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Questa Del Rio News

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The Genizaro Legacy In New Mexico



Photo by Larry Lamsa

Matachine dancers at Ohkay Owingeh.

By PRISCILLA SHANNON-GUTIÉRREZ

One of the lesser known histories of New Mexico is the genizaro legacy, whose remnants can be found across the state, especially in northern communities. The word genizaro actually comes from the 14th-century Ottoman word Janissary (yeniçeri), referring to abducted children who were traded and eventually trained as soldiers.

In New Mexico, the term referred to Indian captives and their offspring who had been acculturated and assimilated into the Hispano and Catholic cultures. And while slavery was illegal under Mexican rule, many of the genizaro entries within the baptismal and census records are referred to as servants, which served as a way to get around the issue of human ownership. Other terms in both baptismal and census records utilized to designate a slave (or peon) included, color quebrado (broken color), mezclado or revuelto (mixed), or collote/collota (mixed blood). The words famula

and criado were also used to indicate a mixed blood slave during the latter part of the 19th century. Mexican and Catholic officials were quite meticulous with recording whether an individual was a Native, and often included tribal affiliation, when known. As a result, thousands of genizaros are named in 18th- and 19th-century baptismal and census records.

In 1740, then Governor Tomás Velez Gachupin granted the establishment of genizaro settlements to act as buffers of defense against attacks by the Navajo, Ute, Apache, Comanche, and Kiowa tribes in the borderlands surrounding Spanish settlements. From this decree arose genizaro settlements such as Barrio de Analco in Santa Fe, Belen, Socorro, Abiquiu, Ojo Caliente, Trampas, and Truchas. Even the Santa Fe Trail port of entry at San Miguel del Vado had its origins as a genizaro community. Settlement locations were chosen within already established routes and mountain passes utilized by tribes for attacks. When Fray Domínguez toured the area

in 1776, he found enclaves of genizaros in Abiquiu, Los Jarales, and near Albuquerque and Belen.

In Spanish and Mexican cultures, land ownership played a significant part in establishing social position and prestige, as well as determining wealth. In the 18th and 19th centuries, ownership of land dictated who was selected to govern in roles such as judges or county clerks. Prior to Gachupin's decree, it was illegal for genizaros or their descendants to own any land. The establishment of buffer settlements provided them with a high-risk opportunity to own land, and surprisingly in some instances, to also own slaves themselves.

Early Indian slavery in New Mexico targeted Pueblo Indians, but eventually at least six different tribes were involved in the cycle of raiding, abduction, and servitude. These tribes included Ute, Apache, Pawnee, Comanche, and Navajos. A number of these slaves were

GENIZARO cont'd on page 28

Questa Del Rio News

NOTICIAS QUESTA DEL RIO

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EDITORIAL

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE QUESTA DEL RIO NEWS!

February 2021 marks three years of this newspaper's service to our community. *The Questa Del Rio News* has survived its terrible twos, yay! Since we won't have a birthday party, as we did for our first year, go ahead and pop some bubbly and raise a glass to celebrate with us. Being humanitarian water-bearers, it is okay if you raise a glass of water. We recognize water as a truly precious valuable resource. We are true *Nuevo Mexicanos* in that way. The rest of the world is catching on. In the U.S. water is now being traded on the futures market as a valuable commodity, like gold and petroleum!

Speaking of business, Cynthia Najim has turned her considerable talents to this month's Business Profile. Guess who the featured business is? *The Questa Del Rio News*! On pages 16-18 you will learn more than you ever wanted to know about us! And we rounded up photos of those who help bring this paper to you every month; so you can put faces to some of the names you have seen in this paper.

We are also celebrating Lynn Skall's one-year anniversary as director of the Questa Economic Development Fund and as the newspaper's business manager. Lynn has done so much for the paper and for the community, it's hard to believe that she started just one year ago!

What can one say about the past year? That words cannot describe it? That it was a year like no other? That it was truly a challenge and what doesn't kill us makes us stronger? We have all come out the other side of a difficult year considerably stronger than when we went in. That is especially true of the *Questa Del Rio News*. How did we do it? We had a lot of help. We would like to say thank you to all of our readers, contributors, advertisers, donors, subscribers, volunteers, and wishers of goodwill. Our policy is to be here for our community, and we appreciate the community being here for us, too. You make a tremendous difference and YOU are the reason we are here.

In regard to a difficult year, it seemed that 2021 couldn't come fast enough. And then, the first week of January came and seemed more like 2020, with all the violence, anger, and confusion that we hoped would pass. But here we are, moving ahead and leaving all that behind.

For those of you who like to celebrate New Year's, here's a second chance. On February 12, most of the world's population celebrates the Lunar New Year. It is sometimes called Chinese New Year or Tibetan New Year, Losar. In the Tibetan tradition, February 11, or Lunar New Year's Eve, is called Housecleaning Day. What a great way to end the year and begin a new one. I like that idea more than starting the new year with a hangover!

Because our paper celebrates its birthday in February, we also like to make a big deal about Valentine's Day and all that it stands for. How can celebrating love go wrong? We aren't sure, but we think that St. Valentine is our patron saint. After a rough year with too much of love's opposite, why don't we celebrate, honor, and put voice to love in all its forms? The shadowy underworld of negative news can be way too intense. We need to ramp up the intensity of love and light to balance out the negativity. And maybe even move beyond neutral into just downright good!

Here's wishing you a wonderful February, a Happy Year of the Ox, a beautiful Valentine's Day, and all good things. And thank you for celebrating our birthday with us.

LOU McCALL AND THE BIRTHDAY CREW AT QUESTA DEL RIO NEWS



*Hello, Lou,
I'm enclosing a check for \$60.00 to pay for a subscription to the Questa del Rio News. We really enjoy your newspaper and look forward to keeping up with events in the area when we're at our winter home in WA! We would also appreciate five copies of the October edition for our files.*

Thank you so much. Wishing you a safe holiday season!

Arthur & Francisca Gallegos

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE FEBRUARY 2021 EDITION
— THANK YOU!

BARRIE ANDREWS, JEFF BARELA, LINDA BETZ, KRISTI LUHAR-BLAKE, MARYANNA CLEMONS, JANIE CORINNE, CLAIRE COTÉ, PETE CRIDER, ZOEY FINK, BRYCE FLANAGAN, DEBBIE GRIFFITH, PRISCILLA SHANNON-GUTIERREZ, VANETTE HARRIS, MIN JAE HONG, HILARY JACOBS HENDEL, RACHEL KUC', AUDREY KUNKEL, GILLIAN JOYCE, MARGARET LEJUSTE, MONICA MARTINEZ, JOANN ROMERO, SARA MARTINEZ, MELISSA MITCHELL, LEEANN MURPHY, JIM NAGLE, CYNTHIA NAJIM, CORILIA ORTEGA, FELIZ ORTEGA, AMZIE SAYRAH, DEBORAH TORRES, JOHN WALSH AND THE STUDENTS OF ALTA VISTA SCHOOL!



Welcome our New Assistant Editor, Martha Shepp!

By STAFF WRITERS

In March of 2020 we introduced Martha Shepp as our volunteer copy editor. We are now excited to welcome her as assistant editor, a position that has been vacant since Sara Martinez moved into her new position as School Counselor at Questa Junior/Senior High School in July 2020.

Martha has spent many decades visiting family in the Questa area. Before moving here permanently in 2014, Martha worked in the non-profit and education sectors of society, always wearing communications hats, sometimes as a graphic designer, other times in the editorial realms – and doing plenty of crossover! She has also taught computer graphics and fine art to high school and college students. Her favorite job was at the alternative newsweekly magazine *MetroPulse* in Knoxville, TN, where she got to use her talents as a photographer, art director, copy editor, and advertising and production coordinator – the very things she will now do at the *Questa del Rio News*!

With Martha on board to help with producing our newspaper, 2021 is looking bright. Do you have an idea to help make our paper better? Do you want to share a story idea? Let Martha or any of us know. Martha can be reached at questadelrionews@gmail.com or call her at (575) 776-7579.

Questa Del Rio News

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DO YOU HAVE CRITTER QUESTIONS? ASK SHANNON!

Over the next year, this space will be dedicated to answering your questions concerning pest control, insects and critters, and a few fun facts.

Send your questions to dina@questaedf.com before the 5th of the month and GRPC will do their best to answer them.

Happy Valentines Day! Brought to you by: GREP, Questa, NM

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Tax Tips for Sole Proprietors & Short-Term Rental Owners

By LYNN SKALL

We are grateful for the useful and essential tax advice Kristi Luhar-Blake (from Burt Taos CPA LLC) offered in the first of a series of new “Passion to Profits” workshops, sponsored by the Questa Economic Development Fund and the LOR Foundation. The mid-February tax topic was specifically targeted for sole proprietors, home-based businesses, and short-term rental companies, which all fall into the same tax category.

Keeping good records is the key to getting the maximum deductions on the taxes you pay on the net profit of your business. Kristi recommends using an Excel spreadsheet, QuickBooks, taking pictures of receipts on your cell phone, or even keeping a handwritten diary to ensure you have good history recorded for the entire year.

What is deductible? Kristi says, “If it’s an ordinary and necessary business expense, it’s deductible.” Here are some of the tax tips that were shared:

Home office. Take a home office expense if you don’t have an office you typically leave home to go to. The deduction is based on the square footage portion of your home used for your

business. If you make a profit, you also can take deductions for a percentage of other home expenses, such as utilities, homeowner’s insurance, property tax, landscaping, and more.

Equipment. Any equipment purchased before the end of the year can be fully expensed up to \$2,500. If you spend more than that and you have a profit that year, you can take bonus depreciation (Section 179 Depreciation) and write it all off in one year— just don’t turn around and sell it or you’ll have to pay back the depreciation.

Auto expenses. Keep good track of business mileage, especially if you also use your car for personal use. Kristi suggests, “Take a picture of your odometer on February 1. At the end of the year, you’ll know how many miles you put on your car.” Every time you drive to town, remember to make your first stop business related, such as the bank or post office, and you can deduct that trip’s mileage.

Gross receipt taxes. If you cannot pass the GRT expense on to your customers, you can reduce your income by that amount. Kristi recommends, “After your return is completed, check it against your GRT totals. If they don’t

match what is reported as income, go back and amend the last GRT return of the year you reported.” Kristi warns that in New Mexico “it’s not a matter if they ever come looking at your GRT, it’s when.”

Filing jointly. Net profits from your business get added together with your spouse’s W-2 income for regular tax rates. She advises that a good way to keep the combined income down is to “max out your retirement account,

where the amount you invest is deducted off the top of your taxable income.” There are a variety of options for the self-employed. “Establish them early in the year so your money grows for you,” says Kristi.

Meals and beverages. New for 2021 and 2022 is that all work-related meals, with or without clients, are 100% deductible (formally a 50% deduction). So, get the full deduction by keeping good records of those expenses.

Travel expenses. When traveling out of town on business, you can keep track and deduct every receipt for meals and lodgings, or you can simplify the recordkeeping and take the government’s standard per diem deductions for the specific city you are visiting. You must

keep documentation of the purpose of your business trip. As per diem rates vary by city, get more information by going to your search engine and typing in: GSA Per Diem Rates.

Health insurance. Self-employed people get a line-item deduction from their adjusted gross income for their health insurance payments. “It comes right off the top, just like your retirement account,” says Kristi.

When filing for 2020, be sure to take advantage of the Qualified Business Income deduction for qualified business, which is anything you are doing for profit. This is a 20% tax deduction off your net self-employment income; in theory it is to offset your 15.3% self-employment tax. Read the instructions for Schedule C to see what is deductible.

Since the 2021 tax forms aren’t even approved yet, it’s hard to predict what may come in 2021. Kristi’s prediction, “I expect things to change.” Please consult your accountant for your own business’s specific deductions, or contact Kristi Luhar-Blake at Burt Taos CPA for help with your taxes; call (575) 758-3964 or email Kluhar-blake@burtcpa.com.



QUESTA LODGING PROJECT UPDATE

By DEBORAH TORRES

As the first type of project of its kind in the United States, the Questa Lodging Project is leading the way to revitalize our village, bringing economic growth and community pride. The QLP is working with homeowners and the San Antonio del Rio Colorado Historic Preservation group to renovate and rent one home at a time.

Completion is near on our first renovation: in just one more month, fingers crossed, the home will be available as a short-term rental in March. As the homeowner completes a few more updates, which includes new flooring, the home will be a great addition to available rentals in Questa. Look for more



Photo by Deborah Torres

The first Questa Lodging Project renovation, with porch about to be painted

information in the March issue!

Volunteers are always needed to help with home improvements of the QLP. Your time and skills are appreciated and are an added value not only to each project, but to our community. If you are highly skilled, your help will make a big

difference. If you are new to the building trades or are looking to learn new skills, this is a wonderful opportunity.

Our lists are being updated, so contact our office if your property is available for rent or if you are looking for a rental.

Here are a few tips to get your property rental-ready:

- Fix anything that is broken or damaged
- Check if all appliances and electrical outlets are working
- Wipe down walls, deep-clean floors, windows, cabinets, and furniture
- Paint walls if needed
- Remove clutter
- Clean the yard
- Remove any personal items

The presentation of your home will help fetch top dollar for your rental.

With this quick update, helpful tips, and a call for volunteers, you are now up to date on the Questa Lodging Project. Please feel free to reach out and contact us!

Deborah Torres

Questa Lodging Project Manager
San Antonio del Rio Colorado

Historic Preservation

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QBEN PRESENTS THE LOR
AND TAOS COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS

By LYNN SKALL

Did you ever wonder where our local foundations get the money to award grants and scholarships within the community, and how they decide who will benefit from their generosity? The February Questa Business Entrepreneur Network meeting featured the LOR Foundation and Taos Community Foundation, with Jake Caldwell and Lisa O'Brien. Although they are very different foundations, they are both making significant impacts in our community with their positive philanthropy.

"I love this work, I love this community," exclaimed Lisa O'Brien, director of TCF, "I'm enormously proud of the work we do!" And with good reason. Last year TCF granted over \$1.5 million within a small area that includes Taos County and the Eagle's Nest and Angel Fire communities in neighboring Colfax County. As a 501 (c)(3) public charity, a "community foundation" is limited to a specific geographic area, and "to instill and celebrate philanthropy," says O'Brien.

TCF builds up assets through the receipt of charitable giving. They act as a "charitable bank" and manage over 150 different funds pooled together, totaling more than \$14 million in assets. It is a percentage of the return on the investment that is used for grantmaking and covering overhead for their staff of four. Lisa clarified that "TCF does not take any cut of any money. When you donate, nothing is being taken off the top."

Half of the TCF assets are donor restricted, meaning they are specifically designated for certain uses. For example, the nonprofits Youth Heartline and Community Against Violence both opened charitable funds with TCF, where they have an advisor overseeing their investments, and once a year they get a disbursement.

Some funds are donor designated for specific nonprofits, other funds are disbursed for scholarships. There is one competitive application cycle per year, published on their website, TaosCF.org. "Any nonprofit in the community is eligible to apply for a grant during the cycle; unfortunately we can't award everyone

funding, so keep in mind it is a competitive process," explained Lisa.

When COVID-19 hit, TCF reacted immediately with opportunities for funding support. The Fund for Taos, an emergency action fund, was established and over \$500,000 has been granted without applications to food pantries (including our own North Central Food Pantry) and shelters. An additional \$100,000 was distributed among every school within the TCF geographic area, and a special grant application cycle was opened specifically to assist organizations with funding to help them pivot around COVID-related operating challenges. "The Harwood Museum applied to purchase equipment to video and photograph their art to get it into the community. So far, we have funded \$250,000 in these grants," said Lisa.

The Taos Community Foundation and LOR Foundation work together on many community projects, including funding support for the Census, development with UNM of Taos HIVE, a hub for digital career readiness, and Taos Connects, a resource to connect volunteers to projects they are interested in, and a place where organizations and projects can solicit and recruit volunteer support.

The LOR Foundation is quite different from the TCF. They are a private family foundation, not a public charity; a 501 (c)(3) whose work is place-based, driven in rural communities in five western mountain states, with their mission to improve the quality of life of their residents, enhance livability and prosperity, all while preserving the character that makes each community unique.

The LOR name is an acronym that reflects their values: livability, opportunity, and responsibility. Jake Caldwell, the current program officer for LOR in Taos, explains, "we work within a problem/solution paradigm, and the granting is to solve a community problem. We look for the individuals and organizations who have solutions to address them."

Recently they have focused on funding projects on a smaller scale of under \$10,000, because "We want to be nimble and respond quickly; that is one reason we are focusing on smaller projects, to get them on the ground faster, which will catalyze additional beneficial work in the community," says Jake.

"We don't have funding cycles; we invite community members, organizations, and businesses to share ideas at any time and if there is a way forward, we will try to assist to fund those ideas as potential grants. I'm happy to talk at length about what that process looks like," says Jake.



Their website has a place where you can offer your ideas, at <https://lorfoundation.org/about-us/>. LOR is open to many grants that fall within eight guideposts that represent the goals of their communities, from economic prosperity, to access, to quality healthcare.

Some of the grants that LOR has funded in the Questa area include the Questa Lodging Project, turning legacy homes into rental properties, and improvements to the Questa Farmer's Market. LOR is helping to build Questa's reputation as an outdoor destination, particularly around fishing, with the production of Querencia, a video project with Toner Mitchell and Trout Unlimited. Home-based businesses workshops, Passion to Profits, is just taking off, and

the Shop Questa campaign ties in with the promotion of place with the redesign of the VisitQuesta.com website.

LOR helped the San Cristobal Neighborhood Association purchase a wood processor, as the U.S. Forest Service is allowing more community-based tree thinning projects for wood gathering, and there are opportunities for area residents to process that wood and sell it, with profits going back into the Community Center.

Localogy was recently funded for a 3-phase power supply to reopen an existing grain mill, which will support local food sources and build community. Over the holidays, along with QEDF, LOR supported the schools' Santa's Angels project with gift cards to hand out to kids.

Jake closed by saying, "A big part of the LOR push going forward is to engage more members of the community to identify more opportunities we can help with."

For more information, contact:
Jake Caldwell at the LOR Foundation,
jake@lorfoundation.org, (575) 224-1810;

Lisa O'Brien at the Taos Community
Foundation, director@TaosCF.org,
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VIDA DEL NORTE: 2020 RECAP AND HAPPY 2021!

