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Questaño Jared Martinez Putting People Back on the Moon: Part 1



Courtesy Photo

Questaño Jared Martinez inside the Orion spacecraft "Artemis One" while still under production. Martinez is lead engineer for the Orion crew module, the first of which launched November 15th for its initial test run.

By EDWARD H. CAMP

When Jared Martinez graduated from Questa High School in 2003, he never expected to find himself working at the forefront of America's new Space Race. Never a slacker, he also would not have considered himself a top student.

The son of Frances and Russell Martinez, Jared said "I played sports, I had a bunch of friends, I went out. I wanted decent grades but I was never shooting to be the valedictorian or top of my class."

But after starting at UNM, that began to change. "It wasn't until I hit college that I really buckled down. Then I got into civil engineering and mechanical engineering. Then I really started getting into my grades." And got into them he did, graduating with honors in both undergrad and grad school.

Following his newfound passion, Jared pursued a graduate's degree in mechatronic engineering, a "full systems degree" with management elements, while starting his

career in aerospace in Houston. "I was doing a co-op project with Lockheed-Martin ...called Targets and Countermeasures... and the recession hit." Jared initially wanted to continue his work in missile defense but opportunities were drying up. Fortunately, his hard work had already proven his worth to the company. "I was supposed to move to San Diego [in 2009] and keep doing missiles there but they had a hiring freeze and then that's when Houston called me."

By Houston, he means Lockheed-Martin's division working on NASA's Orion project. His first job out of college, Martinez has been there ever since, watching the Orion project morph into today's Artemis mission.

For those unfamiliar with the Artemis Project (like this reporter), Jared explains: "It's basically to reestablish deep-space technology we haven't had since the 1950s, but to go even farther than we ever have. So, the goal is to get back into deep space. Right now, space is sort of an untapped market and everybody's trying to get a

piece of it, including other countries. It's basically to establish the technology then determine what we really want to do with it from there. But the moon is just the first step and our endgame is really to get to Mars."

Having been with the project through three presidential administrations, Jared is now one of the old hands; "I'm a team lead on the Orion spacecraft crew modules - the console, the windows, where the crew sits. I oversee all the design development, make sure everything works." As a certified principal engineer, Jared is ultimately responsible for the lives of the future Artemis astronauts, a hefty responsibility, but one he can handle.

He says a career like his isn't so out of reach. "Go out and do whatever it is you want to do at the time, even if it scares you or you don't think you can do it. It might not be what you eventually want to do, but it might open doors you never knew existed before, and that might be what you actually want to do the whole time. Everything just happens for a reason. Basically, don't be afraid to take risks, or do whatever it is you want to do. Don't let anything stop you."

"You don't need a 4.0 to work for NASA or really do whatever it is you want to do. I've hired a few people and GPA is not the first thing you look at. It's important! But there's a lot of other factors. So, as long as you have a solid GPA and a solid head on your shoulders, that's [what employers look for]. Desire, work ethic — basically be a good human, that's the kind of thing we would look at."

And don't worry, he says. You can still work for NASA if you're not into science fiction. "A lot of my coworkers make fun of me because I've never seen *Star Wars* or *Star Trek* actually," he said with a smile. "And it's like I might be the only one, so it's becoming a point where even if I want to watch it, I want to hold out just because!"

Stay tuned for our February issue, we will hear more from Jared Martinez about the future of the space race and upcoming Artemis missions.

Questa Del Rio News

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Welcome To 2023

New Beginnings

By ERNESTO CISNEROS

Not many people have the privilege of receiving a free quality newspaper in their mailbox every month with stories written by everyday people from their communities. *Questa Del Rio News* has offered that service for five years because of a strong vision to protect local news and help others stay informed. As she prepares for her transition from *Questa Del Rio News* editor to other endeavors, I would like to thank the person who helped start it all and who has stayed true to that vision. The person who has made an impact on news coverage in northern Taos County — Lou McCall.

I had the privilege of working with Lou as a journalism student in 2021 with my summer internship with *Questa Del Rio News*. It was a beneficial, and truly eye-opening experience. I learned useful skills that would help me become a reporter and now an editor for my college paper. I saw firsthand the impact that a small-town paper has on a community and how it has brought so many people together whether they are locals or former residents wanting to stay in touch.

It was the relationship that I formed with Lou that really made me enjoy my time on her team. She was an excellent mentor who believed in me and provided valuable guidance. Her leadership and knowledge helped us produce a monthly paper that readers look forward to seeing every month.

In the coming new year, *Questa Del*

Rio News will be under new leadership as Lou steps down.

Lou's service and dedication these last five years will be missed. However, it's also an exciting time for the paper as a new editor will have the opportunity to bring in their ideas and enhance the groundwork that has already been laid. As Lou says, "...take the paper to the next level."

I hope that whomever takes the position, they realize the importance of local reporting and how this community has been impacted by it for the greater good. Other publications and media outlets have tried to cover our culture, traditions, and history but nothing compares. *Questa Del Rio News* is strongly rooted in the community it serves and has been successful because of its dedication to local reporting and focusing on the people who would otherwise be left out by the mainstream.

Our little newspaper is proof that local news is still alive and important! Right now, we see an upsetting trend in local newspapers shutting down across the country due to the influence of large media corporations. In a time when journalism is needed more than ever, our little local paper can and has led by example. We have Lou to thank for that!

I am proud to have been a part of this publication during my short time here, especially under the leadership of Lou. Her service to our community is beyond commendable. She is more than just our news editor; she is our friend. We wish her all the best in the coming new year.

Ernesto Cisneros,
Managing Editor, NMSU Round Up

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO OUR JANUARY NEW BEGINNINGS ISSUE!

PENNY ABERNATHY, LINDA BETZ, ALBERTA BOUYER,
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FABIAN VARGAS, PEGGY TRIGG



WHAT ARE YOU GRATEFUL FOR?

By MARTA GLOVER

New Beginnings

I have been watching the little creek by my house thaw out and freeze, thaw out and freeze. Every day the ice shapes itself into a new form, becoming beautiful, moving water crystals. The weather is about to change again and it will start snowing. What changes do you see coming for 2023?

Do you have a sparkling new inspiration, a new direction or a new plan for yourself, others, or the environment in the upcoming new year? Do you have a new beginning you are looking forward to? How about a New Year's resolution? Are you grateful for any past situation or event that happened in 2022 that will carry you forward to 2023? Is there a blessing you care to give and share for the new year?

Josh:

"I met someone this year. We have a healthy love of communication. We are able to open up doors emotionally for each other. We inspire each other and she is sexy. No expectations, no conditions. I don't want to be a rebound. Relationships are like water, if you grasp it, you lose it."

Kenny:

"A new beginning. I look forward to being able to share my personal experiences with others in the story of my life. I feel the story is inspiring more than anything I have been able to have. I want to tell the story through group interaction. It's a story about gratitude."

Theresa:

"I would like to give a blessing of love and togetherness with families and friends. And bless the strong connection we have in the community we live in. May there be world peace."

Diane:

"I would like to see more joy and play in my life. I would like to work more with energy and music. And get back to the basics of life, healing with herbs and essences."

Cheo:

"I have been disappointed in the last two years. All these people hopping into our small community, buying up all the properties. Our young people can't afford to even pay rent. Part-time residents taking homes away from our people. Who are these people moving into Taos? I don't understand this movement. What kind of people are we attracting? Are they doing art or music? Are they taking time to reflect on the past two years? What are they bringing to share and offer the community? These are my concerns for Taos County."

Beth:

"I just returned from Ireland, and I need to change my life's direction and follow my Celtic heritage in media and film making. I am going into this year with more gratitude for friendship because I don't have a family. This is the year to follow my dreams and heart and to be more in service to people."

Meg:

"I am feeling very encouraged about the coming year in terms of coming out of COVID. I am very excited about my new home on the lake, a place to gather with family and friends. It is a blessing to be able to sing with the Threshold Choir at the bedside again. A gift to us, to all the members. My husband and I were blessed in 2022 with a reunion with friends we had not seen for 40 years. We are grateful for the renewed friendship."

Jane:

"This last year has threatened my idea of democracy and propelled me into political action. It has also profoundly increased my gratitude for all the blessings I experience daily."

QDRN Welcomes Rachel Kuc'



Courtesy Photo

Rachel Kuc', hiking on Guadalupe Mountain near Questa

By STAFF WRITERS

Questa Del Rio News welcomes Rachel Kuc' to our team as Community Calendar Coordinator and Subscriptions Manager. She has also lent her services to us for technical support and has helped us resolve a number of digital dilemmas.

Rachel is a Questa resident and holds this community dear to her heart. She recently took a full-time position as the Communications and Development Director at the Millicent Rogers Museum in El Prado. The museum is free for Taos County residents on Sunday and Rachel hopes that you will stop by for a visit soon to see their wonderful exhibits.

Rachel has been working in community relations and marketing since she graduated from the Institute of American Indian Arts in 2012 and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts. She has a background in the Arts and in

marketing. She also holds a certificate in Southwest Style Woodworking from UNM Taos and an Associates Degree in New Media from Santa Fe Community College.

Prior to her new roles with *Questa News* and Millicent Rogers Museum, Rachel was the Media Specialist for *Vida Del Norte*, which is a community organization in northern Taos County focused on youth substance misuse prevention. Rachel also works with Taos Education Collaborative, a local organization that supports the students of Taos County. The Collaborative's role is to increase access to high-quality educational experiences and outcomes across our communities, regardless of the students' demographics, school of enrollment, or family's language of origin or socioeconomic status. If a student in your family does not have access to the Internet at home, you can contact the Taos Education Collaborative and they can help you get connected. Visit taosedcollab.org to find out more.

Since starting with *Questa Del Rio News*, Rachel has been revamping the newspaper's community calendar. You can now submit your community events directly on the calendar web page: questanews.com/events. Rachel will review these submissions before they post, and she will reach out to you if she has any questions. You can also email her regarding events at: events@questanews.com. Do you have questions regarding Millicent Rogers Museum? Reach out to her at rachel@millicentrogers.org.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Dear Everybody there, I love yous and your wonderful little (growing fast) newspaper. I remember when it was 2 or 3 pages. Thank you SO much,

Annie Degen

Questa Del Rio News is an editorially independent local news source published by the Questa Economic Development Fund, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works in the public interest to advance a diversified sustainable local economy.

OUR JOURNALISTIC ETHICS POLICY

The Society of Professional Journalists declares four principles as the foundation of ethical journalism and encourages their use in its practice by all people in all media. We have adopted these principles as our own:

- Seek Truth and Report It.
- Minimize Harm.
- Act Independently.
- Be Accountable and Transparent.

EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE AND DONOR TRANSPARENCY POLICIES

The *Questa Del Rio News* retains full authority over editorial content to protect our best journalistic and business interests.

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- We give no right of review or influence of editorial content.
- We are committed to transparency in every aspect of funding our organization.
- Accepting financial support does not mean we endorse donors or their products, services, or opinions.

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Business Profile

Red River Ski Area's Linton Judycki continues his father's legacy

By ELLEN MILLER-GOINS

In 2007, 19-year-old Red River native Linton Judycki was hard at work training to make the US Ski Team — all with the love and support of his father Drew, owner of Red River Ski Area. One year later, Drew passed away prematurely, and Linton made the decision to keep his father's legacy alive, with the support of his uncle Denny.

Denny stepped in as General Manager and President of RRSA for 11 years while Linton learned the business almost from the ground up, serving as Assistant to the General Manager (GM) and the Director of Skier Operations. In 2018, Linton assumed the role of GM and President of the Board of Directors, and, sadly, Denny passed away a year later.

Four years later the now-seasoned owner has matured into his role.

"Obviously growing up here and doing the last 14 years without my dad and the last 4 years without my uncle, I know the ski industry really well," Linton said, noting a global pandemic added some new challenges in recent years. "Working through COVID and the effects afterwards of having to control large crowds with minimal employees. Fortunately, we have a pretty good group of loyal people on our team. We kept a core group, people in management, plus a group who transfers around [to different jobs in the winters and summers]. It's a group of people who like to work here, we're close, we like each other, we work well together... it's really nice."

Drew's guiding principle was simple — great skiing always comes first, which meant expanding snowmaking year after year in response to global warming — and customer demand for better and better conditions. "That's where we've put our efforts," Drew said in a 2004 interview, "and it's proven to be the right decision... We consistently have great skiing."



File photo from the Sangre de Cristo Chronicle

Linton Judycki and dad Drew get ready to launch a ski "float" during a Mardi Gras event in the mid-'90s.



File photo from the Sangre de Cristo Chronicle

Linton Judycki Alpine ski racing in 2005.

Linton holds onto that belief. "Most definitely I hang onto the snowmaking philosophy of my dad's. We constantly are improving our snowmaking and grooming operations."

This year is no exception: Red River Ski & Summer Area's website boasts the addition of "over seven new snow guns and upgraded water lines to further expand upon the most powerful snowmaking in the state."

For the uninitiated, modern snowmaking, when made properly, is as good as natural snow. Thanks to decades of technical and scientific improvements, machine-made snow lasts longer, holds its shape better, is easier to groom, and is more economical to produce. The final step is grooming the snow to make it fluffy and skiable. Red River Ski & Summer Area has that aspect well-covered, too, by constantly upgrading its grooming equipment.



File photo from the Sangre de Cristo Chronicle

Linton Judycki with son Atlas at Red River Ski Area

This year, the ski area is adding a new PistenBully groomer, which, according to Linton, features "the latest and greatest, when it comes to technology."

He added that he does depart from his father in key ways. "Dad was old school, not into technology. We've upgraded everything from chairlift to snowmaking to ticketing. We use RFID (radio-frequency identification) cards so now people can ski through a gate that reads their card [to load the lift.]"

The result, Linton said, is now customers don't have to fish out their lift ticket and a lift operator doesn't have to check it. "That has been a huge thing. I think our longest lift line was 7 minutes

last year. This year is our second year and it's showing."

The ski area has also implemented a new e-commerce system, Linton said. "You go to a pickup box with your QR codes and pick up all your tickets for your whole family, so a family can buy their whole entire vacation online."

This streamlines operations — with pre-booking for everything from lift tickets to rentals, to lessons to evening tubing — the result is shorter waits and fewer lines.

In its 14 years since Drew's passing, Red River Ski & Summer Area has made numerous improvements: Two new chair lifts, remodeling The Grill at the Lift House, new "moving carpet lifts," more and better terrain parks, and a spate of new summer activities that include mountain tubing, the Pioneer Flyer seated zipline, and the Hidden Treasures Ropes Course/ Zip Line.

RRSA will also continue Drew's legacy of fostering new skiers with its multiple-week, on-snow lesson and skiing programs for students in Red River, Questa, and Sierra Blanca in Fort Garland — starting mid-January.

This winter the mountain is also supporting the revival of the Red River Ski Team. "The team kind of fell away," Linton said. "My generation was kind of the last big group. Now we've got enough little kids coming up, so Mark Darby, who was a ski instructor here in the '80s, was like, "Hey! I want to start a ski team." Former long-time coach Ed Hampton has helped a bunch. We have scheduled a Fun Race sometime in January for teams in Red River, Santa Fe and Taos."

Another legacy Linton is already continuing? Putting his own children on skis as soon as they are ready. Drew's father had him and brother Denny on skis as soon as they could walk. Linton learned to ski at 2-years-old and began racing at 5. Linton's son Atlas, now 4, was around 10 months when he got on skis, Linton said. "It was pretty cool. He could walk around in his ski boots! We skied all the silver chair last year when he was three."

Little sister Indy, 18 months, has already "skied a couple of little runs this season."

In the end, Linton's life is exactly what his father wanted for himself. In an interview from many years ago, Drew said, "This is the only thing I ever wanted to do — and I'm real fortunate to be able to do it."

Linton agrees, noting simply, "I love skiing."



Alberta Bouyer

By STAFF WRITERS

In 2013, the week before Memorial Day, Alberta was recruited by the Village of Questa and given three days to turn an abandoned bank into a visitor center. She did it!

When many Questa locals were asked at that time what was special for visitors, the reply too often was, “Red River is over that way!” To Alberta, the answer was different; after years working in marketing, advertising, travel, and travel writing, she thought the Questa area was as beautiful as New Zealand and the Swiss Alps, and the camping some of the best in the world, especially at our then-brand-new Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument.

That first summer of tracking visitor statistics and comments illuminated a real disconnect between the loving memories held dear in the hearts of Questa locals, and what was apparent to visitors. “My goal quickly became, and has remained, to bridge that divide,” says Alberta.

Questa’s first Marketing Plan was developed by Alberta at a crucial time, the winter before the Questa Chevron mine closed. Her new message that Questa is “surrounded by protected wilderness” with a “unique history and culture,” and a “home to many talented artists and creatives” has served our community well. Outside consultants were hired to develop Questa’s Strategic Plan for economic redevelopment. Alberta’s valuable assistance in that endeavor is cited in that original Marketing Plan.

Alberta grew up on the Hudson River, north of New York City, in a diverse and historically rich area that fostered curiosity and learning and finished high school in the Southeast, when her parents retired to her mother’s hometown.

She lived as a young adult in San Francisco. A student of art and anthropology, she worked in fashion and retail management. Then as writing became more of a passion than the visual arts, she moved into marketing. Her focus was writing promotional material for small businesses seeking to differenti-

ate themselves in often crowded fields. Alberta loved to travel and had a fair amount of travel writing published before leaving California.

An anthropology tour had already brought her through northern New Mexico. When the crowds, traffic, cost of living, and earthquakes of the Bay Area became too much, she returned and has lived in the Questa area since 1996. Already concerned about climate change, she built her own straw-bale home with an off-the-grid solar system. She first learned to honor our wise elders when asking around about how to pour an adobe floor. Then she joined the volunteer fire department.

While she was Questa’s Tourism Director, our Visitor Center became a hub for area promoters to find each other. This informal coming-together helped develop projects such as the Questa History Trail, the Questa Studio Art Tour, and events to celebrate 50 years of the Wilderness Act that has helped preserve our beloved surroundings.

The years of building relationships with the NM Tourism Office, the BLM, Forest Service, Enchanted Circle Marketing group, and NM Economic Development Dept. also involved negotiating the mixed emotions brought on by the need for new growth. “Often this was a rewarding role to play, and sometimes not.”

