding to the growing portfolio of rural economic possibilities.

Carson National Forest Seeks Public Input

By ERIN FRYER

It has become increasingly expensive to maintain and improve recreation sites due to aging facilities, increases in visitation, and limited resources. The Carson National Forest is looking for public input on proposed changes to the management of its developed recreation program. These changes will impact campgrounds and day-use sites on the Carson, Gila, Lincoln, and Santa Fe National Forests, as well as the Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands. Several different management options are being considered, including adding new recreation fees, increasing current recreation fees, eliminating or repurposing some developed recreation sites, and collaborating on the management of some sites with volunteers, partners, or concessionaires.

"To offer quality recreation experi-

ences and serve our public better, we need public input and ideas on other methods that may help cut costs and leverage resources for managing developed recreation facilities," said Jeremy Golston, Recreation Fee Program Manager for the USDA Forest Service Southwestern Region. "Public participation will give us the opportunity to hear from all forest users; visitors, partners, tribes, elected officials, and community members.

"The Carson National Forest offers diverse recreational opportunities to over 700,000 visitors annually. They get an opportunity to experience the waters of the Rio Grande and the snowcapped peaks of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. During this public input opportunity, we want to hear some valuable input. Our facilities will continue to decline without financially viable options and sustainable solutions to maintain them, and our

visitors and communities deserve better," said Forest Supervisor James Duran.

The National Forest Service manages forests and grasslands and operates and maintains a variety of campgrounds and day-use areas. Some of these recreation sites offer limited amenities and visitors services but are free of charge. Other sites charge recreation fees. In exchange, these recreation areas offer visitor services and amenities such as restroom facilities, trash collection, visitor security, and interpretive services. Developed recreation sites offer visitors convenience, are often gateways to recreation opportunities and can play an important role in economic growth tourism for local communities.

The recreation fees charged at Forest Service-managed sites contribute to the stewardship and improvement of these special places. Since 2004, under the authority of the Federal Lands Recre-

ation Enhancement Act, 95% of the revenue from recreation fees and passes remains with the forests. This funding is used to operate, maintain, and improve facilities. However, the resources needed to address the maintenance backlog and improve recreation sites still exceed revenue generated from recreation fees and congressionally appropriated dollars.

The public is invited to comment on the proposed changes until December 31, 2020. Public meetings on this will be scheduled. For meeting dates and locations, or to submit a comment online visit www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r3/SusRec. Comments may also be submitted through comment cards at local USDA Forest Service offices, and by mail to the Southwestern Regional Office, Attention: Recreation Fees, 333 Broadway SE, Albuquerque, NM 87102, or by email to SM.FS.R3FeeProComm@usda.gov.

What Esther Garcia Meant for Northern New Mexico Fishing

By TONER MITCHELL

Growing up in New Mexico, I took for granted that there were fishing spots where no one would want to go. Steep hikes, brush and snags everywhere, places that required too much work to get to. "Joke's on them," was my attitude; if only people knew that it wasn't so much work as fun. The people who knew this too, well, they understood the true value of a special place. They would do the necessary work of taking care of it.

Of course, I was to learn later that there were other types of people willing to go to extreme lengths to enjoy the places I held dear, except "enjoying" for them meant drilling or digging for things, cutting them down, and turning them into money somewhere else. I'd lived in several other states, had seen forests mowed like lawns, and lakes that smelled like gasoline.

Naively perhaps, I thought New Mexico was different. The Rio Grande gorge is one of my top five favorite fishing places in the whole world, mainly because of its physical beauty. No one would ever want to mess it up. Right?

Around 2011, I joined a group that would make sure that no one would ever



Photo by C. Jim Cox Artworks Studio

Esther Garcia was a key player working for the designation of the Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument. Here she is shown speaking at the dedication ceremony at Taos Mesa Brewing Company along with many other key dignitaries.

mess it up, an effort to designate the Rio Grande del Norte as a national monument. It was a big group, representing conservation groups, recreationists and,

importantly, local citizens from Taos County towns. We each brought our most profound perspective on why this landscape deserved such strong protection, and we took pride in our mission.

It was Esther Garcia who boiled the campaign down to its simplest terms. While listing the traditional uses of the Rio Grande del Norte landscape – the hunting, fishing, grazing, and farming, the collecting of herbs and pinon or just the value of walking out there with the wind and coyotes – the unique sound of her voice seemed all that was necessary to make her words legitimate. You felt her words more than you heard them, which I'm sure is why we considered her to be our leader.

Whether talking about her acequia, the Columbine Hondo, or the Red River restoration that began under her watch around 2012, Esther had the same impact. You knew exactly where she stood, and where she stood was with her community. She spoke from a watershed's point of view, which, as a fisherman, I recognized immediately.

What was different, however, is that when Esther talked about a watershed, there were people in it. She said the word "Cabresto," and you saw the

houses, fields, children and their history along with the fish. It all had to be taken together, which, when you think about it, is what ecology is. Ecology is about communities. It is how monuments get designated and churches get rebuilt. It is how fishing gets better instead of worse.

Esther was also a lesson in the value of our rural communities to the proper functioning of New Mexican society. It's one thing to sit at home and advocate for the protection of one's favorite northern recreation site, quite another to be the person who minds the store, who keeps the shelves stocked and shoos away the shoplifters until the city dwellers deign to visit. Along with her compadres in the Questa community, Esther was that shopkeeper.

Like many whom she influenced, I will always wish I got to know Esther better, but I am grateful for her lessons and for the community that blessed us with her life and her work.

Toner Mitchell is the New Mexico Water and Habitat Coordinator for Trout Unlimited. He has worked with Questa for several years on fisheries and natural resource issues as a member of the Village Economic Development Leadership Team. He is a regular contributor to Questa del Rio News.

Valle Vidal: This Pristine Natural Environment is Waiting for You!

By NICK NAGAWIECKI

Nestled in the middle of the Sangre de Cristo Mountain range, just east of Costilla and Amalia, lies the Valle Vidal. This valley is the definition of "hidden gem." It is divided between east and west, its dividing line marking the end of the Rio Grande Basin to the west and the Canadian Basin to the east. That line is distinctively marked by lower Costilla Peak, which is a long snaky mountain that defines the valley, and whose tendrils reach all the way up to La Veta in Colorado. This interesting geographical phenomenon makes for a surreal landscape of sweeping vistas and lush natural environment. People visit the Valle for the solitude, remoteness, and uniqueness of the resources hidden within.

The east/west divider is not only geographical but also affects the ways in which visitors can access the Valle. Forest Road 1950 is always open for drivers throughout the year and is closed only if the snow on the road makes it too



Photo by Nick Nagawiecki

The Valle Vidal makes for a surreal landscape of sweeping vistas and a lush natural environment. People visit the Valle for the solitude, remoteness, and uniqueness of the resources hidden within.

dangerous. The east and west side have different closures so that the forest service can assess the environmental conditions of the Valle. Between January 1 and March 1, the east side is closed to visitors other than driving by. Between May 1 and June 30, the west side is closed.

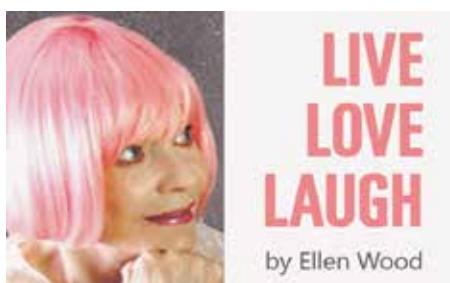
During the winter, visitors can hike

(snowshoe) and ski in the Valle. Hunting in the Valle is a once-in-a-lifetime event. Applicants for hunting must enter a lottery to gain access to the Valle. Once they are accepted, it only costs \$90, but they are only allowed to do the hunt once in their lifetime. The forest service keeps tabs on who hunts in the Valle.

Hunters will go after elk, black bears, wild turkeys, and deer. Antelope are also in the Valle but they are not for hunting. Fishing is not permitted anywhere in the Valle between December 31 and July 1. Any fishing must be catch-and-release. The exception is in the Shuree Ponds, where fishers can keep any fish under fifteen inches. Only artificial fly lures are allowed.

Access the Valle from Questa by heading north on Highway 522 until you reach Costilla. Then take a right on State Road 196 through Amalia. Continue along 196 after the paved road becomes dirt along the Rio Costilla and enjoy the gorgeous drive through the craggy river valley. Once you reach Comanche Point, a distinctive landmark, you can either keep heading forward for a short while or take a right on Forest Road 1950 to take you to the heart of the Valle. Continuing on Forest Road 1950 will take you all the way to Cimarron if you so choose.

What if this was my last week on Earth?



As I write this, it's the fifth day of a new decade and I'm wondering what I can do in 2020 that will make my life the best it can be.

Blessed as I am, and even though I have mindfulness practices, occasionally I still find myself worrying about what might happen in my future – financially, politically, physically – and once in a while I ruminante over little things that have happened to upset me.

Later I think, "Heck, I could die tomorrow. What am I doing to myself?" By then it's too late. My vibration has plummeted (I can feel it in my belly) and that feeling gets stuck there.

So now I'm thinking about what I can do to help this situation in this new year, this new decade. I believe one part has to do with faith – trusting in the Divine – remembering that I'll always be taken care of. That's why I'm putting my holy picture of St. Joseph in a more prominent place on my desk. He's my "go-to guy" for anything I need, and I can feel his presence as I write.
Here's what I'm putting in place for 2020 so I can live fully at my highest level:
• Catch myself.

Notice a thought that produces a negative feeling. To remind myself, I'll put a sticky note on my kitchen counter that says: WAITRN? That stands for What Am I Thinking Right Now? Just in case my brain stops seeing the sticky note (which happens after a week or so), I'm setting an alarm on my iPhone for the first of every month to ponder whether my life is as wonderful as I'd like it to be.

• Don't resist.

Just be. Allow a worrisome feeling to pass through my body by not resisting it or judging it. I'll just watch it go by and say: Something good will come of this.

• Pretend this is my last week on earth.
Ask myself if this is what I really want

to be doing right now. If the answer is yes, then yay! I'll keep going as I am. If no, ask what I need to change, take steps to make those changes and say: thank you, thank you, thank you.

• Assess this method at the end of 2020.

Did it work? Am I happy? Am I trusting in God? Is my life as wonderful as it could be? Is there anything I need to change? If not, keep going into 2021.

May your life be as wonderful as possible this year – and always.

Ellen Wood of Questa is the award-winning author of the series of books, "The Secret Method for Growing Younger." Her website is www.howtогrowyounger.com. Contact Ellen at ellen@howtогrowyounger.com

¿Y si esta fuera mi última semana en la Tierra?

Por ELLEN WOOD

Mientras escribo esto, es el quinto día de una nueva década y me pregunto qué puedo hacer en 2020 para que mi vida

sea lo mejor posible.

Bendecida como soy, y aunque mantengo prácticas para enfocar la atención, de vez en cuando todavía me preocupo por lo que me podría suceder en el

futuro, financiera, política y físicamente, y en ocasiones me pongo a pensar en las pequeñas cosas que me han mortificado.

Más tarde pienso: "Diablos, podría morir mañana. ¿Qué me estoy haciendo a mí misma?" Para entonces, es demasiado tarde. Mi vibración ha descendido (lo puedo sentir en el vientre) y esa sensación se me atora allí.

Así que ahora estoy pensando en lo que puedo hacer para ayudar con esa situación en este nuevo año y esta nueva década. Creo que una parte tiene que ver con la fe, con la confianza en lo Divino, con recordar que siempre estaré protegida. Es por eso que pongo una imagen sagrada de San José en el lugar más prominente en mi escritorio. Él es "el amigo al que acudo" para todo lo que necesito, y puedo sentir su presencia mientras escribo.

Esto es lo que estoy implementando para 2020 a fin de vivir plenamente en mi nivel más alto:

1. Fijarme en lo que pienso.

Observar los pensamientos que producen sentimientos negativos. Para recordarlo, pondré una nota adhesiva en el mostrador de mi cocina que dice: WAITRN? (iniciales en inglés de ¿Qué estoy pensando ahora mismo? Es español dirímos QEPAM) En caso de que mi cerebro deje de ver la nota (cosa que podría suceder después de una semana aproximadamente), he

configurado una alarma en mi iPhone el día primero de cada mes para que me pregunte si mi vida es tan maravillosa como me gustaría que fuera.

2. No resistir.

Nomás ser. Dejar que las preocupaciones pasen por mi cuerpo sin resistirlas o juzgarlas. Solo las veré pasar y diré: Algo bueno saldrá de esto.

3. Fingir que esta es mi última semana en la tierra.

Voy a preguntarme a menudo si esto es lo que realmente quiero hacer en este momento. Si la respuesta es sí, entonces ¡órale! Sigo con lo que estoy haciendo. Si no, me preguntaré qué necesito cambiar, tomaré medidas para hacer esos cambios y diré: gracias, gracias, gracias.

4. Evaluar este método a fines de 2020.

¿Funcionó? ¿Estoy feliz? ¿Estoy confiando en Dios? ¿Es mi vida tan maravillosa como podría ser? ¿Hay algo que deba cambiar? Si no, seguir con el método en 2021.

Que tu vida sea lo más maravilloso posible este año y siempre.

Ellen Wood de Questa es la galardonada autora de la serie de libros, "El método secreto para crecer más joven". Su sitio web es www.howtогrowyounger.com. Comuníquese con Ellen en ellen@howtогrowyounger.com

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BODY | MIND | SPIRIT
 By BARBARA TRACY
EYE OF THE STORM

There is a story about our animal nature represented by two wolves that represent a polarity – one negative and one positive – that both live inside us. Whichever one we feed with our thoughts and emotions grows larger and stronger. There is a natural tendency to want to feed the wolf that is gentle, kind, and compassionate as opposed to the other wolf full of violence, hatred, and anger. The one we pay the most attention to will eventually consume us.

What would happen if we stopped feeding the duality (both wolves) and instead stood in the middle? Not this

one or that one, but neutral – just for a while. I find that when I stand in the middle between the noises of the left and right, the good and the bad, and allow a place of neutrality – which is a place of peace in the midst of chaos – I am offered the chance to contribute that peace to the rest of the world. There is plenty of energy going toward opposing sides, and very little toward the middle, of simply observing.

We have enough conflict in this world, all a battle of the dualistic world that keeps us riled up one against the other. There is the possibility of serving peace by standing in the middle where we are much more useful to the world, which in turn allows us to find more peaceful solutions to keep our heads while others are losing theirs.

Of course, we have to make choices, and that requires us to dwell in duality.

This is a time of strife and conflict in many areas of the world and of course in our personal lives as well. We must be knowledgeable of both sides and do our best to understand where the truth lies. Perhaps we can do the most good in any situation if we step back from the scene and find that place of neutrality within that allows us to observe without attachment so that we can be of greater service to the situation at hand. Have we ever seen true peace come from a war of mind or body? The remnants of war are sad indeed. These wars could be avoided with the understanding that there is a place between opposing sides that is like the eye of the storm. Within each of us is a place of peace and calm and a greater perspective of the situation, much needed for making choices.

People are becoming physically ill from anxiety and worry regarding world

issues, even children. If we can step back from the fray, we can actually help calm the seas of anger and frustration, as well as fear. This is not an easy thing to do, but by letting go of our position and taking time to be in a quiet place of observation we can give respite to the body and mind. Then we can go about making choices with less anger, less fear, and greater peace of mind.

*When he is emptied
he will be filled with
light, but when he is
divided, he will be
filled with darkness.*

— Gospel of Thomas Verse 61

A SMALL GREEN ISLAND

By Rumi

There is a small green island
Where one white cow lives alone
In a meadow of an island.
The cow grazes till nightfall, full and fat
But during the night she panics
And grows thin as a single hair. "What shall I eat
Tomorrow? There's nothing left!
By dawn, the grass has grown up again, waist high,

The cow starts eating and by dark
The meadow is clipped short.
She's full of strength and energy, but she panics
In the dark as before, and grows
Abnormally thin overnight.
The cow does this over and over,
And this is all she does.
She never thinks, "The meadow has never failed

To grow back. Why should I be afraid
Every night that it won't?
The cow is the bodily soul.
This island field is this world where
That grows lean with fear and fat with blessing.
Lean and fat. White cow,
Don't make yourself miserable
With what's to come, or not to come.