By RACHEL KUĆ

The pandemic made this past year a tough time for everyone. Vida Del Norte still managed to bring the community together in efforts to promote a healthy, safe environment to prevent youth substance misuse, though. Social distancing made it difficult to host in-person events and meetings indoors, so Vida Del Norte responded by hosting events outdoors, such as movie nights, a picnic lunch to honor law enforcement, and an outdoor town hall meeting to discuss substance misuse in our community.

Vida Del Norte also participated in Red Ribbon Week again in 2020. It is the nation's oldest and largest alcohol, tobacco, drug, and violence prevention campaign awareness program, held annually the last week of October. During Red Ribbon Week, Vida Del Norte worked in collaboration with Harvest Questa Church and the Questa Independent School District to mail out red ribbons to students and distribute ribbons and Prevention Bags to the community at Rael's Market. The Active8 youth also



Zoom screen featuring retreatants at the Vida Del Norte Virtual Retreat 2021. Top left, Maria Gonzalez, Vida Coordinator; Rachel Kuc, the Coalition's Media Director. Bottom left, Janie Corinne, Vida Project Evaluator, and bottom right is Malinda LaVelle, Questa Health Center coordinator.

painted the windows of local businesses in red with prevention messages.

During the holiday season, Vida Del Norte hosted an online auction and fundraising campaign and raised over \$1,000 to help create a safe, drug-free environment for our youth and the community.

This school year, starting in August, Vida Del Norte was invited to participate in teaching a Life Skills class in the Questa schools. Vida Del Norte's director, Maria Gonzalez, has been trained to teach Botvin LifeSkills and has been volunteering her time to incorporate it into the curriculum in Questa.

The Botvin LifeSkills Training program is a groundbreaking substance abuse and violence prevention program based on more than 35 years of rigorous scientific research. Proven to be the most effective evidence-based program used in schools today, LifeSkills Training is comprehensive, dynamic, and developmentally designed to promote mental health and positive youth development. In addition to helping kids resist drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, the LifeSkills Training Middle School program also effectively supports the reduction of violence and other high-risk behaviors.

Vida Del Norte is excited to be col-

Questa vs Taos County - Grades 9-12 2019 YRRS Survey Current (past 30 day) Use		
	Questa High	All Taos County
Current Alcohol	59% *	42.3%
Current Cigarette	26.2% *	13.6%
Current Ecig	67.7% *	57.5%
Current Marijuana	48.9%	42.70%
Current Rx	29.8% *	11.1%

* Statistically Different from Taos County

laborating with Questa schools to bring the Botvin LifeSkills curriculum to our students. Vida Del Norte is currently seeking an intern to receive the Botvin LifeSkills Training and funding to eventually turn this into a full-time position, so that we can reach more students with this prevention program.

Vida Del Norte knows that continued support from the community will help us all get through this difficult time. They are dedicated to helping to prevent substance misuse in the youth and the community and they are excited that so many people came together in creative ways this past year to help with this effort. If you or someone you know is struggling, please visit the Vida Del Norte resource page at www.vidadelnorte.com/resource or call (575) 779-2260.

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples." – Mother Teresa

Debbie and Joann's Gift-Giving Tree

By DEBBIE GRIFFITH, JOANN ROMERO & JEFF BARELA

The main reason that we did the Gift-Giving Tree at Christmastime is because there were families who were losing jobs because of COVID-19. So we decided that we would take a step forward to show the community that we can come together in times of chaos and need. We raised enough money for gifts to be given to 121 children, ranging from infants up to 19 years old.

We started sign-ups in the middle of November and we were still taking in children a week before Christmas. (You may have seen our flyer on the post office bulletin board.) We received donations from Red River Brewing Company, Tia's Cafe, Knights of Columbus, Frank's Eats and Sweets, two baskets full from an anonymous Santa helper, and many others around the Questa community. This was made possible because everyone



Photo by Joann Romero

Josiah Archuleta received Christmas gifts from Taos County Sheriff Jerry Hogrefe and six officers. Gifts were given to 120 additional children as a Gift-Giving Tree set up by Debbie Griffith, Joann Romero, and Jeff Barela.

got together to help each other. Everyone came together and loved participating in the program. It was fun and exciting for all of us where we work, at BestCare Pharmacy. Some donors were very generous and gave over \$100. It feels good to do something awesome for the community.

In this picture is a child, Josiah Archuleta. He lost his mother, Jessica, this past year, and it has been difficult. Josiah was not the only one who lost a parent this year. He was added to our Christmas Gift-Giving Tree by his aunt, Lynda Archuleta. We found out that he wanted

to be a police officer or firefighter – then when we gave the gifts to him, we found out that he wanted to be a bounty hunter! This was a special occasion because when we asked Sheriff Jerry Hogrefe from the Taos County Sheriff's Department if he could give the gift to the child, he agreed. We set a date and time to meet with Josiah. To our surprise, Sheriff Hogrefe brought along six additional officers and they brought additional gifts – one was an autographed calendar for the year 2021. Josiah was delighted and excited. There were lots of tears and hugs, for sure. We know that this made this holiday season more memorable.

If you did not receive your gifts, please contact us at (575) 483-6922; we still have some gifts that were not picked up because we may have gotten incorrect phone numbers at sign-up.

Thank you to our community, Debbie Griffith, Joann Romero, and Jeff Barela

Whole30® Cleanses and Resets Eating Habits

By LYNN SKALL

This story starts a little over four years ago. It's the week between Christmas and New Year's and I'm having breakfast at the Taos Diner with my son, who lives in Denver. I was staring at my huge, smothered breakfast burrito and just blurted out, "Ugh, I feel so toxic after all that holiday food!" Like many of us, I am guilty of using the holidays as my justification to eat more; after all, it's a "special occasion."



Courtesy photo

Lynn Skall, feeling great after the January reset of her eating habits with Whole30.

What my son suggested next changed my life – to try an eating reorientation program called "Whole30;" I had never heard of it. What was it? I got online and learned: it is a rigid and restrictive 30-day eating plan, focusing on clean and healthy foods, and prescribed rules – it sounded like just what I needed for a good cleanse and a reset.

And it looked hard. What motivated me to give it a try was this line on their website, "Don't you dare tell us this is hard. Beating cancer is hard. Birthing a baby is hard. Drinking your coffee black. Is. Not. Hard." So starting that February 1, I committed to following the program for 30 days and drinking my coffee black.

In her book, *The Whole30® Day-by-Day: Your Daily Guide to Whole30 Success*, founder Melissa Hartwig explains what can be eaten on the program, "Eat foods with very few ingredients, all pronounceable, or better yet, no ingredients listed at all because they're whole and unprocessed." Eat lots of vegetables (including potatoes), some fruit, moderate portions of meat, seafood, eggs, and nuts, vinegars, plenty of natural fats (olive oil, avocados), ghee or clarified butter, herbs and spices.

It's what can't be eaten that is challenging. For 30 days you cannot eat any dairy (milk products, cheese), anything made with added sugar or sugar substitutes (no honey, no sodas), zero alcohol, no grains (including wheat products, bread and rice), and all legumes are off limits (no beans or anything made with soy). There are thousands of recipes online to support Whole30 (eating eggs for breakfast gets old quickly), so keeping the food interesting and varied is essential.

At the end of 30 days the restricted foods are then re-introduced one at a time to see how the body reacts to them. Between each re-introduction a return to the core plan for two days re-cleanses the

system before the next food is introduced. After my first Whole30 I added beans and grains with no problem, and occasionally dark chocolate. I identified dairy as the culprit for my congestion and switched to almond milk. Without any sugar for a month, my sweet tooth and cravings were completely eliminated.

I consider Whole30 more of a cleanse than a diet. It's about getting back to basics. Following this plan completely overhauled my pantry and realigned my relationship with food. The benefits of following this plan have been tremendous for me. At the end of that first Whole30, my joints were no longer aching, my hands were pain-free, my congestion had cleared up, and I slept better. My tastebuds were super tuned-in, and my energy level and outlook were consistently high. I felt clear-headed and fully cleansed, not to mention that I lost 14 pounds!

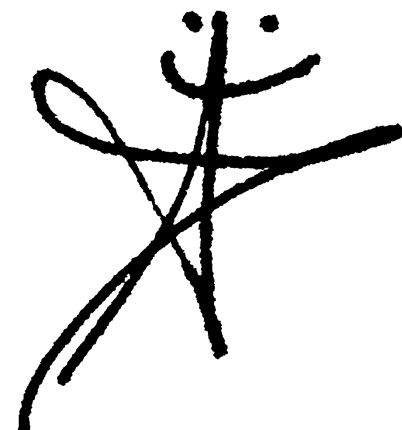
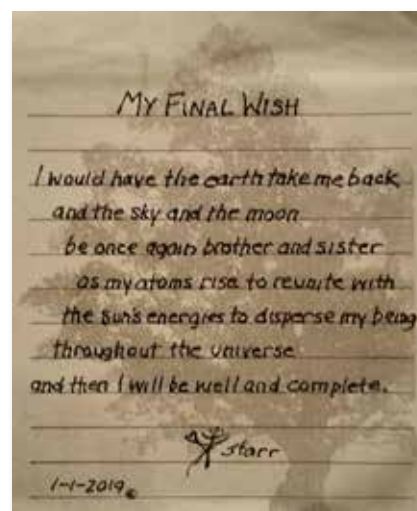
Since that first cleanse four years ago, I have done a "reset" each January. For the rest of the year, I have loosely followed the guidelines of Whole30. It resonates with me – more than any other "diet" or eating plan I've tried (I was even a Weight Watcher's leader). I have lost a total of 40 pounds, 30 inches, dramatically reduced my glucose and cholesterol numbers, and I have kept them all off.

It's what I've gained on Whole30 that inspires me to go on this journey every January. Starting each year with these good habits, reinstituting a positive way of thinking about food, and knowing it's helping me achieve greater good health literally have changed my life.

For more information about Whole30® visit www.whole30.com.

Note: This article is not intended to be construed as medical advice or program instruction. Always consult your health care professional before changing any matters regarding your health and wellbeing. Results vary by individual.

The Passing of a Starr



The Questa community is sad to hear about the passing of Starr, a well known and beloved Questa artist. She died at the home of her daughter in Maine on January 8, after a long illness. We hope to offer a commemoration of Starr and her work in our March issue, pending more information from her family and friends.

Photos by Min Jae Hong

Virgen de Guadalupe tapestry, sewn by Starr and featured in her 2013 OCHO Artspace exhibition.



WHAT WE'RE FAMOUS FOR

A Q C K B U J Q T R U C K S K
 C F Y O X M Y F P K L T Z M F
 E I C G E X C E L L E N C E U
 B G L X I C I S H V M T E D G
 A N B W D J I E B A K I L B E
 I B F R B W N T R K T R U W M
 M N Q Z V U M Z A I O E C K N
 O A O Z M F G C K N U S A S N
 J J L R U I U A E D M H S U K
 A S R A T U W R S N Y G B N C
 R S O E Q H E S T E Y O T D B
 T R D K Y U S Z H S A W W A C
 B A N E V C I T X S W C F N Z
 A Q E Z H C F A A C E O U C E
 E W Y T R C Q V S R R M J E C

EXCELLENCE	MALAQUIAS	KINDNESS	NORTHSTAR
SUNDANCE	RODNEY	TRUCKS	BRAKES
TIRES	CARS	LUCAS	ART

Locate the given words in this WORD SEARCH puzzle and enter our drawing. Bring it in or mail to us at P.O. Box 199, Questa NM 87556. We're giving away two oil changes. Limit one entry per family. No purchase necessary. Expires 2/28. Drawing on March 9.



575-586-0561 • 2460 State Road 522, Questa NM

Is your name right for you?



Have you ever considered giving yourself a different name? I did. It was on December 6, about a week or so after I had started painting again after more than 50 years of not picking up a paintbrush. I felt exhilarated – encouraged by my newfound delight in expressing myself on canvas.

I knew immediately that I wanted a new name, and that name was Maruška, my father's middle name. He was born on December 6 and died on December 6, and that day in 2020 was the 40th anniversary of his death. I thought of him frequently throughout the day and instead of putting Ellen Wood on my painting, I decided to put Maruška. I

also felt inspired to include a heart in each of my paintings.

How do you feel about your own name? If you love it, great. But if you feel it doesn't quite resonate with who you are now, change it. Some of my friends have and they feel more at ease, "more ME," as one had said. It doesn't have to be your legal name – just your "heart" name.

Some people are given spiritual names and their new name fits them like a glove. The Dharma name given to me by Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche in a private ceremony in 2002, did not. The name itself is a mouthful: Karma Konchok Wangmo, but I also felt unworthy of the meaning – Possessor of Supreme Rare Jewel.

My name at birth, during Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first term in office, was Eleanor Bilansky. I was named after the President's wife, a woman I greatly admire. (My dad always called me Eleanor.) Eleanor means Light; Bilansky

means White. White Light sounded pretty good to me when I found that out a few years ago. But by then, it was many decades after I had gone to live in New York City and changed my first name to Ellen. Then I married and became Ellen Wood. Except for the year I was a model in New York and the agency owner changed my name to Ilona Wood, I've been Ellen Wood ever since.

Three books later, I'm ready for my new name. Why? Because I'm a different person now. I'm a painter as well as a writer.

Maruška has a smile on top of the s to give it a "sh" sound and I really like the name. Not Maruška Wood – just Maruška. A single name. Like Sting, who used to be Gordon Matthew Thomas Sumner, or like Twiggy or Cher or Plato. Maruška means, "bitterness, beloved, wished-for child." Bitterness? Well, "White Light" sounds better but besides being beloved, why not a bit of bitterness? Imagine Key Lime Pie without the tartness of that

citrusy fruit. Imagine mild-mannered reporter, Clark Kent, without the zing of Superman. How bland and tedious those stories would be.

During COVID-19 isolation and with the lack of social contact, it's time for reflection. How do you feel about yourself? Perhaps a new name will help you shed your skin of old energy. Mull over a new name and say it to yourself over and over to feel its vibration in your heart.

Whether you take a new name or not, may you come to know the joy of expressing yourself in a different way. Let's co-create a new world together.

Love, Maruška

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

¿Es tu nombre el adecuado para ti?

¿Alguna vez has considerado darte un nombre diferente? Yo sí. Fue el 6 de diciembre, aproximadamente una semana después de que comenzara a pintar de nuevo luego de más de 50 años sin tocar un pincel. Me sentí tan regocijada—animada por el deleite de expresarme en un lienzo.

Supe de inmediato que quería un nuevo nombre, y que ese nombre era Maruška, el segundo nombre de mi padre. Él nació el 6 de diciembre y murió el 6 de diciembre, y ese día del 2020 fue el 40 aniversario de su muerte. Pensé en él con frecuencia a lo largo del día y en lugar de poner Ellen Wood en mi pintura, decidí poner Maruška. También me sentí inspirada a incluir un corazón en cada una de mis pinturas.

¿Cómo te sientes acerca de tu propio nombre? Si te encanta, genial. Pero si sientes que no resuena con quién eres ahora, cámbialo. Algunos de mis amigos lo han hecho y se sienten más a gusto, "más YO", como había dicho una. No tiene que ser tu nombre legal—solo tu nombre de "corazón."

Hay personas a quienes se les dan nombres espirituales y el nuevo nombre le queda a la perfección. El nombre de Dharma que me dio Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche en una ceremonia privada en 2002 no lo

hizo. El nombre en sí es un bocado: Karma Konchok Wangmo, pero también me sentí indigna del significado—Poseedora de la Joya Rara Suprema.

Mi nombre al nacer, durante el primer mandato de Franklin Delano Roosevelt, era Eleanor Bilansky. Me pusieron el nombre de la esposa del presidente, una mujer a la que admiro mucho. (Mi padre siempre me llamaba Eleanor.) Eleanor significa Luz; Bilansky significa blanco. Luz Blanca me sonó bastante bien cuando descubrí su significado hace unos años. Pero para entonces, habían pasado muchas décadas después de que me fuera a vivir a la ciudad de Nueva York y cambiara mi nombre de pila por Ellen. Luego me casé y me convertí en Ellen Wood. Excepto por el año que fui modelo en Nueva York y el dueño de la agencia cambió mi nombre a Ilona Wood, he sido Ellen Wood desde entonces.

Tres libros después, estoy lista para mi nuevo nombre. ¿Por qué? Porque ahora soy una persona diferente. Soy pintora además de escritora.

Maruška tiene una sonrisa en la parte superior de la s para darle un sonido de "sh" y realmente me gusta el nombre. No Maruška Wood—solamente Maruška. Un solo nombre. Como Sting, que era Gordon Matthew Thomas Sumner, o

como Twiggy o Cher o Platón. Maruška significa "amargura, amada, hija deseada." ¿Amargura? Bueno, "Luz Blanca" suena mejor pero además de ser amada, ¿por qué no un poco de amargura? Imagínate el pastel de limón sin la acidez de esa fruta cítrica. Imagínate al reportero de modales suaves, Clark Kent, sin el entusiasmo de Superman. Qué insípidas y tediosas serían esas historias.

Durante el aislamiento del COVID-19 y con la falta de contacto social, es hora de reflexionar. ¿Cómo te sientes contigo mismo? Quizás un nuevo nombre te ayude a deshacerte de la vieja energía. Reflex-

iona sobre un nuevo nombre y repítelo una y otra vez para sentir su vibración en tu corazón.

Ya sea que adoptes un nuevo nombre o no, ojalá que llegues a conocer el gozo de expresarte de una manera diferente. Co-creemos un mundo nuevo juntos.

Con amor, Maruška

Ellen Wood de Questa es la galardonada autora de la serie de libros "The Secret Method for Growing Younger" que se encuentra disponible en northernnewmexicoartists.com. Su sitio en la red es www.howtogrowyounger.com. Para contactar a escribe a ellen@howtogrowyounger.com. Traducido por Teresa Dovalpage



A painting by Maruška of Jennifer Paris' cat, Rishi.

El gato de Jennifer Paris, Rishi, pintado por Maruška.

Photo by Ellen Wood

Surviving Loneliness: Living in the Grey as the Pandemic Wears On



I'm Hilary Jacobs Hendel, LCSW. My goal is to educate people on the benefits of understanding what emotions really are and how they affect our mind, brain, and body.

We live in a culture that values thoughts and logic over emotions. But science has proven it is not healthy to tune out our emotions -- and we do not have to choose between emotions and logic. We can become aware of both and understand how emotions work to help us feel better or feel worse depending on whether we bury or validate them.