Alberta has moved away from official development work. *The Questa Del Rio News* included Alberta as a volunteer Poll Watcher in their December 2022 article about election workers. She is a founding member of the Questa Creative Council, along with a diverse and skilled team of neighbors we know and love. She’s the current QCC Board Chair. During time serving as acting director, she helped with efforts to secure enough backing to hire a dedicated Executive Director to help manage the future of this valuable non-profit organization. Her skills and interests were in the right place at the right time for Questa.



Courtesy Photo

Alberta Bouyer, who established the Questa Visitor Center and founding member of the Questa Creative Council, along with other volunteer activities, is one of Questa’s most Notable Locals!



Looking Ahead to 2023

By LYNN SKALL

As the new year commences, the Questa Economic Development Fund is working on a variety of projects that will impact the long-term economic viability of the Questa area. Our goal is to help Questa grow into a more diverse and sustainable economy.

With the Village of Questa, Chevron Mining, Inc., and many local partners, we are working together in 2023 to benefit Questa through business recruitment and growth, green energy exploration, an agricultural focus, workforce housing, childcare, recreation, tourism, and more.

There is so much opportunity in our area for economic diversification. The business park is ready to welcome new industries with sites prepped with utilities, electrical, and fiber optics. Chevron is working to transfer land and water rights to farmers to support locally grown food and preserve our agricultural traditions; other land and water is being considered for sustainable energy projects. The untapped beauty and adventures found in our National Forest and National Monument are a powerful draw to outdoor enthusiasts and visitors alike.

And there is much work to be done to continue to grow our economy. Interested businesses are looking for the availability of local employees and skilled labor; available land, water, and power sources; as well as rentals and affordable homes to accommodate workers and new personnel.

In order to hire employees, employees need somewhere to live. The absence of available accommodations is at a critical level. Developers, investors, and government agencies

need current data to consider construction of workforce housing. QEDF is commissioning a comprehensive housing assessment to measure the level of housing need, the scale of affordability, and the type of lodging that’s needed to take the conversation to the next level.

The lack of childcare, like housing, impacts the availability of potential employees in our community. QEDF is evaluating the need, looking at funding and resources to support daycare providers, and working toward making childcare more accessible.

The feasibility of the production of renewable green hydrogen power in Questa is being explored by the National Renewable Energy Lab through a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. This tremendous opportunity will create many new jobs, support skills development, and supplement Kit Carson Electrical Co-op’s 100-percent day-time solar to make energy in our area more affordable and environmentally sustainable.

To make our food supply more lo-

cally sourced and sustainable, a Questa Valley Agricultural Co-op is being proposed and considered. QEDF will be holding community meetings and co-op presentations early this year. Look for more information to come.

In recreation, the Questa to Red River Trail has been funded, and is scheduled in 2023 for engineering design and environmental assessments, making it ready for construction in following years. QEDF is also procuring conceptual plans for new trails in Largo Canyon as recommended by the Recreation Assessment conducted for us by Public Land Solutions. Along with our continued advertising partnership to promote Questa through New Mexico True, both of these trails will help drive visitors to our area, help enhance traffic to our businesses and ultimately increase gross receipts tax revenue in the Village.

For more information about these projects and the work of the QEDF, contact Lynn Skall, Director, at lynn@questaedf.com or leave a message at (575) 586-2149.



Infrastructure Expansions and Upkeep

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Questa's Village Council focused on infrastructure improvements and a proposed water rate increase during its Dec. 13 Regular Council Meeting.

The Village received funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development office to expand municipal offices for the Administration Building and to build a new fire station.

According to Village Clerk Valerie Vigil, the \$350,000 expansion of the Administration Building will accommodate a growing staff for future projects.

Construction of a new fire station is estimated to cost \$3 million, \$1 million of which has already been awarded. The Village is exploring additional funding sources.

A second fire station is at the Questa Business Park would allow for more effective fire fighting across northern Taos County and may also entitle the Village to more capital outlay funds from the New Mexico Legislature.

Additionally, another station can potentially impact the village's ISO (Insurance Services Office) fire rating, which indicates how well-protected a community is by the fire department, and which affects home insurance rates.

Water rate increase deferred

The Council did not make a decision on a water rate increase. Finance Director Karen Quintana Shannon did a presentation to the Council on the Village's water department, sewage department, and wastewater department, comparing revenues with expenses. The Village is losing money in all three of those municipal departments with expenses outpacing revenues."

Each fund has to be self-sufficient within itself when it has no money from the general fund coming in," Quintana Shannon explained.

Starting Jan. 1, 2023, New Mexico's minimum wage went up to \$12 per hour, which will place more strain on the Village to maintain infrastructure upkeep while paying its employees a fair wage.

Inflationary cost of living increases are putting strains on Americans all over the country. Councilor Louise Gallegos



Photo by Dylan R.N. Crabb

Village of Questa Council discusses water rate increases at the Dec. 13 meeting. Pictured from left to right are council members, Louise Gallegos and Jason Gonzalez, Mayor John Ortega and council member Brent Jaramillo. Seated to the right are Village Clerk, Valerie Vigil and Village Finance Director Karen Quintana Shannon.

stated that the Council has avoided raising rates to keep pressure off Village residents. "We've known for a long time that we had to raise rates, we didn't because we didn't want to burden our residents; but the time has come," Gallegos said.

Questa currently has the lowest water rates compared to the municipalities of Eagle Nest and Angel Fire as well as other municipalities across the state. "We need to be more fiscally responsible," Mayor John Ortega acknowledged.

The Village current base rate for water is \$19.76 per month. The considered increase of \$7.04 (subject to change) would bring the base rate up to

\$26.80. The proposed increase would boost monthly Village revenues from \$14,721.20 to \$19,966. "The new revenue will almost be enough to pay for one additional employee for the Village's Utility Department," Quintana Shannon explained. "And that will just be for a salary with benefits, nothing else."

A public hearing on water rates is tentatively scheduled for February. No date for a public hearing on water rates has been announced. The staff has done the research, but the information wasn't ready to meet this publication's deadline. More information will be available in the February issue. Stay tuned!

Building The Questa P.D. and Community Policing

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Back in October, Questa Mayor John A. Ortega reported at a Village Council meeting that "we are starting from scratch with this police department." This month, newly-hired Police Chief Ronald Montez told the *Questa del Rio News*, "when I walked in there, there was nothing. I have a huge wish list for this police department but not a huge budget."

Chief Montez has been working diligently to build a new police department for the Village. As a native Taosño and a former New Mexico State Police officer, he has both knowledge of the area and the necessary job experience and training. However; he is still one person. Chief Montez would like to hire four certified officers with at least two officers on patrol at any given time, but here lies the first hurdle: finding certified officers who can start the job hitting the ground running.

Chief Montez said he is open to hiring a qualified applicant to be trained at the



Staff Photo

Police Chief Ronald Montez

police academy in Santa Fe. The training would be provided by the Village but those applicants would be gone for about six months. For that reason, Chief Montez would prefer to hire applicants who have already gone through training and already have the proper certifications.

"Right now, the Academy is 16 weeks long so, if I hire an uncertified officer, he'll be out of the job for a couple months before he can really start. That's why I would prefer to hire people who are already certified," said the Chief.

Chief Montez said the Village provides everything needed for officer positions. He understands that some residents may feel frustrated that our community still lacks official, effective policing but it takes time to build anything of value. The Chief is in the Village offices almost every day, 8 am - 4 pm, and encourages anyone to approach him with questions. "I'm an open book, I'll give you all the information I can without compromising any investigations."

At this time, the Village of Questa is still under contract with the Taos County Sheriff and Chief Montez maintains "a really good relationship with the Sheriff and the State Police."

Chief Montez understands that police officers have very hard jobs. While serving in the State Police, he was a member of a peer officer support team to care for individual officers who were experiencing difficulty coping with stressful situations like officer-involved shootings or particularly gruesome crimes. Especially in a state where mental health resources are mini-

mal to sub-standard, the public servants who deal with the worst aspects of our society are often hit the hardest emotionally and mentally.

"Particularly here in New Mexico where we are so limited on mental health resources, a lot of times the only person you can call is a cop," Chief Montez lamented. "Much of the time, we are the first ones on a scene."

Combine that nature of the job with the vitriol often displayed against police departments all over the country and it's not hard to understand why some former police officers may be reluctant to put on the uniform again. Oftentimes, it's a job that seldom sees appreciation.

"One of the advantages of being in a small town is that everybody knows everybody," the Chief explained. "One of my goals is to have an email account or a phone hot-line setup where people can call me to give me info."

QUESTA POLICE DEPT cont'd on pg 28

Lobbyist Gabriel Cisneros Talks with QISD Board

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

The Board for the Questa Independent School District (QISD) held a meeting Dec. 21 during which local lobbyist Gabriel Cisneros shared his plans to represent the district at New Mexico's upcoming legislative session.

Cisneros, working alongside NM Representative Kristina Ortez and NM Senator Roberto Gonzalez will have 90 days to secure funding for Ques-

ta's schools.

"The things that the Superintendent [referring to QISD Superintendent John Maldonado] and I are working on are critical priorities, emergencies, roofing, mechanical, electrical, whatever, then hit Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham for the big project," said Cisneros, hoping to secure general funding for the district.

The focus of the discussion centered on infrastructure improvements for

the schools with a focus on Alta Vista Elementary & Intermediate.

"There's a lot of money, let's see what we can do," Cisneros said.

The QISD Board hopes for funding in the range of \$750,000 – \$1.8 million to "get Alta Vista up to par" regarding infrastructure, according to Superintendent Maldonado and Questa High School Principal Kimber MacDonald. Board Member Juan Cisneros asserted that Alta Vista was the higher priority

in terms of facility improvements and the Board tacitly agreed.

A recording of the Dec. 21 QISD Board meeting can be viewed at the following web address: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtUKwmkb5rc>.

If you are interested in contacting your state representative/senator, you can find them at <http://www.nmlegis.gov>. Legislation will be pre-filed between January 3–13.

Moore v. Harper Could Undermine Redistricting Committee?

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

If the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) rules in favor of North Carolina Speaker Moore in Moore v. Harper, the legitimacy of New Mexico's newly created Citizen Redistricting Committee, an independent, non-partisan body tasked with developing and proposing district maps for state elections.

On Dec. 7, 2022, SCOTUS heard oral arguments in the case Moore v. Harper, docket number: 21-1271. The case revolves around a new district map for the state of North Carolina drawn after the 2020 census. The new district map was challenged in a North Carolina state court as a partisan gerrymander and, in February 2022, the North Carolina Supreme Court struck down the map.

North Carolina lawmakers then asked SCOTUS to block the North Carolina Supreme Court's decision and allow the alleged gerrymandered map to go into effect in time for the 2022 national mid-term elections. The Court declined that request with Justice Brett Kavanaugh saying, "the applicants are asking this Court for extraordinary interim relief — namely, an order from this Court requiring North Carolina to change its existing congressional election districts for the upcoming 2022 primary and general elections. But this Court has repeatedly ruled that federal courts ordinarily should not alter state election laws in the period close to an election (Ballotpedia, accessed 12/15/2022)."

In March of 2022, the Speaker of the North Carolina House of Repre-

sentatives, Thomas Moore, filed a writ of certiorari with the SCOTUS and the SCOTUS granted review in June, setting the date of the oral arguments for Dec. 7, 2022. At the time of this publication, the appeal is still pending adjudication before the U.S. Supreme Court.

If SCOTUS rules in favor of North Carolina Speaker Moore in Moore v. Harper, it will set a new precedent for federal election regulation in each state giving sole authority to regulate federal elections to the corresponding state legislature. The attorneys for the appellant in Moore v. Harper are arguing on behalf of a particular legal theory called the Independent State Legislature Theory (I.S.L. Theory), which proclaims that the United States Constitution delegates authority to regulate federal

elections within a state to that state's legislature without oversight from judicial authorities, executive authorities, or other bodies with legislative power such as constitutional conventions or commissions.

I.S.L. Theory claims legitimacy with the Elections Clause of the U.S. Constitution which states "the times, places and manner of holding elections for senators and representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing senators (Article 1, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution)." The principle argument by I.S.L. Theory is that the words "Legislature

MOORE V. HARPER cont'd on pg 28

Questeño Announced as Deputy State Treasurer NM State Government Press Release

BY STAFF WRITERS

New Mexico Treasurer-Elect Laura M. Montoya made the notable announcement on Dec. 14 that Malaquias "JR" Rael III, of Questa has been appointed to serve the State of New Mexico as Deputy State Treasurer.

"JR is a hard-working public servant that brings a wealth of hands-on government experience and innovation that the people of New Mexico deserve in a Deputy Treasurer," stated Treasurer-Elect Montoya. "JR has a proven track record of delivering for our state and I am thrilled to have him on my team."

Rael currently serves as the Chief Administrative Officer for the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General managing day-to-day operations, fiscal, risk and audit management, operational implementation, and community awareness. Rael also manages policy priorities, legislative mandates, and develops programming to align with complex litigation outcomes. Rael earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of New Mexico and is from the Village of Questa in northern New Mexico. He is the son of Malaquias and Donette Rael.



Courtesy Photo

Questeño Malaquias "JR" Rael III, also known locally as JR Jr., has been appointed as Deputy State Treasurer by Treasurer-Elect Laura M. Montoya.

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BODY MIND SPIRIT

By BARBARA TRACY

A Time For Reflections

Time passes and on the 12-month cycle of one year, we have once again reached the end — of a year of experiences, a year of opening to something new, a year of new understanding, a year of challenges, a year of loss, a year of gain.

The last several years have brought about a division of people, a division of ideology, meeting new and old friends

and finding that the power of the thinking mind and the emotions have brought out clear differences in our perceptions and attitudes and relationships.

Now we begin a new year, and the canvas of life is awaiting new expressions and actions of cause and effect which will reflect what we hold to as important and that from which we have turned away.

In this time of division of hearts, minds, and bodies there is an opportunity to remember that each of us is an expression of something more than this mortal body and that this expression is a gift that is a presence of greater knowledge and wisdom. When we choose to perceive life in this way, what could be called soul to soul, then there is no need for division, as we would sincerely allow others to follow their own path as we would be free to follow ours, without measure or criticism, but simply seeing the mystery of the unseen divine

expressing itself within another.

It is very clear that those who are asleep to the pathways to a peaceful existence are choosing the opposite. This is when we can observe those that are power hungry, greedy, unkind, blaming, and shaming others and know without a doubt that they are not aware of their deeper connection to a gracious and

joined together to create one thing, a union of parts to make a whole and in that whole, there is strength. We do not have to think alike, look alike, or feel alike, we can have sovereignty within a whole and yet we can work together for the same objective. Work together for something that would nurture us all — PEACE.

“That ye love one another as I have loved you”

John, 13: 34

peaceful way of being.

We have free will and free choice to guide our thoughts and direct them in such a way as to achieve good, kind and loving results. That is our own individual responsibility and choice.

Life is like a patchwork quilt. It is made up of different colors, patterns, textures, and different fabrics. All of these different parts of the quilt are

A few days ago, my sweet husband took a tumble in public and even though he had fallen, there was such beauty to it all. People we did not know, dropped what they were doing and rushed over to help. They did not ask his nationality, if he was Democrat or Republican, the “right” religion, vaxxed or unvaxxed. They saw someone in need and came running. That is who we truly are.

SENIOR MENU: JANUARY 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Sloppy Joes, Potato Wedges, Sliced Tomato, Jalapenos, Broccoli, Banana	3 Green Chile Relleno w/Beef Chile Sauce, Mixed Vegetables, Refried Beans, Spanish Rice, Mixed Fruit	4 Shredded Chicken Bean Burrito, Calabacitas, Green Chile, Sour Cream, Peanut Butter Cookie	5 Frito Pie, Mixed Vegetables, Carrot Raisin Salad, Tropical Fruit	6 Salisbury Steak, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Green Beans, Wheat Bread /Butter, Mixed Fruit
9 Beef Stroganoff, Penne Pasta, Chateau Vegetables, Wheat Bread w/Butter, Pudding	10 Chicken Breast w/Gravy, Scalloped Potatoes, Green Beans, Wheat Bread w/Butter, Banana	11 Beef Stew, Rice, Crackers, Beets, Peaches in Yogurt	12 BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwich, Baked Beans, Peas and Carrots, Applesauce	13 Chile Cheese Dog, Peppers and Onions, Coleslaw, Mixed Fruit
16 CLOSED Martin Luther King Jr Day	17 Macaroni in Tomato Sauce, Italian Vegetables, Crackers, Pudding	18 Fish Sandwich, Tarter Sauce, Chips, Mixed Vegetables, Mandarin Oranges	19 Beef Lasagna, Chateau Vegetables, Crackers, Granola Bar	20 Sausage & Mushroom Ragu Penne Pasta, Italian Vegetables, Garlic Roll, Orange
23 Bratwurst w/Bun, Sauerkraut, Onions & Peppers, Chips, Diced Pears	24 Beef and Papas w/Green Chile, Pinto Beans, Chuckwagon Corn, Tortilla, Pudding	25 Sweet and Sour Pork, Rice, Oriental Veggies, Wheat Bread w/Butter, Applesauce	26 Pork Tamale w/Red Chile, Pinto Beans, Calabacitas, Orange	27 Tuna Salad Sandwich, Cucumber Salad, Mixed Vegetables, Tapioca Pudding, Banana
30 Chicken Fajita, Peppers & Onions, Tortilla, Spanish Rice, Mixed Vegetables, Salsa, Orange	31 Chile Cheese Dog, Peppers and Onions, Potato Salad, Mixed Fruit	FEB 1	FEB 2	FEB 3

Taos County Senior Program 575-737-8927 • PLEASE NOTE THAT MENU IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

This Senior Lunch menu applies to all Senior Centers in Taos County. Meals are cooked fresh at each location.

Lunch costs \$1.50 to anyone over age 60. Those under 60 pay \$7.50. Lunch hours are 11 am to 1 pm. Grab and Go Lunches are available 11 am to noon. Meals-on-Wheels are provided at the same price to frail, homebound, or at-risk elderly.

To qualify, an in-home assessment at the request of the client's physician is conducted by project staff, stating that this person is not able to travel to the Senior Center.

For our readership area, Senior Lunches and Meals on Wheels are served at Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd., Questa, NM 87556 (575) 586-0508 and at 583 State Road 196, Amalia, NM 87512, (575) 586-0071.

Free Senior Exercise classes at the Questa Center are Thursdays 10 –11 am. Free transportation is provided to registered Seniors on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Registering for events or meals (must be over 60) takes only a few minutes. Arrive early to sign up.