David Sinclair's Anti-Aging Research

By MARK WHITE

Folks around the world and throughout human history want to know how to be younger, or at least feel and look younger. Now that geneticists at Harvard have found a gene therapy that actually restores youth in mice, effective human treatments may not be long in coming. David Sinclair's decades-long search has begun bearing fruit.

Post-doctoral researchers in Sinclair's aging lab were inspired by a Nobel-winning method that turns adult cells back into the pluripotent stem cells that embryos form into complete adult bodies as they mature. Although when researchers tried it, the so-called OSKM combination just turned adult mice into masses of cancer.

Since the M in the OSKM method is known to cause cancer, Sinclair's post-doc next tried OSK without the M. Lo and behold, the mice treated with this gene therapy not only tested younger for various markers of aging, they were visibly younger. Grey hair, wrinkles, and fatigue were replaced by brown hair, smooth skin, and endurance. No cancers emerged.

With this discovery, Sinclair's lab can now control aging in mice. Previously, the researchers there could take young mice and age them prematurely. Turning old mice young again not only points toward the fulfillment of a dream as old as mankind, but also advances an information theory of aging: the aging body loses its accuracy in reading the genome

to create the different kinds of cells it needs to replace. These inaccuracies in creating every kind of cell in our bodies is what makes us old, as Sinclair's prior work has shown.

Sinclair compares the new OSK treatment to polishing the scratches off a compact disc. Scratches make the underlying digital code partially unreadable by the CD player even though that digital code is still intact. Sound and images skip. Epigenome wear and tear make the underlying DNA partially unreadable by the dividing cell, even though that DNA is still accurate. Cells make mistakes. New gene therapies like OSK and others that may be in the offing restore the epigenome to its pristine condition and make new cells accurately

replace old cells, restoring the body's pristine operations. OSK rejuvenates.

Right-to-Try laws (the US state laws and a federal law created with the intent of allowing terminally ill patients access to experimental therapies not approved by the Food and Drug Administration) might then quickly offer human treatments to cure the heretofore universally fatal disease of aging.

Readers seeking more information and perspective on effective rejuvenation can find it with David Sinclair. OSK's discovery recently prompted him to publish his popular book Lifespan (yes, Questa Public Library has put in a request for it) and he has given many talks and interviews that readers can find on YouTube and other internet sources.

Colcha Embroidery, Alive and Well in San Luis

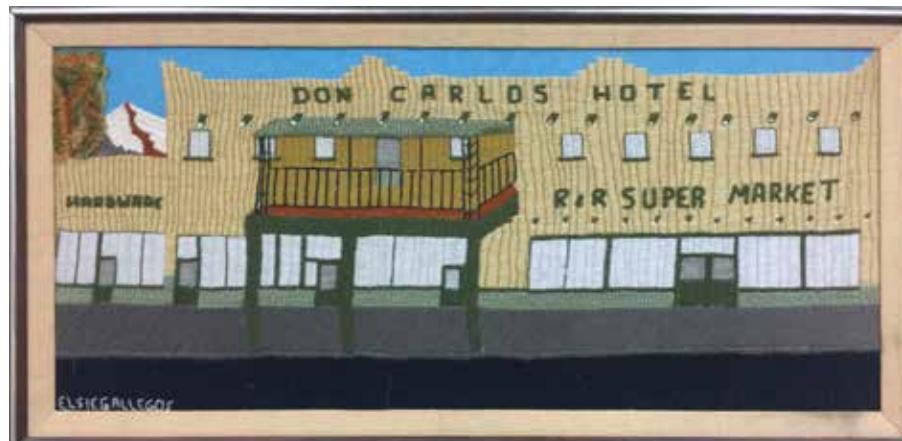
By LOU MCCALL
and LINDSAY MAPES

February is National Embroidery Month and the members of the Colcha Embroidery Group in San Luis, Colorado celebrate embroidery every month! The group has been meeting since 2017 and are passionate about reviving this traditional art form. People everywhere are learning about traditional colcha embroidery in the Rio Grande Valley and families are picking up the craft that their ancestors found so dear. Colcha embroidery is going through a revival period and the ladies in San Luis are doing their part in bringing new life to the old artform.

The group acknowledges Connie Fernandez of Taos for getting them started. Connie held a series of colcha workshops at the Martinez Hacienda in Taos and some of the women from San Luis attended. Marcella "Marcy" Pacheco facilitates the San Luis group and is an artist in her own right. Switching her artform from painting to colcha embroidery was a smooth transition. She started doing colcha about ten years ago and picked it up again after attending Connie Fernandez's workshops. Since then, Marcella and the group have attended workshops in Taos, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Questa, and Peñasco.

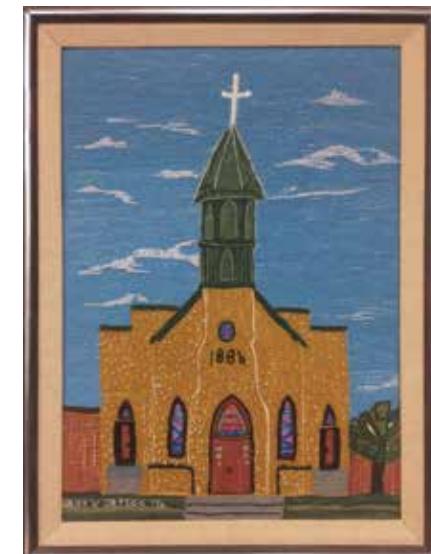
The group first met in what was once the San Luis Museum, now called the Cultural Center. They now meet in the conference room of the Costilla County Economic Development building, and the staff there were very helpful in getting them started, along with Connie Fernandez, who was instrumental in getting support from gifted colcha embroiderers from around New Mexico. Their meeting room walls are covered with framed colcha embroideries, several of which are depictions of some of San Luis' historic buildings. Since colcha embroidery was considered a dying art, the town of San Luis received a historic preservation grant in 1988 to depict some of their prominent old buildings while reviving the traditional artform.

The San Luis group worked with art historian and folklorist, Suzanne P. MacAulay, who published a book, *Stitching Rites: Colcha Embroidery along the Northern Rio Grande*. It critiques the role of cultural politics in arts and crafts revitalization projects in the southwestern United States. Dr. MacAulay is consulting producer of a film based on *Stitching Rites* and San Luis Valley artist Josephine



Photos by Lou McCall

Don Carlos Hotel, R&R Super Market and Hardware Store, San Luis, by Elsie Gallegos



Photos by Lou McCall

La Iglesia – Most Precious Blood Church in San Luis, by Daisy Ortega, framed colcha 22" x 29"



Photos by Lindsay Mapes

Members of the San Luis Colcha Embroidery Group, from left to right, Marcella Pacheco, Maria Barela, Aurora Martinez, Irene Medina, and Julia Mondragon.

Lobato. Ms. Lobato, of Chama, Colorado, received a National Heritage Fellow Award for her work with native textiles. (The book is available on Amazon.)

The San Luis Colcha Group has about 12 participants, mostly from San Luis and surrounding communities, such as

San Francisco, where Maria Barela is from. Aurora Martinez drives all the way to San Luis from Monte Vista, a total round trip of two-and-a-half hours every month! Julia Mondragon was inspired by her grandmother's colcha embroidery and got started through family ties. The

group would like to acknowledge Darlene Jacquez, who passed away and left unfinished embroideries that the group is finishing in her memory.

The San Luis group hosts an annual Colcha Bazaar on the first Friday of December, so the public can see the fruits of their labors, learn more about the history of colcha, and enjoy the holiday spirit. Mark your calendars now for December 4, 2020!

The Colcha Embroidery Group meets on the third Wednesday of every month from 10 am to noon, at the Costilla County Economic Development Conference Room, 401 South Church Place, San Luis, CO. For more information call Marcella Pacheco at (719) 672-4237.

What is colcha embroidery?

The tradition of Spanish embroidery goes back many centuries and in the New World, colcha embroidery became an original artform of the Rio Grande Valley, from Southern Colorado to as far south as Las Cruces and Silver City. The word colcha is a Spanish word that means bedspread or sometimes quilt, and is still in common usage. In New Mexico, the bedspreads were fabricated in wool, and often got moth holes. As the colchas wore out, either from wear or from moths, the ladies would embroider a flower or animal to cover the imperfection. In time, sometimes with generations of such care, the colcha would become a thing of beauty. Some embroiderers would plan a design ahead of time to embroider on the colcha.

Starting in the 17th century, bordados, embroidered cloth, were used in churches as altar cloths, altar carpet, and wall hangings. They could be bordados de algodon (cotton), bordados de lana (wool), or others. Sometime in the mid-19th century, historians found mention of sabinilla, the base wool cloth used for blankets and mattress covers. It came from the churro sheep that has been part of New Mexico culture since the Spanish arrived.

With the influx of Anglo traders in the last half of the 19th century, the embroidered blankets became a popular trade item. In the 1930s two Mormon traders, the Graves brothers, married the Hispanic Varos sisters and started a business in Carson, a small town near Taos. The sisters and their husbands hired several women to embroider for them and for a few years produced many embroidered blankets to sell. Some are now in museums and are known as the Carson Colchas.

The New Mexico colcha stitch is found worldwide and is known by many names. It is compared to the bokhara stitch found in embroidery books. Today the term "colcha embroidery" refers to an embroidered textile made in the Rio Grande Valley where the colcha stitch is predominantly used.

Opportunities for Local Artists at Questa Youth Center



Clay constructions made at the Clay Studio at the Youth Center for the Questa Library's Fun Friday program.



Photo By Peggy Trigg

Locals enjoying the clay makers space at the Carlos Cisneros Youth and Family Center in Questa

By PEGGY TRIGG

The Questa Creative Council is offering opportunities for local artists to develop, promote, and share their work in the community. The QCC has reserved and uses a dedicated time at the Carlos Cisneros Youth and Family Center on Tuesday afternoons from 3:30-5:30 pm.

Following an autumn and winter season of the “clay making for all ages” class, this non-profit is now inviting artists to create additional uses for this space from March through June.

What could this be? Any QCC member artist can arrange to teach a workshop, give a demonstration, organize figure drawing sessions, or just use the

room to spread out and mat your own artwork. The cost to participants would be up to the hosting artist; promoting your activity would be shared.

The QCC would post workshop information on their Facebook page as well as on their website and it will be featured in the Arts and Culture Section of the Questa Del Rio News and their cal-

endar. The art room at the Youth Center is equipped with minimal art production supplies and materials.

If you're interested in scheduling a Tuesday afternoon at the Youth Center, or would like more info, please contact Peggy Trigg at (505) 974-5314 or email questacreativecouncil@gmail.com.

Trout Unlimited's Upper Rio Grande Community Initiative seeks to strengthen New Mexico's rural economies by **enhancing and protecting the watersheds** that have sustained traditional communities for centuries.

Since 2013, TU has supported the Village of Questa's expansion of its fishing-based economy through re-storing the Red River, developing a restoration work force, and improving the village's capacity to lodge and serve visitors.



TU has joined a diverse coalition of local stakeholders opposing a proposed copper, gold, and zinc mine in the Pecos River watershed. The mine would destroy the economy of the Village of Pecos, which depends heavily on revenue generated by the river.



For over a decade, TU has engaged in restoring the Comanche Creek watershed, supporting reliable irrigation flows and imperiled Rio Grande cutthroat trout, a species of significant cultural value.



Esther Garcia's Dream of a Public Library

By JUDITH CUDDIHY

The path toward a public library in Questa began initially in 2001 with a book about Questa. Esther Garcia discovered that I was a professional editor and writer and persuaded me to work with her mom, Tessie Rael y Ortega on a book about Questa's history—*Another Time in This Place*. After the book with Tessie was completed, we continued the book theme by talking about the need for a public library in Questa. I had lived in communities with public libraries and had benefited greatly from them, and Esther told me that one of her dreams for Questa was to have a public library. We quickly organized a core group that included Gail Buchanan and Kimber MacDonald. Esther arranged for our group to meet with the then Village of Questa administrator, Brent Jaramillo, on November 24, 2003, to explore the possibility of establishing a public library in Questa. The Village agreed that this resource needed to be developed, and established the Questa Public Library by village ordinance on April 13, 2004.

Key to making the library a reality was the donation soon thereafter of a portable building by Pojoaque Pueblo through the auspices of Charlie Gonzales, as well as grants from the Los Alamos National Laboratory Founda-

tion, Molycorp, and many local donations. We desperately needed substantial funds to renovate the donated building. Esther's crucial efforts with the state legislature, particularly with Senator Carlos Cisneros, secured two capital outlays for renovating the building. To raise funds for furnishing our library, Esther got us placed on the agenda for a Taos County Commissioners meeting. We made a presentation to the County Commissioners and asked for \$30,000; fortunately, they immediately voted to grant these funds.

Once the physical plant was completed, an enthusiastic group of generous volunteers collected and prepared the books, DVDs, videotapes, and other resources for circulation and worked to set up the library in preparation for opening. After five years of work, our library opened at 1 pm on January 19, 2008. The library soon became a lively village destination under the auspices of library director Carolyn Anderson, followed by our current library director, Sharon Nicholson. The library provided internet access to the community, as well as a good selection of books, DVDs, and most importantly, programs for the children of our village. As a member of the QPL Advisory Board, Esther provided significant guidance throughout these early days, as the library moved from

developing library status to full library status – eligible for state funding.

With this continuing growth, we soon realized that we would have to expand the library's physical plant. The Questa Public Library serves a very rural area and had become an indispensable focal point for the community, providing a place to read, meet, and use computers for research, education, and job searches. It soon became apparent that additional space was needed for library programs and activities. Beginning in 2013, we formed the Questa Public Library Expansion Committee under the auspices of the Friends of the Questa Public Library that consisted of Esther, Margaret Lejuste, and myself to explore pathways for the almost \$600,000 needed for building an addition. A generous grant from the Questa Economic Development Fund enabled us to commission a preliminary architectural plan and cost estimate from EDGE Architects in Taos, New Mexico.

We then produced the needed documentation and worked with the village, the late Senator Carlos Cisneros, the state legislature, and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham to obtain the funds needed for constructing the addition. Esther's persistence and passion for this project

and her vital connections in Santa Fe were instrumental in the library receiving a capital outlay of \$580,000 from the state legislature in the spring of 2019. We began meetings this past summer with architect Doug Patterson of Living Designs Group in Taos to plan the new addition. Throughout the course of several of these meetings, Esther had input into the design elements for the addition to the library and was able to see the final architectural plans for it.

With the groundbreaking for the new addition planned for this coming spring, our Questa Public Library Expansion Committee has been working on raising money for the furnishings and then raising an endowment to ensure the future of the library. Establishing and growing Questa's library was very important to Esther. Her support for the Questa Public Library throughout its development, her engagement of the community with this project, and most importantly her fundraising efforts, have been critical to the growth of our library. We will continue working to ensure the library's success in Esther's honor to make sure her dream of the Questa Public Library lives on.



Photo by Peggy Trigg
Nick Nagawiecki, architecture graduate and Americorp VISTA Volunteer, will be leading the Questa Library Fun Friday event on February 28th, building things.

FEBRUARY EVENTS AT QUESTA LIBRARY

FEBRUARY 14 1:00-3:00 PM

Library Fun Friday
Questa Youth Center
February is Sculpture Month! The Questa Youth Center Art Room will be open for Library Fun Friday on February 14th from 1-3 pm. Our focus this month will be to continue working with clay by finishing up glazing our simple sculptures and another clay work completed. Other non-clay activities will also be offered. Valentine craft supplies are available. All youth are welcome to attend. Come and explore clay...or make something Valentine-ish!

FEBRUARY 20 10:30 AM – NOON

Kitty Club at the Library
Join the Questa Wildcat Kitties for play, music, activities, snacks and a good time. Ages 0-3 welcome to attend. Bring a parent or caregiver!

FEBRUARY 24 3:30-5:00 PM

Book Club at Rael's Market
Check at the library for this month's selection, read up, and come enjoy the fun and lively conversation.