Emotions are unique in their potential to cause traumatic stress and everyday distress. But what most people do not know, because we were never taught this in school, is that emotions are the doorway to healing our anxieties, depression, low self-esteem, and other mental health symptoms. Working with our emotions in very specific ways helps us manage daily life with more ease and helps us meet the challenges of our relationships. (See her tool, The Change Triangle, for more specific info)

By HILARY JACOBS HENDEL

A few practical ideas for positive change:

(Note: Safety first! During the pandemic, online activities are safest, unless you wear a mask, keep CDC recommended distance, or do these activities only with those in your bubble.)

1. Channel activities and interests into group activities with others. For example,
 - a. if you like to write, start, or join a peer-to-peer writing group.
 - b. If you like to move your body, join a yoga class or walking group.
 - c. If you like cooking, bake alone or with a COVID-safe friend and then share your delicacies with someone else to undo their loneliness.
 - d. If you love to read, start or join a book group.
 - e. For podcast lovers, check out the Podcast Brunch Club.
 - f. I suggest using my book *It's Not Always Depression* as a curriculum for a peer support group. Additionally, if you are looking for a romantic partner, I believe in online dating to meet people. Grab a trusted friend to help create an online profile.
2. Allow yourself to be conflicted as you try. Allow yourself to hate it. Which reminds me of exercise. I hate exercise but I do it anyway because it's good for me. Embrace your conflicts and fears around being with people. We all have ambivalent

feelings. We all want connection, and simultaneously find people irritating. It's all ok, and only by being out there will you feel better.

3. Volunteer at an organization that excites you or engage with organizations that cultivate connection. Seek Healing is an organization dedicated to authentic connection and undoing loneliness, is a special online resource to feel deeply heard and to practice your own listening skills. Try out one of their "connection meetings" and take the free "listening training." You can sign up at Seekhealing.org.
4. Connect to your vast inner world. Find a therapist or coach to help you connect with the lonely part inside. Get to know that part of you intimately and listen to its story. How long have you been aware of the lonely feeling inside? Is it a recent feeling? Or have you always felt alone? Was there one event that led to this feeling or many over your lifetime? Was loneliness a response to being left alone in the midst of overwhelming emotions caused by traumatic events like being bullied, or not fitting in, or losing a parent, to name just a few examples of childhood traumas? Get curious about the meaning you assign loneliness — is it something you are ashamed of, or do you extend compassion to yourself? Are you harsh and critical to yourself for feeling lonely? How do you understand your loneliness? As a

child, did you look up at your mother or father and see loneliness in their faces? There can be intergenerational loneliness passed on from grandparents to parents to children. What does loneliness feel like in your body? Is it like a tightness in your throat, chest, or stomach? Is it like having a hole in your heart? Or is it a more metaphorical experience? Try to get an image of that lonely part of yourself. Give him/her/them a name. Befriend it. Ask it what it needs? Let it tell you. If it feels right, imagine providing your loneliness exactly what it needs (a hug, someone to talk to, to play with, etc.) in a comforting way. It may not take away all your loneliness, but it might make you feel a little bit better.

Loneliness, like all feelings, is not static nor stuck, even though it may feel that way. Resist any self-defeating thoughts emanating from your loneliness that might dictate your next move. Like a good parent would do, validate your loneliness, give yourself compassion, and force yourself to do one small thing today that connects you to the world. Your future self will appreciate it. And give yourself an A+ for trying!

*This is an excerpt from Hilary's blog. See the entire post at <https://www.hilaryjacobshendel.com/post/surviving-loneliness>, author of *It's Not Always Depression*. Her *Change Triangle*, <https://www.hilaryjacobshendel.com/what-is-the-change-triangle-c18dd> can help you learn what our emotions are and how to work with them to feel better. Visit her website at www.hilaryjacobshendel.com*

BODY | MIND | SPIRIT

By BARBARA TRACY

A DIVIDED UNION

In view of recent events on planet Earth, it seems there is a deep division taking place between neighbor, friend, and even in families. We humans have a natural tendency to want to be right. If we are wrong, we won't be admired, we won't be loved, we won't be wanted – or so we think. Bottom line: being wrong will not kill us.

Perhaps that is where the defense mechanism in right/wrong games comes from. Perhaps this is a survival pattern left over from primitive times that still lives in our genes. When we consider the primitive dilemma, there is a need to be right or perhaps we could die. There was a time when we were faced with fangs, claws, and wild things that could harm and possibly kill us. So, it was a matter of them or us, and we had better be right about our decision on how to handle the situation.

Of course, in this day and age we have a more civilized way of living, but the pattern of getting it right still haunts us. It has taken a different form than experienced by primitive man, but nevertheless it is still a fear that there will be death – death of the ego? Perhaps the death of our importance? Certainly a death of something dear to us. I am sure there are varied deaths each of us could experience in such a situation. We love being right and showing up as a star. However, the need to be right can be a prison. True freedom from such demands as wanting to be right can be brought about by sincerely allowing others their own views. We can do this by appreciating their position and respecting that they too are no different than we are.

We are all simply “feeling” our way about on this planet and doing the best we can to understand our place in it. Who knows, maybe we could broaden our horizons and learn something! This does not mean that discussions cannot be advantageous, but discussions that are open and tolerant will bring about the best results where perhaps all can see

a vantage point.

I have seen mental and physical pain levels drop in people who have reached beyond these fear-based, polarized thought processes. Once we are free from negative thought patterns, our lives begin to open and become much easier with more understanding for others and ourselves. Remember, this is our life, so it is up to us to be the master of our

care enough about ourselves and others to take the time and make the effort to assume responsibility for everything that we choose to entertain in our thoughts and focus. We have the ability to nurture the seeds of such change that has the potential to lead to a world of enduring peace and contentment.

It has long been evident that how we

We must learn to live together as brothers or we will perish together as fools.

– Martin Luther King

mind and not the servant to it.

There is true joy knowing that there is the possibility that someday on this beautiful planet, humankind may walk side by side in a state of love and compassion; that upon meeting one another, there will be the recognition of the oneness that manifests itself in a worldwide sisterhood and brotherhood. No separation, no boundaries, no differentiation. One planet, one people, one love.

Love and compassion begin when we

think and respond is something that we can become the master of, and implement in our lives, fostering a new way of living on this earth. Palestinian or Jewish, Republican or Democrat, Buddhist or Catholic matters not when the veil is lifted to find there is only One.

May your days be filled with blessings and goodwill. May your heart sing with the freedom of the unencumbered mind.

Positive Thoughts

by Donna Mitchell-Moniak

Groundhog Day is a movie that can be viewed repeatedly, due to the deep layers of meaning that underlie the movie's comedic message. Rebirth after rebirth, Bill Murray's character slowly develops warm-heartedness, wisdom, and authenticity. In order to bring forward these innate qualities, lifetime after lifetime he is thrust into the same situations with the same group of people, reliving the exact same day again and again. The characters in the movie slowly mature through these circumstances, including Bill Murray and Andie MacDowell, the female lead character. They go from one day to the next (even though it is the same day, relived) like the current of a river flowing to the sea. Like everything related to the river, they experience benevolent results: purification, nourishment, and growth.

The year 2020 is one full month behind us, though not gone from anyone's life. America can explore a new degree of freshness: an administration whose stated wide-minded purpose includes healing a battered nation and its people. Rejuvenating American social systems is on the agenda, while fostering forward

momentum together with the rest of the world on global issues such as climate change.

Like Bill Murray's character, none of us are as we were before 2020. And, for all its hardship (and there was plenty), for all its loss (so much for families, businesses, for our children, our friends), for all its changes and uncertainties, 2020 matured us in ways that could not have been planned or foreseen. As in *Groundhog Day*, the wheel of life rolled along. While often seeming to crush everything in its path, something more profound was happening: a rounding out and an opening of everything and everyone.

A great light is behind all events and circumstances, warming the seeds of change planted in the soil of human experience so that they will sprout, grow, and bear fruitful results. Good things take time and require much from all of us.

February is Heart Month when Valentine's Day is celebrated. What and who do you love? This month, please focus on the ways of the heart: love one another as if today were the last day and the very first day together. Support the health of your physical heart by eating well, getting outside, and moving. Support the emotional heart by listening to the birds, to one another, to the wind and the flow of the creek.



Two-legged beings, be well. Four-legged beings, be well. When you set out, be well; and when you return, be well. Be well in the daytime; be well in the night; be well at midday, too. May all of you be always well. Words of the Buddha. Excerpt from *The Mahāsūtra* "On Entering the City of Vaiśālī."

This month is Black History Month. One of the best ways to learn about history is through music. Ken Burns' documentary series, *Jazz*, is not only a walk through 100 years of American history, culture, and music, but also illustrates the deep roots of racial inequality while displaying the mythic journey toward wholeness of America. It can be streamed through PBS and other venues.

February is Children's Dental Health

month. Raw celery, carrots, apples; need we say more?

And, mid-winter calls upon us to feed the birds. Human beings have taken away bird habitat over the last few decades. There are now 40% fewer birds in America than when I was growing up, due to human activity. Let's invite them back and help them out. Birds have a way of improving the quality of our lives if we listen.

QUESTA ARTISTS
AUDREY & PAUL KUNKEL
By AUDREY KUNKEL
and STAFF WRITERS

I've always been the "artsy fartsy" type and in the mid 1980s I was bitten by the beading bug. I had seen beautiful, beaded earrings made by a neighbor and that was it for me. Over the years I've learned many different stitches and techniques and loved every minute of it!

I've always had a difficult time getting my work out there to be sold. Putting it in shops has never been successful. Maybe I just never had it in the right places. When I am there with my work it sells much better. I DO think it tends to sell itself, but

for some reason I have to be there with it. In early 2016, I found out I was going to be a Gramma, so I decided to teach myself to crochet, as I had always wanted to learn and this was the perfect time – you know, baby booties, hats, blankets. So that started another chapter in my creative life. I have gone on to make much more than baby stuff – these little animals I'm in love with making are called Amigurumi (Japanese word mean-

ing "crocheted or knitted", and kurumi, literally "wrapping").

At the beginning of 2020 I resolved to start painting. I wanted to start small and also wanted to find a canvas that was inexpensive. I chose rocks! They are so abundant around where I live and come in all sorts of sizes – I'm loving it! I still love my beading and crochet too, as well as my very newest endeavor: painting –ing cow horns.

My husband Paul is also artistic. He's doing limited edition crosses (not sure how many more he'll make) but his real artistic ability lies in custom cabinetry and doors that last. Reach Audrey or see more of her work here: [Audrey Kunkel Beaded Designs](https://www.facebook.com/audreykunkelbeadeddesigns) on Facebook, audreykunkelbeadeddesigns@gmail.com, <https://northernnewmexicoartists.com/audrey-kunkel>.

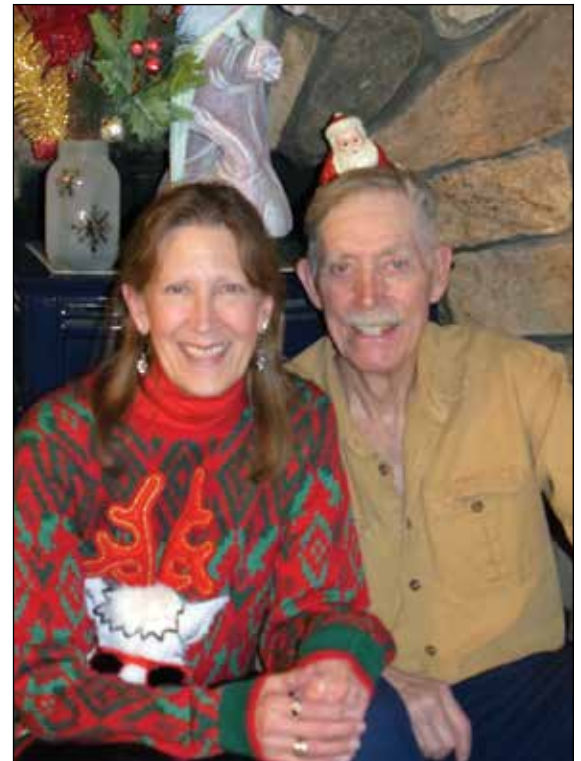
People love to wear my jewelry and display my window hangings and rock paintings and crocheted creatures. Sometimes I think people just need these things in their lives!



Amigurumi by Audrey



Audrey Kunkel rock painting



Audrey and Paul Kunkel



Audrey Kunkel beaded purse



Another Amigurumi by Audrey Kunkel



Audrey Kunkel horn painting



Paul Kunkel carved cross



TONER MITCHELL

By DONNA MITCHELL-MONIAK

The renewal of Questa, after its life as a mining town, is still in progress. Innovative and collaborative individuals have reviewed the scope of what Questa and the local region have to offer while promoting land and water resources, historical integrity, the well-being of the people, and the authenticity of the greater village of Questa. Efforts such as the restoration of the historical San Antonio Church and preservation of natural habitats are two initiatives that have put Questa on the map for tourists and outdoors enthusiasts. Fishing in the native creeks, hiking the back country, and camping have brought people from far and wide. Plus, local families are enjoying fishing, recreation, and wildlife more than ever.

Toner Mitchell grew up in Santa Fe and has loved this area since childhood. His grandparents summered in the Moreno Valley in the 1940s and later relocated to Talpa, south of Taos. Granddad fished the creeks, as did his dad. Toner learned the joys of nature and of the catch from the rivers. This month's volunteer offers his generosity to the Questa del Rio News by writing regular features about fishing in this area. He has given his life in service to fish and fishing, protection of natural habitat, guiding anglers, and his involvement in



Photo by Melissa Mitchell

Toner Mitchell, his wife Cullen, and son Gus at Wild Rivers

Questa's renewal – of specific interest to him is waterway restoration, indigenous trout protection, and tourism related to the area's natural beauty.

Toner is Trout Unlimited's current water and habitat coordinator in New Mexico, although he has a history with this non-profit organization that champions water management, watershed restoration, as well as all things fishing. He served as a volunteer until 2012, when he was hired by the organization to serve in his current position.

The Rio Grande cutthroat trout, an imperiled native species, has received the attention of TU, the NM Department of Game and Fish, as well as grants to support field work to save the fast-dwindling genetically pure populations of the species left in the higher creek areas. "Cutthroat need cold, clean water. Climate change, decrease of snow and thus snow melt, plus the invasion of the

more aggressive brown and brook trout brought in by humans for fishing, all contrive against this native species... I release cutthroats unless I injure them," he says. "If I'm going to harvest fish for dinner, I take the non-natives only." Toner states that "healthy rural communities make for the best fishing." This is largely due to local stewardship of local resources; and "Questa has proved to be a great steward."

Toner's work in Questa is a mixture of volunteering along with some remuneration. In 2011, as the president of Santa Fe's Truchas chapter of Trout Unlimited, he was approached by the president of the Enchanted Circle chapter – could he team up with them to restore a section of the Red River in Questa? Yes! By the end of 2014, Questa had restored two miles of the Red River, thanks to investments from the Questa Economic Development Fund (\$80,000)

and the two Trout Unlimited chapters (\$5,000 each), which were leveraged by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish into a \$900,000 project.

The Rio Grande del Norte National Monument and the Columbine Hondo Wilderness Area, both at Questa's back door, had just been designated. Seemingly overnight, Questa was endowed with the potential to become a vibrant recreational hub, but also the existential imperative to realize (and protect) it.

About volunteering in general, Toner's joy leads also to concern. "Everyone's worked so hard in Questa. It's been a special mix of leadership and energy." He hopes that there is a next generation of leaders coming up, not only as volunteers, but for the ongoing renewal and protection of Questa and the historic and traditional Questeño community at large. Regenerating leaders and innovators among young people who have been mentored through the trials and tribulations of the last decade (even the last year with all its stresses) will be imperative. Bottom line: get involved in the community you love! Toner ended with, "It is healthy to strive for something larger than one's self."

Querencia is a beautiful, short video on Questa and the cutthroat trout project, featuring locals that everyone will recognize. It was produced by Trout Unlimited. <https://www.tu.org/blog/querencia-a-love-of-place/>

Footnote references: 1. *Canjilon*, August 10, 2020; <https://www.tu.org/blog/canjilon/?fbclid=IwAR0xnQIoNfjV-URhh-OQfyIPx6ac9WZvCNq2VDMOp7Pp7i1U4Wsn1gUNLQk>; 2. *Querencia*, March 6, 2020; <https://www.tu.org/blog/querencia-a-love-of-place/>

National Forests Release Final Environmental Assessment

By MARYANNA CLEMONS

The Carson, Cibola, and Santa Fe National Forests and Kiowa National Grasslands released a final environmental assessment (EA) and draft decision notice on December 21, 2020. The proposal to restore riparian, wetland and aquatic ecosystems in northern New Mexico will improve habitat, watershed health, and water quality. A 45-day objection period on the final EA opened on December 21.

Although only 2.5% of the 4.8 million acres of National Forest System (NFS) lands in northern New Mexico are wetlands or riparian areas, they provide essential ecological functions far beyond

their small footprint on the landscape. Riparian zones provide the highest plant, bird, insect, reptile-amphibian, and mammal biodiversity in the forests. At the same time, they have been impacted by significant stressors, including climate change, high-severity wildfire, agriculture and grazing, urbanization, recreational use, and invasive species.

Almost 60% of the sub-watersheds across the three forests have been identified as "impaired or functioning at risk." The three forests collaborated on the environmental analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to increase the pace and scale of riparian, wetland and aquatic ecosystem restoration, restore watershed health and

water quality, and recover riparian and aquatic species.

The riparian restoration proposal provides a more efficient process to accelerate project implementation using well established tools and project-specific design criteria for five main types of projects:

- Projects to improve passage for aquatic species
- Instream, side-channel, and floodplain projects
- Riparian vegetation treatments
- Road and trail erosion control, relocation, and decommissioning
- Restoration of seeps and springs

The final EA reflects public comments received during the scoping

period in 2019 and the formal comment period for the draft EA earlier this year. The final EA is subject to the pre-decisional objection process. To be eligible to object, individuals or organizations must have submitted substantive comments on the riparian restoration proposal during the previous scoping and comment periods. Objections must be submitted within 45 calendar days or February 4, 2021.

Additional information on the northern New Mexico riparian, aquatic, and wetland restoration project, including the final EA and guidance on submitting an objection, is posted on the project webpage. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=56975>

Fishing Below Abiquiu Dam

By TONER MITCHELL

As far as winter fishing opportunities go, Questa could hardly be more blessed. Between the Rio Grande gorge, the Cimarron, the Red River from the confluence through the hatchery, to the wonderful ice fishing at Eagle Nest, Eagle Rock, and Cabresto Lakes, the devoted Questa angler need look no further than her own back yard.