WISHING OUR AMAZING COMMUNITY A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR! Questanews.com



LIVE LOVE LAUGH

by Ellen Wood
a.k.a. Maruška

Are You a Happy Person?

If yes, you are a happy person, thank your friends and family members. Research scientists have revealed that there are some qualities happy people have in common and one of them is good relationships with friends and family members.

Robert J. Waldinger, the head of the study who is also Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and directs the Harvard Study of Adult Develop-

ment, says "The clearest message that we get from this 75-year study is this: Good relationships keep us happier and healthier. Period."

Friends can make a huge difference. The study shows that where your friends live is a major factor on how happy you'll be. If you have many happy people in your life, you're more likely to be a happy person. But...a happy friend who lives within a mile increases the probability that you will be happy by 25 percent.

If your close friends are happy people, you're more likely to become happy, but a friend who is happy and lives within a mile significantly increases the probability that you will be happy. The farther away your best friend lives, the less likely you will be happy.

The conclusion of the study proves that happiness is directly related to friend relationships, and how close you live to your friends. Work friends will

not make you happier, whereas a happy, close friend who lives within a mile of you is about 1.5 times more likely to improve your happiness. In the study, the strong influence of neighbors suggests that the spread of happiness depends more on frequent social contact than deep social connections.

You can help a close friend feel happier by doing or saying something kind. Without being asked, volunteer to help. Play cards together (even if you almost never win, like me.) Laugh together. Make them feel happier because giving is often just as rewarding for the giver as for the recipient.

People who work hard like to associate with other hard-working people. Physically fit people like to associate with other people who take care of their bodies. Successful people like to associate with successful people. And happy people like to associate with

happy people.

I am happy and so incredibly blessed. My neighborhood is full of happy people and my two best friends, Jennifer and Maria, live within a mile and they're happy people. I have a big happy family as well: eight children (including two stepchildren and two foster daughters), 15 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren. I'm a creative, successful businesswoman — ditto Jen and Maria. My corporate career is long over but I now enjoy writing, painting, running a vacation rental and working with Malaquias on his NorthStar ads. And, best of all, I'm only 86!

Ellen Wood of Questa is an award-winning author as well as an artist using the name, Maruška. The website for her books and paintings is www.NorthernNewMexicoArtists.com/ellen-wood. Contact Ellen at ellen@howtogrowyounger.com.

¿Eres una persona feliz?

Si es así, si eres una persona feliz, dales las gracias a tus amigos y familiares. Los investigadores científicos han revelado que hay algunas cualidades que las personas felices tienen en común y una de ellas es la buena relación con amigos y familiares.

Robert J. Waldinger, el jefe de estudios que también es profesor de psiquiatría en la Escuela de Medicina de Harvard y que dirige el Estudio de Desarrollo de Adultos en Harvard, dice: "El mensaje más claro que hemos sacado en claro de este estudio que ya dura 75 años es este: Las buenas relaciones nos mantienen más felices y saludables. Punto."

Los amigos pueden marcar una gran diferencia en la felicidad. El estudio muestra que el lugar donde viven tus amigos es un factor importante en lo feliz que serás. Si tienes muchas personas felices en tu vida, es más probable que seas una persona feliz. Pero... un amigo feliz que vive a una milla de distancia aumenta la probabilidad de que seas feliz en un 25 por ciento.

Si tus amigos cercanos son personas felices, es más probable que seas feliz, pero un amigo que es feliz y vive a una milla aumenta significativamente la probabilidad de que seas feliz. Cuanto más lejos viva tu mejor amigo, es menos probable que seas feliz.

La conclusión del estudio demuestra que la felicidad está directamente rela-

cionada con las relaciones de amistad y con lo cerca que se vive de los amigos. Los amigos del trabajo no te harán más feliz, pero un amigo feliz y cercano que viva a una milla de ti tiene aproximadamente 1,5 veces más probabilidades de mejorar tu felicidad. En el estudio, la fuerte influencia de los vecinos sugiere que la difusión de la felicidad depende más del contacto social frecuente que de las conexiones sociales profundas.

Puedes ayudar a un amigo cercano a sentirse más feliz haciendo o diciendo algo amable. Sin que te lo pidan, ofrécete para ayudar. Jueguen a las cartas juntos (incluso si casi nunca ganas, como yo). Rían juntos. Haz que se sientan más feliz porque dar a menudo es tan gratificante para quien da como para quien recibe.

A las personas que trabajan duro les gusta asociarse con otras personas trabajadoras. A las personas en buen estado físico les gusta asociarse con otras personas que cuidan de sus cuerpos. A las personas exitosas les gusta asociarse con personas exitosas. Y a la gente feliz le gusta asociarse con gente feliz.

Yo soy feliz y tan increíblemente benedecida. Mi vecindario está lleno de gente feliz y mis dos mejores amigas, Jennifer y María, viven a menos de una milla y son personas felices. También tengo una familia grande y feliz: ocho hijos (incluidos dos hijastros y dos hijas adoptivas), 15 nietos y 5 bisnietos. Soy una mujer de negocios creativa y exitosa, lo mismo que Jen y María. Mi carrera corporativa terminó hace mucho, pero ahora disfruto escribir, pintar, administrar un

alquiler de vacaciones y trabajar con Malaquias en sus anuncios de NorthStar. Y, lo mejor de todo, ¡solo tengo 86 años!

Ellen Wood de Questa es una autora galardonada y una artista que usa el nombre

de Maruška. El sitio web de sus libros y pinturas es www.NorthernNewMexicoArtists.com/ellen-wood. Para ponerse en contacto con Ellen escriba a ellen@howtogrowyounger.com.

Traducido de Teresa Dovalpage

JR (Malaquias) says:

“Q: What’s the greatest book that never gets read?”



Answer: Your owner's manual. It's like the Bible for your car.

Felix Navidad!



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

Taos County Participates in National ‘Arts & Economic Prosperity 6’ Study

By GRETA BRUNSCHWYLER

The Millicent Rogers Museum and Taos Arts Council announced that Taos County will participate in *Arts & Economic Prosperity 6* (AEP6), the most comprehensive economic impact study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry ever conducted in the United States, administered by Americans for the Arts.

AEP6 will examine the economic impact of nonprofit arts and culture in Taos County and 398 additional communities representing all 50 states.

All Taos County-based arts and culture nonprofits are invited to participate by contacting greta@millicentrogers.org. The LOR Foundation, Millicent Rogers Museum, and Taos Arts Council all provided funding for the local study. Taos Community Foundation is providing technical support.

The Arts & Economic Prosperity® series is conducted about every five years to gauge the economic impact of spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and the event-related spending by their audiences. In 2017, AEP5 documented that the nonprofit arts and culture industry generated \$166.3 billion in economic activity (spending by organizations plus the event-related spending by their audiences), which supported 4.6 million jobs and generated \$27.5 billion in government revenue. The AEP series demonstrates that an investment in the

arts provides both cultural and economic benefits. This is the first time Taos County is participating in the study.

Audience surveys will be collected from attendees at arts events throughout the County from May 2022 through May 2023—in total, the national sample is anticipated to surpass 250,000 surveys. A survey of nonprofit arts and culture organizations will occur February through April 2023. The national and local findings will be made public in September 2023. At that time, AFTA will provide a customized report on the unique economic impact results for Taos County, including the number of jobs that are supported and the amount of government revenue that is generated by our community’s nonprofit arts industry.

Americans for the Arts is committed to addressing equity and inclusion as a critical component of the methodology, organizational participation, and collection of data for AEP6 by centering and representing BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, Native American) identifying communities — a segment of the nonprofit arts and culture sector that has been underrepresented in past studies.

“Everyone knows the intrinsic value of the arts, but this information will help us understand the overall return on investment, as well as help us advocate for greater support across the county. We



think the numbers are going to tell an eye-opening story!” said Greta Brunschwyl, Executive Director, Millicent Rogers Museum.

Volunteers are needed and welcome to help collect audience intercept surveys at events across Taos County. Anyone interested is invited to complete a simple volunteer form so that local organizers can match volunteers with arts and culture events.

Nolen V. Bivens, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, commented, “The arts are economic catalysts — strengthening the economy by creating jobs, generating government revenue,

and driving tourism. Community is where the arts make a difference, and while the national impact data are impressive, at its core, AEP6 is a local story. I look forward to seeing its results, which will be key in persuading decision-makers that the arts benefit all people in all communities.”

For more information and a full list of the communities participating in the AEP6 study, visit www.americansforthearts.org/AEP6

The Millicent Rogers Museum is a Taos, NM 501c-3 dedicated to sharing and celebrating the arts and cultures of the Southwest.



QUESTA
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Questa Library Has a 3-D Printer

By SHARON NICHOLSON

The Questa Library has come a long way from the tiny two-room facility that opened over a decade ago. Your new-and-improved library is more than an expanded building complete with a Children’s Library — and

it’s even more than 100-foot drawings of Blue Whales on the parking lot! Thanks to a generous donation from Mike Barbee of Sage Automatic Systems, now we have a 3-D printer! Have you been waiting for an opportunity to try out a 3-D printer? Are you curious to see what this new printer will do? Do you have something in mind to print? (No weapons, please!)

It is time to roll out the new printer. We would like to hear from you if you are interested in learning about and using our 3-D printer. Please contact us at the library, (575) 586-2023, to express your interest. This new equipment opens up endless possibilities. Be a part of the future!

Letter From Sharon Nicholson

QUESTA PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTOR

I am doing great following the stroke I had on Nov. 21. My energy is returning, and I don’t have any obvious damage. Assistant Librarian, Linda Mansell, acted quickly when we realized I was in distress and called Questa EMS. Raynelle Sanchez-Cordova and her coworker, Kate Ingils were at the library within a few minutes. They knew what to do, and got me to Taos quickly and quietly.

The first thing I did after I settled in at home after a couple of days at Holy Cross was get my knitting out. Sure enough, my hand was a little weak, but I could knit! It seems fine now, and I have two projects on the needles.

I started back to work, maybe a little too soon and a little too much. It is easy to expect too much of ourselves on a daily basis... but hey, we all have good and bad days and that’s okay. Life has a way of reminding us that life is short, eat dessert first, that’s what I do!

I am so thankful for everyone who helped me and for all the good thoughts and prayers. Keep trying to tell me to slow down... I will try to listen!

LOCAL NEWS ANYTIME AT QUESTANEWS.COM

**QUESTA
CREATIVE
COUNCIL**



January Update

By QCC INTERIM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

New Year's Resolution; add fun and friendship to our community!

Do you have a creative skill to share? Join the Questa Creative Council's growing roster of workshop leaders and help grow their Art-for-All project.

This popular project took a hiatus

during COVID but returned in the spring and summer of 2022. Multi-day sessions in weaving, poetry, and creative painting started the resurrection. Now the QCC is seeking to add more offerings to the calendar.

Local creatives in any artform or craft skill, from quilting to cuisine, writing to figure drawing, are welcome. The workshops are held in the Questa Youth and Family Center, next to the public library on Municipal Park Rd. Monday to Friday. Weekend sessions have also worked in the past.

In addition, the QCC non-profit has a budget to cover a small honorarium for workshop leaders, and a small allowance for materials. With such a variety of topics at hand, each workshop may have different needs and the creative council team is there to sort out the details that will guarantee your success in the com-

munity and in sharing your passions.

The QCC depends on workshop leaders to establish that there is interest in their topic and to do active outreach in recruiting attendees: workshops must have at least four attendees to be a "go." Once approved, talented publicity members of the QCC will help you draft a professional flyer and guide you in doing your part to publicize your workshop. The summer months are the most successful, reaching local youth, adults, and visitors (except for May, when graduation festivities seem to take over free time). Workshops and classes are generally offered to all ages, with children under 12 requiring an adult chaperone. Individual exceptions to this can be discussed.

While the Questa Creative Council would not turn anyone away from taking part, they do ask for at least a \$10

attendance fee (the lowest membership level), with further donations being VERY much appreciated!

We know there are some wonderful creatives in our community already taking part in the annual Questa Studio Art Tour, and others not yet on our radar. Plus, there are some very personable people out there who would be such fun to get covered in clay or paint with! Whether you are young yourself, or a newly retired teacher, this could be a great way for you to serve your community. So, email or phone the creative council team to discuss your ideas and your skills and become part of this exciting project.

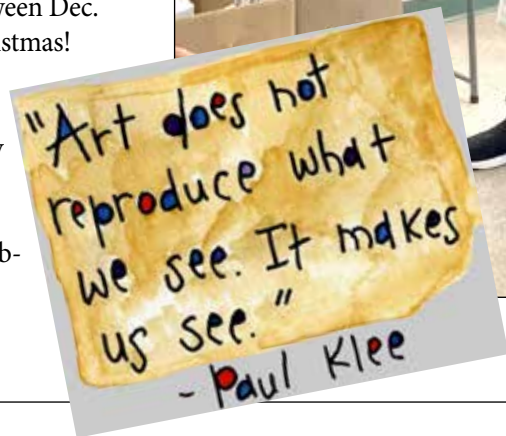
Find out more about the creative council at QuestaCreative.org, (575) 586-5658; QuestaCreativeCouncil@gmail.com.

Creativity Lives On

By PEGGY TRIGG

The Questa Creative Council would like to thank the community for helping us raise over \$1000 for our annual Art Kits for Kids Fund Drive. With your help we bought all sorts of materials including watercolor and acrylic paints, brushes, pencil sets, drawing and watercolor paper, sketch books, collage papers and fabric. Children from our community picked up their free art materials at the Questa Public Library between Dec. 19 and 22, just in time for Christmas!

We are proud of another successful endeavor that will help the children in our community explore their creative side and have fun! What's better than making things and solving problems through creativity?



Expressions of Love at Questa Public Library

By PEGGY TRIGG

Share the Love! Join us in spreading love throughout our community. Have your special "Expression of Love" Valentine's Day card displayed at the Questa Public Library as part of our "Expres-

sion of Love" poetry display during the month of February.

This year the library will celebrate love and kindness by featuring local, handmade cards that share that theme in a heartfelt poem. We are calling on each of our community members to join us with a card featuring your favorite poem or one that you have created to "Share the Love." We will be accepting cards the last week of January for this special display.

The requirements are simple: All cards must be completely handmade with a Valentine's theme. Cards must contain an all-aged appropriate poem and may be made of lightweight materials of your choice. The size of the card cannot be larger than 8" x 10." If you are sharing a published poem, please cite the author.

Cards made by both adults and children will be accepted. The card can be dedicated to someone or something, or

not. It can also be signed or anonymous. All cards will be read before displaying to check for appropriate content. Overly racy cards will not be hung.

Got some love to share? Share it with your community. Make yourself happier as well as others. Join us by bringing your "Expression of Love" card into the library by the end of January to be part of this wonderful February display!

If you have questions, please call the library at (575) 586-2023.

Taos Tiger Hockey Lineup



Photo by Fabian Vargas

Hockey dad, Fabian Vargas was talking with a Taos Tiger Hockey coach who told him about an invitation to skate at Eagle Rock Lake in Questa. When Fabian told his son, David about it, he got with some of the other kids and they decided to go there to skate. David had a net he used to practice and they took it to the lake and had a great time. Members of the Taos Ice Tigers Hockey Team loved skating on Eagle Rock Lake. The frozen lake provided the kids an opportunity to get back to hockey's roots in the great outdoors. From left to right Sebastian Ruiz, Hanna Weinman, Rocket Holmes, and David Vargas



My New Year's Resolutions

By AUBREY CISNEROS

Hello! For me, New Years is scary, going into a new year, you never know what's going to happen! But in all honesty— I love it! New Year, new me! Am I right? Here are some New Year's resolutions I have made: Pray more, get better at math, go to Taos Academy, meet new people, be the manager for volleyball, basketball, and track. Hope you like my New Year resolutions!

Fifth Grade Resolutions as interpreted by Teacher Mr. John



- I want to become a better friend to my classmates.
- I want to get better at math class
- I want less drama in the school day
- I want to be kind to my teachers and classmates
- I want to make a million bucks
- I want to get better grades
- I want to finish work early and not have homework

My New Year's Resolutions

By JOHN WALSH
ALTA VISTA'S 4 - 5 GRADES TEACHER

- I hope that every student comes to school each day with a smile on their face and excitement in their eyes.
- I hope that I come to school every day with a smile on my face and excitement in my eyes.
- I hope that ski days are as safe as possible.
- I pray that students listen in class with their ears and not their mouths.
- I hope that all my endeavors are smooth and easy.
- I hope that all my students' parents will drill their student on multiplication tables each week.



Photo by Elaine Romero

Santa Claus took time out of his busy schedule in December to visit Questa's Alta Vista Elementary/Intermediate School. Pictured here are Santa, counselor Madalena Miera and daughter Maliyah.

Asset Based Community Development Workshop, Part II for Questa's Future

By LYNN SKALL

A new year brings new opportunities, including Part II of the free Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Workshop. This convening of engaged area residents, community leaders, non-profit organizations, and any interested participants will take the outcomes from the first ABCD Workshop to the next level!

The Workshop is sponsored by a generous grant from the LOR Foundation, a longtime community partner. ABCD will be held Saturday, Jan. 14, at

Living Word Ministries Fellowship Hall from 9 am to 3 pm with complimentary lunch served.

Local facilitator, Louis Jeantete of Turquoise Door Consulting in Taos, will lead the group toward achieving a structured list of actionable goals with time-stamped due dates and measurable deliverables. After a review of the outcomes from the April 2022 Workshop, Jeantete will guide the group through a series of interactive processes to identify key initiatives the group would like to focus on for community development

in 2023, and ultimately fine-tune a short list of goals and action items for each key area.

Everyone from the greater Questa community in northern Taos County is invited and encouraged to attend. There is no charge, and we welcome your participation even if you did not attend the first workshop. Advance reservations are required so the proper amount of food can be ordered.

For more information and to RSVP before January 11, please email Gayle Martinez at gaylelwm@msn.com.

Asset Based Community Development Workshop Part II

Saturday, January 14, 9am to 3pm
Living Word Ministries Fellowship Hall
No charge, everyone is invited
Includes complimentary lunch
RSVP to Gayle Martinez
at gaylelwm@msn.com.



2023 Wellness Classes at Yoga Sala

BY GAEA MCGAHEE

Yoga Sala is a moving arts studio in Questa and home to the nonprofit program, Sala Reach. All classes, events and workshops are created with this intention: to *support a culture of health*.