FEBRUARY 28 1:00-3:00 PM

Fun Friday with Nick
Questa Youth Center
Have you met Nick Nagawiecki? Nick is our Vista Volunteer helping out in Questa for a time. He studied architecture and design and will be helping us design simple shapes and building them. What will you build? Houses? What materials will you use? Pipecleaners? Newspaper? Or maybe not build a house at all!

www.questalibrary.org



Photo by Sharon Nicholson
Questa Library Book Club members help Linn Bayne celebrate her 90th birthday on January 12 at the home of Krissie Breidenbach. Pictured seated, left to right: Linda Betz and birthday honoree Linn Bayne. Standing, left to right: Nancy Parker, Alita Randolph, Krissie Breidenbach, Lynn Galusky, and Judy Rutledge. "Keep on keeping on, Linn. You are an amazing woman!"

Kit Carson Electric Co-op Moves Toward 100% Solar Power

By LOU MCCALL

Has anyone noticed that the El Rito North solar array is up and running north of Questa? The 1.5 megawatt (mW) project came online on January 2. Many local residents were up in arms before construction began, expressing surprise or anger that it was being built without Kit Carson Electric Co-op (KCEC) members' prior knowledge or input. Recent initiatives to increase tourism for economic development were of primary concern. After public outcry, primarily regarding the location that blocked a pristine viewscape, KCEC agreed to move it further back from the highway, a much-appreciated step. Moving it back made a big difference. Some residents say it is less conspicuous than they thought it would be. For the most part, local electric customers are happy to be getting solar power and are glad that our local power company is going green.

With the completion of the array in the El Rito/Latir area, on a sunny day the facility generates 1.5 mW of electricity. Combined with the Questa/Chevron and the Amalia arrays, there is now enough daytime solar electricity in Northern Taos County to power 700 households, including all residents of Questa, Sunshine Valley, Cerro, El Rito/Latir, Costilla, and Amalia. On some days there is even enough to send some excess power to Red River.

Over the last few years KCEC has taken bold steps in their commitment to move away from fossil fuels. In 2010 Co-op members voted to obtain 100% of



Photo By E. Wilde

El Rito North Solar Array entrance 01/26/20.

their electricity from renewable sources. KCEC has been strategically moving in that direction, steadily making progress over the past decade in responding to members' requests for renewable energy options. They are on track to meet the goal of 100% daytime solar by 2022,

do-based company consisting of 36 rural electric co-ops in Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, and Nebraska. Tri-State purchased our electricity from natural gas, coal, wind, and some hydroelectric, which came mostly from the Four Corners area. KCEC receives power through

"KCEC has been working towards providing resilient, renewable energy for all our members equally since 2002," said Luis A. Reyes, CEO, Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, Inc. "The importance of this work is to demonstrate that renewable energy can be technically integrated into a rural grid in a way that allows all members access to renewable energy, rather than only a few members. This project will provide a pathway for other rural cooperatives, municipalities, and communities to enter into the deployment of Distributed Energy Resources (DER), given the fast pace of the changing market and member desires."

which amounts to about 35% of total usage. KCEC is developing up to 35 mW of solar arrays and will be implementing a total of 15 mW of battery storage, 12mW in Taos and 3mW in Angel Fire.

Previously, KCEC was a member of Tri-State Electric Co-op, a Colora-

transmission lines owned and maintained by PNM and Tri-State. Paying for transmission of power is very expensive and now KCEC is generating more of its electricity locally through small solar arrays like the Questa/Latir installation, which cuts down on transmission costs.

Tri-State capped the amount of renewable power at just 5%, an unacceptable figure to our more forward thinking co-op. KCEC paid millions to get out of their contract with Tri-State and has been operating independently since 2017. According to the KCEC website, "With the buy-out from Tri-State, the financial benefits to KCEC were immediate. Guzman Energy and KCEC agreed to a 10-year fixed contract on energy prices with no cap on renewables. This is significantly different from a multi-decade contract where prices increase regularly." KCEC reports the following results:

Energy prices are stable and fixed. KCEC projects that when the Tri-State buy-out is complete, energy costs would be approximately 4.5¢ per kW hour.

Over the 10-year fixed contract term through 2026, KCEC will have saved its members a projected \$50 - 70M.

KCEC has an impressive renewable energy portfolio, which includes the first 100% solar powered community college in the country – the UNM-Taos Klauer Campus. Additionally, Northern New Mexico Community College in El Rito near Ojo Caliente came online with 1.5mW of power at the end of 2019. Throughout 2020 there will be other solar arrays completed with more battery storage implemented. In mid-February the large Taos Array will be coming online with 3mW of power, and a spring ribbon-cutting is in the works. Stay tuned!

Caps for Cancer Drive Continues

By DEBORAH CHAVEZ

Nonviolence Works Questa Youth Mentorship Program would like to thank all who contributed to the Caps for Cancer collection drive. Together we have collected almost 100 lbs (and counting) of plastic caps! They have been shipped to Texas and are in the process of being delivered to Coahuila, Mexico, where they are donated to a hospital as a fundraiser for cancer treatments.

We would like to give a special thank you to Kit Carson Electric Cooperative for their donation, which helped cover the shipping cost of our very large collection. We would also like to thank

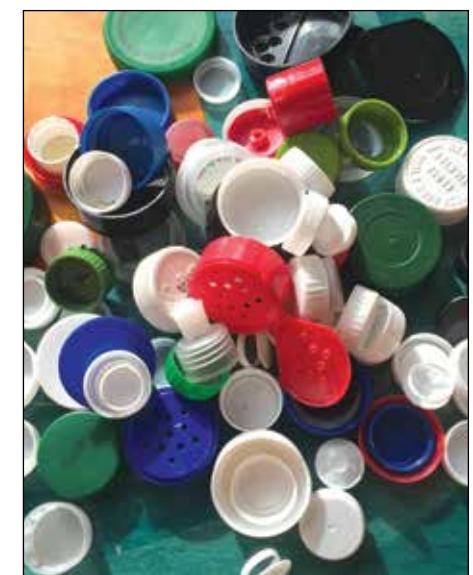
the Questa Center Supermarket for their support, offering their business as the primary drop-off/collection location.

Nonviolence Works Questa Youth Mentorship Program will wrap up their involvement with the Caps for Cancer campaign on March 30, 2020. It has been a huge success and the community has done an amazing job of pulling together to make a positive impact, helping individuals suffering from cancer. It is hard for us at the Nonviolence Works Youth Mentorship Program to say goodbye to the Caps for Cancer campaign but we are looking forward to seeing it continue. The Questa Del Rio News will

sponsor the program and the Questa Center Supermarket will continue being the main collection point. If there are agencies, businesses, youth groups or individuals who would like to continue to collect plastic caps or donate money for postage, please contact the program director, Deborah Chavez (dchavez-nvw@gmail.com) until March 30, 2020, or this newspaper, starting in April, at news@questaedf.com.

Thanks again to all who have contributed,

DEBORAH CHAVEZ,
DIRECTOR NONVIOLENCE WORKS
QUESTA YOUTH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM





RED RIVER DELIGHT BRETT'S BISTRO

By ROBYN BLACK

Brett Lewis's roots run deep and strong in Red River. His family came to this mountain town in 1932 when his father was just three years old. His well-known grandfather, Lefty Lewis, built the Lewis Ranch, a sawmill, and the Black Mountain Playhouse (the first casino). You could say Brett Lewis is a Red River culinary institution in himself; and he has had a hand in many Red River eateries.

Brett's restaurant ventures include opening The Homestead Steakhouse (now the site of Capo's) and Salmon Eggs and Trout Kitchen (now the site of Shotgun Willie's). Brett's Steakhouse on the outskirts of town was his father's old house that he turned into a restaurant, with seating for 177 (sadly, the building no longer exists). All of his ventures have been delicious successes.

Brett has been in the restaurant business now for 37 years; nine years at his current location, Brett's Bistro in the Lifts West building on Main Street. Brett and his wife Ruth are the heart and soul of the business. Brett is chef extraordinaire and Ruth does the bookkeeping and makes the delicious decadent desserts for the restaurant. Brett says, with love and gratitude for her skills, "The best thing I ever did was to teach my wife to bake!" We are also grateful for that, Chef Brett!

If you are a beef connoisseur, be assured you will get the best. Brett is active with the Angus Certified Beef Program, where he buys futures to make sure the Bistro gets the best beef available year-round. The Bistro also offers beer and a wonderful wine selection. A lunch menu, dinner menu, and kids menu give everyone the opportunity to choose exactly what will make them a satisfied diner.

Brett's Bistro would be a wonderful, intimate, romantic place to take your special someone for Valentine's Day. Along with the usual fare, they will offer a delicious seafood platter for two, with elk and also scallops cooked to perfection and of course, wonderful desserts. Rumor has it that there may even be

some chocolate-dipped strawberries with a surprise infusion. Reservations are not necessary, but for this big evening, it is recommended. If New Year's Day was any indication of how busy Brett's can be, 360 lucky people dined with Chef Brett and his crew. I am sure that the gracious waitress, Tonya took good care of each and every one of those diners, as she did when we were there.

Brett's Bistro is located at 201 Main Street (in Lifts West building) Red River, New Mexico 87558. Call them at (575) 754-9959. Their hours are 11 am - 9 pm. You can find Brett's Bistro on Facebook. This spring Brett is thinking about closing for April for a little fun remodel so that they have some great outdoor dining options.



Bottom line here: if you want delicious food that is not your ordinary fare, a local extraordinary chef and a dedicated team, Brett's Bistro should be on your list of places to get a great meal!

Brett's Bistro offers a lunch menu, dinner menu and kids menu, along with a wonderful selection of beer and wine—and amazing desserts!

Brett's Bistro is located in the Lifts West Building at 201 West Main Street in Red River.

Photos by Robyn Black

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH



LOUISE GALLEGOS

By DONNA
MITCHELL-MONIAK

There's a restlessness to human beings. It begins as soon as we're born. As we grow, it becomes obvious that human fidgetyness comes from one of two primary inner drives: either one's self or others. In young children it is displayed through wanting something in order to immediately share it with others, or to keep it for oneself. I imagine that Louise Gallegos demonstrated sharing from a very young age.

Louise is a woman of the Enchanted Circle. Born and raised in Questa, she is the fourth of nine children, with four sisters (Rosie, Donna, Sherry, Connie) and four brothers (Donald, Ronnie, Johnny, Joey). Joey passed away while serving in Iraq. Her parents were the late Adonario and Petronila Gallegos. Community involvement was all around her growing up. Her dad was always involved in politics and was a WWII Marine who fought in the battle of Iwo Jima. Louise's childhood set the stage for a life of active and varied community service. A theme arises in talking to Louise: the ideal of service to one's community for everyone's benefit, now and in the future.

In 2000, Louise ran for a seat on the Questa Village Council and won. She was the first woman elected to that body. Imagine the commitment and daring required to present oneself to the community to run for office and then to work with an established all-male political body. After twelve years serving with the Questa Village Council, she stepped down "to re-group myself." Then in 2018, she ran again and was re-elected to her current.

During the time away from Village Council, Louise rolled up her sleeves with St. Anthony's church restoration. Like Mark Sideris (who nominated



Photo by Lou McCall

Louise Gallegos, February 2020 Volunteer of the Month, nominated by Mark Sideris.

Louise as our Volunteer of the Month Louise said, "It was the most magical time of my life." She said "little miracles" would happen. Louise said, "We just knew that we had to do it and that God would provide. Sometimes everyone's faith would be shaken." For instance, money, equipment, or materials would be needed but the restoration group did not know how they could be acquired. "Let go and let God," Louise said, "Then God comes in the form of the right person or equipment."

"Commitment is hard," she added. Yes, it is, which is why those who volunteer or are involved in their community are active in multiple ways. Louise was recognized as an Unsung Hero by the Taos News for all her volunteer work.

When asked if she helps out with other facets of St. Anthony's, she laughs and said yes. The San Antonio Del Rio Colorado Historical Preservation (SARCHP) is a non-profit organization that was formed to help with the Church restoration and this group is still very active, assisting with the Questa Lodging Project.

Louise is Vice-President of Taos Feeds Taos, a group that started feeding hungry families in Taos County 34 years ago. In 2010 Louise became a board member and has volunteered with the organization for 20 years, coordinating distribution in the Questa, Cerro, Costilla, and Amalia area. Every family receives \$120 worth of food including 5lb-bags of potatoes and apples. Hams are given out for the holidays. Over 1200 families in Taos County receive these boxes of nutrition. Taos Feeds Taos can use more help. They are always looking for volunteers to deliver food or prepare the boxes for home delivery. Go to <https://taosfeedstaos.org> for information on how you can donate time, energy, or money to support this program and those in need.

Louise is also Treasurer of the Questa Citizens' Ditch Association, which oversees part of the acequia system of the area's water rights and water distribution. Distribution includes maintenance of the mother ditches and the laterals. Is it something like an Amish barn-raising, the way the acequias are maintained with everyone bringing food during the spring ditch clean-out? Everyone working together changes how we look at one another. Shoulder to shoulder the work gets done for everyone's betterment. The genius of those who devised the acequia systems hundreds of years ago and the dedication of those who have maintained them is something to marvel at. Water was always shared equally, among small family farmers or ranchers. The Ditch Association has its work cut out for them, protecting our precious water in these interesting times.

Of all of Louise's causes and volunteer work, she is probably best known in the community for her involvement with The Veterans Healing Field of Honor (some people call it The Healing Field) since its beginning. Here's one more opportunity for community members to volunteer: every year on Memorial Day weekend, a big field along the highway in Questa is transformed by over 1000 American flags. It honors all veterans from our area who have served in the different arms of the military and through different conflicts, both

now and in the past. Now, the project is sponsored by the Village of Questa. Each year, the location is cleaned and prepared, flags are replaced and repaired, and then installed in the field. A ceremony is held and in due time the flags must be removed. The Healing Field honors all veterans, though it was begun in Utah in honor of the tragedy of September 11. This event is always in need of volunteer help. You can also purchase a flag in the name of someone who has served. For information, call the Village of Questa at (575) 586-0694. Monetary donations are welcome and appreciated. Here is a link to the Healing Field of 2014 to give you more information. <https://www.healing-field.org/questa14/>

Remember how this article opened with a thought about restlessness? Some people just have to get involved in solutions rather than talk about problems. Some people feel incomplete unless they are bringing benefit to others in some way. All the Volunteers of the Month have shared how joyous volunteering is, how they are personally fulfilled by fulfilling a need somewhere in some way. The year is new; how about you? There are many ways to help in our community.

"Volunteering is very rewarding," Louise said. "Get involved." She said that running for office is also an important type of service. It's true. A democracy only works if the demographics of a community, or state, or nation are fully and actively represented. Helping one another, making sure that current needs are taken care of, and ensuring a vibrant future for the whole of the community – now that's rewarding!

One volunteer activity that doesn't get much credit, is being a parent, one of the best forms of service imaginable! Louise would like to acknowledge her children, Dean Max (Maque) and Kari-Lynn Martinez who have supported her in all her volunteer activities.

For our Volunteer of the Month for March, Louise has nominated a very special, hard-working and dedicated individual who works tirelessly for the good of our community. Stay tuned for our March issue!

**WHO DO YOU KNOW WHO DESERVES RECOGNITION?
TELL US ABOUT THEM.**

news@questaedf.com

MARIA ESTHER PEARLA CANDELARIA ORTEGA-GARCIA

Esther Garcia was born in Taos, New Mexico on September 9, 1945 and lived in Questa most of her life. She married her love, Eugene Garcia on September 26, 1964, and was married for over 55 years. Her marriage to Eugene gave her the opportunity to raise three daughters Myra, Christine and Lori.

They made their home in Questa, where she served as a beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Esther and her family were fortunate to travel to places such as Spain, United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, Switzerland and Canada. She enjoyed traveling and seeing the world.

Esther was educated in the Questa Schools and took classes at the University of New Mexico.

She was involved in many community activities throughout the years, including her daughters' education and sports programs. She was an artist and painted with oils when she had time. She also quilted and belonged to a quilting group here in Questa. Esther loved her quilting and painting. Her greatest love was conservation of the land and water throughout New Mexico and especially here in Questa.

In 1986, Esther became politically active and ran for the Questa School Board and served for six years. During her time as a board member they implemented advanced classes, built a new school and a gymnasium modeled after UNM's gym known as "The Pit." Teachers' salaries were also increased. She participated in the Questa Elementary Reading Program and at some point spent 2 days a week helping children with their reading skills.