Doing so, however, would be a mistake, given how good fishing can be on the Rio Chama below Abiquiu Reservoir. Beginning around the end of irrigation season, when dam releases are significantly reduced, fishing for rainbow and sometimes extra-large brown trout really heats up. This action lasts a good six months, ending around the time most other fishing options begin waking up in the spring.

You might think the downside is the long drive from Questa to this destination, but it's way shorter than you might think. From Questa to the gorge bridge, to the West Rim Road, to Carson and Highway 285, and then on to Highway 84 and Abiquiu – the drive consumes a mere hour and a half. And in the heart of winter, there's no need to hurry anyway, since the best fishing is generally



Photo by Andrew Black

Page Buono and Garrett Hanks from Arroyo Hondo with a wise old elder brown trout caught and released below Abiquiu Dam.

during the warmer hours of the day.

The most popular fishing spots are located in the first mile directly below the dam, where the Game and Fish Department keeps the river well stocked with rainbows. This time last year, this stretch was the focus of a significant (\$1.3 million) river restoration effort led by Game and Fish. As with recent restoration projects on the Red River through Questa, this Chama project entailed shaping the stream channel to concentrate flow and scour sediment. There's more fishable water now, and more water holding fish.

From the end of the restored section down to the village of Abiquiu, accessed



Photo by Andrew Black

Toner Mitchell with a grandpa brown trout, caught and released below Abiquiu Dam. It's not what's for dinner, though. Toner says these old guys are not good to eat and too precious to kill. This one was at least five years old, possibly eight.

by a rough dirt road on the south side of the river, there are fewer fish and fewer obvious fishing spots such as riffles and runs. Ivan Valdez, owner of The Reel Life fly shop in Santa Fe, believes that the key in the lower river is to patiently fish the slow pools. And by patiently, I

mean change rigs and flies and depths and methods way past the point of boredom. Your reward could be the brown trout of your dreams.

That's right. Though notorious for its poor trout habitat – red, insect-suppressing caliche mud is its defining characteristic – the Abiquiu stretch is also famous for producing trophy brown trout. A friend showed me a picture of a 30-inch brown caught on a white Rapala lure. I heard another tale of a brown that had not one, but two baby beavers in its stomach, which says to me the fish had hunted them.

As far as what works best, the choice is yours. I've known anglers to succeed on pretty much anything: bait, spinners, Rapalas, and flies big and small, although it's rare to catch a fish on a dry fly. Having a small fly in your rig a pheasant tail, zebra midge, or Ivan Valdez's own Yoda nymph – is a smart move. It also doesn't hurt to run a wooly bugger (or Pistol Pete), egg pattern, bunny leech, or some other kind of meat fly.

Whatever you do, don't give up. After Christmas, Abiquiu can fish extremely slow, especially during cold weather. But this is one place where perseverance pays off, sometimes in a big way.

Carson National Forest Prescribed Pile Burns Planned



By LEEANN MURPHY,
CARSON NATIONAL FOREST

Between February 11 and March 31, fire managers on the Carson National Forest are planning to take advantage of favorable conditions, including fuel moisture levels, air quality, winds, and weather forecasts to implement several prescribed pile burns. Smoke may be visible from the surrounding areas during and after ignitions begin.

A planned treatment area close to the Questa area is Kiowa San Cristobal WUI- 80-acres of piles remain in the project which is located near San Cris-

tobal and Gallina Canyon.

Recently completed projects ignited in fall of 2020 include the 161-acre pile burn in Kiowa San Cristobal WUI near San Cristobal, NM.

Prescribed fires are managed with firefighter and public safety as the highest priority and are one of the most effective tools available to resource managers for restoring fire-adapted ecosystems, to return them to their historic conditions, and thereby mitigate unplanned fire risk to adjacent values at risk. These fires reduce forest fuels, while recycling nutrients and increasing habitat diversity. Piles vary in size and are constructed using the slash created from mechanical treatments. Pile burn operations require moisture in the surrounding vegetation and as such typically produce lighter smoke than a prescribed broadcast burn.

A high priority of these prescribed burns will be to minimize smoke impacts to the surrounding communities by utilizing any available Emissions



Courtesy Photo

Prescribed pile burns on the Carson National Forest.

Reduction Techniques (ERTs). Fire managers will consult with the National Weather Service, New Mexico Environment Dept. of Air Quality, and local health departments to assess potential smoke impacts to the adjacent commu-

nities in order to minimize degradation of air quality that could exacerbate COVID-19 symptoms.

Prescribed fires have short-term impact to air quality, but are always planned in coordination with the New Mexico Environment Department Air Quality Bureau to ensure regulation standards are met. This planning helps to avoid smoke levels that would be considered harmful to smoke-sensitive populations.

Smoke-sensitive individuals and people with respiratory problems or heart disease are encouraged to take precautionary measures. Information on air quality and protecting your health can be found online at the New Mexico Department of Health's website at <https://nmtracking.org/fire>.

For more information contact
Leeann at leeann.murphy@usda.gov

(575) 758-6200,

www.fs.usda.gov/carson,

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CarsonNF/

Twitter: [@CarsonNF](https://twitter.com/CarsonNF)



**CHANGE YOUR FOCUS,
CHANGE YOUR WORLD.**

By MANDY STAPLEFORD

**BUS STOP BEES:
A DUTCH CITY GETS
ECO-CREATIVE TO HELP
INSECTS AND FOOD
PRODUCTION**

Honeybees are one of the most important pollinators on the planet. Unfortunately, honeybee populations are declining, due to human interference on many levels. But there's a news buzz of hope on the horizon in Europe... In Utrecht in the Netherlands, they've taken the declining bee population problem into their own hands – or should I say, over their bus stops!

The city of Utrecht has planted the roofs of their bus stops with sedum, as a way to help the honeybee and bumblebee populations. Sedum are bee-friendly succulent plants which are easy to grow and improve air quality. Last year the Dutch government introduced this Pollinator Strategy in an attempt to revive the bee, butterfly, and other insect populations which are necessary for more than 75% of the country's edible crops.

Not only do the buzzing bus stops aid in recovering the bee population, but they also help improve the city environment by capturing fine dust, reducing noise, and absorbing carbon. The new roofs also store rainwater and provide cooling in the summer. The buzzing bus stops are maintained by city workers who go from one stop to the next via electric vehicles. These environmentally friendly hubs have also been equipped with energy-efficient LED lights and sustainable

bamboo benches.

As of late 2019, Utrecht had 10 electric buses in service, with a plan to have all their buses emission-free by the year 2028. The city is also encouraging its residents to alter their home roofs to be buzz-worthy and bio-diverse by offering eco-funding to do so. Utrecht's long-term plan is to create a more sustainable city, and a model that others can easily replicate, improving the lives of the pollinators, the people, and the planet – one buzzing green roof at a time!

Good News Good Planet is produced in Taos, NM by Mandy Stapleford. It was created to inspire and remind us all of the endless good deeds happening globally every day. Its regular format is a recorded two-minute audio of non-religious and non-political good news stories. Hear it on local True Taos radio KNCE 93.5, weekdays at 8:20 am, 12:20 pm and 5:20 pm. Also available on Alexa. Visit www.goodnewsgoodplanet.com for more info and to sign up for the free weekly audio story with the option also of reading the transcript.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world — indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead

What you choose to focus on determines the quality of your day, your year and your life.

Let's come together and focus on making the world a better place!

Mandy Stapleford

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Global Birdwatching Event Takes Place This Month



Photo from Wikipedia

Yellow-billed Cuckoo



Photo from National Park Service

Spotted Owl

By BRYCE FLANAGAN,
AVIAN ENTHUSIAST

The National Great Backyard Birdcount takes place from February 12-15 this year, and anyone can participate. Sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, National Audubon Society, and Birds Canada, the event is designed to track bird populations across the globe to help scientists know more about population levels and movement patterns.

New Mexicans can participate in one of three ways:

- downloading the free Merlin bird app
- downloading the free eBird app, or
- uploading bird lists to www.ebird.org.

Merlin and eBird share their information, so no need to use more than one.

To count birds, just find a place where birds like to flock and observe



Photo from Audubon Society

Southwest Willow Flycatcher



Photo from Wikipedia

Piping plover

them for at least 15 minutes. Then enter your observations online or on one of the apps (e.g. 3 magpies, 2 crows, 6 chickadees). Exact numbers aren't necessary; your best estimate will still help scientists. The Merlin app can also help with identifying birds if you're not sure of the species.

Keep a close eye out for the Yellow-Billed Cuckoo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Piping Plover, and the Mexican Spotted Owl. These birds are local to our region and listed on the endangered species list.

Last year more than 250,000 people from across 190 countries took part in the Backyard Birdcount, with a total of 27 million different birds counted. Bird counting is a fun outdoors activity to do with family and friends, and especially fun for children. You will be providing invaluable information to scientists the world over.

Bryce lives in Questa and began birding last year. He's passionate about the preservation of the environment and local ecosystems.

Drought Conditions Inspire Legislation for Fallow Land

By GILLIAN JOYCE,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
ALIANZA AGRI-CULTURA DE TAOS

Farm producers and ranchers who are active can now keep their agricultural land valuation if land is fallowed during times of drought. This is an exciting new development that will help

farmers during difficult conditions.

In 2015 Alianza Agri-Cultura (then called the Agricultural Resolution Team) led an effort spearheaded by Toby Martinez to pass legislation which provides relief in times of drought. If any part of a New Mexico county experiences eight consecutive weeks of moderate drought (as defined by the USDA) a landowner

can rest the land without jeopardizing their agricultural land classification.

Upshot: If you are an active producer who had to fallow land during 2020 due to drought, you are not in danger of losing your agricultural valuation! It is always important to maintain documentation (photos, receipts, etc.) of agricultural production on your property, so

that if there were concerns or if a field was only temporarily fallowed due to drought, the Assessor's Office could be helped to understand your case. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Taos County Assessor's Office at (575) 737-6360.

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The National Young Farmers Coalition

By CORILIA ORTEGA,
NATIONAL YOUNG FARMERS
COALITION, EL VALLE DEL NORTE
CHAPTER PRESIDENT

El Valle del Norte chapter hosted several elected officials in order to introduce themselves as the next generation of agriculturalists in northern New Mexico. Key discussions addressed investing in skills and training for the agricultural workforce, land access, and small-scale growing incentives, as well as prohibitive costs related to hoop house permits and farmer/rancher healthcare. Our hope is to maintain visibility with elected officials as they make choices and cast votes that impact all farmers in the region, especially our young and new farmers.

We gave a wonderful tour that included Taos Red Willow Farms, Taos Pueblo, and Jardineras Unidas in Arroyo Hondo. The conversation concluded with the chapter being challenged to create a platform and a set of "asks" for legislators and local officials!

By ZOEY FINK, NATIONAL
YOUNG FARMERS COALITION
NEW MEXICO ORGANIZER

The National Young Farmers Coalition finalized their New Mexico State Policy Priorities for the 2021 legislative session. A few highlights from the platform include advocating for funding for the New Mexico Agricultural Workforce Development, the New Mexico Healthy Soils Program, the Healthy Food Financing Initiative (led

by La Semilla Food Center), and funding for New Mexico-grown produce in schools and senior centers.

Young Farmers recently released a new report, Land Policy: Towards a More Equitable Farming Future, highlighting the land access challenges young farmers and ranchers face; the deep connection between land, policy, and power; and key

actions that policymakers can take now to address this issue. The report is being released alongside the new website, www.youngfarmers.org/land, which includes farmer stories, land access resources, and a tool to explore land access policies from Young Farmers and partner organizations. This site will serve as a platform for ongoing resource sharing around the land access challenge. This report launches the Young Farmers Land Campaign, designed to drive meaningful policy change forward at all levels of government alongside partners, with an eye towards the next farm bill. Interested in learning more? Become a member of the Young Farmers Coalition today! <https://www.youngfarmers.org/>

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Farm to Food Bank: A Local Response to COVID-19

By PATRICK JARAMILLO AND
SAYRAH NAMASTE, AFSC-NM
PROGRAM CO-DIRECTORS

In response to COVID-19 and its impacts on our communities, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) launched the Farm-to-Food-Bank project in partnership with farmers and food banks. The AFSC is a Quaker organization founded in 1917 that works toward lasting peace with justice. We began working in New Mexico in 1976, accompanying land-based people in their effort to protect and preserve culture, land, and water.

New Mexico's farmers have fresh produce but less customers, and food banks are facing a decrease in donations along with a large increase in demand. AFSC is filling this gap by purchasing fresh vegetables from local farms for the food-to-relief agencies. In nine months, the AFSC purchased 14,000 lbs. of local food from more than 30 farmers and donated it to nine food banks and pantries. Thanks to our partners at the Taos County Economic Development Corporation (TCEDC) and the Red Willow Center, we were able to purchase food from nine Taos farms and deliver it to six different organizations feeding people in need in the Taos area, including St. James Food Pantry, First Presbyterian's The Shared Table, and Questa's North Central Food Pantry.

Since 2007, AFSC-NM has im-



Photo by Core Visual

Sayrah Namaste, AFSC co-director, receives vegetables from Albuquerque farmer Amzie Yoder for the Roadrunner Food Bank.

plemented three farmer-to-farmer training programs in four counties and turned them over to the community for sustained action going forward. They have incubated three farmer-owned cooperatives and provided support to several others. We have a farm-to-school program, working with school districts, including Taos, to source local produce for their students. Additionally, we provide technical support and infrastruc-

ture development. We have built over 30 passive solar cold frames, five walk-in coolers, and dozens of drip systems in eight counties.

One Albuquerque farmer told us, "If I didn't have AFSC's Farm-to-Food-Bank to sell my produce to, I may not have farmed this season. I lost most of my restaurants and farmers markets because of the pandemic. I was able to continue to employ two workers this

season at living wages thanks to AFSC's program. It's been a lifesaver."

During this challenging time, we see how important local food systems are and how much strength we can have when we come together to support one another. For more information, please visit our website: www.afsc.org/newmexico

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¡Feliz Cumpleaños, *Questa Del Rio News*!



Business Profile

QUESTA DEL RIO NEWS:
THE CONNECTOR OF
COMMUNITY

By CYNTHIA NAJIM

Local newspapers have long played a key role in bridging society. They not only provide valuable information on community news and events, but they also keep people connected – in local activities and in mind, heart, and spirit. These bonding benefits are especially crucial in rural areas like ours.

This month, our local newspaper, *Questa del Rio News*, celebrates its third birthday. This may sound like a young milestone, but every step taken over these past 160 months was not easy. Numerous trials have been faced to publish and deliver an engaging and professional newspaper each month.

It all began in 2016 when current editor Lou McCall and Pete Crider relocated to Questa from the village of Monticello, New Mexico. Lou was an artist turned writer with a master's degree in Multicultural Education. She had written for regional publications and

created newsletters for nonprofits, school districts, and businesses. In September of 2017, Lou saw the Questa Economic Development Fund's (QEDF) newsletter *Questa Community News*, originally conceived by AmericorpsVISTA volunteer Erin Freiboth, and relaunched by the newly hired QEDF director Lindsay Mapes and Questa Tourism director at that time Alberta Bouyer.

Lou told QEDF president Malaquias "J. R." Rael how much she loved it and that she had been a community newsletter editor for several years. Malaquias immediately suggested that she contact Lindsay. Together, Lindsay and Lou decided to establish a monthly tabloid newspaper with the mission statement "To inform, inspire, connect, and unite the communities of Northern Taos County."

In late 2017, the two began work on the first edition of *Questa del Rio Colorado News*, a name chosen by Malaquias to reflect the region's historic identity. Lindsay sold ads, sought funding, and served as business manager while Lou served as editor and creative director. They both wrote articles and recruited writers and volunteers, including the helpful Kelly Butwinski, an Americorps-VISTA volunteer who worked hard to lay out and design the initial issue, followed by Mary Rose, the graphic

designer for March through August.

In February 2018, the debut edition was published. The Business Profile presented the brand new Elite Fitness Center. "Spotlight on Lodging" began as a regular feature, highlighting the area's burgeoning rental market. Toner Mitchell wrote the article, "Winter Fishing in Questa," and has been a staple contributor at the paper ever since. The cover story was on Village of Questa elections. Questa Creative Council was introduced as "Here to Stay, Here for You." The Vida Del Norte Coalition had just received their Drug-Free Community Grant. These past three years have been an exciting period in Questa's evolving identity, and *Questa del Rio News* has proudly chronicled this growth.

One major internal change came when Lindsay Mapes opted to leave the paper to devote more time to the flourishing Questa Lodging Project, which she had built from the ground up. A short time later, she resigned from QEDF. The newspaper team was sorry and concerned. Thankfully, any fears about Lindsay's departure were eased when Lynn Skall was hired as QEDF director in February of 2020. Lynn brings her extensive experience as executive director of the Summit County Chamber of Commerce in Colorado, and as the head of her own freelance writing

and marketing firm. She's a perfect fit for the community and for the paper.

Advertising is the financial lifeline for most publications. *Questa del Rio News* relies on ad sales despite the fortunate annual subsidy from QEDF. Lindsay was tackling this big effort alone, until joined by Robyn Black, who later became editor of the "Enchanted Eats" feature (now aptly called "Quarantine Quisine"). Sales have been an ongoing challenge with personnel hard to find. For most of 2020, the paper had no salesperson. However, the future looks bright. Dina Coleman, who handles advertising contracts and billing at QEDF, has bravely and seamlessly stepped up to spearhead this critical role.

Former advertising executive Ellen Wood, a loyal proponent and regular columnist of "Live, Love, Laugh" from the beginning, has generously shared her expertise with publishing and fundraising ideas. She has been an integral part of the team. Ellen is also the ad agency for NorthStar Tires & Auto. Ellen Wood has recently changed her name to Maruška. She shares that wonderful story in this issue, on page 8.

Beyond funding, the successful operation of a newspaper requires a lot of work from a lot of people. The content of each edition must be conceptualized and planned, ideally months in advance.



Malaquias Rael



Lynn Skall



Lou McCall



Martha Shepp



Lindsay Mapes



Emily Wilde



Dina Coleman



Chuck Kroon



Robyn Black



Ellen Wood - Maruška



Teresa Dovalpage



Donna Mitchell-Moniak



Toner Mitchell



Barbara Tracy



Sharon Nicholson



Charlene R. Johnson



Sara Martinez



Caroline Yezer



Vanette Harris



Cynthia Najim



Deborah Torres



Pricilla Gutierrez



Deborah Archuleta Moreno



Mandy Stapleford

Mainstream publications draft their editorial calendars at least one year beforehand. At *Questa del Rio News*, content is mapped out 2-3 months ahead when possible. Every issue has a theme and some themes carry over from year to year; for example, May is Mother's Day and graduation, June celebrates Father's Day, May and November showcase veterans. Also in the spotlight are different events and communities, such as Cerro, San Cristobal, and Red River.