In 2023, a 12-class Wellness Series, one per month, will focus on whole health and draw on community expertise. Encouraging and supporting individual wellness in the broadest sense, and building up personal capacity underpins our resilience. The series is intended to help individuals build a personal toolbox that supports their whole health. Importantly, the series will be led by community members for community members; we intend to highlight the value of local knowledge and skill-sharing.

The topics of our 12-class series include nutrition in local traditional foods, food producing and processing, preserving, art-making using natural pigments (locally sourced clay and plant dyes), and digital and financial literacy. The class facilitators live in, and therefore value investing time in, our dispersed community. Facilitators include community members who run the local credit union, or own local businesses, or, for example, have expertise such as growing microgreens, building websites, or pickling and fermenting.

This series will be directed to adults, but is also open to younger community members who wish to join.

Kick-off for the series: The Benefits



Photo by Jennifer Fisher

RAW juice full of vitality!

of RAW Juice! Jennifer Fisher, former juice-bar owner and 10 year raw food veteran, will share her passion of juicing with YOU. She'll be doing a juicing demonstration, sharing samples, and answering questions at the Sala Saturday, Jan. 21, noon to 1:30 pm. For more details and to RSVP go to yogasalaquesta.org/wellness-series/ or call (575) 224-2102.

The Sala hosts weekly classes including, yoga, qigong, tai chi, kickboxing, and kids ballet, as well as special events and workshops. Our nonprofit creates equitable access to assure that all offerings can be attended by all

community members and some of the classes are free.

Our mission is to cultivate a diverse community of learners, moving arts teachers, performers, and audiences from rural northern New Mexico and make dance, yoga, martial arts and opportunities for creative expression and experience accessible for all ages and abilities promoting health and connection.

Sala Reach is a program of Localogy, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. In addition to offering weekly classes freely to the community, we collaborate with local organizations such as Questa Creative Council, LEAP, Twirl, and Vida del Norte Coalition's Summer Vida Camp.

Our outreach effort is intended to support and engage:

- All youth
- People seeking moving arts for recovery support, no questions asked
- People coping with post traumatic stress
- People coping with addiction in their family
- Veterans and their family members
- Law enforcement officers and first responders
- Anyone experiencing any financial need

Our nonprofit, Sala Reach is supported by donations from the community as well as funding through grants. Current funding from the LANL Foundation and the Taos Community Foundation helps

provide for several weekly classes (e.g. Kids' Ballet) and monthly special events. In 2022 Sala Reach collaborated with the Questa Creative Council to bring two Chamber Music events (spring and fall), and Cristina Masoliver's Teatro Vagabundo puppet show to Questa twice, including a July show for the Vida Summer Camp participants.

MONTHLY WELLNESS SERIES CLASS SCHEDULE

Jan. 21, 12-1:30 pm - Juicing
February - Fermentation
March - Microgreens
April - Kimchi
May - Financial Literacy
June through December TBD

What: Yoga and Community Space offerings for youth and community members

Where: 2331 State HWY 522, Questa, NM 87556 and YogaSalaQuesta.org

When: Once a month, throughout 2023, dates and times to be announced

Contact: Gaea McGahee, YogaSalaQuesta@gmail.com, (575) 224-2102

See event calendar: <http://yogasalaquesta.org/wellness-series/>



BIRD IS THE WORD

By BRYCE FLANAGAN

Good News For Birds

To ring in the new year, I thought I'd catalog some of last year's victories for bird conservation. While birds have been losing their numbers, we should remember that conservation efforts absolutely work to bring them back, and we ought to celebrate these victories for the hope they represent.

Last year I wrote about the decades-long legal battle to list the Lesser Prairie Chicken under the Endangered Species Act. In November the Fish and Wildlife Service finally acted, listing two population segments under the act. The

northern population segment, encompassing territory in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, has been listed as "Threatened" while the southern population segment in New Mexico and Texas has been listed as "Endangered."

These listings will provide crucial protections for this southwest icon and are the result of persistent effort on the part of Wild Earth Guardians and the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD). The Center for Biological Diversity first petitioned the FWS in 1995 to list the chicken as "Threatened." In a press release, CBD representative Michael Robinson celebrated the "terrific news" of the listings but lamented how long it took to finally get these protections, saying "We wish that the Fish and Wildlife Service hadn't delayed this protection for 27 years, because quicker action would have meant a lot more Lesser Prairie Chickens alive in a lot more places today." These new protections will set regulations on livestock grazing within the chicken's habitat and limit oil rig development, a primary cause of habitat loss for the endangered bird.

While these new protections are a



Photo from Wikimedia Commons

Male Lesser Prairie Chicken in New Mexico

great step in direction of conserving prairie chickens, the North American Grouse Partnership cautions that "The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cannot recover lesser prairie-chickens with regulations" and that the bird is around today thanks to "caring private landowners who steward nearly all the remaining habitat." The Conservation Ranching Initiative was launched by the Audubon Society in 2017 and today 99 ranchers across 15 states partner with the program.

Wild Earth Guardians also won a

victory for clean air in southeastern New Mexico, settling a case with oil and gas company OXY. This settlement includes a \$500,000 penalty, a \$500,000 investment into air quality improvement projects and \$5.5 million for emissions prevention at OXY's southeastern facilities. Cleaner air is a big win, not just for birds but for all animals, including people: a 2021 study by McGill University found that air pollution leads to 50,000 premature deaths in the United States.

Finally, thanks to the efforts of conservationists across the U.S., the Audubon Society reports that waterbirds and ducks in the U.S. have increased by 18 percent and 34 percent respectively since 1970. While this news is overshadowed by the fact that more than half of U.S. bird species are declining, it offers a glimmer of hope in the fact that conservation does work and that these species can be saved. We can all play a part in saving these beautiful creatures for our posterity to enjoy. Hanging a bird feeder, cleaning trash out from trails, giving to conservation groups — together these actions secure a future for our feathered friends.



By TONER MITCHELL

Our Digital Conservation Future

Having finished the online New York Times crossword puzzle over morning coffee, retweeting some delicious burns on climate-change deniers, checking Facebook and Instagram, liking a picture of a cutthroat trout, and prioritizing work emails before a day of zoom calls, he/she remarked, "Kids these days are hopelessly addicted to their devices," as though the article on the Peloton screen was an actual person. "We really need to get them outdoors more."

"Kids these days", including youngish adults who are having children of their own now, live in a digital habitat. We, especially they, are completely wired. How wonderful.

Really. Of the many aspects of past life

I never want to revisit, there's the fact that having a cell phone usually means I don't have to hitchhike to the nearest town if my car breaks down on the highway. I like being able to track bank transactions, and that I can communicate easily with people around the globe.

At first, I liked social media, if only for the possibility of deriving some solace at how many of my contemporaries had gotten heavy or gone bald, as I had.

But we are now aware of how social apps reduce attention spans, profit through opinion aggregation, select for herd formation through conflict-inducing content, are designed around addiction models and how they can even alter brain chemistry. We watch outrage bounce among like-minded users in ever-shrinking circles into which nothing can enter that challenges what we might not necessarily know about the world. If we didn't know any better, it's almost as if we are talking to ourselves.

Especially where kids are concerned, we don't know any better and we are talking to ourselves indeed. Barraged by negatively-biased topics – our toxic society, politics, and earth – the instinct to withdraw into the safety of the herd is hard to resist. There is comfort there, belonging and identity, which Joe Camel TikTok knows simply as dopamine.

Until very recently, I thought this



Photo by Toner Mitchell

Interns from the Ojo Caliente area leveling a field for better crop production

same dynamic drove my development as a fly fisherman. Almost every aspect of the sport demands focus and refinement. Thus, my long-term success could only come about by turning inward.

Which is silly of course. If anything could epitomize a healthy, outward-facing interaction with the world, fly fishing is it. On a given day, I'll have conversations with cottonwoods, clouds and sky, a loud and winding river, all while expecting frequent interruptions from magpies and trout. Over the years, my conversations have deepened as my working knowledge of the natural languages around me has expanded. If it's true that my identity has



Photo by Toner Mitchell

Jeremy Riley flying the drone.

been shaped by fishing, it's been through constant negotiation and revision.

Still, I worry, especially since none of us can go fishing anymore without cell phones close at hand. When it comes to young people, I wonder how conservation can progress while social media has such a grip on their lives.

In my fantasy, kids disappear into the mountains every summer, riding range to keep cows from overgrazing riparian areas, let's say, or clearing trails through wilderness areas. There's a serious unmet need there, but is it realistic to expect kids to stay out of cell reception for so long? Will their addiction to technology doom

DIGITAL FUTURE cont'd ----->

Protecting Your Water and Forests



Photo by Leann Murphy

Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep and Taos Mountain

By TRACEY STONE

The Rio Grande Water Fund (RGWF) is celebrating eight years of forest restoration, and more. Forest management by the U.S. Forest Service has substantially increased the resilience of the Rio Grande watershed to wildfire. Around 30,000 acres are restored each year with thinning and controlled burns, compared to the annual average of about 20,000 acres per year when the RGWF was formed in 2014.

Analysis by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) shows this restoration helped prevent four fires from producing catastrophic results. The Midnight (2022), Medio (2021), Cajete (2017), and Venado (2018) fires burned through untreated forest at high intensities until they encountered restored forest where the fire stopped raging through the forest canopy and became easier to control.

The RGWF is a collaborative effort

with over 100 signatories, designed to generate sustainable funding to proactively increase the pace and scale of forest restoration, focusing on the 600,000 acres of forest most at-risk for severe wildfire in northern and central New Mexico over the course of 20 years.

“We have an ambitious goal and tremendous support to help us get there,” Matt Piccarello, TNC in New Mexico’s Forest and Watershed Health Manager said. “By working together, we can reduce wildfire risk, secure water for one million people, protect communities, and enhance wildlife habitat.”

The effort also elevates Indigenous voices and choices, Piccarello said. Severe wildfires have destroyed resources and caused cultural disconnect for the Santa Clara Pueblo. With support from the RGWF, the tribe has developed and implemented a Santa Clara Creek watershed restoration plan that



Photo by Sean O'Neill

The Rio Grande as it flows through Corrales, looking back toward the Sandia Mountains

combines Indigenous knowledge with nature-based solutions such as creating bio-fences with woody debris to better manage grazing.

“Taking care of our sacred land and water is the most important value and purpose tribal people believe in, as it is at the core to sustaining our tradition and culture,” says John Waconda of Pueblo of Isleta and TNC in New Mexico’s Indigenous Partnership Program Manager. “Persevering through climatic changes and responding to environmental challenges is a communal responsibility, and the Rio Grande Water Fund is working hard to strengthen the tribal voice, bringing attention to tribal priorities, and contributing to our urgent societal decisions.”

Over the last 200 years, New Mexico has lost more than a third of its wetlands. Stream and wetland restoration are also a part of the RGWF’s initiative. Last month, a five-year, multi-partner collaborative effort near Taos reached its pinnacle with a large riparian restoration project that reconnected the Rio Fernando to its floodplain.

“Re-creating wetlands will slow the flow of water down the river and enable snowpack and rain to be gradually absorbed into the ground,” said Rachel Conn, deputy director of Amigos Bravos. “Healthy wetlands help prevent dangerous floods and provide clean water for downstream users.”

For more information, visit <https://riograndewaterfund.org/>.

<----- DIGITAL FUTURE cont'd

conservation?

Rich Schrader, a long time TU partner in New Mexico, doesn't think so. Rich is the director of River Source, a company that advances watershed resilience through education, restoration, and the preservation of traditional ways of life that promote conservation of water and land.

In Indigenous and rural Hispanic villages, River Source's projects involve community elders in mentoring and teaching youth on cultural adaptations to the harsh New Mexico landscape. These communities have wrung life out of the dirt by developing strategies for addressing

heatwaves and drought, flood and erosion, and fire. And they've done it well for many centuries.

River Source draws upon kids' technological proclivities to improve the health of land and waterways. Kids map project areas, use lasers to level fields, measure water quality with scientific instruments and monitor vegetation with their cell phones. There's hand work as well, moving rocks, repairing fences, planting willows, and collecting insects.

According to Schrader, “Many New Mexico youth love getting outdoors and connecting knowledge they gain from elders with the skills we teach in ecology and stewardship.

“Many young people don't have opportunities for these experiences. I witness excitement when youth fly drones for the first time and see the complexities of a stream meandering through a riparian area where they have gone fishing with family. When they combine that excitement and new awareness with a desire for improving water and land conditions, they become leaders and educate neighbors about the need for protecting the river from off-road vehicles, excessive grazing, and people camping too close to streams. We find that these experiences expose the kids we work with to career pathways. About 25 percent of our interns go on to academic or professional careers in conservation fields.”



Photo by Toner Mitchell

Perla Miramontes flies a drone to learn about the complexities of monitoring riparian areas.

2022 Highlights



Photo by Geoff Goins

JANUARY 2022: A devastating windstorm in December whipped through the west, leaving a trail of destruction, leaving many without power for weeks. (Also in January 2022 QuestaNews.com makes it's premier debut.)



Photo by Spencer Warnock

FEBRUARY 2022: Fifth and sixth-grade Alta Vista students made a quincee snow shelter for their Wilderness Skills Class taught by Mr. Spencer Warnock.



Courtesy Photo

MARCH 2022: The History of the Questa Mine, Part 1 of a 5-part series



Courtesy Photo

APRIL 2022: Questa Elects a New Mayor, Mayor John Anthony Ortega



Photo by Carrie Leven

JUNE 2022: National Trails Day was celebrated on our own Questa History Trail, with music, food and fun.



It is just impossible to pick just one highlight from each Issue.
To read more about the things our community accomplished in 2022 go online [QuestaNews.com](https://www.questa.com).
We have complete PDF's of all Issues going back to 2018 loaded online and online articles going back to 2021.



Courtesy Photo

MAY 2022: Cover story honoring Cerro military family, The Meads. Kory Mead, Adelita "Lita" Mead and son Jesse.



Photo by Alyana Leon

JULY 2022: There were 20 graduating seniors in the QHS Class of 2022, CONGRATULATIONS!



Courtesy Photo

AUGUST 2022: Vida Del Norte Coalition has been collaborating with Localogy to provide summer camp for the youth of our community.



Photo by Lynn Skall

SEPTEMBER 2022: Introducing the new Questa Police Chief, Ron Montez, and his family.



Photo by Dylan R.N. Crabb

DECEMBER 2022: Alta Vista Elementary/Intermediate School's New Principal, Elaine Romero!



Photo by Feliz Ortega

OCTOBER 2022: Questa Achievers 4-H Club won big at the Taos County Fair and earned spots at the New Mexico State Fair.



Courtesy Photo

NOVEMBER 2022: Red River Celebrated First Responders

Thanks To All Who Care For Our Community Cats

By GAEA MCGAHEE

One day last June a cat appeared in the Sala garden while I was eating lunch. She was interested in my canned fish, but kept her distance. She was a thin white cat and it was clear she wasn't anyone's pet. I left her some fish and began to see her daily. About a week or two later she arrived with her four kittens. They looked to be 9 weeks old and they would nurse and play in the garden.

I put cat food out for them and I knew we would need to do something to keep from having a cat population boom. Female cats can have up to three litters per year. For a cat that is struggling to feed herself, especially in the winter, providing for kittens can be very hard, especially in the winter.

That mama cat was pretty tame, though her kittens didn't trust people. Many months later, feeding them regularly with lots of help from Sala teachers, kids from the ballet group, and many friends and cat lovers, these cats are now more tolerant and used to our coming and going, though they hide when we are near. They have a great cat house, thanks to Joseph Lightman, where they can keep warm, together, through winter.

At the end of August we found five tiny kittens, five or six weeks old. There was a second mama cat; very wild, she wanted nothing to do with people. Her kittens were young enough that we were able to socialize them and get them homes. They now live in Albuquerque, Cerro, Questa, and northern Colorado.

We began to follow the trap, neuter, return approach for our community of cats. It is a humane method and prevents the vacuum effect; caring for a wild cat colony keeps more from coming.

Our wild mama cats and two of our female kittens, now 7 months old, have been spayed (in other words, trapped, neutered, but returned to their chosen home). We have to neuter two more and then our cat group can hold steady at six. We've become the caretakers of this little colony. We're their feeders and they are always on time.

These cats didn't belong to anyone. We read a definition from the Maui Human Society's website that describes them as "Community Cats." This "is a term used to describe outdoor, unowned, free-roaming cats . . . that may be social or unsocial, but cannot be traced back to any one owner."

We know there are a lot of community cats out there and people like us who take care of them. It can feel overwhelming. It

can be hard to catch them and take them to a vet to get neutered. If you need help, or a cat carrier, a cage, or company you can reach us at yogasalaquesta@gmail.com, (575) 224-2102.

As for our wildish community cats, they are welcome to live at in the Sala garden where we will always provide them food and a home.

You can support our efforts by:

1. Buying a Sala T-shirt (all proceeds go to the cats)
2. Donating to this effort (cat food, money, time)
3. Help put food out for the six Sala cats

You can support community cats, and animal welfare in general, by:

1. Supporting local groups working for animal welfare
2. Becoming the caretaker of a cat group, and helping to get them neutered
3. By adopting a couple of young kittens, they will grow to be domesticated

Finally, here are wonderful ideas for building shelters for wild cats: <https://www.christinedemerchant.com/feral-cat-shelter.html>

Questa Del Rio News published an interview with Mayor John Ortega in our September 2022 edition on the feral feline and wild dog population in Questa. Since then the Northern New Mexico Friends of Animals will have fixed 11 cats by Jan. 12. This is great news. Thank you NNMFOA! Here is our updated list of resources.

SPAY AND NEUTER PETS, STRAYS and FERAL FELINES!

Northern New Mexico Friends of Animals are right here in Questa. They run a no-kill shelter, offer adoption services and foster care for dogs and cats and other animals. They provide free microchip service and registration. They work closely with other local groups, including veterinarians and spay and neuter clinics. If anyone is interested in adopting barn cats, please call Holly Howard at (575) 586-0784. For more information, visit <https://www.adoptapet.com/shelter/79240-northern-new-mexico-friends-of-animals-questa-new-mexico>

Animal Protection New Mexico is a non-profit organization that assists New Mexico Counties in providing low-cost or free spay/neuter programs and provides a directory of services here: <https://>



Photos by Gaea McGahee

Sala cats on the garden fence, December 2022.