Esther worked closely with the following organizations: Rivers and Birds, NM Wilderness Alliance, NM Acequias Association, Amigos Bravos, Land Grant Council, Questa School Board member, Questa Library Grant, Questa Achievers 4-H Leader, Questa Quilt Guild, and received the NM Mother of the Year 2015, NM Woman of Excellence Award, and Taos County Unsung Hero Award. Questa Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary and the Taos County Planning Commission. She was honored to have been nominated by the Governors of New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women as one of the top 20 women



Courtesy Photo

On March 25, 2013, President Barack Obama signed into law the designation of the Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument. Questa Mayor Esther Garcia worked tirelessly to create the National Monument and was among the dignitaries who went to the White House to celebrate.



Photo by Carrie Leven

Esther was a champion of acequias and land and water. Reprinted from *Remarkable Women of Taos* by Nighthawk Press.

in New Mexico. Because of Esther's service to the 4-H organization, she was inducted into the 4-H Hall of Fame through New Mexico State University. She and her family hosted three different Japanese students through the LABO 4-H Foreign Exchange Program.

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TRIBUTES TO ESTHER GARCIA

On January 5, 2020, Questa and northern New Mexico lost a true legend with the passing of former Mayor Esther García. I interviewed Esther when she was selected as one of the "Remarkable Women of Taos" in the 2012 volume and website by the same name, published

by Nighthawk Press. Before then I had known Esther only as the mayor. We became friends during that interview and bonded over our love of local history and culture. We created a slideshow on the history and restoration of San Antonio Church that we presented to the Taos Historical Society. I'll miss her kind heart and formidable presence in the community and hold dear the memories of our friendship and collaborations. Rest in Peace with the Angels, Esther García. You will not be forgotten, my friend, you will always be in our hearts.

—BY CARRIE LEVEN

Jill and I are deeply saddened by the passing of our friend, former Village of Questa Mayor Esther Garcia. Esther was a tireless champion for the people of northern New Mexico and played a key role in protecting the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, Columbine Hondo Wilderness, land grants, acequias, and other treasures in our state. We join her family, friends, and community in mourning her passing and honoring her legacy.

—U.S. SENATOR TOM UDALL

I'm deeply saddened by the passing of Esther Garcia. She spoke from the heart about what conservation of our public lands meant to her and her community. As mayor of Questa, Esther was instrumental in the establishment of the Río Grande del Norte National Monument. Future generations who visit the monument's spectacular landscapes, from the tops of Cerro de la Olla and Ute Mountain to the depths of the Rio Grande Gorge, will be forever grateful for all she did to protect northern New Mexico's unique natural heritage.

—US SENATOR MARTIN HEINRICH

Esther was a friend, mentor and a fierce conservation advocate. Her legacy will live on forever in all the public lands she worked so hard to protect.

—MICHAEL CASAUS,
MATT KELLER &
THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

TRIBUTE TO ESTHER GARCIA

We are so sorry for your loss. Esther was a wonderful, strong woman who worked tirelessly for her community, including the arts. We will miss her.

—THE QUESTA
CREATIVE COUNCIL

New Mexico mourns the passing of Esther Garcia. A lifelong, multi-generational resident of Questa, Esther built a remarkable civil service and conservation legacy. The former Mayor of Questa, spokesperson for the San Antonio del Rio Colorado Land Grant, and long-time commissioner on the Cabresto Lake Community Ditch, Esther was one of the primary traditional voices driving the designation of both the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument and the Columbine Hondo Wilderness. Esther was a tireless advocate for the preservation of traditional land and water uses on public lands as well as the conservation and protection of clean water, healthy watersheds, and healthy wildlife populations. Esther was incredibly wise, funny, deeply spiritual, kind, diplomatic, soulful, brave, passionate, fierce, and just a lovely human being all around. Esther was a remarkable woman and mentored so many of us over the years. She embodied so much of the cultural richness and beauty of Northern New Mexico. So sad to lose her... We will miss you dearly, Esther! May you rest in peace.

—GARRETT VENE KLASEN,
NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS ALLIANCE

Our beloved Esther Garcia, long-time commissioner on the Cabresto Lake Irrigation Community Ditch and former Mayor of Questa... She put her heart and soul into her work of protecting acequias and the waters that flow through them. She fought tirelessly to rebuild Cabresto Dam and protect the water rights for agriculture in her community. She was a mentor to several of us at the New Mexico Acequia Association where she shared her faith and love of community. We will miss her wit, political savvy, laughter, and her tireless advocacy. Que Dios la tenga en su Santa Gloria.

—NEW MEXICO
ACEQUIA ASSOCIATION

Esther was a special woman and I'm sure I don't know the half of it. Lucy Gonzalez started the Questa Achievers

4-H Club back in the 1950s, and then Esther served as the 4-H leader for 23 years. When Esther decided to pass the post on to me, I protested when she asked me to take over. She inspired me to be and to do so much more than what I thought I was capable of.

Esther truly lived the 4-H Pledge:
“I pledge my Head to clearer thinking
My Heart to greater loyalty,
My Hands to larger service,
My Health to better living,
For my club, my community,
and my world.”

Esther had a strong head and a big heart. She is pictured here with the quilt she spearheaded the ladies to make and raffle for the St. Anthony's Church restoration project. What a woman! I'll miss you, Esther.

—DENISE
WINSLOW-LAWRENCE

Esther was a huge help when we were launching the Questa Lodging Project. It started with doing an inventory of all the vacant homes in Questa – 99 of them. I couldn't tell if a house was vacant or not, and I didn't know if the family had previously rented or was planning on renting, etc. So, who better to drive around every street in Questa (literally, every street) than Esther? For two straight days, she told me about the status of just about every house in town. It would have taken me months to gather that information. It was a wonderful opportunity to spend time with her.

Esther was a tough cookie sometimes, but she sure knew her stuff and she had such a deep love for her community. A famous quote from John F. Kennedy reminds me of her; “Ask not what your country can do for you but ask what you can do for your country.” She was the living example of what you can do for your community. A real treasure of a woman. I hope I’m like Esther when I grow up.

—LINDSAY MAPES,
QUESTA LODGING PROJECT

Esther was a truly remarkable person and I was extremely fortunate to get to know her. I don't think it is an overstatement to say that it would be difficult to imagine the designation of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument and Columbine Hondo Wilderness without her involvement, support and leadership. I saw Esther as a peace maker



Photo by Carrie Leven

Esther loved to spend time in the mountains hiking and was a great advocate for preserving the land and water for future generations.

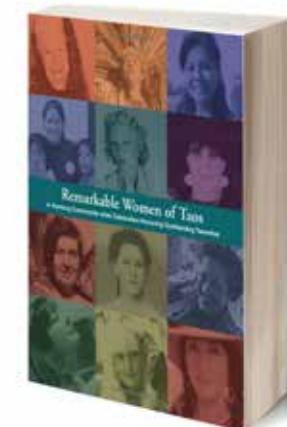
and a bridge builder, who helped bring together acequia parciantes, land grant heirs, Native Pueblos, local governments, businesses, hunters and anglers, communities of faith and conservation groups around shared values on the “Love of the Land and Water.” When Esther was in the room there was just an implied expectation that everyone would listen to one another and treat everyone with dignity and respect. When Esther spoke, people listened! She held strong opinions but one of the many things I respected about her was her willingness to have an open mind and even change it on occasion when she was persuaded by the merits. Today, this is a rare and almost un-heard of quality. I think that is one of the reasons why people trusted her and why everyone saw her as a leader.

—JOHN OLIVAS

REMARKABLE WOMEN OF TAOS
A YEAR-LONG COMMUNITY-WIDE
CELEBRATION HONORING
OUTSTANDING TAOSEÑAS, 2012
EDITED BY LIZ CUNNINGHAM

How is it that one small mountain town in northern New Mexico has succeeded in attracting and sustaining so many remarkable women over the years? This central question is at the heart of this exciting new celebratory book, *The Remarkable Women of Taos*.

This book published by Nighthawk Press in Taos is the natural outgrowth of an unprecedented year-long commu-



Questa High Welcomes Chase Disney



Courtesy Photo

Let's welcome Chase Disney, new history teacher for Questa Junior and Senior Highs School!

Hello! I'm Chase Disney. I'm very excited about teaching 7th through 12th-grade history here in the Questa School District. I'm originally from Stillwater, Oklahoma where I graduated from high school in 2003. After graduation, I enlisted in the United States Army. After serving I went to Southeastern Oklahoma State, majoring in recreation. This is my fifth teaching year and I've taught in Oklahoma, Texas, and last year I was the high school history teacher and head football coach in Logan, NM. I have coached football, basketball, baseball, softball, powerlifting, track/field, and golf. In my free time, I like to play golf, enjoy outdoor activities, and listen to live music. I look forward to being the head football coach next fall.

STAY TUNED FOR SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Make sure to tell us about an upcoming educational event:

news@questaedf.com

Department of Education Family Advisory Council

By MEGAN JENKINS

Every spring, I receive an email about the Family Advisory Council announcing that they are looking for parents to work with the Department of Education. Every year I had dismissed it with the excuse that I do not have any more time for anything else. This year was different. With all the turmoil in our school district, I felt like I needed to do something. After doing some research on what the Family Advisory Council was, I quickly applied. I submitted an application and a short video about myself and why I wanted to join. I also took part in an interview. The Family Advisory Council along with the Civic Advisory Council and the Teacher Advisory Council, discuss predetermined topics directly with Dr. Ryan Stewart, Secretary Designate of Education. These are issues in need of revamping to be in compliance with new laws and the New Mexico Administrative Code. I was notified in September that I was granted this amazing opportunity and privilege to serve the students of New Mexico.

The Family Advisory Council consists of approximately 20 parents from



Photo by Lou McCall

Costilla's Megan Jenkins, member of New Mexico Department of Education's Family Advisory Council, still smiling even in a snowstorm!

all over the state. All three councils meet in Albuquerque four times during a school year and attend a monthly webinar. We also have two regional meetings. Prior to the quarterly meetings, we receive reading materials for research and information to make sure we all share the same understanding. At the meetings, we form triads; we divide into groups with one representative from each council to discuss the topics given. This allows opinions from each sector to be heard and how they will affect stakeholders in the state. Dr. Ryan Stewart and his team take notes as they

move around the room to join different discussions. Each group is asked questions and our opinions are written down on large posters. Then they document our work to bring back to the Public Education Department.

We have discussed topics that include equity in Special Education and an updated framework to make Special Education and General Education inclusive to ALL students. We have discussed community schools, teacher licensure and recruitment, graduation requirements, principal evaluations, and why it is important to take part in the census and the legislative sessions.

This has been an amazing opportunity for me and I encourage our local community members to apply for the next group if given the opportunity. The Public Education Department is listening and is encouraging us to speak up. There will be a forum held within the next few months with members from the PED. We need to be present and show them the awesome support we are known for. Please feel free to email me at megluvken@yahoo.com if you would like more information on the topics we have discussed or how to apply.



By CATHY GALLEGOS
QUESTA HIGH SCHOOL
PRINCIPAL AND QISD INTERIM
SUPERINTENDENT

HAPPY FEBRUARY!

The Questa Independent School District is moving right along. We hope everyone has been enjoying our basketball season. We truly appreciate our student-athletes; they do their best to represent their school district. We would like to congratulate our cheerleaders, who took third place at NMSU Spirit Championships in January. They truly are a hard-working and talented group.

Our school board has been hard at work and recently restructured the board offices. Mr. Jose Lovato is our President, Mrs. Tammy Jaramillo has taken the Vice President position, and new board member Becky Griego is now our Secretary. Mathew Ortega is a returning member, and Juan Cisneros is our new member.

We'd like to take a moment to ask all our parents and relatives of our students to have an important discussion with their teenagers about the danger of vaping. The use of vapes is truly alarming. The news is full of stories about the dangers of vaping. QISD is hoping to bring presentations about this problem to our students to help them become informed about the choices they are making. And we ask our young people to have this conversation with their friends and fellow students. If you vape, please stop and if you don't vape, please don't start. This conversation really starts at home,

though. Please help keep our children and students safe.

I would like to take this opportunity to let our readers know that this will be my last WILDCATS CORNER column as the interim superintendent. I will now be continuing in my role as principal of the high school full-time. At the January 21 executive session, the school board voted to choose Carla Archuleta, principal of Alta Vista Elementary and Intermediate School to be the new interim superintendent.

The new board is in search of a superintendent for the coming school year and the search is open until February 28. We are all hopeful that QISD will get a new leader that will take us to the next level. Thank you, everyone, for your support during the last few months and let's continue to keep our young people front and center for everything we do here at Questa Independent Schools.

BOOK REPORT

By SARA MARTINEZ

STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE READY FOR A REVOLUTION

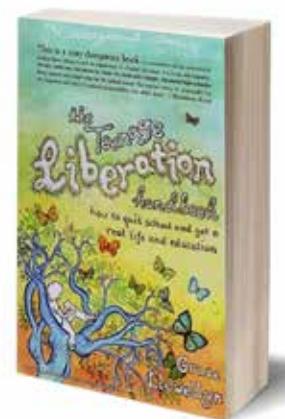
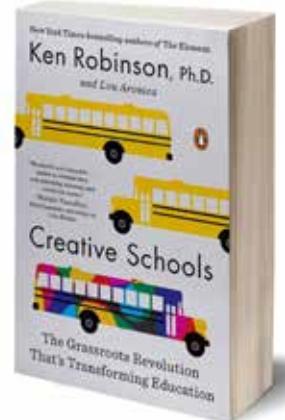
January 7 marks the beginning of my fifth year of teaching. Some major shifts in my own thinking and the major changes in leadership at the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) have encouraged me to change the way I am approaching this semester with my students. One of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisholm's first acts as governor in 2019 was to end Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) testing and scrapping many other components of the teacher evaluation system. For the first time in my teaching career, I feel more energized to create classrooms that students want to be in, and thanks to these policy changes, teachers can be more creative with what their classrooms look like.

I came across two very different books written about revolutionizing education. Sir Ken Robinson and Lou Aronica's book, *Creative Schools*, is a book that gives teachers, superintendents, and policymakers a realistic way to revolutionize public schools. The

second book was recommended by Robinson and Aronica, and is called *The Teenage Liberation Handbook: How to Quit School and Get a Real Life and Education* by Grace Llewellyn. Llewellyn's book is a great way for students and parents to understand the changes that are needed in their own education and opportunities for transforming their relationship to learning.

My explorations began with Ted Talks by Sir Ken Robinson; one of them was entitled "Do Schools Kill Creativity?" which made a lot of sense to me. He describes some of the things I noticed about students in my classrooms. They are bored and they don't "get" why they have to learn certain things. For a few decades now schools have done a great job of getting students to college. Especially in Questa, we often have a higher graduation rate than the state average. But then what? Many earn degrees for things they are not passionate about, or they stop going to college because they aren't sure what field to go into. If they do leave, they can feel like they failed in some way.

Much of what Robinson and Aronica propose is creating environments for learning that engage students' curiosity and creativity, which will then have real-world applications. Not everyone will go to school for a Ph.D., but we do need highly skilled and highly motivated



internships and hands-on training for those jobs. We would have graduates who make more informed choices about their career options.

Interestingly enough, Grace Llewellyn wrote her book when she was living in Taos. It was at the beginning of her teaching career, and she was really upset about how students were expected to learn. Even in schools that were the most free from the paralyzing grip of standards, such as charter schools, the system was essentially the same. The pathway Llewellyn offers for students on the homeschooling route has applications that can liberate our own classrooms in public schools, if we have the courage to follow her suggestions.

Neither book is new: they may not even have been New York Times bestsellers, but they sparked something in me that had been slowly dying. Now, when I think of my dreams for students and what our classrooms could look like in Questa, I feel hope. Both *Creative Schools* and *The Teenage Liberation Handbook* offer revolutionary ways to engage students in their learning and education while offering ways to inspire parents, teachers, and our local educational leaders to push for more far-reaching changes. Our students deserve a revolution, and the world they are entering needs their passion and talents.



**Sara Martinez,
Welcome Back
to QJSHS!**

Culinary Arts teacher Sara Martinez and her students kick off cooking at QJSHS with the making of flour tortillas. The Culinary Arts elective was eliminated in the 2018-19 school year. Mrs. Martinez says the students were excited to get the elective class back.