Once each issue is outlined, the deluge of details begins: writers and subjects identified; interviews scheduled; photographs requested, taken, credited, and captioned; public information solicited; and more. All must be finished by the looming submission deadline, the 15th day of the month. By that time, the editorial and production teams are in high gear – story editing, copy editing, photo editing; facts, grammar, and spell checking; arranging for permissions and translations; strategically laying out which ads, images, and text go on each page. And then the news happens, presenting surprises and incidents that need to be quickly covered and squeezed in, sometimes very close to press time.

Emily Wilde, who grew up in a newspaper family, became the graphic designer with the September 2018 edition and continues to this day. A consummate craftswoman, she takes all the content from the many hands that bring this paper to you and weaves it into a fluid and fun publication, month after month. She designs ads for our advertisers, too.

Once the layout is complete, there is a comprehensive review of Emily's

draft by Lou and assistant editor Martha Shepp. The final proof is then conducted by what Lou calls her informal editorial advisory board: Lynn Skall, Ellen Wood (Maruška), Malaquias Rael, Dina Coleman, and Chevron's Public Affairs Advisor Christian Isely. Everyone catches mistakes! Some minor, some major. Emily corrects and uploads the digital files to the printers.

The newspaper is printed in Santa Fe by the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, usually around the 28th of the month. The copies are delivered to Questa very early the next morning by Southwest Film and Media, the same company that delivers auto parts to CarQuesta. Lynn Skall manages the postal paperwork with Questa postmaster Pat Brown and the newspaper's distribution manager Chuck Kroon, who has performed this vital service since November 2018. Chuck ensures that about half the newspapers are delivered to postal customers in Questa, Red River, San Cristobal, Cerro, Costilla, and Amalia. The rest are taken to public collection points, such as Questa Center Supermarket and the Red River Visitor Center. Recently, the newspaper has been selling subscriptions to readers both in and out of state, which are mailed by writer of "Positive Thoughts" and volunteer Donna Mitchell-Moniak. There is also the digital online edition that is emailed to online subscribers by our subscription manager, Vanette Harris. The digital newspaper is then posted on social media platforms.

Who are the people that turn this weighty wheel every month? It is not unusual for up to 50 individuals to contribute to a single issue. At present, believe it

or not, there are only four modestly paid staff. The rest of the team consists of diverse and dedicated volunteers. Without its backbone of volunteers, *Questa del Rio News* would not exist. As editor Lou explains, "We want to continue to offer the newspaper for free and invite our readers to support us financially if they can. The donations we receive mean a lot to us and help a great deal. Any amount, even just \$1 a month, enables us to distribute free copies. Postal customers outside of our readership area can purchase a subscription for only \$60 per year so they can hold the paper in their hands, which so many readers value." With a current circulation of around 4,000, sustaining a free community newspaper is a worthy goal and a triumph, especially given the sagging economy, escalating production costs, and the steady growth of the newspaper, which has blossomed from its humble 12-page debut to its current 32-page size. *Questa del Rio News* faithfully upholds its mission to positively impact the community.

Questeña Alice Gallegos appreciates the work involved to publish a quality paper. In the 1990s, she and her late husband Lawrence started the short-lived newspaper *The County Reporter*. Alice affirmed, "*Questa del Rio News* is a professional, knowledgeable, and interesting resource. I especially love the recipes."

Costilla/Garcia resident Evangeline "Vangie" Leyba, who works for the Questa Health Center, looks forward to the newspaper each month. "I enjoy reading about what's going on in our area," she said. "I learn a lot that I wouldn't have readily known."

Another big fan is Raynelle Sanchez

Cordova, head of the Questa Emergency Medical Services (EMS) operation. "The newspaper is vital to our communities. It takes us out of our quarantine bubble and into the happenings of the greater area. I put copies in our EMS hub for the team to read. At home, when I see a good article on the Vida del Norte Coalition, for example, I share it with our children."

Tara Hall, assistant manager of Questa Center Supermarket, exclaimed, "People love it! I've heard many customers say that it's getting better and better. As a mother, I am grateful for the coverage of high school activities and important social information."

What's ahead for the newspaper? Among other initiatives, an interactive new website is in development, where you'll be able to access archives, subscribe, donate, purchase ads, and easily share individual articles. The website is almost ready to go, with the launch slated for spring. The team is just waiting for the funding needed to finalize the project.

Happy birthday, *Questa del Rio News*! You did it! You survived the terrible twos. May you prosper and serve the communities of northern Taos County for many, many more years to come.

Questa del Rio News

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Kudos From Our Esteemed Advocates

Malaquias "J. R." Rael

Chairman, Questa Economic Development Fund

I am pleasantly surprised and delighted that our newspaper is still in print, as we were encouraged to have only an online version. It is special to be able to read the physical paper and refer to it if needed. I've heard several people say that *Questa del Rio News* is the glue that helps hold this community together. This inclusive periodical is made possible by hardworking individuals who are not in it for recognition. I wish we had more contributors, but I am highly grateful for the dedicated team we have.

Lynn Skall

Director, Questa Economic Development Fund

The role of QEDF is to help the community move into a more diverse and sustainable economy. The paper was one of the first projects that was launched and serves as an essential conduit of information for the community, uniting all of northern Taos County.

From the very first edition I read when I was applying for this position, I was blown away by the quality, depth, and breadth of the content, the writing, and the layout. Everything struck me as being extremely professional for such a young paper. Over the past year I've watched it grow and evolve into an even stronger vehicle of communication. While it may be a small-town paper, it has a really big heart and makes a big impact.

Christian Isely

Public Affairs Advisor, Chevron

Chevron is pleased to continue supporting *Questa del Rio News* via our partnership with the Questa Economic Development Fund and also, more recently, through buying ad space. With so much media shifting their formats to online platforms, it's really nice to see a small local paper continue in print to promote our local culture and communities in the Questa area. I read the paper every month and our local Chevron team closely follows the news and events.

Lindsay Mapes

Former Economic Development Director, Questa Economic Development Fund

Of the many projects I've worked on in Questa, *Questa del Rio News* has the broadest scale impact. It represents the voices of the colorful spectrum of Questa and northern Taos County. Most impressive is having such a professional caliber newspaper for this small rural town and area. It's truly a feat and sets Questa apart from every other town of its size in the country.

Ellen Wood, a.k.a. Maruška

Columnist & Award-winning Author

Most small newspapers are started by families. This paper was, too, but without blood relatives. Our team is a family, headed by our revered editor Lou McCall, who nurtures us, cares about us, and prompts us to perfect our work. How blessed we are to have each other, the QEDF and Chevron, and most of all, you, the members of our community who share with us your talents and stories.

Questa Del Rio News

Astrology Reading for *Questa del Rio News*' Third B-Day

By CHARLENE R. JOHNSON,
SKYDANCE ASTROLOGY

This is an abbreviated esoteric astrology reading for the 3-year-old youngster, the *Questa del Rio News*. From an esoteric point of view, a chart is the blueprint of what the soul had in mind; it maps out the purpose of this lifetime, including limitations and gifts. It can guide the native (the person with the birth chart) toward fulfilling its soul purpose, as opposed to focusing only on personality desires or hopes.

Questa News was born on February 1, 2018 at approximately 6:30 pm, in Santa Fe, NM. In esoteric astrology, we consider the sun sign the personality; it is the vehicle through which the soul wishes to manifest its purpose. This native's sun/personality is Aquarius. How appropriate; a newspaper for the Age of Aquarius, for this chaotic time in which we live! We believe that we (*Questa News* included) are all here now to help make this transition into the new astrological age better. Four planets landed in the sign of Aquarius, which makes it a strong personality.

Aquarius is the sign of humanity, far-seeing, knowledge, and publications. These four planets all landed in the sixth house of service, attention to detail, and health. "Service through publication" or "For the health of the people," could be catchphrases for this personality.

But we consider the rising sign, the ascendant, of greater importance than the personality. This is the first indicator of the soul's purpose. The rising sign of this chart is Leo, the sign of courage, love, and creative self-expression. Interestingly, when Leo is rising it means the personality is much more important to fulfilling the native's purpose than most, because the sun is Leo's ruling planet. Thus, the two are more compatible in fulfilling the purpose of this native, not butting heads as some personalities and soul directives can. When Aquarius and Leo work together in partnership, it can be an efficient and powerful combination. Aquarius is more aloof, stepping back as the observer to see the big picture. Leo is warmer and fuzzier, appealing to the hearts of people. Thus, Leo can soften the aloofness of Aquarius while Aquarius can keep Leo from taking things too personally. And now we have another catchphrase, "The facts of the matter are presented with courage."

The moon in this chart landed in the first house of self-identity and in the sign

of service and health, Virgo. The moon is the esoteric ruler of Virgo. Any planet in its own sign or house is stronger than when not so situated. This moon and Virgo are associated with that sixth house the personality landed in, which strengthens the emphasis on service and details. This translates into the idea that this paper (*Aquarius*) defines itself with pride (*Leo*) regarding its attention to details (*Virgo*, moon and sixth house). "Getting to the heart of the matter," is another possible catchphrase. This moon suggests a defining quality of being good at research and analysis. Several sections of this chart suggest that this native is meant to bring

light and knowledge to humanity.

This chart has both challenges and blessings, as most charts do. Several areas of the chart suggest that something new can be created with a partner, which is both blessed and challenged. Partnerships (for this native) can be enhanced with the respective partners operating in honorable and high-minded ways; as if pursuing a spiritual journey.

Flowers are a particularly powerful symbol of what this native is about. Sunflowers, forsythia, foxglove, hydrangea, yarrow, and broom are just a few that are special to this native. Keeping them around the offices could be a great tool to

help bring out creativity, positivity, and productivity.

Aquarius is the visionary, while Leo brings fire and creativity to the mix. Serving the people with love and vision could be the summary of this native's soul purpose.

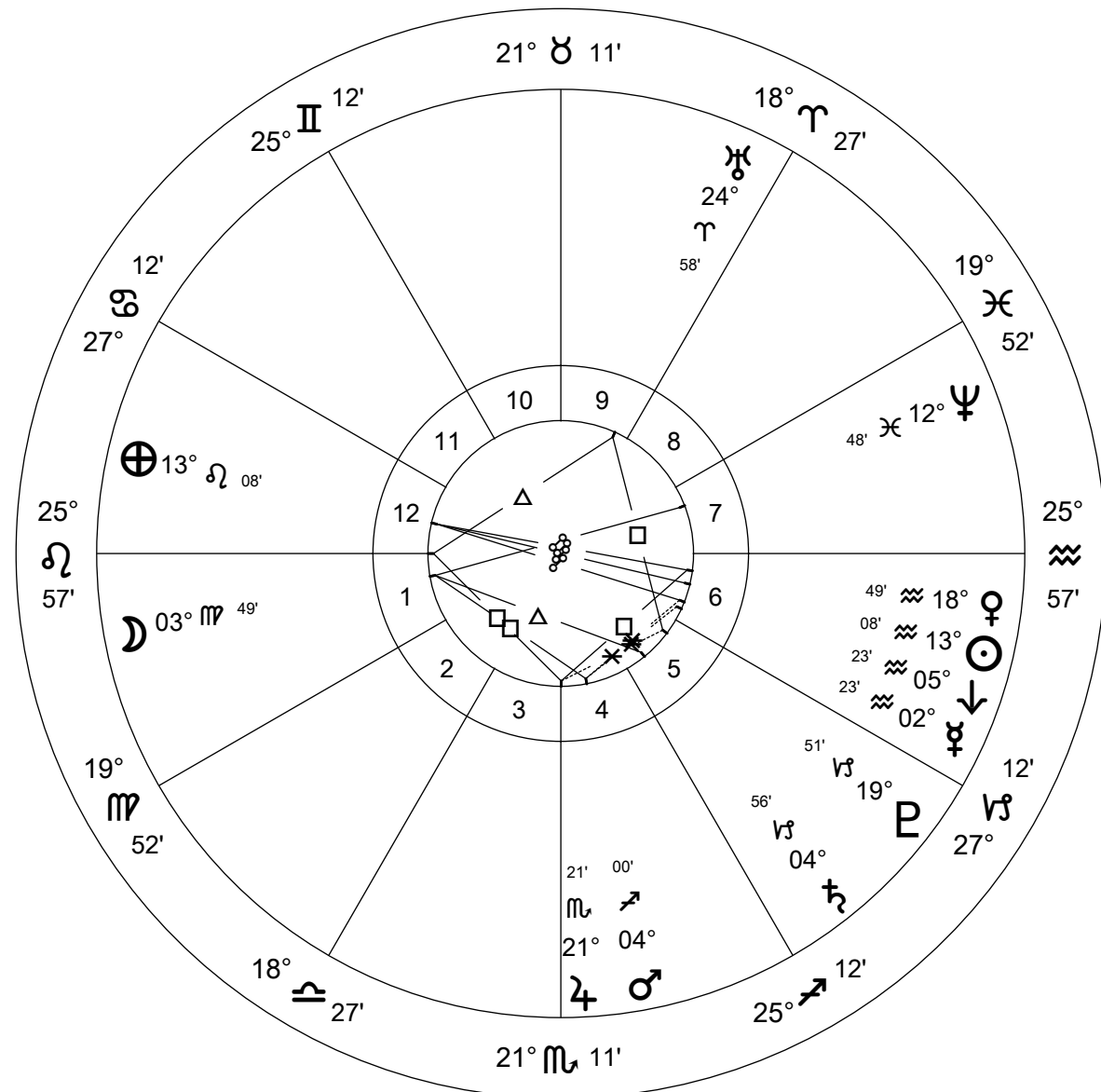
This is an abbreviated example of what an oral reading or a written report provides. SkyDance Astrology offers both, as well as classes on Esoteric Astrology, Esoteric Psychology, and the Wisdom Teachings. Write or call for more information. SkyDance@SkyDanceAstrology.com or (352) 274-2100.

Event of Feb 1 2018

Event Chart
Feb 1 2018, Thu
6:30 pm MST +7:00
Santa Fe, NM
35°N41'13" 105°W56'14"
Geocentric
Tropical
Placidus
True Node
Rating: AA



Compliments of:-
SkyDance Astrology
www.SkyDanceAstrology.com
SkyDance@SkyDanceAstrology.com
Please befriend the SkyDance Astrology facebook page!



Questa High, Junior High, Alta Vista Elementary and Intermediate Honor Roll for Quarter 2 - 2020-2021

Questa High School 2020-21 2nd Quarter		
Student Name	Grade	Level
Lovato, Angelica	11	Principal's Roll
Sanchez, Ricardo	9	Principal's Roll
Mandonado, Josiah	12	Honor Roll
Martinez, Aalyiah	12	Honor Roll
Martinez, Elizabeth	12	Honor Roll
Medina, Tiana	12	Honor Roll
Rodriguez, Ikhiro	12	Honor Roll
Trujillo, Consuelo	12	Honor Roll
LaCome, Danielle	11	Honor Roll
Martinez, Leah	11	Honor Roll
Rivera, Annaliese	11	Honor Roll
Cintas, Jaydyn	10	Honor Roll
Gonzales, Juan	10	Honor Roll
Rael, Karina	10	Honor Roll
Arellano, Joaquin	9	Honor Roll
Carter, Alayna	9	Honor Roll
Cisneros, Faith	9	Honor Roll
Gonzales, Praxedes	9	Honor Roll
Gonzalez, Amalia	9	Honor Roll
Gonzalez, Marivel	9	Honor Roll
Mascarenas, Marcus	9	Honor Roll
Piper, Kaylee	9	Honor Roll
Rael, Nathaniel	9	Honor Roll
Romero, Antonio	9	Honor Roll
Vialpando, Jeremiah	9	Honor Roll
Cintas, Santana	12	Merit Roll
Griego, Mariah	12	Merit Roll
Molina, Monica	12	Merit Roll
Ortiz, Emily	12	Merit Roll
Archuleta, Ashleigh	11	Merit Roll
Danis, Tate	11	Merit Roll
Mascarenas, Martina	11	Merit Roll
McKenney, Emma	11	Merit Roll
Quintana, Nataniel	11	Merit Roll
Chavez, Josiah	10	Merit Roll
Martinez Jr., Jason	10	Merit Roll
Martinez, Jordyn	10	Merit Roll
Medina, Emelina	10	Merit Roll
Rodriguez, Daniel	10	Merit Roll
Trujillo, Kalena	10	Merit Roll
Caraveo, Diego	9	Merit Roll
Rivera, Martin	9	Merit Roll

Questa Junior High School 2020-21 2nd Quarter		
Student Name	Grade	Level
Andrianos, Melissa	8	Principal's Roll
Santistevan, Donny	7	Principal's Roll
Brown, Alexis	8	Honor Roll
Cardenas, Kamryn	8	Honor Roll
Leon, Alyana	8	Honor Roll
Lovato, Diego	8	Honor Roll

Martinez, Liliana	8	Honor Roll
Martinez, Sophia	8	Honor Roll
Rael, Delilah	8	Honor Roll
Santistevan, Aliyah	8	Honor Roll
Vallejos, Jacob	8	Honor Roll
Dominguez, Janae	7	Honor Roll
Hurtado, Skye	7	Honor Roll
Leon Jr., Ricardo	7	Honor Roll
Lovato, Alyse	7	Honor Roll
Medina, Ariana	7	Honor Roll
Medina, Joshlyn	7	Honor Roll
Ortega, Jocelyne	7	Honor Roll
Rael, Dedrick	7	Honor Roll
Smith, Sophia	7	Honor Roll
Gonzalez, Alianna	8	Merit Roll
Rael, Ashlynn	8	Merit Roll
Roberts, Savanna	8	Merit Roll
Vallejos, Dominic	7	Merit Roll