The community cats at Yoga Sala have a wonderful cat house, thanks to Joseph Lightman, where they can keep warm, together, through winter.

apnm.org/what-we-do/building-foundations-to-keep-animals-safe/new-mexico-spay-neuter-resources-directory/taos-county/.

Taos County sometimes has spay and neuter vouchers which will be available again sometime in the spring. All animals must be registered for \$10 for two years to be eligible for spay and neuter services. For more information, to register and schedule appointments, please call Taos County Animal Control at (575) 737-6488. Please keep in mind that Animal Control personnel work in the field and will return calls before and after business hours and during lunch hours.

Zimmer Feline Foundation offers free cat spaying/neutering for Town of Taos, Taos County, and Taos Pueblo cats. Zimmer uses Angel Fire Veterinary and maybe Salazar Veterinary. They send out vouchers that are good for 90 days after you call, and then you make your own appointment with the vet. (505) 466-1676

Taos Feral Feline Friends: Pays to Help Strays Program helps people adopt stray cats of Taos County and the Enchanted Circle by providing spay/neuter surgery, vet-recommended testing, and vaccines. To be eligible, the adopter must



contact TFFF within 60 days, or in advance, of the adoption. Cats from shelters, pet stores, or breeders are not eligible for this program. (575) 758-3519

Spay, Neuter & Vaccines for Dogs and Cats available to low-income pet owners of Town of Taos, Taos County and Taos Pueblo and for all feral, outdoor, barn cats, which are also eligible for free vaccinations. Dogs and cats must be between 8 weeks and 8 years of age. Española Valley Humane Society (505) 753-0228

Stray Hearts Animal Shelter in Taos has many dogs and cats, ready for adoption. They ensure all its animals are "spayed/neutered, dewormed, microchipped, and fully vaccinated," according to its website: <https://www.strayhearts.org/about-us> (575) 758-2981.

Chevron's Gabriel Herrera Takes Up Mantel from Christian Isely

By STAFF WRITERS

Questa Del Rio News' editorial team recently had the opportunity to sit down over lunch with Christian Isely and Gabriel Herrera from the Chevron Questa Project. They announced some big news. Christian has joined Chevron's State Government Affairs Team in Santa Fe, where he will help manage Chevron's relationships with the state legislature, state agencies, and the governor's office. In that role, he will continue to support the Questa Project and also support Chevron's operations statewide, including in the Permian Basin.

Gabriel is taking over Christian's role as Chevron's local Public Affairs Advisor for the Questa Project. He will manage Chevron's relationships with the Village of Questa and surrounding communities along with management of Chevron's property divestments, social investment, and local media relations. Here is a recap of our conversation:

Q: Christian, you've been on the Questa Project for eight years now, how do you think Questa has fared since the mine closure of 2014?

A: The Village of Questa and the community has made great progress since the mine closure. I arrived about six months after it closed. I remember the tremendous uncertainty of those times; it was a big shock. Fortunately, we had great leadership from the Village of Questa and the Questa Economic Development Fund (QEDF). Both organizations worked together on the economic development plan which set out a vision for a post-mining economy. That vision is now being realized via several projects. There is certainly a great deal of economic development going on now due to our environmental remediation of the former mine site — job creation, more business activity, increases in tax revenue. However, most of that work will end one day, likely in the 2040s. By pursuing economic diversification now, Questa will be in strong economic shape when that day finally comes.

Q: Christian, you mention several economic development projects. What projects have benefitted Questa the most?

A: The ones that come to mind are completion of the business park build-out, river restoration, the Questa Del Rio News, and joint strategizing on water



Photo by E. Wilde

Christian Isely (right), outgoing Chevron Public Affairs Advisor, who has taken a post with Chevron in Santa Fe and Gabriel Herrera (left), native *Questaño*, who is stepping into the role to continue Chevron's support of the Questa Project.

rights. The business park required a lot of effort but was successful in leveraging Chevron funding with state and federal resources for concrete results. The Village is now better poised to recruit businesses in addition to current tenant Taos Bakes. The restoration of trout habitat along the Red River is already a benefit for locals while serving as a draw for tourists to one of our greatest recreational assets.

I want to especially emphasize the success of the *Questa Del Rio News*. Not only does the paper serve as an economic development tool by celebrating Questa's successes and improvements to our local quality of life, but it also gives the community a strong voice on some very important issues. Chevron congratulates the paper on its success and looks forward to continuing our support.

Lastly, one of those important issues is water rights. We thank the paper for covering this issue and emphasizing how important it is. Water is vital to the future of this community. Without water rights, farmers can't develop local sustainable agriculture, the Village of Questa can't provide its residential and commercial users the water they need, and the prospect of a strong future built on locally produced renewable energy is greatly diminished. Chevron has asked me to continue to lead on water rights

advocacy in my new role. We hope to see resolution of this issue as we continue to negotiate with the New Mexico Office of State Engineer.

Q: Christian, what will you miss most about Questa?

A: The people. By far, the people. The people of Questa welcomed me from the very beginning. I can name a few folks who've really helped me understand the local culture and community. Malaquias Rael, Jamie Archuleta, Mark Gallegos, Louise Gallegos, and Gordon Robinson are some of the folks I've gotten to know professionally and as friends. Their insights have proven immensely valuable over the years. Mayor John Ortega, and village attorneys Marcus Rael and Chris DeFillippo have been great on leading economic development efforts including river restoration and green energy production.

I've really enjoyed working with Lou McCall at the *Questa Del Rio News* as they've covered the mine and water rights. And it has been phenomenal working with Lynn Skall at the QEDF especially on the New Mexico True Campaign and the recent acequia benefit concert. That's just a few of many people. Questa has a strong bench of community leadership to carry it into the future. I am happy to say this is not really a "goodbye." Although I will be based in

Santa Fe, I will visit as often as I can, both in my new role and due to family ties. I am so happy to see my daughter Josefa growing up in Questa.

Q: Gabriel, we know you grew up in Questa. What would you like to share about your family, educational, and professional background? Hobbies and interests?

A: I am the son of Amos and Pauline Herrera and a proud graduate of Questa High School, class of 2002. Following high school, I received my bachelor's degree in Secondary Education from the University of New Mexico in 2006. Later that year I returned to Questa to teach high school science. During my four years at the school, I also served as athletic director and coached the soccer team. When the mine had a layoff in 2008 the school's population declined over the next couple years and there were not enough students to justify having three science teachers at the secondary level, so I had to move on. After a brief stint at the Questa Credit Union, I eventually took a job at the mine that was only supposed to last two weeks. In the 11 years since I have held several different positions and I am about to take on an exciting new role.

Most of my hobbies and interests involve the outdoors, which is one of the reasons I wanted to return to Questa. I enjoy hiking and have hiked just about every mountain in the Questa area, many of them several times. I hunt deer and elk in the Questa area and fish exclusively at the Rio Grande in the same spots I did with my dad growing up. My favorite hobby is gold prospecting, which is another interest I picked up from my dad. Unfortunately, there is not a lot of gold to be found in the Questa area, but it is still a great hobby, and I am already looking forward to the late spring when I can get out to do some panning.

Q: Gabriel, what are you most excited to accomplish in your new role?

A: I am excited to be more involved in the economic development and social investment efforts in my hometown. In my former roles I am proud of the projects I have overseen, such as the removal of the tailing pipeline between the former Mill and Tailing Facility and how much those projects have restored

TAKING UP THE MANTEL cont'd on pg 28



Fog Farming

The Atacama Desert in northern Chile is one of the driest places on Earth. Its dwindling reservoirs and falling water tables are forcing local communities to ration water. But the area does have heavy coastal fog that is captured by nearby thirsty forests. Now researchers are bio-mimicking this process with fog-catching nets to solve the water shortage.

Huge polypropylene nets are strung tightly between poles and placed over gutters that lead to plastic drums. As tiny droplets condense on the mesh, the water pools into the troughs to be stored for drinking and crop irrigation.

Consistent innovations in materials are improving fog yields and reduc-

ing the size of the equipment needed, allowing easier, small-scale solutions such as portable, fog-collecting water bottles.

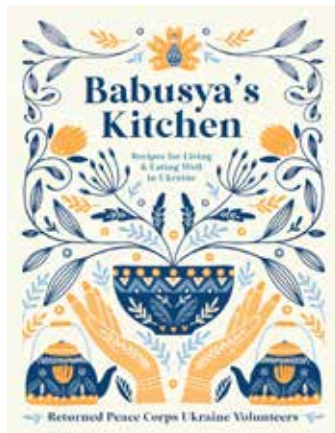
Built like large wind farms, these fog farms are capable of producing enough water to sustain life and even make the desert bloom, all without requiring any man-made energy.

Fog farming might also combat climate change by harnessing weather in a way that helps the environment through encouraging forest growth and renewing soils — both of which consume carbon dioxide.

This simple solution could turn the driest deserts on earth into lush farmland where gardens can grow.

“Building community through creativity.” [SecoLive.org Audio Story: https://mcusercontent.com/6dd23531465f1c13f80eb7d84/files/07a23f1e-d25e-0973-a08c-ac0d7b67c3e4/GN_7.64_FogFarming.mp3](https://mcusercontent.com/6dd23531465f1c13f80eb7d84/files/07a23f1e-d25e-0973-a08c-ac0d7b67c3e4/GN_7.64_FogFarming.mp3)
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Babusya’s Kitchen, Recipes for Living & Eating Well in Ukraine



Currently, there are no U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers in Ukraine—only an unwanted and unprovoked war. As an act of peaceful protest, the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV) Alliance for Ukraine has republished Babusya’s Kitchen to raise funds for Ukraine relief efforts.

This newly adapted edition is designed to raise awareness of Ukraine’s

rich culinary contributions and inspire new American audiences to make a pot of borsch. Babusya’s Kitchen was originally written for Peace Corps Volunteers to use during their two years of service in Ukraine, providing instructions needed to make local dishes at home and to recreate American and international favorites with ingredients available at their local stores and outdoor markets. The book included contributions from Peace Corps Volunteers, staff, host families, and recipes that were modified for life in Ukraine.

The hardcover book is \$30. Funds raised will support humanitarian aid and help preserve Ukraine’s cultural legacy. By December 2022, the fundraiser sold enough cookbooks to purchase an ambulance in Ukraine! Order here: <https://www.allianceforukraine.org/articles/announcing-the-babusyas-kitchen-cookbook>. See recipe from *Babusya’s Kitchen* on page 22.



Substance Abuse Finding to QISD Board

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

At the Dec. 7 Board Meeting of Questa Independent School District Maria Gonzalez, Interim Coordinator for the Vida del Norte Coalition presented findings from a “risk and resilience survey” conducted on Questa Independent School District high school students regarding substance abuse. The study focused primarily on alcohol and electronic cigarettes.

“We try to educate the kids to make sure they are not drinking and driving,” Gonzalez told the Board. “Alcohol is associated with motor vehicle crashes which are the leading cause of death in adolescents.”

Gonzalez explained how the study showed a slight decrease in alcohol use from 43 percent of students to 28 percent of students throughout the year of 2021 but revealed that they were unable to survey the 10th graders so the data may be slightly incomplete.

“We don’t know if it’s a result of what we’re doing, what the school’s doing, what parents are doing, or if it was a direct impact from COVID-19 with kids being home,” Gonzalez remarked on the decrease. “We will take the survey again in 2023.”

Electronic cigarette use (e-cigarettes or e-cigs) also showed a slight decrease from 68 percent to 58 percent. According to Gonzalez and this risk and resilience survey, e-cigarettes have become a larger phenomenon than alcohol at Questa High School. Students were also questioned on so-called perceptions of risks regarding e-cigarettes and there still remains a perception of reduced risk in e-cigarettes relative to alcohol. There is also an element of peer pressure involved in the perception of popularity around e-cigarettes. We are all familiar with the cliché, “all the cool kids are doing it.” The cigarettes are electronic now.

The United States Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that

e-cigarettes are technically safer than traditional cigarettes “but that does not mean that they are safe (CDC, https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/about-e-cigarettes.html, accessed 12/14/2022).”

E-cigarette aerosol contains fewer toxic chemicals than regular cigarette smoke but it is not harmless; it can be cancer-causing like regular cigarette smoke. “One question I asked [students] was, ‘was it hard to be at school and vape,’ and every single one of them said no and laughed about it,” said Gonzalez. “It’s easy to conceal, it’s not hard. They were very honest.”

The silver lining in this survey is, among students who started vaping then stopped, most of them did not miss it, which means vaping may show less of a propensity for addiction. Student athletes also showed less propensity to continue using e-cigarettes due to an effect on athletic performance. More data will be available in 2024 after the next risk and resilience survey is conducted.

A recording of the 12/07/2022 QISD Board meeting is available on the *Questa del Rio News* Facebook page at the following web address: <https://fb.watch/hp-VN5hoBI/>.

Thank You

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Happy New Year!!**



Seasonal Changes On The Carson National Forest



Courtesy Photo

By LADOSHIE HOLMAN

The Carson National Forest will be going through a series of changes that take place annually each year on Jan. 1.

Seasonal Road Closures

Carson National Forest roads close Jan. 1 through April 30, per the Forest's Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUMs). Some of these seasonally closed roads will be gated and others may not; it is everyone's responsibility to "know before you go" by checking the appropriate MVUM. If weather conditions are favorable, roads may open early. If weather conditions are not favorable, roads may stay closed until they are safe, and travel will not cause damage to the road.

Seasonal closures are implemented primarily for public safety. Hazardous road conditions including snow and ice can make traveling difficult. Motorists should be aware of road conditions on loop roads as they may be impassable due to snowpack in the high country. Often, people in vehicles become stranded, resulting in emergency response. Learn more about being prepared for winter, as well as other activities on the Forest by visiting Know Before You Go. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/visit/know-before-you-go>

Fuelwood Permits

Fuelwood permits purchased in 2022 expired at the end of the year. Sales for 2023 permits will resume Jan. 3.

Valle Vidal

The east side of the Valle Vidal, a wildlife wintering area, will close Jan. 1 until April 1. During this closure, visitors may drive through the entire unit using Forest Road 1950 but cannot

venture from the road. The closure includes recreation sites, such as Shuree Ponds and the two campgrounds: Mc-Crystal and Cimarron. Although Forest Road 1950 will remain open, snow often closes it, limiting access during much of winter. This road is not maintained for winter travel and can often become treacherous. If you must travel on Forest Road 1950, call the Questa Ranger District at (575) 586-0520 for a conditions report.

Canjilon and Trout Lakes

In the Canjilon Lakes area, Forest Road 129 is not open past the gate as it is notorious for snow drifts. Please plan accordingly or avoid this area during winter months. In addition, Forest Road 125, which accesses Trout Lakes, is also closed.

Helpful Tips

- Check and use the Carson National Forest Motor Vehicle Use Maps that show roads, motorized trails and lands that are designated for motor vehicle use and seasonal information. Mobile phone users should download them on the Avenza App.
- Check weather and road conditions; contact the local ranger district for more information on seasonal road closures. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/gila/maps-pubs/?width=full&cid=FSEPRD585896>
- Be aware of changing conditions, including trees and debris across roadways especially in areas where recent storms have occurred.
- Let someone know where you are going, when you will be returning and what route you plan to take.



NORTH CENTRAL RTD Blue Bus Update

By JIM NAGLE,
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

On Dec. 9, North Central RTD introduced the new look for its RTD Blue Buses. Now simply known as the Blue Bus, the newly branded buses will begin rolling out throughout the District over the coming months and over the next couple of years.

As part of the rebranding, the District will call itself the North Central RTD rather than North Central Regional Transit District. Over the years, users of the service have commonly referred to it as the Blue Bus or RTD Blue Bus and the new branding will make use of that with the simple brand as the Blue Bus.

The new logo and branding was created by Studio Six Branding after a series of Discovery sessions with area stakeholders. It incorporates elements of the land and presents a celebration of cultural diversity and inclusivity. This was inspired by the majestic and

awe-inspiring northern New Mexico landscape and symbols at the heart of the communities it serves.

The new bus design incorporates mountains, mesas, and blue skies so prominent in the northern New Mexico landscapes. It also incorporates elements of eagle feathers, symbols that were raised by area Pueblos during a Discovery session with the North Central RTD Tribal subcommittee and members of their Pueblos.

Along the top of the bus are translations of the word Blue in various languages commonly spoken in the region with Spanish, Tewa and Tiwa, as well as French and German. The Tewa translations were provided by Nambè Pueblo and Ohkay Owingeh, and the Tiwa translation by Picuris Pueblo.

North Central RTD is in the process of purchasing 19 new buses including ten electric vehicles. All of the buses will feature the new branding. In the past bus purchases would have roughly a nine-month delivery time, but today due to supply chain issues that window has extended to one to two years.

The North Central RTD provides bus public transit service throughout the counties of Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, Taos, and Los Alamos, and to each of the Eight Northern Pueblos and the Jicarilla Apache Nation. Its service area encompasses more than 10,000 square miles of northern New Mexico.

Happy New Year!

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JANUARY IS NATIONAL SOUP MONTH!

What better way to celebrate winter than with a hot bowl of delicious comforting soup to warm your bones.

Borshch

From Babusya's Kitchen, Recipes for Living & Eating Well in Ukraine

- 1 large beet (or two small ones), peeled and grated
- 1 chicken leg on bone
- 2 medium whole tomatoes
- 1 carrot, peeled and grated
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 T sunflower oil
- 1/4 t salt
- 1/4 t pepper
- 1 or 2 green peppers, sliced
- 2-3 potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 handful dried white beans, pre-soaked overnight
- 1 bouillon cube, optional
- 1 spoonful tomato paste
- 3 C thinly sliced cabbage
- 1 T chopped fresh parsley
- 1 T chopped fresh dill
- Sour cream (smetana), for serving
- Pampushkey, for serving (traditional Ukrainian garlic rolls)

If the beet is hard in the fall or winter, boil it for 45 minutes to one hour the evening before until it's medium soft.

In large soup pot with 6-8 cups of cold water, place the chicken leg and bring water to boil. Wash tomatoes and add to the boiling water, whole. Boil for 15 minutes, remove the tomatoes and chicken. When the tomatoes are cool, peel them and chop roughly. Clean the chicken off the bone, don't discard the bone, set both aside

Meanwhile, peel and grate softened beet. In frying pan, heat oil and fry grated beets, carrot, and onion for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, add sliced green pepper and sauté for 5 minutes more.