Photo by Mariah Ramirez

Book Review

TERROR ON THE
SANTA FE TRAIL: KIT CARSON
AND THE JICARILLA APACHES
BY DOUG HOCKING

By PRISCILLA
SHANNON GUTIÉRREZ

On November 20, I had the opportunity to attend a Santa Fe Trail Association presentation by accomplished author Doug Hocking, who gave a fascinating look at the history of the Jicarilla Apache. His new book looks at the multiple roles that Kit Carson had with the tribe and how they played out over the years, as well as how conflict with them impacted travel on the Santa Fe Trail. Doug was born in New York state, and grew up on the Jicarilla Apache Reservation in northern New Mexico, near the Colorado border. His considerable amount of personal experience and first-hand information from tribal members has translated into a fascinating, in-depth look at the Jicarilla Apaches.

The Jicarilla are a Plains tribe who lived in teepees, and roamed in quite a large area, from the San Juan Mountains east all the way to the Llano Estacado. Pretty much all of Rio Arriba County lay in their territory. Often they camped near Picuris to collect mica for their ceramicware, which they were known for and which provided trade income for the tribe. Their closest allies were the Utes, with whom they often intermarried. Chief Ouray's mother was a member of the Jicarilla Apaches.

They were one of the most tenacious of the Natives – the Jicarilla were the last of the tribes to be relocated to a reservation. The tribe's fierceness in battle was well known. Conflicts with the US Government led to the closure of the Santa Fe Trail three times during 1848-51.

In spite of treaty violations, the Jicarilla continued to comply with the 1846 Kearney Peace Treaty until things boiled over two years later, when James Kirker was ordered by the government to begin collecting Apache scalps. Kirker was known amongst tribal members for his role in the deaths of 40 Jicarilla warriors in an 1840 battle at Rancho de Taos.

In June of 1848, about 150 members

of the tribe attacked Lucien Maxwell's party while they were crossing Manco Burro Pass. Ironically, Manco Burro Pass was chosen in the hopes of avoiding the Jicarilla at Raton Pass. Maxwell survived with a bullet wound to his neck, and the other survivors managed to make their way to Taos. The attack closed the Santa Fe Trail.

One month later, Major William W. Reynolds left Taos with 150 soldiers, intending to engage the Jicarilla, who were blocking Raton Pass, and other passes north into the San Luis Valley, bringing trade and travel north virtually to a halt. Accompanying Reynolds was Old Bill Williams and James Kirker. Reynolds would soon prove instrumental in saving Kit Carson from sure death the following year.

In the spring of 1849, Kit Carson and Lt. George Brewerton set out from California on the Old Spanish Trail, carrying dispatches for Washington, DC. The group did not fare well after losing rifles, ammunition, and food when one of their rafts capsized in Colorado. When the emaciated men neared the San Luis Valley, Kit noticed the tracks of a large party on horseback. The lack of any signs of travois confirmed it was a war party. The group tried unsuccessfully to slip past the Jicarilla encampment. They only managed to escape a sure death when a brave brought word that Major Reynolds and his Missouri Volunteers were approaching. Later, Reynolds would engage the Jicarilla in Cumbres Pass. The battle resulted in the deaths of almost 40 warriors – a huge blow to the tribe.

In October of 1849, the trail was closed once again when the Jicarilla and Utes attacked the White Wagon Train in Palo Blanco Canyon near Point of Rocks, east of Springer. The attack resulted after the leaders repeatedly refused to pay a fee to the tribe to pass through their lands. All of the men were killed, and the women taken captive. Famed trader and horseman Francis X. Aubrey put up the money to track down the taken women. Kit Carson led the recovery party, and was able to find the trail, which they followed for 200 miles. Sadly, the women were killed just before the Jicarilla broke camp and escaped.

The famous Wagon Mound Massacre on May 19, 1850 that resulted in the deaths of 10 men, once again closed the trail. At the time, the Jicarilla were

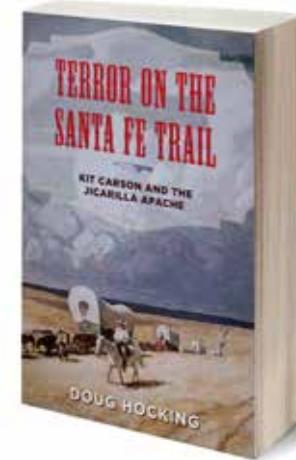
looking for revenge against the US for the recent capture and death of Chief Lobo Blanco's daughter. She had been taken in Las Vegas, NM in an incident shortly before the massacre, and the Wagon Mound victims paid for revenge with their lives.

In 1851, the Chacon Treaty was an attempt to bring peace with the Jicarilla. However, the terms were absurd: unconditional submission; trade regulations that effectively killed the tribes' ceramics business; the building of forts throughout Jicarilla homelands; and prohibition of nearing or approaching any settlements. Even so, the negligent U.S. Senate refused to ratify the terms for a long three years. Not surprising, conflict with the Jicarilla continued for the next two years.

The William Carson Lane Treaty of 1853 required the Jicarilla to settle and farm near the Abiquiu area, while receiving rations, tools, and training from the US Government. As was so often the case, the government did not live up to these terms. In September, Governor David Merriweather stopped providing food altogether to the tribe, even though the Rio Puerco had dried up and farming was not sustainable. Even so, the Jicarilla kept the peace. But it could not last. When Kit Carson became the Jicarilla agent in 1854 and attempted to secure a fairer approach to handling tribal matters, it quickly became obvious that the government was determined to incite war with the tribe. It got what it asked for.

The March 30th Battle of Ciene-guilla, near present-day Picuris, was much more of a disaster for Lt. John Davidson and his troops than it was for the Jicarilla. They counted 22 dead among them, with another 34 soldiers wounded. The following month, war on the Jicarilla was declared. The Battle of Ojo Caliente in April included both the Jicarilla and Utes. Kit Carson accompanied the troops.

The violence and conflict escalated that October when, according to the author, the Utes were given small-pox-infected blankets by Governor Merriweather, and they declared war on the US, joining their Jicarilla allies. Two months later, the Christmas Day attack on Pueblo decimated the settlers living there and caused the virtual abandonment of the trading post. Many subse-



quent campaigns against the Jicarilla ensued through Sangre de Cristo, Poncha, and Saguache Passes, but the tribe could not be subdued.

Kit remained an Indian agent with the Jicarilla until 1861, when he resigned to become colonel with the First Volunteers of New Mexico in the Civil War Battle of Valverde. Interestingly, the South had tried to convince the Jicarilla to fight on their side, but they were not successful. Eventually the Jicarilla would accompany Kit on campaigns to fight the Comanches, who were causing problems along the trails, as well as with the tribe.

In 1874 and 1880, Presidential Executive Orders established tribal reservations for the Jicarilla. However, the reservation abutted the Tierra Amarilla Grant, which made settlers nervous. Their complaints led to the tribe's relocation south to the Mescalero Reservation near Cloudcroft. The move did not work out well for the Jicarilla, and finally in 1887, they were allowed to return to the original reservation near the Colorado border.

However, the high altitude prevented any sort of large-scale farming or crops to sustain the tribe. In 1907, President Roosevelt doubled the size of the reservation, including acreage south of Chamita at a much lower elevation that was arable. In the 1920s, they began grazing sheep on the expanded reservation and soon saw a profit. The postwar years saw a huge increase in tribal income from oil and gas development. Currently, there are approximately 3,000 tribal members, most of whom live either in or near Dulce, NM. The area's rich mineral sources provide the tribe with a solid source of income from oil and gas wells that are owned by the Jicarilla.

COMMUNITY NEWS FOR THIS COMMUNITY.

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VIDA DEL NORTE COALITION MOVES FORWARD IN 2020

Vida Del Norte Coalition is a group of dedicated individuals working to prevent drug and alcohol misuse among the youth in our community. By breaking the generational cycles of addiction and through teaching and educating our community on healthier ways of living and interacting, the Coalition is making a big difference. Vida Del Norte uses an environmental prevention approach as opposed to the traditional individual model. Vida Del Norte has begun the implementation of policies and enforcement to ensure that this model is developed correctly.

Vida has collaborated with other local entities to host events that promote healthy and fun ways of living in our community. Vida's first annual New Year's Eve Masquerade event was one of them. Growing up in the Questa Community, I can always recall being at New Year's Eve parties with my parents, with the adults drinking while us kids played and had fun. The risks were great... it was winter, adults were impaired and most times they drove home with us after a night of drinking. Through the years not much has changed, just new parents and kids, but the cycle is still



Photo by Rachel Kuc

Vida Del Norte Coalition offered its first New Year's Eve Celebration, alcohol-free for all ages. From left, Cynthia Rael-Vigil and Maria and Jason Gonzalez bring in the new year. 2020 will be a good one!

present. Thinking how we can change this norm, we decided to begin a new tradition and host a New Year's Eve event where the entire community could come and bring in the New Year in a fun drug- and alcohol-free way.

A 1920s-themed party where dinner was served to kick off the event enticed people to interact and engage with one another. Adults, youth, and families joined in the fun of playing board games, engaging in conversation, and

dancing. Several masks were made by adults and children alike that were worn throughout the night. The first bottle of sparkling cider was opened around 8:30 pm as some of the kids enjoyed their games of Monopoly and Uno, toasting to one another. There were intense games of chess with an adult and some kids. "That boy whipped my butt in one move!" William Borges said, speaking about a young man who had a good strategy. We celebrated the New Year

with the east coast and the midwest time zones so those who wanted to make it home early could still celebrate and bring in the New Year. Overall it was a successful event and we hope to continue with collaborative efforts to show our community a healthier way of living.

The Vida Coalition gathered two weeks later for our annual retreat at My Tias Café in Cerro, where we brainstormed and planned strategically how we will continue to grow as a coalition and community in 2020. Many great ideas and actions were put into place at the retreat, motivating and exciting all the participants. The Coalition members had the opportunity to talk and ask our young Active 8 questions about the issues they are seeing and how adults can help. It was another successful retreat for our Coalition! Stay tuned as we continue to implement our third year of prevention in Questa and surrounding communities. Vida Del Norte continues to seek active individuals who are willing and ready to help our community decrease substance misuse. To find out more about ways you can be involved please contact me!

*Maria Gonzalez, Program Coordinator
Vida Del Norte Coalition
mari.gonzalez@vidadelnorte.com
(575) 779-2260*

Remember, if you want to make progress on the path and ascend to the places you have longed for, the important thing is not to think much but to love much, and so to do whatever awakens you to love.

— St. Teresa of Avila



Happenings at Harvest Questa

Kid's Night Out

Friday Feb. 14th 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Kid's Night Out is happening again. It's a FREE night of food and games for our community kids in grades Kinder- 6th. We have the fun at Harvest Questa where there is plenty of adult supervision. Parents, this is your chance for 3 whole hours to yourself- take advantage of this free childcare! The kids will be thanking you for bringing them. If your child is attending, would you reply to this email with their name so we can make enough preparations? (By the way, you're welcome to tell your friends with children about this event.)

Dream Team Party

Friday, Jan. 31st 6:00 PM.

If you're a volunteer at Harvest, then you are part of our Dream Team and we invite you to our Dream Team Party happening on Friday, Jan. 31st 6:00 PM. If you haven't volunteered yet, but you're wanting to volunteer, please join us for our party to find out about all the fun volunteer opportunities we offer. Please email me back at kgonzales@harvestabq.org and let me know if you could attend, I want to make sure we have plenty of food for everyone!

FREE Men's Breakfast

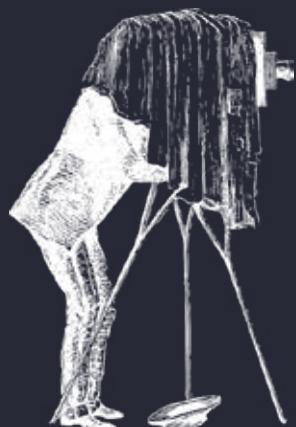
Saturday Feb. 8th 7:00 AM

Attention all Men. Mark your calendar and be sure to join Pastor Johnny for a free Men's breakfast on Feb. 8th Saturday 7 AM @ Harvest Questa. I heard a rumor that there's gonna be delicious pancakes. Also, Men! There's an authentic warrior men's conference happening in ABQ on Feb. 28th-29th. The registration cost is \$50. Transportation provided by church van. Get with Pastor Johnny about the details of lodging and meals. It's gonna be fun! You can email Pastor Johnny at jgonzales@harvestabq.org or give him a call or text at 575-770-5843.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



UTE MOUNTAIN *Photo by C.Jim Cox Artworks Studio • jimcoxartworks.net*



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Send us your photos of "on the scene"
newsworthy events OR just a pretty shot for our
"Photo of the Month".

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I HAVE ONLY JUST A MINUTE

I have only just a minute,
Only sixty seconds in it.
Forced upon me, can't refuse it.
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it.
But it's up to me
to use it.
I must suffer if I lose it.
Give account if I abuse it.
Just a tiny little minute,
but eternity is in it.

— Dr. Benjamin E. Mays

George Shannon Goes to the Consumer Electronic Show

By LOU MCCALL

Anyone who has a television or access to the internet has probably heard about the Consumer Electronic Show (CES), held every January. It is the biggest annual trade show in the world and showcases the latest and greatest of every imaginable gadget, big and small. It's now in its 53rd year and held in Las Vegas, Nevada.

George Shannon of K&G Services, located in the El Rito neighborhood, started attending the expo in the early 1980s and has been going for over thirty years now. George began his career in computers way ahead of the curve and now his son, Kenny, who graduates from college in December of 2020, is looking toward a career in technology as well. To attend the CES one must be over 18 years of age, so when he was old enough, Kenny started attending the show with his dad. Now they go together every year.

The expo goes from Monday through Friday for five full days and is a wonderland for geeks who want to know the latest innovations in technology. Booths are set up at the expo hawking every single player in the hardware and software world, but it also features presentations from the greatest luminaries of our times. In the old days, famous tech



Photo by George Shannon

At the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Nevada: this is a prototype for an 8-person drone, to be used as a taxi in Hong Kong and operated remotely. It lands on your roof or at your doorstep, you get in, close the door, and tell it where you want to go.

giants such as Steve Jobs of Apple and Bill Gates of Microsoft were speakers on the program. Nowadays, anyone and anything that becomes big in technology is probably first noticed at the CES. George remembers when he saw his first flat-screen TV, the biggest sensation at the show—they were handmade at that

time at a cost of over \$15k each, at least 15 years before becoming commercially available.

What captured George and Kenny's attention this year? It was the single-person drone (pictured). This device is operated remotely and used as a rooftop taxi in Hong Kong. It lands on your

roof or on your doorstep, you get in, close the door, and away you go. Kenny was captivated by a new virtual reality game, played with 3-D glasses that are big in the corporate world. It is being used for team building; a group is tasked with working together to come up with solutions, usually with the pressure of beating the clock, such as defusing a bomb or saving a life.

There were a lot of smart home features, such as a refrigerator that tells you when you need milk or a porch camera where you can talk to the person who rings your bell from the other side of the world.

This year technology for pets was everywhere, like a treadmill for overweight cats that also monitors the cat's heart rate. And then there were impressive arrays of robotics, such as a pet robot cat; or if you prefer having a real cat, wild new innovations in cat litterboxes that empty themselves.

Innovations in medical technology, hardware, software, appliances, peripherals, artificial technology – it's all there. And in 2020, it must seem like science fiction becoming science non-fiction! George, probably like most of those who go to the CES, comes back home every year with sensory overload and enough to think about and inspire him for another year.

QUESTA VILLAGE NEWS

Village Elections - March 3

By Renee Martinez, Village Clerk

The 2020 Village of Questa Municipal Officer Election is **Tuesday, March 3**, at the Village of Questa Administrative Offices.

The following candidates are running for office

and are unopposed:

Brent P. Jaramillo – Council (Incumbent)

John Anthony Ortega – Council (Incumbent)

Michael G. Rael – Municipal Judge (Incumbent)

We are still required to hold a full election even if candidates are unopposed. We want to encourage people to come out and vote since it is their right. The candidate will need at least one vote to win

their seat. There are other municipal elections going on at the Town of Taos and Taos Ski Valley.