Alta Vista Elementary School 2021-20 2nd Quarter		
Student Name	Grade	Level
Cabanas, Alice	3	Principal's Roll
Cardenas, Patrick	3	Principal's Roll
Arellano, Mariah	2	Principal's Roll
Gallegos, Donovan	2	Principal's Roll
Gallegos, Betty	1	Principal's Roll
Gomez, Lylah	1	Principal's Roll
Sanchez, Jeffrey	1	Principal's Roll
Cardenas, Zachary	K	Principal's Roll
Griego, Eliseo	K	Principal's Roll
Martinez, Cecelia	K	Principal's Roll
Martinez, Joseph	K	Principal's Roll
Martinez, Lucinda	K	Principal's Roll
Ortega, Adrial	K	Principal's Roll
Ortega, Jackson	K	Principal's Roll
Padilla, Christopher	K	Principal's Roll
Rowell, Aiden	K	Principal's Roll
Sanchez, Fernando	K	Principal's Roll
Cisneros, Aubrey	3	Honor Roll
Fernandez, Dante	3	Honor Roll
Halterman, LilyAnn	3	Honor Roll
Martinez, Gracie	3	Honor Roll
Padilla, Mia	3	Honor Roll
Segura, Xayvion	3	Honor Roll
Vigil Flores, Maria-Mercedes	3	Honor Roll
Vigil-Rael, Andres	3	Honor Roll
Casaus, Damian	2	Honor Roll
Cortez, Mary	2	Honor Roll
Martinez, Evanie	2	Honor Roll
Martinez, Liam	2	Honor Roll
Mondragon, Xzavier	2	Honor Roll
Ortega, Jeremiah	2	Honor Roll
Young, Abigail	2	Honor Roll

Chavez, Diego	1	Honor Roll
Cisneros, Aylee	1	Honor Roll
Gomez, Austin	1	Honor Roll
Lovato, Scarlett	1	Honor Roll
Martinez, Skarlet Rae	1	Honor Roll
Martinez, Wayne	1	Honor Roll
McKenney, Ian	1	Honor Roll
Medina, Antonio	1	Honor Roll
Ortega, Sebastian	1	Honor Roll
Padilla, Melody	1	Honor Roll
Romero, Lucas	1	Honor Roll
Trujillo, Ayana	1	Honor Roll
Vigil, Alexx	1	Honor Roll
Fernandez, Darren	K	Honor Roll
Gallegos, Jeremiah	K	Honor Roll
Littlepage, Alaysia	K	Honor Roll
Pacheco, Aspen	K	Honor Roll
Rael, Jason	K	Honor Roll
Sanchez, Cataleya	K	Honor Roll
Ortega, Drake	3	Merit Roll
Lovato, Xavier	2	Merit Roll
Medina, Valentina	2	Merit Roll
Michael, Joshua	2	Merit Roll
Salas III, Agustin	2	Merit Roll
Montoya, Anthony	1	Merit Roll

Alta Vista Intermediate School 2021-20 2nd Quarter		
Student Name	Grade	Level
Griego, Urijah	6	Principal's Roll
Ortega, Mariana	6	Principal's Roll
Smith, Remington	5	Principal's Roll
Arguello, Gabreella	4	Principal's Roll
Vigil, Lyanna	4	Principal's Roll
Zeleznikar, Hailey	4	Principal's Roll
Brown, Porfirio	6	Honor Roll
Ortega, Delena	6	Honor Roll
Rael, Melinda	6	Honor Roll
Ritchlin-Cruz, Jovad	6	Honor Roll
Segura, Isaac	6	Honor Roll
Vallejos, Esperanza	6	Honor Roll
Vigil Marti- nez, Matthew	6	Honor Roll
Vigil, Chanell	6	Honor Roll
Arellano, Ryan	5	Honor Roll
Cisneros, Analea	5	Honor Roll
Cisneros, Lukas	5	Honor Roll
Dominguez, Maliyah	5	Honor Roll
Martinez, Marivel	5	Honor Roll
Padilla, Thiago	5	Honor Roll
Cisneros, Alya	4	Honor Roll
Gallegos, Izyk	4	Honor Roll
Hurtado, Makayla	4	Honor Roll
Madrid, Xzavier	4	Honor Roll
Ortega, Bradley	4	Honor Roll

Rael, Adrienne	4	Honor Roll
Rael, Jaylee	4	Honor Roll
Santistevan, Joel	4	Honor Roll
Trujillo, Nikkita	4	Honor Roll
Vigil, Ericka	4	Honor Roll
Young, Giana	4	Honor Roll
Cordova, Kaylei	6	Merit Roll
Ortega, Diego	6	Merit Roll
Segura, Atrayu	6	Merit Roll
Archuleta, Amber	5	Merit Roll
Caraveo, Nicole	5	Merit Roll
Hernandez, Hector	5	Merit Roll
Hernandez, Serenity	5	Merit Roll
Ortiz, Sierra	5	Merit Roll
Rael, Hailey	5	Merit Roll
Vialpando, Isaac	5	Merit Roll
Martinez, Annalia	4	Merit Roll
Medina, Emmanuel	4	Merit Roll
Montoya, Kiera	4	Merit Roll
Pacheco, Emilio	4	Merit Roll
Trujillo, Mya	4	Merit Roll

MESSAGE FROM ALTA VISTA ELEMENTARY AND INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

A GRATITUDE LIST

Alta Vista Student Council members 6th graders Mariana O. and Esperanza V., 5th graders Analea C. and Maliyah D., and 4th grader Annalia M. posed the following question to each grade, "2020 was a difficult year for everyone but it really wasn't all bad. What is something that happened in 2020 that you were grateful for?"



Courtesy photo

What's something you are grateful for that happened in 2020?

FLAGS DONATED

Alta Vista Student Council would like to send a huge THANK YOU to Lieutenant Colonel Santiago Tafoya, Retired, for the donation of United States flags for each Alta Vista student to have at home for the Pledge of Allegiance during distance learning.



**QUESTA
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

FROM THE CIRCULATION DESK...

By SHARON NICHOLSON

*I love a good story...
especially when it is true!*

There once was a tiny library in the village of Questa. Soon after it opened its doors in 2008, everyone said, "We need a larger library." So, the library director, Carolyn, and her team, Esther and Judy, got together and created a design for a larger library. After a long while and lots of work by Senator Carlos R. Cisneros, the Governor approved it and the state of New Mexico promised to send money. Building began.

The wind blew and it snowed and rained, but the new part of the library finally grew big and beautiful. The roof went on, the windows were installed, and many mysterious things happened inside the building that the people could not see. The "new" librarian learned from the architect, Jason Boyd, that the project is on schedule and will be completed soon. Our library!

Library staff and supporters are so excited about the new addition to the library. We can't wait to move in! Plans are being made to buy beautiful furniture, toys, computers, and lots of new books. Would you like to help? Phone us at (575) 586-2023. Keep in mind that library hours are reduced because of COVID-19, Tuesday through Thursday 1-5 pm. See photos of the library website at questalibrary.org.



Photo by Sharon Nicholson

Artful comment of a young library guest, from 2018

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(575) 586-2258 or
QuestaDelRioNewsAds@gmail.com

Questa Public Library Depends on Your Support

From THE FRIENDS OF THE
QUESTA PUBLIC LIBRARY

The library visionaries worked hard to fund and build the addition to the Questa Public Library a reality. Now it's up to all of us in the community to complete the final push into the new space!

We've witnessed the construction over the winter, and a spring completion is still on target. As the contractors continue their interior work, our planning committee now turns to what will need to be done between the time the construction is completed and the doors open to the community. Let's hope that the COVID-19 restrictions are relaxed by that time so we can have the official ribbon-cutting event that we've been looking forward to.

Here are some ways you can help:

VOLUNTEERS will be needed on-site to help move furniture, books, and equipment. There will be computers to hook up, artwork to hang, an office and kitchenette to set up, an archive room with displays to be arranged, as well as landscaping and gardening when the weather allows. Alta Vista students have already volunteered to move the children's book collection into their new wing. Lots to do! And we know many hands make the work go faster. Please call (575) 586-2023 or email fqplibrary@gmail.com to volunteer



Photo by E. Wilde

The current state of construction at the Questa Public Library expansion as of January 21, 2021.

your time and expertise.

DONATIONS to the library expansion fund have been arriving for the past year from near and far. Friends heard our call last month, and renewals and new memberships have been arriving in amounts exceeding the requested donations, which will be used for operational services and programs. Thank you! Board members continue to source local foundations for grant money to complete the many tasks that remain.

Last month we identified items on our expansion wish list, and we have received several targeted donations

in memoriam or honorarium. We will continue to identify our needs for specific pledges, and also ask for donations of unspecified expansion funds so that we can put those dollars to the best use. Please mail your check payable to FQPL to P. O. Box 251, Questa, NM 87556.

The Friends of the Questa Public Library sincerely thank each and every member of our community for your contributions – past, present, and future. We want to meet and exceed your expectations to make the Questa Public Library even more essential to our community.

Generosity from the Heart

Dear "Friends,"

Since it is the "Season of Giving," I am presenting a gift of \$1,000 to the Questa Library development fund. Its particular use will be determined by the members of the Friends of the Questa Library.

This donation is prompted by personal memories of what libraries meant to me as a child. They truly shaped my life as much as my family and teachers had. Libraries opened numerous windows into unknown worlds, and inspired me toward a productive and satisfying adulthood, by allowing me to see my place in the "big picture" – beyond what my loving parents could imagine for me. Growing up in a large family, the li-

braries offered a true sanctuary, where I could peacefully focus on things away from the chaos of family life.

Although the Questa Library remains a sanctuary in my senior years and a place of community gathering, I would prefer this gift be directed toward needs that will benefit the younger folks who enjoy this wonderful facility.

Blessings to each of you for the tremendous effort you have made to "dream the dream" of a larger library, and then to carry it through to its real-time construction. This improved facility will not only create a better future for our Questa children, but also, in the process, will build a better future for our entire community.

(My thanks also go out to those who played major roles in the expansion, but who are no longer with us).

Although this gift is small compared to the cost of today's supplies, I am confident that the Friends of the Questa Library will find an appropriate use for it. It will be a joyful day when we can all celebrate together and freely the opening of our newly expanded Questa Library!

May your holidays be blessed with the Peace and Satisfaction of jobs well-done! Please stay well and hopeful into a New Year of happy expectations!

Sincerely, Your Friend & Neighbor
(Name withheld by request)

Christmas Star Promise

The sun sets leaving its rosy glow
upon the blackened horizon of the Ute Mountain.
On this shortest day and longest night,
we waited in the cold
for the return of the Christmas Star.

We held our breath for the star to appear.
Is that it? There? No. There? There.

It appeared in the southwest direction
near where the sun had set
but it was an itty bitty of a star,
we must be mistaken.

Shepherds in the fields
were so dazzled by its light so long ago.
Jupiter with her moons,
a spectacular light show on their own.
Now eclipsing Saturn
with its marvelous rings,
no doubt would shine brighter than a full moon.

But none can outshine the moon in the night sky
But for a moment those two planets tried
And the world rooted for them with 2020 vision
Wishing it were true.

We saw it there with our naked eyes
and didn't believe it.
Looked through our telescopes
and felt like we were duped.
Maybe it's not the right time, we missed it
it'll be later on tonight, maybe it's tomorrow?
Must not be in the right part of the world
to see it in its full brilliance.

Yet how many billions of stars shine every night?
The ever shifting and burning out of dying stars
glittering the sky.

The promise of a new Aquarian consciousness
our hope is now set upon
as Jupiter and Saturn converged
at some point that night.

Sara Martinez



The Hill We Climb

When day comes we ask ourselves,
where can we find light in this never-ending shade?
The loss we carry,
a sea we must wade.

We've braved the belly of the beast,
We've learned that quiet isn't always peace,
and the norms and notions
of what just is
isn't always just-ice.

And yet the dawn is ours
before we knew it.
Somehow we do it.

Somehow we've weathered and witnessed
a nation that isn't broken,
but simply unfinished.
We the successors of a country and a time
where a skinny Black girl
descended from slaves and raised by a single mother
can dream of becoming president
only to find herself reciting for one.
And yes we are far from polished.
Far from pristine.

But that doesn't mean we are
striving to form a union that is perfect.
We are striving to forge a union with purpose,
to compose a country committed to all cultures, colors,
characters and
conditions of man.

And so we lift our gazes not to what stands
between us,
but what stands before us.

We close the divide because we know, to put
our future first,
we must first put our differences aside.
We lay down our arms
so we can reach out our arms
to one another.

We seek harm to none and harmony for all.
Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true,
that even as we grieved, we grew,
that even as we hurt, we hoped,
that even as we tired, we tried,
that we'll forever be tied together, victorious.
Not because we will never again know defeat,
but because we will never again sow division.
Scripture tells us to envision
that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree
and no one shall make them afraid.
If we're to live up to our own time,

then victory won't lie in the blade.
But in all the bridges we've made,
that is the promise to glade,
the hill we climb.
If only we dare.
It's because being American is more than a pride we
inherit,
it's the past we step into
and how we repair it.
We've seen a force that would shatter our nation
rather than share it.
Would destroy our country if it meant delaying
democracy.
And this effort very nearly succeeded.
But while democracy can be periodically delayed,
it can never be permanently defeated.
In this truth,
in this faith we trust.

For while we have our eyes on the future,
history has its eyes on us.
This is the era of just redemption
we feared at its inception.
We did not feel prepared to be the heirs
of such a terrifying hour
but within it we found the power
to author a new chapter.
To offer hope and laughter to ourselves.

So while once we asked,
how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?
Now we assert,
How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?
We will not march back to what was,
but move to what shall be.

A country that is bruised but whole,
benevolent but bold,
fierce and free.

We will not be turned around
or interrupted by intimidation,
because we know our inaction and inertia
will be the inheritance of the next generation.
Our blunders become their burdens.
But one thing is certain,
If we merge mercy with might,
and might with right,
then love becomes our legacy,
and change our children's birthright.
So let us leave behind a country
better than the one we were left with.
Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,
we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one.
We will rise from the gold-limbed hills of the west.

We will rise from the windswept northeast,
where our forefathers first realized revolution.
We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the midwest-
ern states.
We will rise from the sunbaked south.
We will rebuild, reconcile and recover.
And every known nook of our nation and
every corner called our country,
our people diverse and beautiful will emerge,
battered and beautiful.
When day comes we step out of the shade,
afire and unafraid,
the new dawn blooms as we free it.
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it.

Amanda Gorman



Amanda Gorman is the youngest inaugural poet in U.S. history, as well as an award-winning writer and cum laude graduate of Harvard University, where she studied Sociology. She has written for the *New York Times* and has three books forthcoming with Penguin Random House.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, she began writing at only a few years of age. Now her words have won her invitations to the Obama White House and to perform for Lin-Manuel Miranda, Al Gore, Secretary Hillary Clinton, Malala Yousafzai, and others. Amanda has performed multiple commissioned poems for CBS This Morning and she has spoken at events and venues across the country, including the Library of Congress and Lincoln Center. She has received a Genius Grant from OZY Media, as well as recognition from Scholastic Inc., YoungArts, the Glamour Magazine College Women of the Year Awards, and the Webby Awards. She has written for the *New York Times* newsletter *The Edit* and penned the manifesto for Nike's 2020 Black History Month campaign. She is the recipient of the Poets & Writers Barnes & Noble Writers for Writers Award, and is the youngest board member of 826 National, the largest youth writing network in the United States.

Source - www.theamandagorman.com

Did You Make a Resolution Yet? Try This!

By STAFF WRITERS

With the new year come resolutions and commitments to start fresh and clean up our lives. Well, there is nothing like decluttering to get that clean, fresh start feeling.

Marie Kondo is a Japanese professional organizer and author of the book, *The Life-Changing Art of Tidying Up* and the Netflix show *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo*. According to Kondo, organiz-

ing is a skill that many of us were not taught, but is easy to learn and master. She offers simple solutions for decluttering and organizing everything in your home. Think of all the ways you clean, organize, and decorate. There are many different tasks that kids can do in their own rooms and even in family spaces. If you have felt stuck and bogged down, it could be because of too much stuff that weighs heavily on your time, energy, in your space, and in your psyche.



The Tibetans say, "If you have a house, you have house problems; if you have a spouse, you have spouse problems; if you have a yak, you have yak problems." Every single element in your life is a potential problem!

The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press
Kondo, Marie, (2014)

Valentine's Day & Chocolate: Ancient Rituals in a New World

By CAROLINE YEZER

Travel down the eastern slopes of the Andes mountains in one of the tiny microbuses so common in South America and you will suddenly perceive the sharp aroma of fermented fruit. The smell tells you that you have entered the cloud forest, the high jungle that comes before the more tropical Amazon basin. This is precisely the altitude where cacao is grown and processed, by extracting the seeds from the fruit and laying them out to ferment, and then dry in the sun before they are processed into coca powder.

It is hard to imagine European or modern North American cuisine without the delicious cocoa and chocolate that comes from that cacao fruit, or any other foods cultivated by "new world" civilizations. Can you imagine Italian food without tomatoes? Irish food without potatoes? Hipsters without avocados for their toast? What about Valentine's Day without chocolate?

Mesoamerican Beliefs about Chocolate and the Divine

Although cacao originated in South America, the people who cultivated

it lived in Mesoamerica – an historic region comprising mostly modern-day Central America and central Mexico. Archeological evidence of cacao cultivation dates to around 1900 BC along the Pacific coast of Mexico. Later the Maya and the Aztec empires milled cacao with corn, vanilla, chilis, and other spices into a frothy hot chocolate drink.

But these ancient peoples did not just put their chocolate in a heart-shaped box; they associated cacao with the life blood of humanity and a link to the divine. Some readers may think that they are true "chocololics." Perhaps you buy a heart-shaped box of it once or twice a year for your mom, or your romantic partner. Maybe your involvement with chocolate is once a month or once a week. But even you everyday consumers of chocolate cannot approach the level of chocolate worship of ancient Mesoamericans.

The Maya and the Aztecs both believed in a cacao god named Ek Chuah and held yearly offerings and rituals to him. The Aztecs even sacrificed a warrior captured from an enemy group during battle, extracting his heart for

the gods with a knife dipped in chocolate, and mixed chocolate and blood in ritual drinks. Some scholars think that chocolate was likely used in the sacrificial ritual due to the similarity between the cacao pods and the shapes of human hearts. Others believe it was because the Aztecs likened blood and chocolate as precious liquids. When elite members of the society died, the Maya would bury them with clay vessels filled with chocolate, so that their loved ones would have something to drink in the afterlife.

Chocolate in North America

For decades scientists assumed that ancient chocolate consumption was limited to Mesoamerica. In 2008, traces of chocolate in 11th-century burial sites were found in vessels in Chaco Canyon, and in even earlier sites throughout the southwest. As it turns out, southwestern indigenous peoples were the first chocololics in North America, consuming the beverage here over a thousand years ago. As cacao cannot be grown in the arid southwest, this chocolate was imported from 1,200 miles away. This required a sophisticated trade network between

ancient Mesoamerican civilizations and the indigenous peoples of the southwest. Scholars now speculate that the ancient Pueblos may have been exchanging food, cultural traditions and ideas with people as far away as Colombia.