Add potatoes to chicken stock, along with bone, and handful of soaked white beans. Simmer for 5 minutes, until potatoes are softened but keep their form. Add the fried vegetable mixture, tomato paste, chopped boiled tomatoes, and chicken pieces to the pot. Simmer for 15 more minutes, then add the sliced cabbage, parsley, and dill. Simmer for 10 more minutes, and then remove the bone. Serve with a holiday dollop of smetana (sour cream) and pampushkey.



Cauliflower Cheese Soup

From Ellen Miller-Goins

"This is the best soup I've ever had," my niece Helena exclaimed after dinner one night. She is a thoughtful dinner guest, but there is a reason I go back to this and other favorites from the original Moosewood Cookbook: It is full of delicious vegetarian recipes even a meat-eater can love. (I am not a vegetarian - I love a green chile cheeseburger as much as the next person - but Mollie Katzen could make a convert out of anyone. Seriously.)

The Moosewood Cookbook has since been revised to include low-fat versions of its recipes.

Whole milk, sour cream, cheese, butter... many of these recipes are far from low-fat. The "Rarebit" - an old-fashioned Welsh cheese sauce spiked with beer - is, perhaps quite literally, to die for. The "Cream of Spinach Soup" made a vegetable eater out of my vegetable-shy son, William. This one - "Cauliflower Cheese Soup" - is warm, delicious, and filling on a winter day. I have altered the original recipe to suit my tastes. Check out the Moosewood Cookbook for the unaltered version.

- 2-3 large potatoes, peeled, and diced
- 1 large cauliflower, stems removed and florets separated (I'll use frozen cauliflower in a pinch.)
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 1/2 C onion, chopped
- 1 1/2 t salt
- 4 C vegetable stock or water
- 1-1/2 to 2 C grated cheddar cheese (I like extra sharp)
- 3/4 C milk (try using unsweetened veggie milk, such as oat milk or almond milk)
- 1 t fresh dill (or 1/4 teaspoon dried dill)
- 1/4 t dry mustard
- Black pepper

Place the cauliflower florets, potato, carrot, garlic, onion, salt and water into a pot. Turn heat to high and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook until the vegetables are very tender, about 15 to 20 minutes.**

Puree with a high speed blender (like a DASH, VitaMix, Blendtec, etc.), or in batches in a regular blender. Return the soup to the pot. Add cheddar cheese, milk, dill and mustard. Season to taste with black pepper and salt.

Optional: Serve with grated cheddar cheese or shredded parmesan cheese, diced chives and crusty bread.

**Once again, I want to tout the joys of cooking with an Instant Pot. With this useful tool for high-altitude cooking, the vegetables cook in a minimal amount of time.

Mushroom Barley Soup

This recipe was sent to us by Linda Friedman, who found the recipe on Epicurious.com. She said it was one of her family's favorite soups.

- 1/2 ounce dried Polish mushrooms or dried porcini mushrooms*
- 6 T unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3/4 pound fresh mushrooms, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 2 stalks celery with leaves, diced
- 1 large carrot, peeled and diced
- 1/4 C chopped fresh parsley
- 1 T all-purpose flour
- 1 quart low-sodium beef broth*
- 3/4 C barley, rinsed
- 2 t kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

*Using a blend of fresh or dried mushrooms is also nice. Try shiitake, cremini, or button.

Put the dried mushrooms in a bowl and cover them with 2 cups of boiling water. Allow them to soak for 1 hour. Strain the mushrooms through a cheesecloth-lined sieve into a bowl. Reserve the liquid. Coarsely chop the mushrooms and set aside.

Melt butter in a large, heavy stockpot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add onions and sauté until softened and translucent, about 8 minutes. Add garlic and sauté about 2 more minutes. Add fresh mushrooms, celery, carrot, and half of the parsley, and sauté until the mushrooms are golden and the celery and carrots are beginning to soften, about 10 minutes. Stir in flour until well blended. If you use dried mushrooms, stir in mushroom soaking liquid, soaked mushrooms, beef broth, and 4 cups of water. Stir in the barley, salt, and pepper to taste.

Bring the mixture to a boil, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to low and simmer until the barley is tender, about 30 to 40 minutes. If the soup is too thick, add a little more water. Add salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle with remaining parsley before serving.

*[Editor's note: If you are vegetarian, try substituting a mix of soy sauce, tamari or Bragg's Aminos for the beef broth with a bit of nutritional yeast (do NOT cook with Brewer's yeast, it isn't tasty!)]



Vegetarian Green Chili Stew

From Ellen Miller-Goins

First, a caveat: I live at 8,750 feet (about 2,667 meters) above sea level, so I always use an instant pot. If you are cooking everything on a stovetop, your cooking times will vary.

- 4 Yukon Gold potatoes - thick chunks
- 4 carrots - thick chunks
- 3 medium stalks celery - chopped
- 2 medium onions - chopped
- 4 garlic cloves - diced
- 1 box (about 10 oz) cremini mushrooms
- 4 cups Vegetable Broth
- 1 - 2 T olive oil (or butter or water)
- 1 - 2 pounds roasted green chili peppers - chopped
- 2 t ground cumin
- 1 t dried oregano
- 1/4 t dried sage
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes (or use fresh tomatoes to taste)
- Fresh-ground pepper to taste
- Salt to taste (optional)
- Optional additions:
- 2 large zucchini - whole
- 1 cauliflower, cut into large florets
- 2 C (or two cans) white beans
- 2-3 Chipotle Peppers (canned in adobo sauce)

Place potatoes, carrots, celery, onions and garlic in an Instant Pot, large saucepan, or stock pot with 4 cups vegetable stock. Cook until tender (I do 4 minutes on the "soup" setting of my Instant Pot).

Meanwhile, in a large pot sauté mushrooms in butter, oil (or water) for 5 minutes. Add spices, sauté for a few minutes more, then add tomatoes and green chile and continue to sauté over low to medium heat until tender. Add to vegetables in Instant Pot. Continue to simmer until done. (The longer it simmers, the more the flavors meld.)

Variation: My son, William hates squash and beans so I have taken to adding the squash whole (and sometimes the cauliflower, too) at the top of the instant pot then pureeing them (after cooking) with the white beans and two or three chipotle peppers (the kind that come canned in adobo sauce) with a high speed blender (like a DASH, VitaMix, Blendtec, etc.), or in batches in a regular blender, before adding to the stew. As a bonus, this adds a lovely, creamy texture to the stew.

Serving suggestions:

Choose from among the following: avocado slices, guacamole, thick, creamy yogurt, grated cheese, goat cheese, fresh tomatoes, fresh cilantro, pico de gallo, salsa, tortillas (whole wheat or corn) or cornbread (I make it fresh using gluten-free flour).

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Why Value Local News 2022: Part 2

A Path Forward: How to fill the gaps in local news

By PENNY ABERNATHY
BUSINESSOFNEWS.COM

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Designing Policies to Support Local News

Although the U.S. spends much less per person to support public media than any other Western-style democracy, local news organizations have historically benefited from indirect taxpayer support.

As policymakers at the state and national levels have looked for ways to support local news, they have relied not only on historical precedent – including postal subsidies that date back to 1792 – but also on lessons learned from European and Asian counterparts who are pioneering new approaches.

Two bills before Congress in 2022 reflect the dual approach. The Journalism Competition and Preservation Act (JCPA) draws on Australian legislation passed in 2021, which mandated that Meta and Google had to negotiate with news organizations and come up with a formula for compensating them for use of their content.

News organizations estimate that these negotiations have injected \$200 million in Australian money into the budgets of the country's news outlets – although it is unclear how much went to the two dozen smaller local newspapers that participated. Supporters are hoping Congress will vote on the U.S. version of the bill, which has bipartisan support, this fall.

While the JCPA is modeled on legislation crafted abroad, the Local Journalism Sustainability Act (LJSA), which would have provided \$1.7 billion in tax credits to news organizations that hire journalists to cover local news and events, built on the U.S. tradition of using both federal and state subsidies and tax credits to support certain industries.

Although the LJSA was cut from the recently passed Inflation Reduction Act, supporters are hoping to bring it back in a revised version in 2023. In the meantime, it has inspired several state legislators to introduce similar proposals. A bill in Wisconsin with bipartisan support would provide tax credits to local businesses that advertise in local newspapers. Legislators

in a handful of other states have proposed credits for taxpayers who subscribe to local newspapers and digital sites.

The JCPA was introduced in the US Senate on March 10, 2021, and is currently listed on the Senate Legislative Calendar under “General Orders” (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/673>). No further actions on this bill.

The LJSA was introduced into the US House on June 16, 2021, referred to the Ways & Means Committee (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/3940>). No further actions on this bill.

Given the highly charged partisan politics in both Washington and many state capitals, Steve Waldman, founder of Rebuild Local News, a coalition of 17 industry organizations, is looking at existing federal and state policies that would support local ownership of news outlets, especially in low- and moderate-income communities, as well as minority communities

To that end, Rebuild Local News is urging the Federal Reserve to utilize the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) to provide financial assistance to struggling small, independent for-profit and nonprofit news organizations located in economically struggling areas. Many of those organizations have difficulty getting credit and equity financing that will keep their businesses viable. Waldman notes that at least 1,500 locally owned newspapers and dozens of digital outlets serve low- or moderate-income communities. In addition, there are more than 400 local outlets in Black communities and more than 600 in Hispanic communities.

“I’m convinced that there are a lot of existing policies and regulations that can come to the aid of local news organizations,” said Waldman. “In addition to pursuing new legislation, we need to identify current programs and make the case that local news needs to be funded because it is essential to the health of a community.”

Media scholar Robert Picard, senior fellow at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, who has consulted with media organizations around the globe, endorses rethinking U.S. communication policies and regulations to “incentivize” media companies to invest in local news. However, he adds, “The key is making sure that any incentive actually is used for what it was intended – supporting and improving local news – and doesn’t go toward paying bonuses to executives.”

In addition to focusing on efforts to

save local newspapers, he said, “we should be insisting that both radio stations, and television stations beef up their local news coverage. A broadcast license is a privilege and should come with requirements for serving the community where it is located.”

Increasing and Redirecting Funding to News Deserts

Outside of several dozen large cities, we are a nation of small towns and communities. Seventy five percent of the nation’s 20,000 incorporated cities have fewer than 5,000 residents; 40 percent have fewer than 500 residents.

Many of the 2,500 papers lost since 2005 have been small weeklies and dailies serving these communities. Most are not large enough to support either a for-profit newspaper or nonprofit digital start-up, according to Picard, who estimates a news organization needs at least 1,000 subscribers – and the strong financial backing of either advertisers or deep-pocket philanthropists – to be viable.

While there has been a significant increase in financial support for local news in recent years, the vast majority of the venture and philanthropic money has gone to outlets located in major urban areas – not to communities “lacking a critical mass of reporters,” according media scholar Nikki Usher, author of *News for the Rich, White and Blue*.

Both the Institute for Nonprofit News (INN) and LION (Local Independent Online Publishers) – which provide support to hundreds of for-profit and nonprofit news organizations – have developed extensive workshops and material to help legacy and digital operations diversify their revenue streams and craft sustainable business models. But many of the tactics they suggest – such as increasing subscriber revenue – are of limited value in smaller markets, where most outlets remain dependent on advertising – or major grants and donations – for as much as 80 percent of their budget.

Complicating matters for those who rely on philanthropy for their funding, there is a significant disparity between size of the endowments of community foundations in large metro areas compared to those in small and mid-sized communities. This significantly limits the amount of money that foundations in smaller communities can distribute to worthy causes, such as journalism.

Additionally, many community and family foundations have bylaws or practices specifying that grants can only be made

to nonprofit organizations. Yet, as a report published by Report for America notes, “in some communities . . . for-profit news organizations are the only providers of local news.”

To get around the philanthropic funding constraints in smaller markets, an increasing number of for-profit and nonprofit news organizations are looking to large national and global foundations to fund specific reporting projects, on topics such as education, criminal justice or health.


However, the bigger opportunity, said Anna Brugmann, manager of policy development for Rebuild Local News, is getting large foundations with bylaws that prioritize funding specific projects around education or health, for example, “to consider journalism as a horizontal (funding opportunity) that supports their vertical funding priorities. Newsrooms help educate the public and provide critical information to residents and businesses,” she points out. “By investing in journalism, foundations are more likely to achieve their goals in the vertical areas – such as education and health – that they prioritize.”

The Border Belt Independent, established in 2021 to cover the news in four of the poorest counties in North Carolina with large minority populations, is an example of the “horizontal” funding approach. Funded by the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, which typically supports projects aimed at improving the health of residents in rural, low-income areas, the site covers not only traditional health news, but also criminal justice, economic development, education and politics – all related to the long-term “health” of communities in the area.

Until more philanthropic organizations embrace “horizontal” funding of local news organizations, Picard suggests foundations should “focus on funding statewide news outlets, with a requirement that the reporters for those providers identify and cover the communities where there are critical information gaps, and tackle issues that span multiple communities in a region.”


To read this article in its entirety, visit <https://questanews.com/> or visit:

<https://localnewsinitiative.northwestern.edu/posts/2022/08/30/filling-gaps-in-local-news/index.html>



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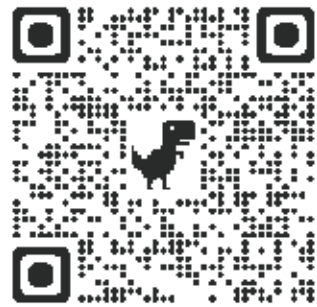
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To register, contact Gayle Martinez
gaylelwm@msn.com







We welcome everyone's participation even if you did not attend the first workshop.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
COMPLIMENTARY LUNCH INCLUDED


Facilitator Louis Jeantete, Turquoise Door Consulting of Taos

- Review outcomes from the April 2022 Workshop
- Participate in interactive activities to identify key community initiatives for 2023

EVENT SPONSORS

Chevron is proud to sponsor this ad in support of the Questa Del Rio News.



O B I T U A R I E S



Valerie Bailon

Valerie Bailon, age 59, a resident of Taos, passed away peacefully on December 9, 2022. She was preceded in death by her parents, Jimmy and Loretta Bailon, grandparents Amarante and Jessie Cortez, and Bernabe Bailon and Bertha Ortiz, as well as uncle and aunt Cipriano and Betty Herrera, plus many other loving relatives. Valerie loved her entire family dearly, she enjoyed spending time and loved to travel with her sister, nephews and niece. She was employed for over 25 years with Bond Plumbing as their administrator. She is survived by her sister Yolanda Bailon, nephews, Brandon, Matthew and niece Delilah Trujillo, special cousin, Jessica Maestas, plus many other loving relatives and friends.

Rosary will be recited on Friday December 30, 2022 at 9:00am, Funeral Mass will follow at 10:00am at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church. A meal in Valerie's honor will be served at St. Joseph's Hall immediately following.



Neil DeHerrera

Neil James DeHerrera, 48, a resident of Española NM, joined our Lord and Savior, on Monday, Dec. 5, 2022. He is preceded in death by his maternal Grandfather Fredrick DeHerrera, paternal grandparents Honorio and Juanita Rael, Uncle Fredrick David DeHerrera, Cousins Dennis Rael, Leona Quintana, Johnny Lawson, and friends Chris Valdez and Dina Barron-Ortiz.

Neil was born to Diana DeHerrera and Joseph Rael on May 14, 1974. He was raised in Questa, N.M., graduated from Questa High School and attended Northern New Mexico College where he met the love of his life, Melinda DeHerrera. Neil had a lengthy career at Windstream Telecommunications and formerly the Local 6171 NM Union Representative and Steward.

Neil was a strong, loving, giving, compassionate, loyal and devoted husband, father, son, grandson, brother, uncle, nephew, godfather, godson, and friend. He led by example and always tried to help those in need. He led many fundraising events, especially for children. Neil enjoyed watching his five children play sports and living their lives as they grew. He enjoyed fishing, hunting and spending time with family and friends. Neil was a member of the Santa Cruz de la Canada Holy Cross Catholic Church and was a Peregrino who made the journey annually for vocations.

Neil is survived by his wife of 24 years, Melinda DeHerrera, his children, Shaniah, Neil Jr., Aspen, Maria and Abigail DeHerrera and like-his-own Orion Ortiz and Rose Hursho, his mother Diana DeHerrera and father Joseph Rael, grandmother Loyola DeHerrera, father-in-law, Jerry Valdez (Mercy), mother-in-law, Sarah DeWitt (Ron), brothers and sisters Craig Cisneros (Veronica), Nicole Romero (Daniel), Daniel Archuleta, Christina Montoya (Frank), Jose Rael, Jolene Rael Baca (Richard), brothers-in-laws, Vicente, Enrique, Josaia Valdez and sister-in-law Micaela Valdez, godparents Danette and David Quintana and Anthony Ates Espinoza, step-fathers Raymond Dino Archuleta and Eugene Archuleta, and numerous uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces and godchildren.

Serving as Pallbearers are: Craig Cisneros, Daniel Archuleta, Tom Cisneros, Enrique Valdez, Roberto Trujillo, Jeremy Blanco, Roy Blanco, and Neil Isaiah DeHerrera.

Honorary Pallbearers were

Shaniah DeHerrera, Aspen DeHerrera, Maria DeHerrera, Abigail DeHerrera, Orion Ortiz, Rose Hursho, Veronica Cisneros, Christina and Frank Montoya, Nicole and Daniel Romero, Isaac Romero, Vicente Valdez, Jose Rael, Jolene and Richard Baca, Andrea Cisneros, Marvin Martinez, Frank Quintana, Antonio Rael, Antonio Chavez, and his godchildren Daniel Romero Jr., Justin Rael, Julia Archuleta, Isabella Cisneros, Jamie Cisneros and Divina Rael.

A Rosary was held Monday, Dec. 12, 2022, at 7:00 pm at the Santa Cruz De La Canada Catholic Church in Santa Cruz, N.M. Mass of Christian Burial was on Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022, at 11 am at Santa Cruz de La Canada Catholic Church in Santa Cruz, N.M. Burial followed at Holy Cross Cemetery in El Llano, N.M.