Important dates:

February 4 – Early voting begins at the Village of Questa Admin Office / 8 am – 5 pm

February 4

– First day absentee ballots can be issued/mailed to voter

February 29

– Last day for early voting / 10 am – 6 pm

March 3

– Election Day / Polls open from 7 am – 7 pm

April 1

– Term of office begins

For more information call Village Clerk Renee Martinez at (575) 586-0694 or rmartinez@villageofquesta.org

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Developing Your Interview Skills

By NIKI NICHOLS

Congratulations! You submitted a job application and you get a phone call asking if you are still interested in the position. Unless you have already accepted another job, the answer is “Yes.” Check your calendar and accept an interview time based on commute time and other unchangeable obligations. Get the name and phone number of a contact person and the approximate length of the interview. Also, ask about the format of the interview, so you know what to expect.

Sometimes the hiring manager will conduct the interview; at others, there may be someone from Human Resources, or a panel interview. For seasonal employment, some retailers use a small-panel interview with up to ten applicants in a group. The interviewers ask everyone the same questions and rotate the order of who answers first so that no one has an advantage.

Always dress professionally for an interview — be neat, clean, and well groomed. Be sure to have the information for the contact person with you. If you have a flat tire or other problem, let them know immediately that you will be late and you are not a no-show — be prepared to reschedule, if necessary. Once there, apologize for your tardiness.

Ideally, you should arrive ten minutes early, ready to go. Know the name of the person who will conduct the interview and which job you are interviewing for. Carry a presentable notepad with any information you want to mention during the interview.

When you enter the room, give a nice handshake and introduce yourself using the name you prefer to use. For example, you may prefer “Mike” to “Miguel” or “Kit” instead of “Christine.” Use the name of each person there. This is not just courtesy, but an integral part of succeeding in the actual interview.

The interview will start with an overview of the organization and the job in question. The opening questions will seek to clarify your experience

and explore any discrepancies on your application. These are not a challenge to your honesty; they are just for clarification. The next series of questions will be about your knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs). A good interviewer wants examples of what you have done, what you have accomplished, and how you have handled various situations. The questions may be situational, behavioral, or hypothetical. Always answer with examples from your actual experience.

Typical questions:

Tell me about a project you had to complete that had a tight deadline and how you handled it.

Give me an example of how you have dealt with a difficult customer. (Or, hypothetically) How would you deal with a difficult customer?

Describe a time when you used your initiative and tell us the results of that effort.

Some questions may seem strange and unrelated to the job, but the interviewer is looking for a specific skill — for example, how you analyze a problem or how you react in a stressful situation. Answer that type of question with an example of how you have applied a problem-solving model or have handled a particularly stressful situation. This is information you want the interviewer to have. If the manager does not ask, you should find a way to insert examples of your work into the conversation.

Before you even get a call for the interview, you can prepare. Depending on the type of jobs you have had and now want, do the following:

Make a list of your skills.

Review your application and resume for relevant accomplishments.

Make notes about what a busy day looked like at your last worksite and how you handled a troublesome co-worker, angry customer, or unpleasant situation.

Write a short example that demonstrates each of your skills or typical situations you have encountered at work or school. Be honest, clear, and concise. Remember, though, that you are telling a

story. For example, this type of response would serve to answer either the direct or the hypothetical difficult customer question: “Fortunately, I haven’t had too many angry customers, but I remember one time when (now fill in with your own experience and how you handled it).

The reason you want to write out your stories is to get the details clear in your memory. It isn’t necessary to take this paperwork to the interview, but a short list with a key word or two to jog your memory is certainly okay. You want the examples to be spontaneous and natural, not memorized. A specific example of what you did provides the manager with evidence of how you conduct yourself.

Sometimes interviewers will ask questions that do not seem directly related to the position. Answer these with your experience, too.

For example:

Question: What is your greatest strength/weakness? Answer (Strength): I am very focused. When I have a project that has a tight time limit, I like to begin right away and work until it is done. For example, (tell your experience.) Answer (Weakness): I was so focused on an important project in my last job (or at school), that once I got started, I forgot lunch and almost missed a 1:30 meeting/class — but the tasks were finished before I went home that day.

Question: If you put money in a vending machine and got no drink, what would you do? Answer: I’m not sure how this relates to the job, but the last time this happened to me, I reported it to the office. Once when there was no one around, I put up an “Out of Order” sign.

Employing examples from your experience is the key to good answers. Many answers can be prepared ahead of time and adjusted to fit the question. If you get nervous in interview situations (and most of us do), have a friend act as the interviewer and practice before you go.

At the end of the interview, the manager will ask if you have any ques-

tions. Your answer is “Yes.” This is your opportunity to interview them. You may want to know who your boss will be, what a busy day looks like, or how large the team is. Again, let me stress, come prepared — have a list of questions to ask. Even if you don’t ask those, you may think of others, and you will be ready and sound professional.

Sending a thank-you note after the interview is an important part of the process. It will help you stand out. Ask for the interviewer’s business card or use the company’s general mailing address.

To wrap up, here are the most important points.

First and foremost, you can do this and do it successfully.

Next, always be prepared, punctual, professional, and gracious.

And then, send thank-you notes to each interviewer.

Lastly, be patient. It often takes several weeks to process the results of the interviews, determine who would be the best fit for the organization, and for them to do the appropriate background checks.

That’s it. That’s all you need to do to survive the interview and make the best impression. It will not guarantee you the job, but it will get you in the running. If you are the chosen one, go celebrate! If for some reason you are not selected, send out three more applications and hope for better luck next time.

G.A. “Niki” Nichols is a Questa resident and retired Human Resources professional, facilitator, and instructor. She has written journal articles on a variety of subjects, including facilitation, change management, and assessing training needs. Niki published an in-depth tutorial, *An Easy Guide to Job Applications That Get Interviews: A Step-by-Step Process to Prosperity*. It is available online at https://smile.amazon.com/Guide-Applications-Interviews-Step-Step-ebook/dp/B00HJBT1OY/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=niki+nichols&qid=1576602029&s=digital-text&sr=1-1





COSTA RICA

By VICKI DUNCAN
and BOBBY FOWLER

"Pura Vida! Pure Life!" Costa Ricans (Ticos) use this to say hello, to say goodbye and say that everything is good, cool, and all is well. It is said several times a day, as in: How was your trip to the beach? Pura Vida. How was your dentist appointment? Pura Vida. How was work today? Pura Vida. It pretty much sums up the attitude of Ticos who don't stress about things as much as the rest of the world. Perhaps that is why this Central American country has been named one of the happiest countries in the world. Although their lives are not always the easiest, they stay with an upbeat attitude and great faith. "Si Dios quiere" (if God wishes) is another much-used phrase and being *buen educado* (well-mannered) is an important personality trait. All of this is part of why I have made around 25 trips to Costa Rica in the last 27 years. It is like going back to see family.

Bobby and I visited this lovely country again from mid-October through mid-November and we took a lot of photos. Most of the time we stayed near Lago Arenal with a few forays to the beaches that were two to three hours away.

May your life be full of Pura Vida!

1.
Photo by Beachside Waiter

Vicki Duncan and Bobby Fowler, enjoying a day at Playa Islita

2.
Photo by Vicki Duncan

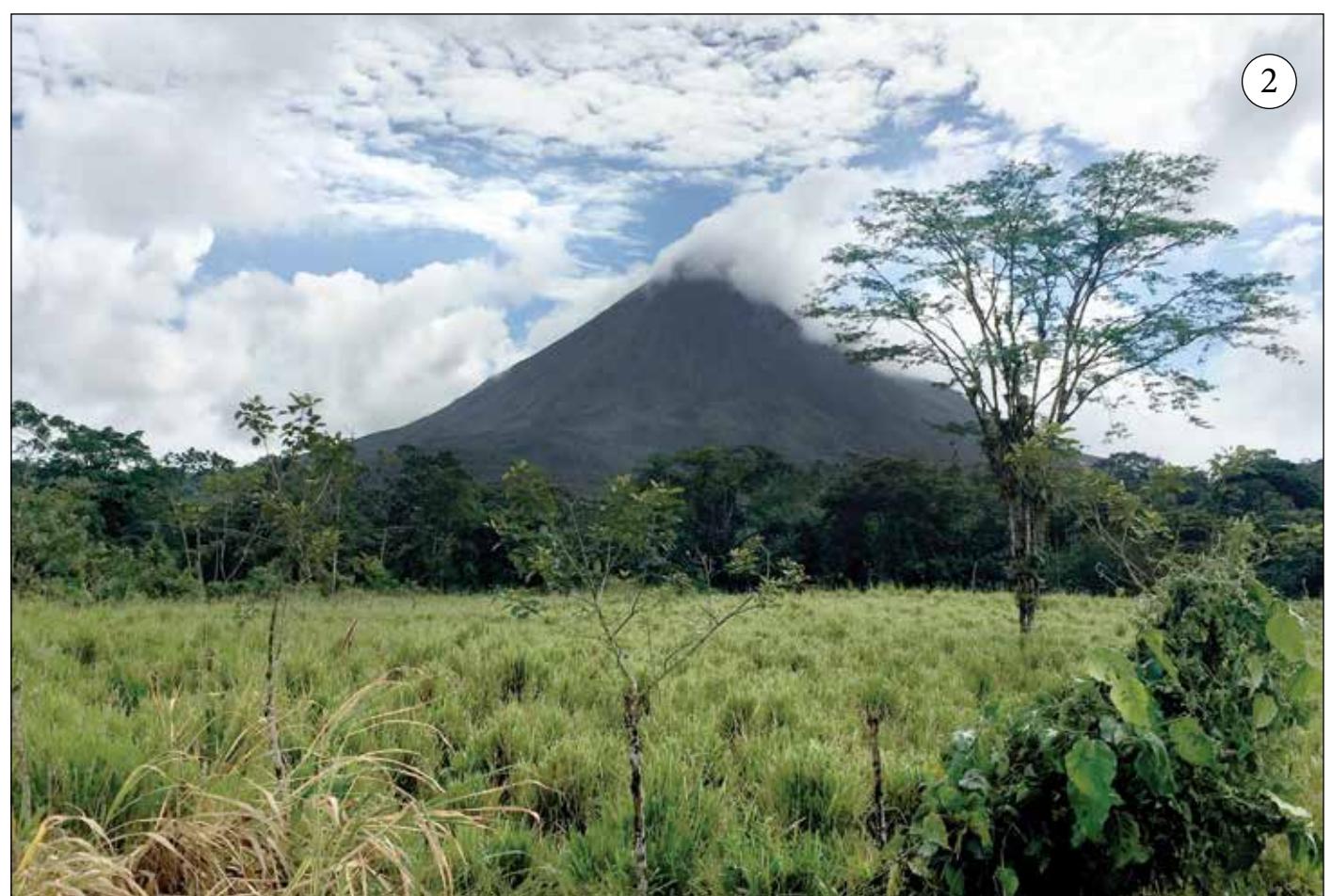
Arenal Volcano, inactive since 2010

3.
Photo by Bobby Fowler

Don Alfredo builds his own marimbas

4.
Photo By Vicki Duncan

Bobby Fowler horsing around Lago Arenal in Costa Rica



Michael's Movie Moments: 2019 Oscar Movies in Review

By MICHAEL YOUNG

Now that we have finished watching and reviewing the 37 movies nominated for major-category Oscars in 2019, we only have a few days to get ready for the 2020 season, since the nominees were announced on January 13. To help fill in your movie rental or streaming queues, here is my summary of the best and worst of these movies. Being the data freak that I am, I engaged in a quantification exercise to rank each of the movies on three different scales: my ratings, the Critic MetaScore, and the audience rating from IMDb (Internet Movie Database). It's fun to see where the ratings align and where they differ.

Here are some of my conclusions:

1. All three scales rate the same movie at the top—*Roma*. And, of course, this is the movie that won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. So, if there is some reason you haven't seen this one yet, then stop everything and watch it. This truly represents much of the best that the motion picture industry can deliver in both story and technical skill.
2. Next on the list should be two very different movies. Although audiences didn't like *If Beale Street Could Talk* as much as the critics and I did, it still rated well across the board and is a beautiful romance with terrific music. I didn't like *Minding the Gap* as much as the audience and critics did, but it is an intriguing documentary about young people in a blue-collar industrial town.
3. After these three must-sees, there are 14 movies that you really should see, if you watch more than one movie per month. They are in alphabetical order with my favorites marked with an asterisk *:

- **Ballad of Buster Scruggs* (Coen Brothers film — laughter and violence)
- **BlacKkKlansman* (based on a true story in Colorado Springs)
- Black Panther* (my favorite "comic book" movie of the year)
- **Bohemian Rhapsody* (Freddie Mercury biopic with great music)
- Can You Ever Forgive Me?* (Melissa McCarthy as an unethical writer)
- Capernaum* (Lebanese film where a child sues his parents)
- Cold War* (Polish romance set in post-war Eastern Europe)
- Free Solo* (riveting documentary about Hannock's climb of El Capitan)
- **Green Book* (trip through the South by two very different men. Won Best Picture)
- Isle of Dogs* (intriguing animated flick with science fiction elements)
- Ralph Breaks the Internet* (Animated flick with terrific portrayal of the internet and a wonderful scene with some Disney princesses)
- Shoplifters* (Japanese film about a desperate family)
- Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* (animated superhero action)
- A Star is Born* (yes, another remake, but Lady Gaga is terrific)

The Ballad of Buster Scruggs is a Coen Brothers movie, so you're either going to love it or hate it. *BlacKkKlansman* tells an interesting story about race in America and Adam Driver is terrific. Critics

didn't like *Green Book* or *Bohemian Rhapsody* nearly as much as the rest of us did and I don't understand why. I'm willing to admit that maybe I got *Shoplifters*, *Spider-man*, and *Cold War* wrong — everybody liked the first two better than I did, while critics really loved *Cold War* where I found it kind of "cold" and difficult to follow.

4. If you want to dive a bit deeper for some not great, but definitely interesting films, then you might want to look at these ten movies:

- Avengers: Infinity Wars* (over-the-top comic book action)
- **Border* (Swedish film that really turns the tables—it is weird)
- The Favourite* (melodramatic sex-comedy)
- **First Reformed* (thriller involving a small town reverend)
- Hale County* (documentary about a small town in Mississippi)
- Incredibles 2* (animated sequel that is really dated, unless you're a kid)
- **Never Look Away* (engaging German biography about surviving WWII)
- A Quiet Place* (sci-fi thriller where sound is the key)
- **Ready Player One* (best special effects movie with a good story line)
- **The Wife* (Glenn Close in one of her best performances, in a so-so film)

I thought *Never Look Away*, though long, was engaging and dramatic and *Ready Player One* had the best usage of special effects of any movie in telling

That's it for the 2019 movies. It was a great year—mostly good films with terrific storylines and artistic delivery. Next year's list is already out and we can expect another year of good movie watching!

an interesting story. Critics disagreed with me on both of them. I liked the strangeness of *Border*, but it isn't for everyone. And, although the movie isn't great, Glenn Close's performance in *The Wife* is nearly perfect. *First Reformed* has enough twists in it to keep your interest.

5. If you really are a movie fanatic, then there are some interesting parts to these six generally not terrific films:

- At Eternity's Gate* (Dafoe's role as Vincent Van Gogh — good for him)
- First Man* (Armstrong's stroll on the moon — nothing new here)
- Mirai* (disappointing Japanese animation that can't find an audience.)

RBG (overly flattering documentary about Ruth Bader Ginsburg)

- **Solo: A Star Wars Story* (fun, if you're into Star Wars)
- **Vice* (entertaining if you don't like Dick Cheney)

I enjoyed the *Star Wars* story, but then I'm sort of a sucker for the series and have been since the '70s. Christian Bale did a wonderful job portraying a difficult character, but this movie is not for conservatives.

6. Finally, in my opinion, you have to be a glutton for punishment to watch any of these four films...maybe good for families with small children, but otherwise, you've been warned:

Christopher Robin (live-action Winnie-the-Pooh with creepy animals)

Fathers and Sons (documentary about how terrorism is passed on)

Mary Poppins Returns (who asked her to?)