The history of chocolate is global and close to home here in New Mexico. It starts with the cacao tree, in the high jungles of South America, making its way to farmers in ancient Mesoamerica, to the southwestern indigenous ancestors, and it is still here.

For your chocolate however, you have only to go the store. Chocolate can be found in every supermarket, every convenience store, and even in vending machines. For those wishing to truly celebrate chocolate, especially for Valentine's Day, chocolate nut clusters, toffees, fudge, and truffles can be found at the newly reopened Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory in Taos Plaza. For a bean-to-bar experience try Chokola, whose chocolate bars took home the bronze in the 2019 International Chocolate Awards. And our friends close to home can get lost in the award-winning candy store in Red River, The Candy Crate.



Photo by Caroline Yezer

Chocolate bon-bons in passion fruit, New Mexico chili, and Earl Grey on display at Chokola in Taos.



Photo by Martha Shepp

Questa resident Mikayla Chavez minds the sweets at the Candy Crate in Red River.



The Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, newly reopened in Taos, offers chocolate-covered apples, caramels, nut clusters, fudge, and heart-shaped boxes of sweets.



Photos by Caroline Yezer



Photo by Caroline Yezer

If your valentine is a health nut, try Honey Mama's Chocolate Truffle Bars in Tahini, Lavender Rose, and Cardamom at The Taos Food Coop.



Photo by Martha Shepp

At the Candy Crate in Red River, you can get fresh homemade chocolate apples!



Photo by Caroline Yezer

Chokola sources their own cacao from Latin American farms. Four of their artisanal bars won the bronze medal in the 2019 International Chocolate Awards.



Photo by Martha Shepp

Fudge is cooked up on-site in Red River with a family recipe at the Candy Crate.

MICHAEL'S MOVIE MOMENTS: The Process

By MICHAEL YOUNG

I have been asked what the process is like for me when reviewing a movie, so here it is:

Watch It — I almost always watch the movie with our small movie group. After an hour of gossip and talking about the news, we settle in to screen the movie on our modest home-theater system. During the movie, I might look up actor names if I can't identify them, but that's about it during the movie. Afterwards, we briefly discuss what we did and did not like.

Sleep On It— Next morning, my wife Joan and I discuss why we think it earned an Oscar nomination. She always makes good points, even though we don't always agree.

Research It— Within a day or two of watching a film, after I have formed opinions, I find out what makes the movie tick and what the motivations were of the artists behind the movie. I start with the online Internet Movie Database (IMDb). I look for several pieces of information:

- General information
- Average audience and critical rankings
- Key crew members such as director, writer, cinematographer, film editor, and the people involved in whatever categories the movie was nominated in.
- Key cast members
- Reviews from key critics.

For key cast and crew members, I look for what other movies they have worked in and if these other movies received Oscar nominations. This helps me understand the movie's origins and what history the team members bring to

this movie. Reading other critical reviews is dangerous, because I don't want their opinion to have undue influence on my own. What I look for are comments that reflect my own thoughts and feelings, and help me clarify why I liked or disliked aspects of the movie.

Write It — Next step is to write the review. That step is difficult to explain. Usually some key elements of what I want to say have filtered to the top of my mind, so I try to structure my review around them. My intent in writing a review is to give people enough information along with my considered opinion, so they can make their own decision about whether or not to watch the movie. It is important that I don't give away too much of the storyline, and that is often hard to do! After writing the review, I always know how many stars I want to give it.

Edit It — I make a couple passes through for grammar and spelling errors. I also give it to Joan for a look-through, and she usually finds things that don't quite work. Once I get it back from her, I make a couple more passes to finish it.

Gather Images — I look online for publicly available images from or about the movie. I look for at least one more image from the movie itself that might relate to points I make in my review.

Publish It — I won't go into the tedious process of getting the review and images posted online. It takes a good 20-30 minutes to complete the entire process. If the review is to appear in a newspaper, then there are extra steps involved in trimming down the review to fit in the allocated space, and further editing for publication. That can take extra days before it is ready to print.

Then I move on to the next one and start all over again.

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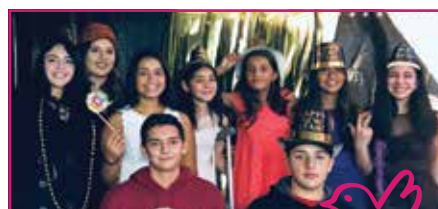
Always remember you are Braver than you Believe, Stronger with God, and Loved more than you know. LOVE, MOM & DAD



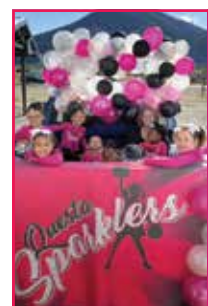
I treasure you and your heart of gold, And, our love and friendship means even more... So, let's keep having fun 'til we're both really old! Happy ♥ Day! Wishing we were on the San Souci Shore...



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**MICHAEL'S MOVIE
MOMENTS**

THE IRISHMAN

10 Oscar Nominations:

- Best Picture
- Director (Martin Scorsese)
- Adapted Screenplay (Steven Zaillian)
- Supporting Actor (Al Pacino)
- Supporting Actor (Joe Pesci)
- Cinematography (Rodrigo Prieto)
- Costume Design (Christopher Peterson, Sandy Powell)
- Production Design (Bob Shaw, Regina Graves)
- Film Editing (Thelma Schoonmaker)
- Visual Effects (Helman/Estebecorena/Sepulveda/Grabli)

The Irishman is a swan song in many ways: Martin Scorsese's final statement about aging, the Mafia, and even the art of making movies. With performances from three of Hollywood's legends late in their illustrious careers, Scorsese not only crafts a superb elegy to the mobster world, but also paints an intriguing look at the meaning of life and our power to control our own destiny. He also brings an exemplary team of filmmakers at the peak of their careers, with all their wisdom and experience.

Scorsese was 77 when the film was released. Robert De Niro, playing the lead as Frank Sheeran, was 76. Al Pacino, in his first time working with Scorsese, plays Jimmy Hoffa at the ripe age of 79. Joe Pesci refused more than fifty times to play any role in this movie, after ten years' absence from the screen, but he finally relented. He does an outstanding job as a mob boss with a refined, confident, and subdued performance at the ripe old age of 76. Thelma Schoonmaker at age 80, and nominated for her film editing, has worked with Scorsese on many previous films. The composer Robbie Robertson, who was not nominated, was also 76. Clearly this masterful and experienced team knows something



Courtesy Photo

about filmmaking.

As someone old enough to qualify for Social Security, I am the last person to suggest that age in any way disqualifies someone from working, especially if it is something they enjoy – and they all are obviously having fun. This team is bringing more to this movie than just the knowledge and intelligence that comes from having lived long lives. They are also reflecting back on their own lives and finding meaning there. Scorsese, through the story of Frank Sheeran, reflects on defining issues, such as the amount of control we really have in our lives. Do we direct our futures, or are we somehow directed by our past?

This is a mobster movie, in the Scorsese tradition of *Goodfellas* and *The Departed*. It portrays one theory of the death of Jimmy Hoffa. De Niro's character, Frank Sheeran, the Irishman, becomes a mob enforcer (another word for a hit man). The working title of the movie (and of the book it was based upon) is "I Paint Houses." In this case, the paint is always various shades of red! The portraits of violence are taken at a distance – the blood is not an essential part of this movie, even if it is an important part of the story.

So, *The Irishman* is about mobsters, but not really. The movie opens (and ends) in a nursing home with Sheeran in a wheelchair nearing the end of his life. The story unfolds as a series of flashbacks to a time in the 1930s, when he was a truck driver. It then proceeds through

the next four decades, bouncing around between different characters and settings, as he tells his tale.

The strength of *The Irishman* is in presenting how the threads of life, seemingly disconnected, come together. It suggests that the course of a life is only fleetingly within our control. Sheeran meets his future boss serendipitously when his truck breaks down on the road and Sheeran fixes it for him. Pesci, that future boss, is absolutely fabulous in this scene conveying with incredible understatement the power of his confidence. Sheeran ends up working for Hoffa (Pesci) almost as an afterthought.

Does morality play a role in how we conduct our lives? Sheeran talks to a priest, and even more often to a lawyer (not that priests and lawyers are on the same rung of the morality scale). It is never clear what moves Sheeran's moral compass. Is that different than the rest of us?

Frank has a family, and sometimes that compass setting is moved by family environments. Early on, in a scene where he exposes his daughter to a very gruesome beating of a storekeeper, (because the storekeeper had lightly pushed his daughter), Sheeran's propensity for violent solutions is established. Was the punishment morally equivalent to the offense? Not even his daughter agreed that it was. That thread could have been the subject of an entire movie in its own right; in this film that relationship was not fully explored. The family is offset

against every single one of Sheeran's murders, or hits. The "business as usual" justification guides his motivation with an almost silent acknowledgement of the father's deeds: He does what he does, not because he wants to, but because that is what is expected of him. The film is about the mob, yes, but also an exploration of what motivates people. It suggests convincingly that we are rarely truly in control. We do what we have to do!

Why was this movie nominated in the Visual Effects category? The scenes flash back to much earlier periods in the characters' lives. The "de-aging" of the characters was all done with computers – not makeup. As with *The Curious Life of Benjamin Button*, state-of-the-art facial recognition software was used to change the actors' faces to match the youthful look of their earlier decades. This technology is largely responsible for the film's \$160 million budget, as well as the extensive post-production time.

This is a big movie in all respects. Clocking in at 3.5 hours, considerable commitment is required to watch. Critics raved about the film, although audiences were less enthusiastic. Strangely, although it received ten Oscar nominations, it failed to win even one, possibly because this Netflix production exemplifies the Academy's bias against small-screen releases. That may be changing as we leave 2020 behind. This is a must-see film. I give it a strong 4.5 stars.

Questa Independent School District is launching the Questa High School Welding Program with the support of the QEDF, Los Alamos National Labs, UNM-Taos and Chevron. This program will provide high school students with the unique opportunity to get training in basic skills in a trade with high demand. Students who complete the curriculum will become eligible for Los Alamos National Labs apprenticeships immediately after graduation.



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A TRAVEL ADVENTURE FROM VANETTE AND DAVID

By VANETTE HARRIS

My husband and I are parked in New Iberia, Louisiana in our 22-foot 1979 Argosy travel trailer we named “Minuet in G” — MinnieG for short. Argosys were less expensive trailers made by Airstream during the 1970s because of higher gas prices and the low sales of RVs in general. They are sought out today by camping enthusiasts looking for something different, something a little retro. The Argosys have the Airstream “bullet” shape, but their skin is painted, rather than silver like the traditional Airstream. When we bought ours, it was completely white, just like an artist’s canvas. I didn’t waste any time painting MinnieG with big colorful flowers!

We have been parked for the last three

weeks directly across from a sugarcane field. Having front row seats to the duties of this sugarcane farmer, Mike McDonald, has been an eye-opener. I’ve always heard that a farmer’s work is never done, and that is certainly true of these cane farmers. There are many steps from planting to putting that bowl of sugar on our table – it takes lots of early mornings and late nights before this process is finished... if it EVER really is.

Through a phone interview with Farmer Mike I discovered he’s been a farmer for 30 years and that his mother’s and father’s families were all farmers, mostly of rice and cattle. Mike farmed those crops, too, but when his brothers and cousins came on board, they began to concentrate solely on sugarcane.

“It’s definitely all in the family,” says McDonald, “We all enjoy the independence and challenge of sugarcane farming.” The nursery rhyme “Old McDonald Had a Farm” certainly comes to mind – Farmer Mike might not have cows, horses, ducks, and sheep these days, but he has plenty to keep him busy throughout the year with his cane crops.

Half the sugar in the United States comes from sugarcane. (The other half comes from sugar beets.) Sugarcane is a

perennial plant, so the field doesn’t have to be replanted again for 3-5 years. But after five years, the fields need to be plowed up and replanted. According to Farmer McDonald, planting is done in the month of August. I questioned him about 2020, with all those hurricanes. He said that they can wreak havoc on a field, but with the new more modern harvesters, the crops can be harvested with little or no loss.

Farmer McDonald describes to me how first the cane is cut, then the leaves are stripped off, and the stalks are chopped into smaller pieces by a combine or chopping harvesting machine. A conveyor arm transfers the pieces into a large truck and the pieces are taken to a nearby sugar mill. Then come a series of steps to remove the sucrose (sugar) from the cane. The steps include washing the cane, crushing the cane, extracting the juice, filtering more impurities, boiling down the juice, spinning the juice to form crystals, and finishing up with raw sugar.

The raw sugar is transported by barge on the Intracoastal Waterway to the Domino Refinery near New Orleans. Molasses gives raw sugar its brown color. At the refinery, the brown is removed from the sugar crystal with water, centrifuging, and carbon filtering.



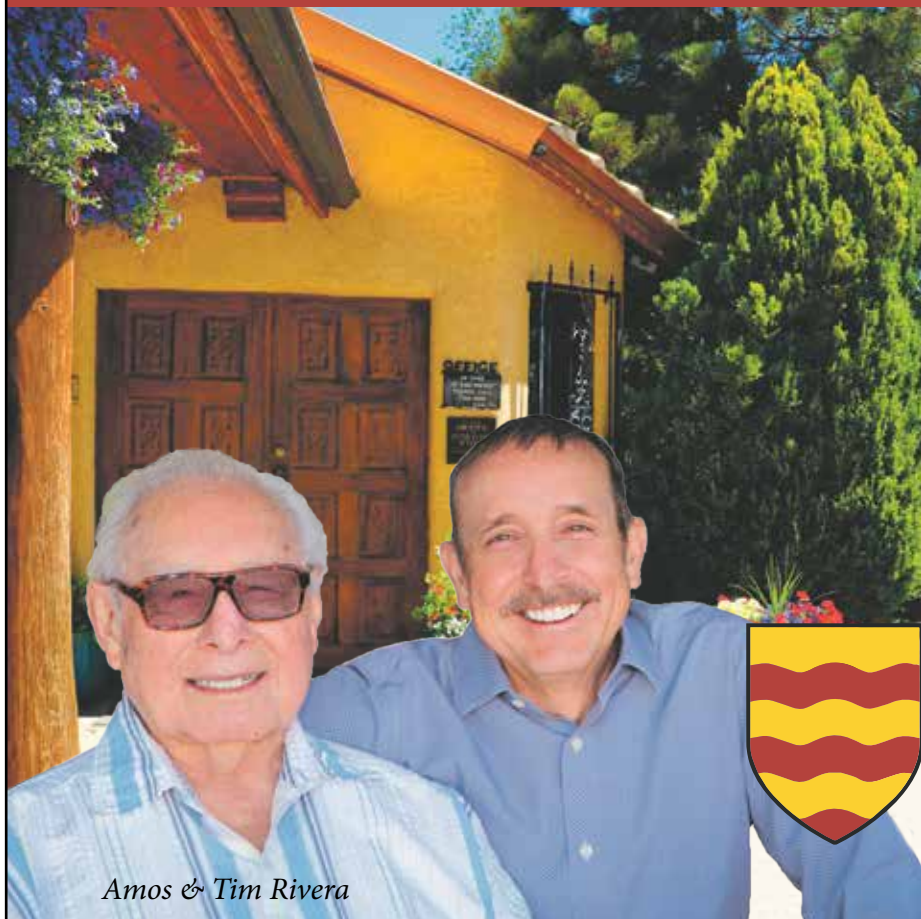
Photos by Vanette Harris

Caption Vanette and David’s 22’ 1979 Argosy across the street from the sugarcane field.

When you buy it off the shelf in the grocery store, it is pure white sugar... the real deal.

My goodness, I’ll never again take that spoonful of sugar I put into my coffee every morning for granted. Who knew what it took to get it to my table? And this story started from parking across from a sugarcane field and being curious about what happened next.

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GENIZARO cont'd from page 1

sold on the Santa Fé Plaza where the obelisk once stood. It is estimated that up to 33 percent of the population were enslaved during the colonial period of the late 1700s into the early 1800s. And even after 1829, when racial slavery was abolished by constitutional decree, many residents of the territory continued to own servants or slaves.

A wide range of the citizenry owned slaves, not just hacienda owners. This included the clergy as well as icons associated with the Santa Fe Trail. For instance, Charles Beaubien had a total of six slaves, and several of his children also held slaves; Charles Bent and Maria Ignacia Jaramillo owned three slaves, and their daughter Teresina Bent Scheurich had two female slaves in her household; Cerán St. Vrain had one slave; and even the Thomas Boggs' household included two slaves in the 1870 census.

It was not until after the Civil War that slave owners in New Mexico Territory were prosecuted for breaking the



Photo by Russell Albert Daniela

Dancers at the Santo Tomas Feast Day in Abiquiu.

law. In 1868, people who were charged with continuing to hold slaves included Maria Luisa Branch (spouse of Cerán St. Vrain) who still kept four slaves in her household, Aloysius Scheurich, Pablo Beaubien, and Joseph Clouthier, the son-in-law of Charles Beaubien. Amazingly,

as late as 1942, individuals who had been born in captivity could be found in the territorial records. Luis Valdez was captured and held in the San Luis Valley and died in Denver at the home of his original master's great grandson. Valdez was one of 146 enslaved people

listed in an 1865 document compiled by Lafayette Head, U.S. Indian Agent. Of those 146 listed, the majority were Navajo children and youth who had been captured and traded.

A number of dances and songs that are part of the genízaro legacy continue to this day. Los Matachines dances are performed in communities across northern New Mexico and are one of the cultural legacies handed down from the early genízaro populations. Folk songs such as El Comanche speak of the trade of women and children in exchange for coffee and sugar.

Over the course of the past three centuries, tens of thousands of mixed blood indigenous slaves have made vast contributions to both the culture and landscape of the southwest. Today their descendants make up much of the population of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado communities. In 2007, the New Mexico legislature honored the genízaro legacy of the state by passing House Memorial 40, which officially recognized the contributions of genizaros to the history of New Mexico.

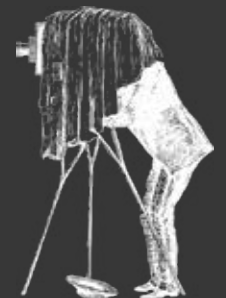
PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Photo by F. Otto

Big horn sheep across from the Forest Service Station on the way up to Red River. 01/21/21

Think you can take a good photo? Prove it.