Bill Donovan Jump

Bill Donovan Jump, 75, of Questa passed away on Nov. 23, 2022. He is survived by his wife, Darlynn K. Jump, son, Donovan Jump, daughters, Stephney Perkins (Greg), Katrina Tanner (Aaron) and Rebecca Ingalls, grandsons, Logan W. Ralls, Payson C. Tanner and Adler Z. Tanner, niece, Jessica R. Grosshardt, and many other relatives and friends. Bill has been a devoted and very loving husband for 56 years, a loving and committed father to his children and the best grandpa you could ask for. He was a respected local business owner of Sun Country Heating and Specialties located in Taos, N.M. for 25 years. He will be greatly missed by those who called him friend. We will see you soon, Papa! Arrangements by Rivera Family Funeral Home. To share a memory, please visit our website at www.riverafuneralhome.com



John and Judy Miller

Longtime Red River residents John Harris Miller and Helen Judy Miller both died Thanksgiving week, but not before leaving an indelible mark on their community — and on the sport of skiing in New Mexico.

Married 65 years, the couple died only four days apart. John, 88, died Sunday, Nov. 20, at Holy Cross Hospital in Taos. Judy, 86, died Thursday, Nov. 24, Thanksgiving Day at the family home.

John was born Aug. 5, 1934, to Francis and Edith Miller in Lubbock, Texas. He was raised in Sudan, Texas, and with his three siblings spent every summer of his youth in Red River where he fished, rode horses, and hiked all over the Enchanted Circle.

Billie Helen "Judy" Miller was born May 4, 1934, to Florence and William Dorrance in Oak Park, Ill. When Judy was around four years old, she decided to name herself "Judy" after Judy Garland, whom she had seen in *The Wizard of Oz*.

Judy's family moved to Denver, then Boulder, Colorado, where Judy graduated from Boulder High School. At the end of her sophomore year at UC Boulder Judy met John, a kha-ki-clad man serving lunch at his fraternity house. "He was just the cutest boy at Boulder and that's the truth," Judy said with a laugh. "He didn't know how adorable he was. That was one of his charms."

The two visited that day at lunch when John mentioned he liked to go tubing on Boulder Creek. When Judy commented that it sounded fun, John said, "We'll have to do that sometime." To which Judy replied, "How about this afternoon?" And that was it: They were inseparable. Three weeks later, he gave her his fraternity pin, which, Judy noted, "was like an engagement to be engaged." They married the

following winter on Feb. 3, 1957, before John entered the Navy.

They honeymooned in New Mexico, staying first at the Taos Inn, then skiing up to the Upper Red River Valley to "camp" a few nights at the Miller Cabin, which had no running water, no electricity, and no indoor plumbing. "Had we known we would end up here we might have chosen a different location for our honeymoon!" Judy said.

John was stationed in Norfolk, Virginia where John, Jr. was born. After two years in the Navy the growing family moved to Amarillo, Texas, where John worked for an engineering firm. Daughters Mary and Ellen were born in Amarillo before Judy suggested they take a chance on mountain life. In 1963 they moved to Red River. Daughter Linda was born the following spring.

John worked at Red River Ski Area before getting a job at the Molybdenum Mine. Judy taught skiing part-time at Powder Puff Mountain. In 1970, the Millers partnered with Gary and Fran Starbuck and bought Powder Puff. After selling Powder Puff Mountain in 1979, John and Judy opened an Art Gallery, and a clothing and outdoor store, which became known as Millers Crossing.

A trip to the largest groomed cross-country area in the United States inspired John to build a groomed area on a plateau atop Bobcat Pass. They opened Enchanted Forest Cross Country Ski Area in winter 1985-86. It was a true labor of love.

John and Judy were inducted into the New Mexico Ski Hall of Fame in 2008. They retired in 2010. After retirement they continued to be active in the community and church. John and Judy skied, snowshoed, and hiked their beloved mountains. Judy noted "One thing we don't ever take for granted is living here and all the wonderful things we're able to see and do. Just driving to Taos, seeing the bighorn sheep, Bear Canyon, the sunsets, and the clouds."

The couple is survived by

O B I T U A R I E S

Judy's sister and brother, Vivian "Francesca" Jarvis of Tucson, Arizona, and William Dorrance and wife Harumi, of Kyoto, Japan; their son John (Karen) of Houston, Texas; daughters Mary Miller and Ellen Goins of Red River, and Linda Miller of Questa; grandchildren Jack (Jia) Miller, Michael (Katie) Miller, William Goins, Nathan Mieras, and Helena Mieras; great-grandchildren Jackson, James, and Riley; numerous nieces, nephews, family relations; and many dear friends. They never stopped loving former-sons-in-law Geoff Goins and Dave Mieras.

John and Judy adored all their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, extended family, Red River family, and all their friends.

A joint funeral service was held on Saturday, Dec. 10, at St. James Episcopal Church in Taos with Fr. Mike Olsen officiating. Inurnment followed at the church.

The family hopes to have a Red River memorial for Judy and John in summer 2023. Donations may be made to Red River EMS, P.O. Box 1020, Red River NM 87558; St. James' Food Pantry, 208 Camino De Santiago, Taos, NM 87571; or the Red River Valley Foundation, P.O. Box 452, Red River, NM 87558 or <http://www.redrivervalleyfoundation.org/donate.html>

www.redrivervalleyfoundation.org/donate.html

Arrangements by Rivera Family Funeral Home. To share a memory, please visit our website at www.riverafuneralhome.com. To read John and Judy Miller's complete, unabridged obituary, please visit <https://questanews.com>.



Matthew Sanchez

Matthew Clinton Sanchez, 39 of Questa was called home to be with the Lord on Sunday, Dec. 4, 2022. He was born Nov. 6, 1983 in Questa to Ronnie D. Sanchez and Roberta Campbell. Matthew loved the outdoors and spent a lot of time doing outdoor activities. He loved to cook for his family and recently perfected his favorite tortellini recipe. Above all, he loved his family. He had the biggest heart and would give his shirt off his back to anyone who needed it.

Matthew is preceded in death by his parents Ronnie and Roberta, paternal grandparents

John and Viola Sanchez and maternal grandparents Dennis and Betty Taylor.

He is survived by his fiancé Ashley Medeiros-Sanchez, his children Matthew Jr, Jeffrey, and Cataleya Sanchez; brothers Carlos Sanchez and Steven Archuleta; mother-in-law Pamela Medeiros, uncles Steve Sanchez (Maryann), Gary Sanchez (Maxine), John Sanchez (Maida), Michael Taylor; aunts Arlene Sanchez, Geraldine Cordova (Edwin), Annette Sanchez, Raynelle Cordova (Mike); and numerous cousins and friends. A memorial for Matthew will be held at a later date.



Victoria Segura

Victoria R. Segura, 65, of Cerro passed away on Dec. 13, 2022. She is preceded in death by her parents, Procopio and Maria Segura [siblings, Emily Chavez, Julian Segura (Grace), Alfirio Segura, and Telesfor Segura. She is survived by her siblings, Charlotte Garcia (Benito deceased), Jose E. Se-

gura (Margaret), Leroy Segura, Vivian Cisneros (Rudy), Gabriel Segura (Diane, deceased), many beloved nieces and nephews, other relatives, friends and her beloved dog, Bubba.

Rosary was recited on Thursday, Dec. 22, 2022. The funeral mass followed at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Cerro with interment following at the Cerro Cemetery. Arrangements by Rivera Family Funeral Home.



Rita J. Rael

We are sad to announce the sudden passing of our mother, Rita J. Rael on Dec. 10, 2022. She was a lifelong resident of Questa and in her later years lived in Las Vegas, Nev., and recently in Rancho De Taos, N.M.

Rita is preceded in death by her mother and father Alejandro and Felicita (Feliz) Gonzales, her brothers, Alex (Norma) Gonzales, Maurice (Velva Gonzales), and Ricky Gonzales, her sister Lydia (Johnny) Aguirre,

grandson, Dyllon Lofink, and niece Annette Selph.

She is survived by her daughters, Lorrie (Joseph) Gutierrez, Valerie (Eric) Anderson, Yvonne (Michael) Carmichael, Jeri Lynn (Aaron) Lofink, and Rita Ann Rael, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

When she was raising us, she loved to plant a garden and flower beds year after year. Buying flowers and plants at every opportunity. She felt as these quotes say: "Don't wait for someone to bring you flowers. Plant your own garden and decorate your own soul" – Luther Burbank, and "In joy and in sadness flowers are our constant friends" – unknown.

No memorial services will be held at this time; however we would like to thank those who have reached out to us and express their condolences, love and concern. Proverbs 17:17 "A true friend shows love at all times, and is a brother born for times of distress." Also, we are grateful to Elizardo Flores and Joseph Macfarlane (Rita Ann) for the help in taking care of our mother. The family of Rita J. Rael has entrusted the care of their loved one to DeVargas Funeral Home of Taos.

THE TRAIN

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

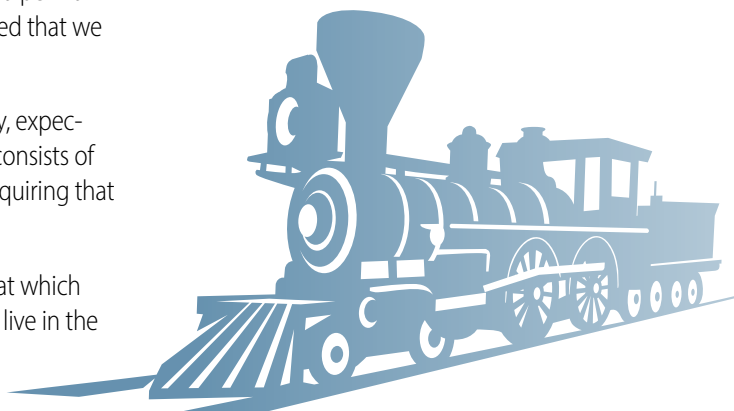
At birth we boarded the train and met our parents, and we believe they will always travel by our side. As time goes by, other people will board the train; and they will be significant, i.e. our siblings, friends, children, strangers and even the love of your life. However, at some station our parents will step down from the train, leaving us on this journey alone. Others will step down over time and leave a permanent vacuum. Some, however, will go so unnoticed that we don't realize they vacated their seats.

This train ride will be full of joy, sorrow, fantasy, expectations, hellos, goodbyes, and farewells. Success consists of having a good relationship with all passengers requiring that we give the best of ourselves.

The mystery to everyone is: We do not know at which station we ourselves will step down. So, we must live in the

best way — love, forgive, and offer the best of who we are. It is important to do this because when the time comes for us to step down and leave our seat empty, we should leave behind beautiful memories for those who will continue to travel on the train of life.

I wish you a joyful journey for the coming years on your train of life. Reap success, give lots of love and be happy. More importantly, thank God for the journey! Lastly, I want to thank you for being one of the passengers on my train!



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If you have any affection for the music of the late '60s, you will want to watch *Summer of Soul*. The great bulk of the film was found footage — some 40 hours of film that had been sitting in the basement of Hal Tulchin who was responsible for recording the six concerts of the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival. The festival took place over six Sundays that summer in a relatively small park in the middle of Harlem, New York City. Each week covered a different kind of music ranging from Soul to Gospel to Blues, Caribbean, and Jazz. Over the six concerts the total attendance was estimated at more than 300,000.

For a while, the concert series was promoted as the Black Woodstock, mimicking the more famous concert that was held just one weekend in a town 100 miles upstate that same summer. But Black Woodstock did not resonate with the world like the hippy-fest further north. Tulchin tried for years to turn his film footage into a concert video, but, as with so many things beautifully Black, no-one thought it was worth the effort. Until Questlove, an accomplished musician in his own right, found it after nearly 50 years. Frankly, it is amazing that the video and sound recordings have survived as well as they have.

The concert footage is the core of this film and is the main reason to watch it. The assemblage of black musical talent is nothing short of amazing. Remember that this was 1969 when many of these performers were already hit recording artists and so being able to attract them to perform on a hot summer stage in the middle of Harlem, for probably a piddling sum of money, has to be considered a testament to how valuable they believed the venue was and how important it was that they be there.

The list of performers, just in the film,

includes Stevie Wonder, The Chambers Brothers, B.B. King, Herbie Mann, the 5th Dimension, Mahalia Jackson, the Staple Singers, David Ruffin, Gladys Knight & the Pips, Max Roach, Hugh Masekela, Nina Simone, and Sly and the Family Stone. It is difficult to be a child of the '60s and not have one or more of these names on your playlist, even today. And their songs are the top hits, too, performed with energy and belief — the performances, one after another, are nothing short of miraculous.

All of them were good, but some were astounding. There is a gospel duet with Mavis Staples and Mahalia Jackson that was not planned before the concert. Even if you aren't into gospel, this performance ranks as an amazing partnership of two incredible voices. The 5th Dimension does a wonderful version of Aquarius/Let the Sunshine In that was their attempt to reaffirm their roots in the Black community. Gladys Knight and the Pips do I Heard it Through the Grapevine, and David Ruffin (formerly with the Temptations) does a stylistic interpretation of My Girl that will blow your socks off. Simply put, the music never stops.

But *Summer of Soul* isn't just a replay

of found concert footage — it is so much more. What Questlove did is find many of these artists, political figures, and attendees that were there at the concerts, brought them to his studio and sat them down to watch these sequences. None of them had ever seen this footage before and then, suddenly, they were seeing themselves 50 years ago. Marilyn McCoo (the 5th Dimension), Jesse Jackson, Gladys Knight and even an attendee remark on how the concerts had an impact on them.

The talking heads never outshine the music. In fact, frequently, their words are fading out as the music fades in. Questlove seems to achieve a near-perfect balance between musical entertainment and a good smattering of informational tidbits that add just enough to enhance your enjoyment — you learn while you have fun. So, yes, there is so much in *Summer of Soul*. You will enjoy the music and the energy, and you will learn so much too. You will have an amazing two-hour trip through the Black Culture of 1969. Enjoy. (4.5*)

Stream on Hulu or Disney+ and rent it from multiple platforms, NetflixDVD, or wherever you get your discs. For more, visit [MichaelsMovieMoments.com](https://www.MichaelsMovieMoments.com)

QUESTA POLICE DEPT cont'd from pg 6

A police department is only as good as the community it represents. Minimal social cohesion between residents, combined with little to no contact between residents and government officials can lead to the populace feeling alienated from the people that are supposed to represent them. This will only deepen the divide between

private citizens and public servants. The more community members actively seek out ways to help their neighbors, even in what may seem like the smallest ways, the stronger that community will be.

"I understand the frustration," the Chief said. "I understand the needs of this community, and I understand why they want a police department. That's why we're trying to start it back up. Safety and

longevity are my priorities right now. I want to see this department thrive but if we don't do it the right way, it won't."

Chief Montez believes the most significant issues in the Questa area are property crime and addictions issues, both of which cannot be solved completely through hard policing efforts alone; it takes a communal effort. It takes a community to give desperate people a sense

of belonging.

"I don't arrest a lot of bad guys, most of the people I arrest are people who made bad decisions but are not bad people."

Chief Montez loves Questa and he wants to see this community thrive. "Northern New Mexico is its own animal, there are things that happen here that do not happen anywhere else. There is a place for everyone and I love it."

MOORE V. HARPER cont'd from pg 7

thereof" refers strictly to the lawmaking body while excluding the state Constitution that governs such a body and the courts that judge the laws.

The 55th New Mexico Legislature passed the Redistricting Act to create a citizen redistricting committee to draw district maps upon every new

census in a manner that would not be partisan to one specific political party. If the SCOTUS rules in favor of North Carolina Speaker Moore in Moore v. Harper, the legitimacy of New Mexico's new independent redistricting commission will be challenged. The new rule will effectively be whichever political party controls the legislature will control redistricting without

oversight. Anyone who is familiar with the United States' history with race relations understands why giving state legislatures sole authority over election regulations is a bad idea. I.S.L. Theory seemingly violates the principle of the separation of powers, that no one branch of government should be more powerful than the others. There is also a clear conflict

of interest with legislators drawing the districts that vote them into their positions of power.

Should any branch of government be able to do anything without oversight from another branch?

A recording of the oral arguments for Moore v. Harper is available at the following web address: <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2022/21-1271>.

TAKING UP THE MANTEL cont'd from pg 19

the natural beauty of the area. In my new role, I am looking forward to collaborating with the Village, QEDF, and all the other stakeholders in the community as we continue our transition from being a mining town.

Q: Gabriel, how do you see Questa in

20 years when most of the remediation work will be completed?

A: I see several of the initiatives that the Village and QEDF are currently pursuing coming to fruition over the next 20 years resulting in a more diverse economy. I think if we can take advantage of the resources, recreational opportunities, and the unique culture that Questa has to offer we can create new,

good-paying jobs that will stimulate the local economy and improve the quality of life for *Questeños*.

Thank you Christian and Gabe for your time. We greatly appreciate each of you and are also grateful to Chevron for its commitment to the Village of Questa and surrounding communities in northern Taos County. Christian, early on, recognized the need for and impor-

ance of having a local newspaper and has been one of our greatest champions. Thank you, Christian, for all you do and good luck in your new role in the Capital. We look forward to getting to know Gabriel and continuing to cover the important topics that Chevron offers to our communities. And a special thank you for your continued support of the *Questa Del Rio News*.

ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

SKYDANCE ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY by Charlene R. Johnson
JANUARY 2023

VENUS & SATURN

“Dispense knowledge, not relief.” Dr. Douglas Baker

The closest, naked-eye planetary conjunction of the entire year occurs on January 22 between Venus and Saturn. Venus is our most evolved, beautiful, and sacred planet while Saturn is our most troublesome, burdensome, and serious planet. Both will be in Aquarius, the sign of humanity, expansion, and joy. The Sun and the Moon will also be in that sign, lending their light, reflection, and energy to this union.

In esoteric astrology Venus rules Gemini, our sign of education and communication, while Saturn rules Capricorn, our sign of long-term-karma and long delays. This combination suggests a series of slow steps toward the Aquarian goal of brotherhood, coming together and working in groups, recognizing that indeed, we are all One. Under the influence of Saturn, it may feel like these steps are heavy, ponderous, hard work, and no fun at all.

The lesson of this Saturn is to accept our karma and welcome the opportunity to do good in the world for all of humanity, not merely to serve ourselves. Aquarius is the sign of Knowledge: pouring forth knowledge for spiritually thirsty people. When we accept our hardships, rather than merely seeking relief, we work off karma, while our willingness to participate in our own lives can literally take the sting out of life.