Mary Queen of Scots (poorly executed battle between two female cousins)

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AVAILABLE FOR RENT OR STREAMING

By MICHAEL YOUNG

FEBRUARY'S MOVIE REVIEW:
RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET



Going into *Ralph Breaks the Internet*, I was expecting it to be as disappointing as the *Incredibles 2* movie. And the first 20 minutes or so confirmed my expectations. Unlike the *Incredibles* movies, I hadn't seen the original Ralph movie (*Wreck-it Ralph*), so I didn't even know that the main characters (Ralph and Vanellope) are actually characters in older style video games. Nor did I know what happened to them in the first film. As this sequel opens, they are living a rather humdrum existence in their video arcade game, and spend their off-duty times drinking root beer at the tavern with their friends.

Then, as in real life, their world is thrown upside-down by the introduction of the Internet, and this is where the movie takes off. They live in an arcade and seriously need to find a steering wheel to fix an arcade game. To do so, they must enter this strange new Internet world which is so much bigger and challenging than their small and primitive video arcade. (They find the item on eBay, of course).

It is the portrayal of "The Internet" that scores this movie at least one extra star. I have never seen a more effective way to portray the technical complexities of the web in such a visual manner. In this film, the internet is a huge city, much like New York. Websites are buildings and they each display proud signs like Amazon, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and of course, one of the tallest of them all, Google. As a user, you travel through the air as an avatar, packaged in small pods or bubbles (data packets, in technical-speak). As you navigate around different streets and buildings, you are perpetually pestered by people demanding that you click on their sign (i.e. pop-ups). That is, of course, if a particular kind of cop is not around (a pop-up blocker). This is just a small sample of the characterizations the movie uses to make the internet a real, visual place with texture and context that is difficult to imagine in the real cyber-world. The imagination in this portrayal is simply



delightful, and I found it mesmerizing to absorb.

Another key element is the cultural referencing, which play out in humorous and sometimes more serious ways throughout the story. We see multiple references to Star Wars characters and several cameos from action heroes from the Marvel Comic Universe (MCU). The best references, though, come straight from earlier Disney animated "princess" features - ALL of the old Disney princesses are resurrected in this movie, and not just with small cameos. There is an extended sequence in the middle of the movie where Vanellope becomes involved with them as she is trying to learn her place and they - the princesses - are trying to determine if she is now one of them. The self-deprecation and inner-directed humor are both touching and hilarious as everybody is changed by their interaction. In the end, it is determined that Vanellope MUST be one of them because she doesn't have a mother and she is always being saved by a big, strong man (i.e. Ralph). And, of course, the princesses sing and even Vanellope gets a song!

In the end, there is a moral to the story. And it has to do with the notion that a truly good friend never constrains you and indeed actually helps you achieve what you need to do to "realize" yourself, even if it means that you won't be together as much. In our ever-shifting world, that is an important lesson to learn and it probably becomes the teaching point for adults with their young children in this movie.

If you grew up with Disney princesses and/or the internet - and that doesn't exclude very many people - you will enjoy this movie. Again, I disagree with the critics, but this time, I like this movie better than they did. I give it 4 stars just for the fun of it.

Michael's Movie Moments: 2020 Oscar Movie Predictions

By MICHAEL YOUNG

Making Oscar predictions, especially when you haven't seen a single one of the movies, is nothing if not a hazardous guess. But there is always some fun in trying to figure out what the voters of the Oscar Academy are thinking. Note that since I haven't seen any of these films, my guess is not based on how much I like any of the contenders. Rather, this is my consideration of the politics involved and definitely, the Oscars are as much about politics as about quality. I encourage other movie buffs to make their own predictions. But if you get stuck, maybe my thoughts might help you go one way or the other. Remember: If you guess greater than five correctly, you beat the odds of picking randomly. Whatever the outcome, it's all about having a good time...

SHORTS: (ALMOST ALWAYS A CRAPSHOOT)

ANIMATED: KITBULL

Pixar almost always wins

DOCUMENTARY: LEARNING TO SKATEBOARD IN A WARZONE

About girls learning to read, write, and more in Afghanistan. Topic is significant, but a safe choice.

LIVE ACTION: SARIA

Sobering message, but this is a wild guess. A Sister is also a good bet.

SPECIALIZED

ANIMATED FEATURE: TOY STORY 4

Pixar film. Liked by critics and audiences much better than the other films.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE: THE CAVE

An anti-war statement. *For Sama* is a close second.

INTERNATIONAL FEATURE: PARASITE

Loved by audiences and critics alike. Best Picture is never granted to a foreign film, so it will be recognized here (like *Roma* last year). *Honeyland* a close second.

BELOW-THE-LINE

MAKE-UP & HAIRSTYLING: BOMBSHELL

More as a consolation prize for not winning any major awards. Besides, the way they made Theron look like Kelly was amazing. *Joker* is a good second.

COSTUMES: LITTLE WOMEN

Usually goes to a period drama and this one is the most historical. The movie is liked better than the others.

PRODUCTION DESIGN: 1917

\$100 mil budget and an Oscar-saturated team. *Irishman* had a bigger budget, but they had to pay expensive actors, and the design team is less experienced.

ORIGINAL SONG: "I CAN'T LET YOU THROW YOURSELF AWAY" (TOY STORY 4)

It's a toss-up between Randy Newman (*Toy Story 4*), Elton John (*Rocketman*), and Diane Warren (*Breakthrough*) – all three have won Oscars before. But I think Newman might ride the Toy Story coattails.

ORIGINAL SCORE: ALEXANDER DESPLAT (LITTLE WOMEN)

Williams already won for a *Star Wars* forty years ago so he doesn't need another Oscar for another *Star Wars* movie. Gudnadottir (*Joker*) is an Oscar newbie and not well known yet. War movies tend to win in the sound categories, but not music. So, it's a toss-up between Desplat and Randy Newman (*Marriage Story*), both of whom have won twice before. I think Desplat is on more of a roll at the moment.

SOUND EDITING: 1917

War movies usually win here, but car racing could provide some competition. The other three movies are not obvious sound showcases.

SOUND MIXING: 1917

For reasons I don't understand, sound mixing and sound editing are almost always given to the same movie (unless there is a music film in the running.)

VISUAL EFFECTS: AVENGERS: ENDGAME

The Avengers probably has the most expensive visual effects effort, and I expect they are fantastic. And it has made the most money (nearly \$3 billion) of any movie (ever - depending how you measure it). Last year, the *Avengers* movie was overlooked in favor of *First Man*, a rather boring movie by comparison. I'm thinking that this year they're going to award the money-maker. (*The Irishman* is my second choice.)

CINEMATOGRAPHY: 1917

The Lighthouse reportedly has some interesting camera work, but there isn't enough buzz about this movie. Besides, Blaschke (*The Lighthouse*) and Sher (*Joker*) are newbies and

OSCAR PREDICTIONS continued page 28

ESTHER GARCÍA continued from page 1

of the Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument. Esther worked with groups like New Mexico Wilderness Alliance and legislators, including her friend, the late Senator Carlos Cisneros, who passed away unexpectedly in September. She regularly called governors and congressmen to voice her opinion. They always took her calls and they listened.

Esther grew up watching her parents serve the Questa community. Her father, Max Ortega, served as mayor and council member, and her mother, Tessie, was a schoolteacher and foster grandmother. Her parents raised her and her siblings to value service, and the Ortega family continues a legacy of serving in elected office and volunteer positions. For Esther, being the first woman mayor

of Questa was just one role in decades of service and leadership. Her commitment to service and accomplishments made her a role model, mentor, and inspiration to many who knew her and worked beside her.

Esther and Lucille Mascarenas founded the Questa Quilt Guild that meets at the Carlos Cisneros Youth and Family Center. Esther spearheaded a fundraiser for the St. Anthony's church restoration that raffled a quilt made by the ladies of the Quilt Guild. The beautiful quilt depicts each of the twelve historic churches.

Esther always remained optimistic that St. Anthony's Church would be restored as an important part of Questa's history and cultural heritage. A staunch Catholic, her daily ritual revolved around the church. She was part of the

Guadalupeña prayer group that meets each evening to recite the Rosary. She and the ladies took their turn volunteering to make and serve lunch for the Saturday volunteers during the church restoration.

Esther was devoted to her beloved family. She and her husband, Eugene García, had three daughters, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. Her mother, Tessie Rael y Ortega, co-authored with Judith Cuddihy the wonderful book on Questa history titled, *Another Time in This Place: Historia, Cultura y Vida en Questa, New Mexico*. Esther herself was a treasure of local history and knowledge. Before she passed, she was busy co-writing with Judith a historical account to include water rights, land grant issues, and the fight to restore historic St. Anthony's Church.

While she contributed a lot over a lifetime, so have many others. Esther said she was grateful to all those who have volunteered and served over the years. She was especially proud of their successful endeavor to open and grow the Questa Library.

"Looking back, I would like to have gone to college, but there was no money or scholarships at the time. My grandfather went to law school at nights, and I would have liked being a lawyer." I asked Esther if she could offer any advice and she said, "Life is a learning experience, so explore, read, and learn, because they can't take knowledge away from you."

Reprinted with permission from the Remarkable Women of Taos, 2012 book by Nighthawk Press.

POSITIVE THOUGHTS from page 1

Lasting social change occurs when society is seen for what it is in its current state—broken. Maybe your mind and heart are with mine right now, worn out. I am personally worn out by the level of negativity we see around us. I was raised with honesty, trust in one another, respect, and courtesy to everyone. I was taught to value a person's word and I raised my children the same way. Nowadays, words are weapons and

weapons of all sorts are used frivolously, without concern for their long-term ramifications.

My positive thoughts lie with all of us. You, your ethic of respect, your insistence on equanimity, your hard work and care, are what keep me smiling and doing what I can in this little corner of the world to make the world a better place. Positive Thoughts are the activism that is available to us each day, through positive words and actions. Thank you for your positivity.

February is also American Heart

Month. Yes, let's be the heart of goodness to one another -- no cholesterol medicine can top that! This month is Children's Dental Health Month, too. Start with decreasing sugar from all its sources -- it is poison to the body and brings only problems and negatively affects children's (and adult) behaviors. Let's help our children and ourselves, not only with dental health but with our overall well-being by reducing sugar in all its forms this month. Then, next month it won't taste so good, and our bodies won't crave it so much. Mark a jar with "money

saved from sugar" and put the money saved from not buying soda or candy. It will add up quickly!

Lastly, February is National Birdfeeding Month. Remember to feed the birds! They have likely foraged the area fully and Nature's food sources have run out. Help them through these last months of cold with a generous handout, please. And remember not to give them junk food! Birdseed is available right here in Questa's stores. The birds will sing their gratitude!

OSCAR PREDICTIONS from page 27

haven't earned rights yet. Although close among the remaining three, I think Deakins (*1917*) will get it again, for the scope of this war movie, and the "single-take" effect.

FILM EDITING: THE IRISHMAN

This is the most difficult of any category to guess in advance of actually seeing the work. I think it will end up being between the two seasoned editors, of *The Irishman* and *Ford v. Ferrari*, and the academy is going to go with Scorsese's *Irishman* since this is probably his last major film.

ABOVE-THE-LINE**SUPPORTING ACTRESS: LAURA DERN (*MARRIAGE STORY*)**

Another tough category. In the end, it will come down to Dern or Pugh (*Little Women*) because their movies are better liked. But Pugh hasn't paid her dues yet and Dern has been nominated three times without a win. So...

SUPPORTING ACTOR: AL PACINO (*THE IRISHMAN*)

Hanks (*A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*) and Hopkins (*The Two Popes*) are unlikely because their movies aren't as well liked. That leaves an interesting battle between Pacino (*The Irishman*), Pesci (*The Irishman*), and Pitt (*Once Upon a Time...*), all three of whom have one acting Oscar each. I'm guessing that the old white men will go for the oldest, whitest guy, and that would be Pacino.

LEADING ACTRESS: SAOIRSE RONAN (*LITTLE WOMEN*)

Harriet, *Bombshell*, and *Judy* are not critically successful, so the battle is between Johansson and Ronan, neither of whom have won an Oscar. After three recent nominations, I think Ronan will finally win. (But Theron [*Bombshell*] could be an interesting surprise.)

LEAD ACTOR: ADAM DRIVER (*MARRIAGE STORY*)

Neither *Two Popes* nor *Pain and Glory* are nominated for Best Picture, so that leaves DiCaprio,

Driver, and Phoenix. By sheer number of nominations, *Joker* could drive Phoenix into an Oscar, but I'm thinking that the academy is going to reward Adam Driver. He's had two back-to-back nominations and might clinch it this time. DiCaprio is a close second.

ADAPTED SCREENPLAY: GRETA GERWIG (*LITTLE WOMEN*)

Waititi (*Parasite*) doesn't have enough American experience. The remaining four all have some Oscar history and have written some terrific screenplays. I think after stiffing Gerwig for a nomination for Director, the voters are going to award her the Oscar here. Sort of a guilt thing.

ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY: NOAH BAUMBACH (*MARRIAGE STORY*)

Without any nominated actors to voice the script, neither *Knives Out* nor *1917* have a good chance in this category. Tarantino has won two screenplay Oscars, for *Pulp Fiction* and *Django Unchained*. Baumbach was nominated once before and has not won. And the South Korean writers of *Parasite* are both new to this game. It

could go to the Koreans, but I think the Academy is of the mind to support a good solid, American, emotional drama.

BEST DIRECTOR: MARTIN SCORSESE (*THE IRISHMAN*)

The old white men are going to reward one of their own. Scorsese has been nominated nine times for directing and has only won once (for *The Departed*). The academy is playing it conservative this year and Scorsese is probably towards the end of his career, so this is a fitting reward. If there is a surprise, it will probably come from Tarantino (*Once Upon a Time...*).

BEST PICTURE: THE IRISHMAN

Sometimes the movie with the most wins in other categories ends up winning, but that's not always the case. Not in recent history has a movie won Best Picture that hasn't won at least one other above-the-line Oscar. So, I think this race will be between *Marriage Story*, *Little Women*, and *The Irishman*. Of those, I think the biggest picture, in terms of budget and talent, is probably *The Irishman*.

ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

SKYDANCE ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY by Charlene R. Johnson
FEBRUARY 2020

GRAND EARTH TRINE

"Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads." Henry David Thoreau

As though the Universe knew February would be a good month, it made it one day longer this year. Starting on the 15th, we experience a Grand Trine. We've discussed Grand Trines before as the greatest blessing we can see in a chart. A trine (triangle) is a 120-degree relationship between two planets; a Grand Trine is this same relationship operating between three planets all trining each other and resulting in a powerful blessing circulating the entire chart.

Generally, a Grand Trine is made up of one element, but in this case, we start with two planets in Earth and one in Fire. While this may weaken the dominant element it also adds movement and change. Consider the benefits of prescribed burns, helping the Earth to grow even better. However, that only lasts a couple of days and then that wayward planet also slips into an Earth sign, giving us a solid Earth Grand Trine for the rest of the month. Spiritually oriented people are sometimes regarded as impractical dreamers with a shortage of the Earth element. The Piscean Age didn't help with its active encouragement to disassociate from the tangible world in the effort to reach "heaven" above. The virtuous pursuit of "higher things" devalued the here and now of earthly existence. But the shift into a more Aquarian way of thinking echoes Madame Helena Blavatsky's mantra: "It is not that we should live in this world less, but in both worlds more." As you enjoy our lovely Earth blessing, you might consider whether we are blessing the Earth in return.

Everyone: The first of three "Supermoons" on February 9th makes Moon-viewing easy and worthwhile.

ARIES ♡ Planet: Mercury ♫ MARCH 20 – APRIL 19

Dynamic: You experience a shift from absolute understanding to an emotional sense of disillusion.

Direction: Ponder upon whether it is a lack of understanding or only a shift of perspective.

Soul Thought: Who is the Wizard of Oz?

TAURUS ♀ Planet: Vulcan ♫ APRIL 19 – MAY 20

Dynamic: A big shift could be monetary; a freeing process is involved.

Direction: Which will you allow to be freed? The money or the attachment?

Soul Thought: From riches to rags?

GEMINI ♫ Planet: Venus ♫ MAY 20 – July 20

Dynamic: You've never looked and felt so good – well, except for this time last year!

Direction: Use that bonhomie to face the challenges with your co-workers.

Soul Thought: Self and Other are not separable.

CANCER ☽ Planet: Neptune ♫ July 20 – JULY 22

Dynamic: Since it's a month of no external challenges, safely diving deep inside could show you a few things.