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ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

SKYDANCE ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY by Charlene R. Johnson
FEBRUARY 2021

THE MONTH OF LOVE

If the house of the world is dark, love will find a way to create windows. — Rumi

This month of love proffers some interesting challenges regarding the topic. Uranus, the planet of marriage/partnership in the sign of values/security, Taurus challenges (and is challenged by) Saturn, the planet of long-term karma/initiation in the sign of all of humanity, Aquarius. This strong challenge isn't the only one this month. Mars is also challenging and being challenged by Venus. (Need we explain this one?) So, right up until the 26th, it is man versus woman and one-on-One partnerships versus the rest of humanity. It's not a month set up for an easy, flirty, fun Valentine's Day.

However, "The Soul Loves a Challenge!" This is an important esoteric maxim. We don't tend to grow much when all is going well; in fact, science has proven that we don't even remember those good times nearly as well as we remember the bad times. We will definitely remember 2020 and February of 2021. We have been living through times of high potential for soul growth.

This month we have the opportunity to stand with our partners — spouses, businesses, or dear friends — and then look out at "them" making a conscious decision to love each other AND them, no matter what. Men and women can gaze across their gulf of differences and choose to figure it out anyway. These four planets in the signs of values and humanity give us the opportunity to determine who we really are. Are we our challenges? Or are we what we choose to become, together, in the face of challenge?

While it IS a time for social change, we can evolve while remembering to love.

Everyone: Choose to love.

ARIES ♈ Planet: Mercury ♀ MARCH 20 – APRIL 19

Dynamic: Lots of ideas fluttering around in that head of yours.
Direction: Until the 21st, it's time for pondering those ideas.
Soul Thought: Not doing.

TAURUS ♉ Planet: Vulcan ♁ APRIL 19 – MAY 20

Dynamic: A series of events may free up something you've been working on since last month.
Direction: Easiest to conclude by the 20th.
Soul Thought: It's not dust to dust, it's light to light.

GEMINI ♊ Planet: Venus ♀ MAY 20 – July 20

Dynamic: Life on planet Earth is not always easy for one such as you.
Direction: Monitor your words AND thoughts; they can be lethal weapons.
Soul Thought: Though men and women came from different planets, they came HERE to work together.

CANCER ♋ Planet: Neptune ♆ July 20 – JULY 22

Dynamic: You may be confused, but you really are in a good space.
Direction: You're in the clear; enjoy Valentine's Day.
Soul Thought: Still waters run deep

LEO ♌ Planet: Sun ☉ JULY 22 – AUG 22

Dynamic: Friends matter a lot right now.
Direction: Count them up, along with your blessings.
Soul Thought: "Remember, George, no man is a failure who has friends." — Clarence in It's a Wonderful Life.

VIRGO ♍ Planet: Moon ☾ AUG 22 – SEPT 22

Dynamic: The last few days of the month are particularly... "right" for you.
Direction: Feel the peace.
Soul Thought: "I will outlive the moon; I will outgrow the stars."
— Dr. Douglas Baker

LIBRA ♎ Planet: Uranus ♁ SEPT 22 – OCT 22

Dynamic: A challenging month indeed, but this is what you came here for.
Direction: Say, "Bring it on!"
Soul Thought: "Come out of the circle of time and into the circle of love." — Rumi

SCORPIO ♏ Planet: Mars ♂ OCT 22 – NOV 21

Dynamic: You have the ability and the armor to be a true warrior.
Direction: What is it that you REALLY want to fight for?
Soul Thought: What is a woman? What is a man?

SAGITTARIUS ♐ Planet: Earth ☷ NOV 21 – DEC 20

Dynamic: Until mid-month you could be caught up in everyone else's troubles.
Direction: Determine whether they are really yours.
Soul Thought: The observer versus the participant.

CAPRICORN ♑ Planet: Saturn ♄ DEC 20 – JAN 19

Dynamic: It's a time for expansion of thought.
Direction: Grow a bigger box!
Soul Thought: When the suffering of humanity can raise consciousness.

AQUARIUS ♒ Planet: Jupiter ♃ JAN 19 – FEB 18

Dynamic: Now is your time.
Direction: Bring on the Age of Aquarius!
Soul Thought: Humanity, joy, abundance, and your greatest hopes and wishes.

PISCES ♓ Planet: Pluto ♇ FEB 18 – MAR 20

Dynamic: You are one who can help raise the challenges to new values.
Direction: One step at a time, or with a great leap over the chasm of misunderstanding.
Soul Thought: These times are important.

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 2021

FEBRUARY 2 6:00 PM

Questa Independent School District Board Meeting online via Zoom; call the Administrative Office for the Zoom link and access code to participate, (575) 586-0421.

FEBRUARY 4 6:00- 7:30 P.M.

Passion to Profits Series: Going into business-options and opportunities. For information call (575) 770-6275. Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82723797091?pwd=M0svbHNacUVnNkpPZ2VkdTdqdnRtdz09> Zoom Meeting ID: 827 2379 7091 Passcode: 846370, Or Zoom Call in: (346) 248-7799.

FEBRUARY 6 Meditation for the Wellbeing of the World and Humanity. Please visit <http://blazinglight.net/> for details.

FEBRUARY 9 6:00 PM

Village of Questa Town Council Meeting online via Zoom; call the Village Office for the Zoom link and access code to "attend" the meeting, (575) 586-0694.

FEBRUARY 10 6:00 PM

Questa Business Entrepreneurship Meeting via Zoom. For information and link, email lynn@questaedf.com.

FEBRUARY 12 9:00 AM - NOON

Free Food at North Central NM Food Pantry, 140 Embargo Rd in Questa. (575) 586-0486.

FEBRUARY 16 6 PM

Questa Independent School District Board Meeting online via Zoom; call the Administrative Office for the Zoom link and access for the meeting, (575) 586-0421.

FEBRUARY 18 2 - 4 PM

Questa One-on-One Business Counseling Drop-in by the Small Business Development Center. Via Zoom or telephone. Call (575) 737-6219

FEBRUARY 23 6 pm

Village of Questa Town Council Meeting online via Zoom; call the Village Office for the Zoom link and access code to "attend" the meeting, (575) 586-0694.

FEBRUARY 26 9:00 AM - NOON

Free Food at North Central NM Food Pantry, 140 Embargo Rd in Questa. (575) 586-0486.

SPECIAL DAYS IN FEBRUARY:

FEBRUARY 1

Black History Month begins

FEBRUARY 2

Groundhog Day-Candlemas

FEBRUARY 11

Inventors' Day, Tom Edison's Birthday

FEBRUARY 12

Lunar New Year, the year of the Ox

FEBRUARY 14

Valentine's Day

FEBRUARY 15

Presidents Day

FEBRUARY 16

Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday, the day before Lent begins)

FEBRUARY 17

Ash Wednesday, Lent begins
The Great Backyard Bird Count is Feb. 12-19

FEBRUARY IS:

Black History Month

Heart Month

Children's Dental Health Month

PLEASE SEND US YOUR EVENTS OR CALENDAR LISTINGS! NEWS@QUESTAEDF.COM



BECOME AN AMERICORPS VISTA!

Are you looking to use your skills to give back to your community?

Are you looking to gain professional experience as part of a national service program?

The Taos Entrepreneurial Network is hiring for new AmeriCorps VISTA member! Reach out to **Steve** for more information:
Phone: (575) 770-7865 Email: steve@taosten.org

Or apply here:
<https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/viewListing.do?fromSearch=true&id=101028>

HELP WANTED

WELDING INSTRUCTOR NEEDED to teach hands-on classes at the new Questa High School Welding Lab. Welding certification required; past welding instruction experience preferred. For more information, and to apply, contact Lynn Skall, Questa Economic Development Fund, (575) 586-2149

Questa Family Dollar is seeking full-time and part-time cashiers. High school graduation or equivalent experience preferred. Prefer experience in retail. Ability to work flexible, full-time or part-time schedule to include days, evenings, weekends and holidays. Apply in person at Family Dollar at 2339 Highway 522, in Questa NM (575) 586-1985.

FOR SALE

We still have the solid oak regulation pool table for sale! Cue sticks, balls, lights. Great condition. Previous owner: Ray Vinella. \$1500, call Lynn or Krissie at 586-0515.

**Need Something?
Have Something?**

**LIST IT IN
THE CLASSIFIEDS!**

QuestaDelRioNewsAds@gmail.com

LAND FOR SALE

35 gorgeous off-the-grid acres (not all flat) in Sunshine Valley about 10 miles south of the Colorado border in magical Taos County. Close to the Rio Grande. Breathtaking mountain views, \$35,000. Call (575) 586-1363.

SEEKING LAND FOR SALE

Looking to buy or barter for 3-10 acres of land in the foothills, with trees, anywhere from Taos to Costilla. Infrastructure a plus, like a well, barn, or house, but not necessary. Call or text Jae at (575) 999-5319.

Aspiring young farmer seeks agricultural land with acequia rights to build local resilience by interweaving agro-forestry, native plant cultivation, and community gardening. Contact rsbkblack@gmail.com or (575) 586-5860.

NOTICES

North Central New Mexico Food Pantry: Distribution days are the second and fourth Fridays of the month from 9 am to noon. 140 Embargo Rd in Questa. For more information call (575) 586-0486.

If you need an emergency food box please call: Jeannie Masters (586-0486 or 779-9194) or Nancy Parker (586-2096 or 505-699-7563).

To make a donation on the Food Pantry website go to <https://www.ncfpquesta.com/> or mail donation to: North Central Food Pantry, PO Box 1076, Questa, NM 87556. For more information, please email wrmesquire2@gmail.com

Questa One-on-One Business Counseling Drop-in Hour by the Small Business Development Center at UNM-Taos with Anwar Kaelin. FREE and CONFIDENTIAL no-appointment-needed. Third Thursday of every month, January 21 from 2-4 pm. Business owners, independent contractors, entrepreneurs in Questa can drop in for one-on-one business consulting and training. Planning, accessing capital, marketing, regulatory compliance, technology development, international trade, and more. <https://zoom.us/j/5757376219> Join by phone: +1 346 248 7799, Meeting ID: 575 737 6219. For specific appointments call (575) 737-6219.

LOVE NOTES FROM LISA "Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world. All things break, and all things can be mended. Not with time, as they say, but with intention. So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you." — L.R. Knost

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Vida Del Norte Coalition is excited to collaborate with the Questa Schools to bring the Botvin LifeSkills Curriculum to students. Vida Del Norte is currently seeking an intern to receive the LifeSkills Training and funding to eventually turn this into a full-time position so that we can reach more students with this prevention program. For information contact Vida Del Norte Director Maria Gonzalez at maria.gonzalez@vidadelnorte.com or call (575) 779-2260.



**QUESTA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
JOB VACANCIES 2020–2021 School Year**

- Superintendent
- Special Education Teacher
- Educational Assistant

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), Transcripts from each crediting college or university, Satisfactory Completion of Background Investigation

Contact DOMINGO TORRES,
Director of Human Resources

(575) 586-0421 EXT 1011 or EMAIL dtorres@questa.k12.nm.us



**Many NCRTD Routes
Now Operating on Regular
Route Schedules**

FROM JIM NAGLE

Many North Central Regional Transit District Blue Bus routes have begun to operate on their regular route schedules. Seating remains limited to provide social distance and adhere to the limiting of persons to groups of five or less. Please visit the routes section at RidetheBlueBus.com for the latest information on all routes.

Face coverings are required to ride the Blue Bus and must remain on for the duration of one's trip. The NCRTD continues to take aggressive measures to clean and disinfect passenger vehicles daily. The District's top priority is to continue service to the public, and to keep them and our employees healthy and safe. We ask that anyone experiencing flu symptoms refrain from boarding our vehicles.

For more information, please visit www.RidetheBlueBus.com

or call (505) 629-4725 ext. 2, or toll-free (866) 206-0754 ext. 2.

FEBRUARY SCHEDULE AT YOGA SALA

All classes require registration. See website for class prices and payment information. <http://www.yogasalaquesta.org/classes-2/classes/>

- MONDAY**
6:00 AM, Yoga, rise up! online only: Jaide
- TUESDAY**
10:00 AM, Yoga, gentle flow: Jaide
4:00 PM Kids Ballet, online only: Miss Tuesday
5:30 PM, Yoga, slow flow: Gaea
- WEDNESDAY**
9:00 AM, Yoga, gentle morning: Gaea
4:30 PM, Jazz / hip hop, ages 12+: Miss Ange'l
6:00 PM Yoga, gentle flow: Jaide

- THURSDAY**
5:30 PM, Yoga, slow flow: Gaea
- FRIDAY**
9:30 AM, Intro to qigong: Martha
- SATURDAY**
8:30 AM, Zumba: Valerie



FEB. 27 VALERIE'S SEWING WORKSHOP

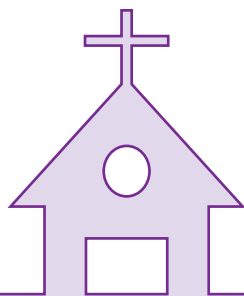
<http://www.yogasalaquesta.org/events-workshops/little-sewing-workshop/>

FEB. 3, 10, AND 17 FREE BOOK CLUB

My Grandmother's Hands "therapist Resmaa Menakem examines the damage caused by racism in America from the perspective of trauma and body-centered psychology" <http://www.yogasalaquesta.org/events-workshops/february-book-club/>

Classes are free to those in recovery, to those coping with addiction in their family system, and to veterans. Kids classes are always free (donations accepted). Classes require registration and COVID-safe practices are observed.

2331 NM-522, Questa, NM 87556 yogasalaquesta.org



Public Health Order announced on August 27, 2020:
Houses of worship may operate at 40% capacity indoors.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

QUESTA

ST. ANTHONY DE PADUA CHURCH IN QUESTA

Father Andrew Ifele (575) 586-0470
Saturday 6pm, Sunday 7am in Spanish –11am in English

MISSION CHURCHES:

Sagrado Corazon in Costillo – Sunday 9am
Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Cerro – 2nd & 4th Saturdays 4pm
Santo Niño in Amalia – 1st & 3rd Saturdays 4pm

HARVEST QUESTA

Pastors Kristi & Johnny Gonzales
2558 Hwy 522
Sunday 11 am – 12:30 pm
Wednesday Women's Bible Study on Zoom 6–7 pm
Check newspaper calendar for evening prayer dates
Message us for Zoom links
Phone (575) 770-5906
Visit us online: HarvestQuesta.org

LIVING WORD MINISTRIES

Pastors Peter and Gayle Martinez
12 Llano Road
Service: Sunday 10:30 am
Nursery and Kids' Church at 10:30am
Wednesday Bible Study 7pm
www.lwmsite.org
(575) 586-1587

PATH OF LOVE

Sunday 7:30 am class and meditation
Sunday 4:30pm, Introductory Meditation Class
(575) 586-1454, Hilece

THEOSOPHY

Sunday 10am Alice Bailey Theosophy Study Group
(575) 586-4641, Francis



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 4pm – Chenrezig
Friday 8am – Green Tara
gabrielle.herbertson@gmail.com
www.earthjourney.org
(575) 586-1454 or (575) 586-1038

KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

(575) 586-1947

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 8:15am and 10:30am
Pastor Joe Phillips (575) 754-2882

ST. EDWIN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

North End of Silver Bell Trail
Saturday 6pm (Confession prior to Mass or by appt.)
Father Andrew Ifele (575) 586-0470



Next QBEN Meeting
Wed., February 13, 2021
6:00 pm

The Questa Business Entrepreneurial Network monthly meetings are free to attend and all Questa area businesses are welcome and encouraged to participate.
The purpose of QBEN is to act as a central hub of information, a place to share business ideas and resources, and to have a voice in helping to direct Questa's future.

JOIN US ON THE 2ND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH VIA ZOOM

Here is the link to join the meeting by video:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87849364259?pwd=Mms0TjBBR1dJR2FyUVlCem44RVVZQT09>



Call-in only: (346) 248-7799

Meeting ID: 878 4936 4259 Passcode: 282982

For more information about QBEN, contact Cynthia Rael-Vigil, owner of Rael's Market and Coffeeshop in Questa's Town Center on Hwy 522: cynthiaraelvigil@yahoo.com call (575) 779-9249, or just stop by the Market and say hello (with mask in place).

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

Questa Del Rio News



Have a voice in your town's future

Attend public meetings via ZOOM!
These meetings are open, and public comments are welcome with a limit of 3 minutes.
Check the websites for agenda topics and past minutes.
Call your Town Hall for accurate dates and times.
(which are fluctuating currently)

VILLAGE OF QUESTA

<http://questa-nm.com/>

Questa Village Council meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, at 6 pm at Town Hall

Mark Gallegos,
Mayor

mgallegos@villageofquesta.org

Renee Martinez,
Town Clerk/Administrator
rmartinez@villageofquesta.org

Village of Questa Town Hall
575-586-0694
2500 Old State Rd. 3
Questa, NM 87556

RED RIVER

<https://reddriver.org/>

Town Council meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at 5:00 pm at the Conference Center

Linda Calhoun,
Mayor

mayor@reddriver.org

Georgiana Rael,
Town Administrator
grael@reddriver.org

Red River Town Hall
575-754-2277
100 E Main Street
Red River, NM 87558
P.O. Box 1020



AA MEETINGS

THE LOVE IN THEIR EYES

Some of us won't believe in God, others can't, and still others who do believe that God exists have no faith whatever

He will perform this miracle.

TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS,

p. 25

Alcoholics Anonymous
Online Zoom Meetings:
https://aa-intergroup.org/directory_audio-video.php

For Information on local meetings call Mose at 575-224-4326

BUSINESS DIRECTORY



Discounted Monthly Rates:
 \$35 Auto Debit Plan (1)
 \$65 Buddy Plan (2)
 \$120 Family Plan (4)




ELITE FITNESS
 Call us: 575-586-6006 www.EliteFitnessQuesta.com

February ~ Online and in person

YOGA • QIGONG • ZUMBA
 KIDS BALLET - free
 JAZZ / HIP HOP - free
 MAKERS CLASSES
 BOOK CLUB

575.224.2102



Register: YogaSalaQuesta.org

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Owner

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Red River, NM 87558

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stichsjones@gmail.com



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575-586-0561

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KEITH D. JAMESON, D.D.S.

Questa Dental Center
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 575-586-0259



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 NM 87556
www.lwmsite.org

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WEBSITE LAUNCHING MARCH 1, 2021

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 Fax: (575) 586-1916

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This isn't no museum! THIS IS JUNK FOR SALE

Jay's UNIQUE Thrift Shop


12 NM-38, Questa, NM 87556
 (575) 779-3723



L&E Self Storage

\$40 for 5'x10'
 \$60 10'x10'
 \$90 10'x20'

(575) 586-0568 (575) 586-0695
 32 Sagebrush Rd. (next to Questa High School)

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 Questa, NM 87556
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