The softening effect of our most famous love planet nudges this humorless, sometimes stilted planet into socializing with pleasure and turning hard times into brief, shining moments of the mere joy of interaction with a fellow human being. At least, this is the potential we have with this union. It also reminds us to “Love our Neighbor as Ourselves,” especially during this unique meeting between two very different planets. It can lighten the load, encourage us to pour forth the love and joy of coexistence with friends and neighbors on the only Blue Planet in our galaxy.

Everyone: Remember that the first month of the year sets the “mood” for your whole year. Live it well.
Energy Follows Thought.

ARIES ♈ Planet: Mercury ♀ MARCH 20 – APRIL 19

Dynamic: The ups and downs this month may have you spinning.

Direction: Turn it into a dance.

Soul Thought: Dancers don't need wings to fly.

TAURUS ♉ Planet: Vulcan ♁ APRIL 19 – MAY 20

Dynamic: Break those chains of attachment that bind you early in the month!

Direction: Determine, what holds you back?

Soul Thought: But also, what holds you steady?

GEMINI ♊ Planet: Venus ♀ MAY 20 – July 20

Dynamic: Relationships may tremble some.

Direction: Discover where your firm ground is, then just be with them.

Soul Thought: “Big stories are hunting the right person to tell them.” An aborigine belief

CANCER ♋ Planet: Neptune ♆ July 20 – JULY 22

Dynamic: The waters are fairly calm this month.

Direction: Feel into it and remember.

Soul Thought: A future baseline.

LEO ♌ Planet: Sun ☉ JULY 22 – AUG 22

Dynamic: As things begin to lighten up, ponder upon what has happened.

Direction: As a springboard for where you want to go.

Soul Thought: What are your greatest hopes and wishes?

VIRGO ♍ Planet: Moon ☾ AUG 22 – SEPT 22

Dynamic: This energetic shift may affect you more than others.

Direction: As always, Be the Reflection.

Soul Thought: What is it that you reflect?

LIBRA ♎ Planet: Uranus ♁ SEPT 22 – OCT 22

Dynamic: Your partnerships may hit a few bumps.

Direction: Focus on holding the road.

Soul Thought: What car (vehicle for the Soul) do you dream of?

SCORPIO ♏ Planet: Mars ♂ OCT 22 – NOV 21

Dynamic: Communication and arguments smooth out if only you let them.

Direction: Use those fine senses of yours to understand what you've learned through conflict.

Soul Thought: Conflict is always for the purpose of finding harmony.

SAGITTARIUS ♐ Planet: Earth ♁ NOV 21 – DEC 20

Dynamic: All confusion drops away as you take aim and fire.

Direction: On your highest aspirations.

Soul Thought: With love.

CAPRICORN ♑ Planet: Saturn ♄ DEC 20 – JAN 19

Dynamic: It's an opportunity to see the big picture in a new way.

Direction: Take a deep breath.

Soul Thought: “Everything breathes together.” Plotinus

AQUARIUS ♒ Planet: Jupiter ♃ JAN 19 – FEB 18

Dynamic: This entire new year is set up for you in a whole new way!

Direction: It's a time to maximize your opportunities.

Soul Thought: As big as the Origin of Man!

PISCES ♓ Planet: Pluto ♇ FEB 18 – MAR 20

Dynamic: Whether you know it or not, you are slowly winding down from a long haul.

Direction: Don't stop the hard work now.

Soul Thought: One foot ahead of the other.

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.




FOR MORE INFORMATION
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Community Service at it's Best!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR • JANUARY 2023

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EVERYONE BORN IN JANUARY!

JANUARY 1: SUN

Happy New Year 2023!

JANUARY 4: WED

6 PM

Questa Independent School District Board meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month, in person at the QSID Administrative Board Room, 2256 Wildcat Rd. # A, Questa; live streamed at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu>.

JANUARY 10: TUES

6 PM

Village of Questa Town Council meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month in person at Village Council Chambers, 2500 Old State Rd 3, Questa. For agenda see VOQ Website, *Questa Del Rio News* Facebook page, or call (575) 586-0694.

JANUARY 11: WED

3-5 PM

Senior Technology classes at the Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. in Questa. Bring your devices and technology problems! There are no stupid questions. . . only opportunities to learn about your technology! Call (575) 586-2023.

JANUARY 13: FRI

9 AM-NOON

Food for All at North Central NM Food Pantry, 140 Embargo Rd. in Questa. Please note special Holiday dates! (575) 586-1807 or (505) 238-1145; www.questafoodpantry.org.

1-3 PM

Questa Library Fun Friday activity with TWIRL. Come make some Ooey Gooney concoctions at Twirl's STEAM Friday. Learn about Newtonian fluids, sparkle your own slime! And make your own modeling dough! Geared towards elementary aged children and their families. Parents and kids learn together as they play, create & explore! 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. in Questa; for more info (575) 586-2023.

3:30-4 PM

Kids' Music Class with Twirl, a special monthly event at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. Check website for more information: <http://yogasalaquesta.org/>.

JANUARY 14: SAT

9 AM-3 PM

Asset Based Community Development Workshop, Part II. Everyone from the community is invited to participate, even if you did not attend the first workshop, no charge and lunch is included. Louis Jeantete will guide the group of citizens through interactive processes to identify key initiatives to focus on for community development in 2023. RSVP to Gayle Martinez by January 11 at gaylelwm@msn.com.

JANUARY 16: MON

3:30 PM

Questa Library Book Club 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. in Questa. For the month's book selection, call the library at (575) 586-2023.

JANUARY 18: WED

3-5 PM

Senior Technology classes at the Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. in Questa. Bring your devices and technology problems! There are no stupid questions. . . only opportunities to learn about your technology! Call (575) 586-2023.

6 PM

Questa Independent School District Board meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month, in person at the QSID Administrative Board Room, 2256 Wildcat Rd. # A, Questa; live streamed at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu>.

JANUARY 19: THURS

12-4PM

One-on-one, no-cost, confidential, Business Counseling, in Questa at the Visitor Center (#1 Hwy 38), with Anwar Kaelin, Director of the SBDC at UNM-Taos. For all businesses, entrepreneurs, contractors, at any stage of business development. Also available virtually via Zoom. Free! Make an appointment here: <https://calendly.com/sbdctaos>.

4 PM

Cerro VFW Post #9516, monthly meeting at 108 NM Highway 378 in Cerro. litameadphoto@gmail.com. Call (575) 586-1112 to confirm meeting.

JANUARY 21: SAT

12-1:30 PM

Wellness Workshop at Yoga Sala. The Benefits of RAW Juice! First of our 12 month Wellness Series. Check website to verify times and offerings, at <http://yogasalaquesta.org/>; 2331 NM-522, in Questa.

JANUARY 24:

TUE 9:30-10:30 AM

Bookmobile at Questa Post Office, 43 NM-38, Questa; (575) 376-2474; laura.gonzales@state.nm.us.

10:45 AM-NOON

Bookmobile at Roots & Wings Community School, 35 La Lama Rd, Questa; (575) 376-2474; laura.gonzales@state.nm.us.

6 PM

Village of Questa Town Council meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month in person at Village Council Chambers, 2500 Old State Rd 3, Questa. For agenda see VOQ Website, *Questa Del Rio News* Facebook page, or call (575) 586-0694.

JANUARY 25: WED

3-5 PM

Senior Technology classes at the Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. in Questa. Bring your devices and technology problems! There are no stupid questions. . . only opportunities to learn about your technology! Call (575) 586-2023.

JANUARY 30: MON

6 PM

Questa Economic Development Fund Board meets the last Monday of the month in person at the Questa Visitor Center, #1 NM Hwy 38, and via Zoom, contact Lynn for an agenda and Zoom link, lynn@questaedf.com.

WEEKLY

SUNDAYS

Please see our Church Directory on Page 31, always call to confirm service times.

Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. Check website to verify times and offerings, at <http://yogasalaquesta.org/>.

10 AM

Qigong online only with Julian

MONDAYS

Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. Check website to verify times and offerings, at <http://yogasalaquesta.org/>.

10 AM

Kundalini yoga in person only with Julian

5 PM

Free Community Gentle Yoga in person only

7 PM

Kickboxing with Reto, in person only

TUESDAYS

Free Transportation for Qualified Seniors Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Info: (575) 586-0508.

5:30-7:30 PM

Kundalini Yoga Basics, Meditation & Gong at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. Join Jiwanshakti in person only. Check website to verify times and offerings, at <http://yogasalaquesta.org/>.

WEDNESDAYS

10-11 AM

Free Senior Exercise Classes at the Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Info: (575) 586-0508

Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. Check website to verify times and offerings, at <http://yogasalaquesta.org/>.

9 am

Gentle morning yoga, Gaea, in person only (no class Jan 4th)

7 pm

Kickboxing, Reto, in person only

12:30 PM-1:30 PM

Repurposing Plastic Project: We now start at 12:30. Come smash plastic and make wire walls! Meet the team, work your body, lift your spirit, and help the planet! At the old "Movies at Home" building in Questa, opposite Questa Supermarket on Hwy 522. Call (575) 770-8681 or (575) 224-7386. Also meets Fridays.

12:30 PM-1:30 PM

Wildcat Kitty Club at the Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. in Questa; for ages 0-3. (Older siblings and guests are welcome.) Stories, songs, and play. The fourth Wednesday of each month will feature our friends from Taos First Steps. (575) 586-2023.

3-5 PM

Senior Technology offers help navigating the electronic world for Senior Citizens. It can be a scary lonely place when we are faced with figuring out those seemingly ever-changing devices. Bring your laptop, tablet, or smartphone to the library for help! You are not alone! Call (575) 586-2023 for information.

6:30-8 PM

Bible Study Freedom Center Church 2558 Hwy 522, Questa. Facilitated by Pastor Johnny. All are welcome to join on Zoom or in person. Times can vary. See freedomquesta.com for series info. For a Zoom link, contact Pastor Kristi (575) 770-1714.

THURSDAYS

Free Transportation for Qualified Seniors Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Info: (575) 586-0508.

Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. Check website to verify times and offerings, at <http://yogasalaquesta.org/>.

2:30-4:30 PM

Dropped Stitch at the Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. in Questa. We knit. We crochet. We laugh. We teach. We learn. Bring your latest project. If it has a fiber, it counts! All skill levels are welcome. Info: (575) 586-2023.

5:30 PM

Power Hour Yoga with Gaea, in person and online

6 PM

Thursday Night Jam Session at Rael's Market & Coffee House; bring your instrument to jam or just bring yourself and enjoy. FREE! 2430 NM-Hwy 522 in Questa. Info: (575) 779-9249.

FRIDAYS

9 AM-3 PM

Repurposing Plastic Project: Come smash plastic and make wire walls! Meet the team, work your body, lift your spirit, and help the planet! At the old "Movies at Home" building opposite Questa SuperMarket on Hwy 522. Info: (575) 770-8681 or (575) 224-7386. Also meets Wednesdays.

Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. Check website to verify times and offerings, at <http://yogasalaquesta.org/>.

10 AM

Free community Qigong with Julian

4 PM

Free Kids Ballet with Miss Tuesday, in person only, FREE (no class Jan 6)

6 PM

New Thirst Group: a Christian Approach to Recovery at Living Word Ministries, 14 Llano Rd., Questa. (575) 613-8010.

SATURDAYS

10 AM Free Community Tai chi at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa, with instructor Reto, in person only. Check website to verify times and offerings, at <http://yogasalaquesta.org/>.



DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING FOR OUR CALENDAR? FREE LISTINGS!

Enter your event Online! (scan QR Code above) or email us. Include the date, time, place, and contact information to Events@QuestaNews.com

CLASSIFIEDS

**Questa Del Rio News
Managing Editor**

Are you a journalist looking for your next opportunity? A retired editor interested in sharing your experience? Do you want an engaging role in the community? Questa Del Rio News is looking for you!

We need a Managing Editor to oversee operations of our monthly local paper: determine editorial content/publishing standards; write/edit/proof; manage staff/volunteers; grow advertising, circulation, subscriptions, on-line presence; manage budget/finances/fundraising. Are you a skilled multitasker and compassionate taskmaster with an eye for detail and work well with technology? Does this sound like a fun challenge?

Visit QuestaNews.com for the full job description and send your resume with cover letter to info@QuestaNews.com.

HELP WANTED

Certified Police Officers for Questa Police Department. The job description and employment application are uploaded to the website: questa-nm.com. Under the government tab there is a job positions tab. Questions: Valerie Vigil Clerk/HR (575) 586-0694 or vvigil@villageofquesta.org

Interviewing NOW! In-home caregiver for an intellectually feisty elder. Must be personable, patient, articulate with a good sense of humor. Assist with ALL daily living skills and needs: bathing, dressing, transferring from bed to walker

or wheelchair, meal prep, companionship. Must communicate clearly with family members, the client and other caregivers. Call Robyn at (575) 779-6802.

NOTICES

Free Senior Exercise Classes, Thursdays, 10–11 am, Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Call (575) 586-0508 for more information.

Free Transportation for Qualified Seniors Every Tuesday and Thursday. Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Call (575) 586-0508 for more information.

FREE COVID PCR TESTS AND VACCINES at the Questa Health Center. For drive-up tests, please call from parking lot and staff will come to you. Please do not enter the building! Vaccines are available by appointment only, including vaccines for children 6 months to 4 years old. 2573 NM-522, Questa, NM. For an appointment, call Amy at (575) 586-0315.

North Central New Mexico Food Pantry: Second and Fourth Fridays 9 am to noon: 140 Embargo Rd. in Questa. If you need an emergency food box or other information, please call: Jeannie Masters (575) 586-0486 or (575) 779-9194 or Nancy Parker (575) 586-2096 or (505) 699-7563. To make a donation, go to ncfpquesta.com or mail to: North Central Food Pantry, PO Box 1076, Questa, NM 87556. For more information, please email wmesquire2@gmail.com. If you would like to volunteer, please call Jeannie (numbers above). Happy Holidays from all of us at the North Central New Mexico Food Pantry.

Questa One-on-One In-Person Business Counseling with Anwar Kaelin, Director of the Small Business Development Center at UNM-Taos. FREE and CONFIDENTIAL offered on the third

Thursday of every month, from 1–4pm, at the Questa Visitor Center. Business owners, independent contractors, and entrepreneurs in the Questa area can receive free one-on-one business consulting and support in planning, marketing, regulatory compliance, technology development, accessing capital, international trade, and more. Also offered via Zoom on the same day from 2–3pm: <https://zoom.us/j/5757376219> Join by phone: (346) 248-7799 with ID (575) 737-6219. For an appointment, or more information, contact Anwar at anwar@unm.edu.

JANUARY QUOTE FROM LISA FOX "Never depend upon institutions or government to solve any problem. All social movements are founded by, guided by, motivated and seen through by the passion of individuals." — Margaret Mead

FOR SALE

2008 Steinway Model S Grand Piano looking for a loving home. I am downsizing and looking to give away my late husband's piano to a new owner, or if you have someone in mind that wants it.

Here are the details: Make: 2008 Steinway Model S Grand Piano | Ebony Model S Finish ; Mahogany Crown Jewel Collection Serial No ; 581465 Year: 2008 Size: 5'1(155 cm) Style: Steinway Baby Grand Piano Model: S Number of Pedals: 3 Brand: Steinway & Sons Condition: In Mint Condition Awaiting your Response. kattybrooks222@gmail.com

Here's to a fabulous New Year!

CHURCH DIRECTORY

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

FREEDOM CENTER CHURCH
(previously Harvest Questa)
Pastors Kristi & Johnny Gonzales
2558 Hwy 522, Questa
Sunday Service 11 am – 12:30 pm
(575) 770-1714
Visit us online: freedomquesta.com

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

PATH OF LOVE
Sunday 7:30 am class and meditation
Introductory Meditation Class Sunday 3 pm
Kagyu Mila Guru Stupa, North Star Rd., Questa
(575) 586-1454, Hilece

THEOSOPHY
Sunday 10 am Alice Bailey Theosophy Study Group
Kagyu Mila Guru Stupa, North Star Rd., Questa
(575) 586-4641, Francis

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www.earthjourney.org
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(575) 586-1947

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ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
Sunday Service 10:30 am
Potluck & Fellowship 3rd Sunday of the month
Highway 196, Amalia
Pastors: Lorenzo & Arleen Lucero
(575) 770-5716

RED RIVER

FAITH MOUNTAIN FELLOWSHIP
Corner of River Street and Copper King Trail
Sunday 10:30 am
First Baptist Church of Red River
103 High Cost Trail
Sundays 8:15 am and 10:30 am
Pastor Joe Phillips (575) 754-2882

ST. EDWIN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
North end of Silver Bell Trail, Red River
Saturday 6 pm (Confession prior to Mass or by appt.)
Father Andrew Ifele (575) 586-0470

LIST IT IN THE CLASSIFIEDS!

CALL for Rates (575) 613-0856 Email Gary for Rates Sales@QuestaNews.com



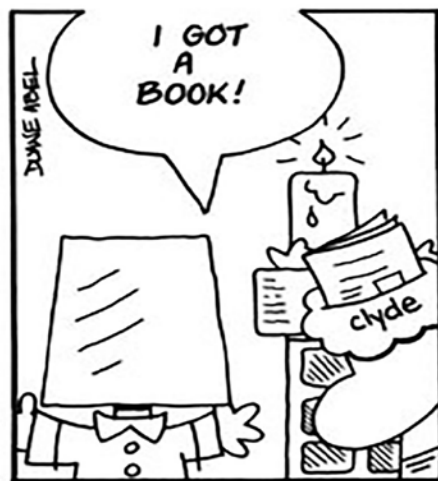
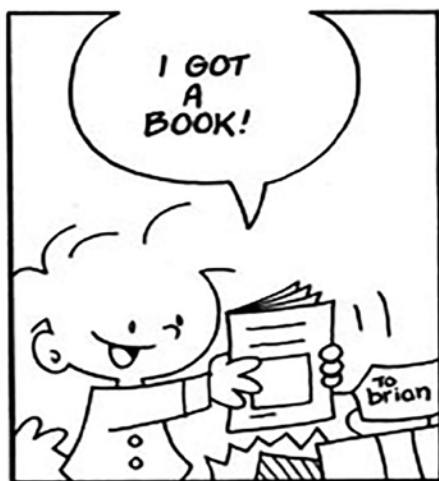
AA MEETINGS

LOCAL AA MEETINGS
Sundays 10-11 am
Open Meeting: Questa Youth Center

"FIRST, THE FOUNDATION"

Is sobriety all that we can expect of a spiritual awakening?
No, sobriety is only the bare beginning.

—AS BILL SEES IT, p. 8
—ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p.130



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