Direction: Of course, it helps if you want to know those things.

Soul Thought: From outer worlds to inner worlds.

LEO ☽ Planet: Sun ☽ JULY 22 – AUG 22

Dynamic: Opportunities for both sacrifice and salvation present themselves.

Direction: It's a time for brooding and pondering.

Soul Thought: What do sacrifice and salvation have in common?

VIRGO ♀ Planet: Moon ♫ AUG 22 – SEPT 22

Dynamic: It might seem a little darker during this time.

Direction: Reflect the light into the darkness.

Soul Thought: When the Divine Mother and the Christ Consciousness come together.

LIBRA ☽ Planet: Uranus ☽ SEPT 22 – OCT 22

Dynamic: By the end of the month your sense of what you value may be tested.

Direction: Now would be a good time to get clear on your values.

Soul Thought: If money is prana what is valuable?

SCORPIO ☽ Planet: Mars ☽ OCT 22 – NOV 21

Dynamic: A big swing in external dynamics might have you spinning.

Direction: Before it happens get clear on where you are going.

Soul Thought: The tip in the fire which becomes hardened and strong.

SAGITTARIUS ✶ Planet: Earth ☉ NOV 21 – DEC 20

Dynamic: Burning questions resolve into concrete plans for the future.

Direction: Ask away.

Soul Thought: "He who has a why to live for can bear almost anything." Friedrich Nietzsche

CAPRICORN ♀ Planet: Saturn ☽ DEC 20 – JAN 19

Dynamic: It's been a long highway to travel, but you're getting there.

Direction: Don't give up now.

Soul Thought: Just one step ahead of the other.

AQUARIUS ☽ Planet: Jupiter ☉ JAN 19 – FEB 18

Dynamic: A business partner could become a friend.

Direction: There may be some business items to sort out first.

Soul Thought: When business and friendship mix.

PISCES ✶ Planet: Pluto ☽ FEB 18 – MAR 20

Dynamic: You may be asked to sacrifice something for the business.

Direction: Ponder upon whether it is an appropriate request.

Soul Thought: Consider dogs.

To discover your Rising Sign, or for more information, contact Charlene R. Johnson,
www.SkyDanceAstrology.com, or email: SkyDance@SkyDanceAstrology.com

Esoteric Astrology is focused on the rising sign more than the sun sign (we suggest you read both) and provides clarity, direction and answers for those seeking a higher level of life.

DATES TO REMEMBER

FEBRUARY 2020

FEBRUARY 1

World Read Aloud Day

FEBRUARY 1 7:00 AM

Men's Breakfast, free at Harvest Questa

FEBRUARY 1

World Wetlands Day

FEBRUARY 2

Groundhog Day, Candlemas

FEBRUARY 4 3:30-5:30 PM

Questa Youth Center Art Room: Clay Studio

FEBRUARY 6 10:30-11:30 AM

Bookmobile in Lama at Roots & Wings Community School

FEBRUARY 6 1:00-1:45 PM

Bookmobile at Questa Post Office

FEBRUARY 7 1:00-3:00 PM

Questa Library Fun Friday Kid's Program

FEBRUARY 8

National Boy Scouts Day

FEBRUARY 9 5:30 PM

Community Yoga, Free at La Sala

FEBRUARY 11

International Day of Women and Girls in Science

FEBRUARY 11 3:30-5:30 PM

Questa Youth Center Art Room: Clay Studio

FEBRUARY 13 2:00-4:00 PM

Questa to Red River Trail Planning Meeting, Questa Youth Center

FEBRUARY 14

Valentine's Day

FEBRUARY 14 1:00-3:00 PM

Questa Library Fun Friday, Questa Youth Center

FEBRUARY 14 11:00AM-2:00PM

Free Food at North Central NM Food Pantry!

FEBRUARY 17

Random Acts of Kindness Day

FEBRUARY 17

Presidents' Day

FEBRUARY 18 3:30-5:30 PM

Questa Youth Center Art Room: Clay Studio

FEBRUARY 20 10:30 AM – NOON

Wildcat Kitty Club Questa Public Library

FEBRUARY 20

World Day of Social Justice

FEBRUARY 21

International Mother Language Day

FEBRUARY 21

Caregivers Day

FEBRUARY 24 3:30-5:00 PM

Questa Library Book Club at Rael's Market

FEBRUARY 25

Mardi Gras/Fat Tuesday: the day before Lent begins

FEBRUARY 25 10:00 AM

Red River Chamber Board Meeting, RR Conference Center

FEBRUARY 25 3:30-5:30 PM

Questa Youth Center Art Room: Clay Studio

FEBRUARY 25 6:00 PM

Questa Village Council Meeting, Village Hall

FEBRUARY 25 6:00 PM

Questa School Board Meeting

FEBRUARY 25 10:00 AM

Red River Chamber Board Meeting, RR Conference Center

FEBRUARY 25 5:00 PM

Red River Town Council, RR Conference Center

FEBRUARY 26

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent

FEBRUARY 28 1:00-3:00 PM

Questa Library Fun Friday with Nick, Kid's Program

FEBRUARY 28 11:00AM-2:00PM

Free Food at North Central NM Food Pantry!

For a complete list of February events in Red River, go to <https://redriver.org/events/calendar/2020/02>

FEBRUARY IS:

The 2nd Anniversary of the Questa del Rio News!

Black History Month

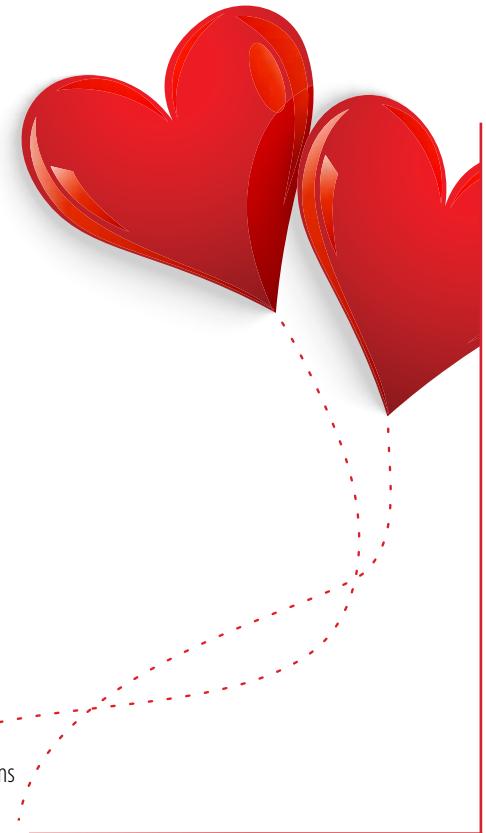
American Heart Month

Bird Feeding Month

Library Lovers' Month

Children's Dental Health Month

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month



HELP WANTED

Wild and Scenic Rivers Visitor Center is seeking seasonal volunteers to help operate the Center. Starting October 1st, 6 hours per day from 1 to 5 day per week, days per week depending upon your availability. Please contact the Wild Rivers Visitor Center for more information at 586-1150.

Do You Have a Home Rehab Business?

The Questa Lodging Project is compiling a list of Questa-area GB-98 contractors, roofers, landscapers, electricians, plumbers, and handymen and women to rehabilitate homes in Questa. If you own a business in the Questa area, have a Questa business license, and fall into one of these categories, please call to get in our directory so we can send home rehab customers to you! 575-586-2149 (more details on page 4)

Housesitters: The Questa Lodging Project is compiling a list of housesitters. If you would like to be in the directory, please call so we can tell people about you! 575-586-2149.

Housecleaners: The Questa Lodging Project is compiling a list of people who clean houses, especially for short-term and vacation rentals. If you would like to be in the directory, please call so we can tell people about you! 575-586-2149.

See Questa Independent School's Job Vacancies on this page

WANTED

Our wonderful old wood stove is on her last legs. I'm seeking her replacement: a slightly used wood stove for our large house, efficient and affordable. Please contact gabrielle. herbertson@gmail.com

LAND FOR SALE.

35 gorgeous (not all flat) off-the-grid acres in Sunshine Valley. Reduced to \$25,000. Call 575-770-3064.

FOR SALE

Nice Used Restaurant Equipment, 8ft custom steel prep table 30" wide, steel tables and rolling rack, Berkel 14 qt.mixer, Market Forge steam sleeve and boiler 40 gallon, FAEMA due espresso machine and grinder, Kenmore fairly new freezer 61" L x 27-1/2" W x 34" H, 1-3ftx30" steel prep table, 3-4ftx30" steel prep tables, Kenmore Elite freezer. Call 586-0064 or or swcfox@icloud.com.

Full-size Frigidaire refrigerator/freezer and gas stove and oven. Used but very clean. Too large for my cabin! \$400 OBO. Tel (561)290-9173 or email tillsuchtime@gmail.com

Solid oak regulation pool table, cue sticks, balls, lights. Great condition. Previous owner: Ray Vinella. \$1500, call Lynn or Krissie at 586-0515.

Mariachi Questa just got a new shipment of chile! This year's crop for sale. Green chile powder for \$9 a pound and red chile powder in medium, hot

and extra hot for \$7 a pound. Please spread the word! Ask any Mariachi Questa member or call 779-5601.

Freshly harvested Tipi (teepee) poles for sale. Poles are pre-order and harvested for you. Denubbed, peeled, and dried. Delivery and set up available for an extra charge. Multiple lengths available. Contact Wendy for price: thetipilady@gmail.com or 541-497-0287.

NOTICES

Colcha Embroidery Group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 10AM to noon at the Costilla County Economic Development Conference Room, 401 South Church Place, San Luis, CO. For more information call Marcella Pacheco at 719-672-4237.

Red River Ski Area is open and the Torchlight Parade and Fireworks will be every Saturday during ski season!

The Questa Visitor Center is now closed for the winter, see you in the spring!

Music lessons - piano, guitar, ukulele, accordion, base, saxophone and recorder, contact Nat Wilson, 575-779-2725, lessons at La Sala in Questa, 2331 Hwy 522.

Bluegrass Music Jam The Juice Caboose in Red River, every Thursday night at 6:30 pm

Weekly Music Jam Rael's Coffee House in Questa, Every Thursday at 6:00 pm.

Maps & More Available from Carson National Forest



By Denise Ottaviano

Fuelwood permits, maps, Interagency Passes, and other products will once again be available for purchase at the Carson National Forest (CNF) Supervisor's Office in Taos. These products are also available at all ranger district offices.

Questa Ranger Ranger District office is open 9AM-12:30PM, 1:30-4PM, 575.586.0520.

Supervisor's Office in Taos is open from 8AM to noon and 12:30-4:30PM, 575.758.6200

Dead and down fuelwood permits are currently not available. Permits are not sold from January through April. These permits are generally available starting May 1, through December 31, forest wide. We will provide updates in the spring when the permits become available.

Forest maps are \$14. Maps for the CNF and all other national forests in the country can also be purchased online at <http://www.nationalforest-mapstore.com/>.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."

For a listing of our forest maps, visit our webpage: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/carbon/maps-pubs>

America the Beautiful Interagency Annual Passes are \$80. For more information about these passes visit the following webpage: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/carbon/pass-permits/?cid=fseprd553944>

Rock permits must be obtained at the Ranger District office where the rock will be collected.

Customers may purchase all products by check, credit/debit card or cash.

For more information about the Carson NF visit our webpage <https://www.fs.usda.gov/carbon>.

Need Something? Have Something?

LIST IT IN THE CLASSIFIEDS!

**Starting at flat rate \$10 for 25 words or less
(25 word min. 50 word max)**

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QUESTA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

JOB VACANCIES

Superintendent

Application Packet Available at <http://qisd-nm.schoolloop.com>

Application packet should include: Complete QISD Certified Application, Letter of Interest, Current Resume, (3) Three Employment or Education References (Include Current Names, Titles, Addresses and Phone Numbers) Satisfactory Background Investigation. All applications will be screened. Selected applicants will be invited for an interview. **INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED.**

Submit Applications to:

Kathy Gonzales, Human Resources Specialist

Questa Independent School District

P.O. BOX 440

Questa, NM 87556



CHURCH DIRECTORY

QUESTA

ST. ANTHONY DE PADUA CHURCH IN QUESTA

Father Andrew Ifeles 586-0470
Saturday 6:00PM,
Sunday 7:00AM in Spanish -11:00AM in English

MISSION CHURCHES:

Sagrado Corazon in Costillo – Sunday 9:00AM
Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Cerro-
2nd & 4th Saturdays 4:00PM
Santo Niño in Amalia- 1st & 3rd Saturdays 4:00AM

HARVEST QUESTA

Pastors Kristi & Johnny Gonzales
2558 Hwy 522
Sunday 11:00AM- 12:30PM
Phone 575-770-5906
Visit us online: HarvestQuesta.org

LIVING WORD MINISTRIES

Pastors Peter and Gayle Martinez
12 Llano Road
Service: Sunday 10:30AM
Nursery and Kids' Church at 10:30AM
Wednesday Bible Study 7:00PM
www.lwmsite.org
586-1587

PATH OF LOVE

Teachings of Herman Rednick
Sunday 7:30AM class and meditation
586-1454, Hilece
Sunday 10:00AM Alice Bailey Theosophy Study Group
586-4641, Francis www.earthjourney.org

QUESTA CHURCH OF CHRIST
2 miles north of Questa on State Road 522
We are excited to offer Bible Class at
9:30AM on Sundays
Followed by worship at 10:15AM
We pray you will join us!

KAGYU MILA GURU SANGHA

Tibetan Buddhism
Thursday at 4:00PM Chenrezig
Friday 8:00AM-Green Tara
gabrielle.herbertson@gmail.com
www.earthjourney.org
586-1454 or 586-1038

ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Sunday Service 10:30AM
Potluck & Fellowship 3rd Sunday of the Month
Highway 196, Amalia
Pastors: Lorenzo & Arleen Lucero
575-770-5716

RED RIVER

CROSS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

(Standing in the Gap)
The Way Coffee House, 201 W. Main Street
Sunday 10:00AM, Wednesday 6:30PM
Children's Church at Both Times
Pastor Chris Torres (505) 600-5859

FAITH MOUNTAIN FELLOWSHIP

Corner of River Street and Copper King Trail
Sunday 10:30AM

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF RED RIVER

103 High Cost Trail
Sundays 8:15 AM and 10:30AM
Pastor Joe Phillips 754-2882

ST. EDWIN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

North End of Silver Bell Trail
Saturday 6:00PM
(Confession prior to Mass or by appt.)
Father Andrew Ifeles 586-0470



AA MEETINGS

Sundays 10-11:00 am

Open Meeting
Questa Youth Center

Mondays 7:00 pm

Harvest Questa
2558 Highway 522

Tuesdays 7:00 pm

Erik's Workshop
417 E. High St., Red River

AA WORDS OF INSPIRATION

Selfishness—self-centeredness!

That, we think, is the root of our troubles.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p. 62

QUESTA LODGING PROJECT CLASSIFIEDS

Call 586-2258 or e-mail Lodging@QuestaEDF.com

LAMA LOFT

Unique lofted 1 bedroom 1 bath home in Lama, house sits on 3 acres and is only 5 years old. Perfect for a 1 person or a couple. There are many special features to this home. Rent is \$1250. per month, plus utilities.

EMBARGO TRAILER

Available Now. \$600 plus utilities, \$150 deposit. NO pets allowed, no smoking. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. Long term preferred.

ABRA APARTMENT

Available March 1st. 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartment, \$600 per month plus utilities. Plus \$600 deposit. No pets, No smokers .

ROOM FOR RENT

Shared spaces \$350 per month plus utilities
Looking for an individual between 20-40 years old, males welcome, female preferred
No Smokers, drug users or partiers. No pets allowed.

HOUSING NEEDED

- Single professional with dogs Very clean, great references Looking for 1 or 2 bedroom
- Professional individual looking to relocate to Questa area, Seeking a small rental apartment between \$700.- 800. Utilities included, internet a must
- School teacher looking for a small 1 bedroom in Questa area. Need a month to month lease.



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Questa Del Rio News



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2 YEARS OLD!



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DaggleBeeZ
CBD Hemp Shop

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Alamosa, CO

(719)298-7093

DaggleBeeZ@gmail.com

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Questa, NM 87556



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