

# Questa del Rio News

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## A Veteran's Purple Heart, Gained in Sacrifice and Given in Love



Photo Courtesy Frank Rael

Veteran, Roger Blanco, poses in front of his treasured newspaper clippings and keepsakes from his service in Vietnam

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Frank Rael is a native Questeño whose family has been in Questa for generations. He opened Franks Eats & Sweets in 2017 and recently celebrated six years in business.

One of the trademarks of his business is putting much effort and work into honoring the veterans who have served our country in the armed forces.

"I do it because they deserve our utmost honor, respect, and to be remembered," he says.

Frank knows all too well the sacrifices veterans and their families make when they're called to serve the country. "They leave their loved ones, and everything they know to respond to the call, but it's also important to note that the families ... left behind sacrifice a lot too. They're always wondering and worrying about their loved ones, and they deserve our honor and respect, too."

Frank's maternal grandfather served in World War I and his father served in World War II. He has numerous brothers-in-law, nephews, and nieces who have also served, so his mission to give back by honoring and respecting their sacrifice, is a personal one.



Photo Courtesy Frank Rael

Frank Rael (left) and Roger Blanco (right)

Every Veterans Day and Memorial Day, Frank curates photos of local veterans to be honored at the Veterans Park in town and on the Wall of Honor at his restaurant.

While his family members who served are a big motivation for Frank's reverence toward our veterans, he also shares a special bond and connection with his neighbor, Roger Blanco.

"Roger grew up just up the road from us and we were very close. He was like a member of our family," Frank recalls.

Currently, Roger Blanco still lives down the road from Frank.

Roger shares many stories and memories with the Raels and Frank says it's his favorite pastime, to sit with Roger at his restaurant and reminisce on the old days.

"One time when Roger was working with us on the pastura, the hay, we would pick it up with a pitchfork because it was loose in the field, and someone threw their pitchfork and it landed in his leg! My mom was able to patch him up, but it's something he still remembers to this day," he recounts.

When Roger, who went on to serve in Vietnam, came home from the war, Frank's father picked him up at the bus stop. "He was the first person he saw when he came home from the war, and that was very special to him," Frank says.

Recently, when Frank was visiting with Roger Blanco, Roger was showing him all of his newspaper clippings and memorabilia from his time in the war. "He was telling me how much my dad meant to him and knowing my dad's purple heart went missing, he told me he wanted to replace it, so he gave me his purple heart," Frank says through tears. "I told him there was no way



# Questa del Rio News

NOTICIAS QUESTA DEL RIO

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To Inform, Inspire, Connect and Unite the Communities of Northern Taos County.

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## EDITORIAL

# Let's Not Tear Down Statues, Let's Erect More

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

The statue of Juan de Onate was erected at the Rio Arriba County Complex on September 28 after an absence from its former position at the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Center in Alcalde, New Mexico.

Initially constructed in 1994, the statue was defaced in 1997 — its right foot was cut off as a symbolic remembrance of the Acoma Massacre of 1599. The foot was recast in bronze but was defaced again in 2017 with red paint that read, "remember 1680," in reference to the Pueblo Revolt of that year.

The statue was removed entirely in June of 2020 amidst the Black Lives Matter protests that swept the nation.

The controversy around the statue seems to revolve around the question of whether we should be celebrating Juan de Onate. I think that premise of celebration misses the point of the broader issue. Whether or not we should be celebrating the historical figure is irrelevant — the point is that he is a historical figure. Juan de Onate was a provincial governor of present-day New Mexico under New Spain and held influence over Spaniards as well as indigenous Americans and played a role in the expansion of the Spanish Empire in North America. Like it or not, Juan de Onate is a part of the history of New Mexico.

Does a statue of Juan de Onate "celebrate" him? I do not think so, it simply recognizes his place in history. At best, the statue is an opportunity to start a conversation about the man and his legacy to this region of the world. Removing the statue does not remove the person from history and I believe all elements of human history are to be recognized and remembered (the good and the bad). I also believe that we should distinguish morality (subjective) from historical importance (objective). Being an important historical figure does not necessarily mean that the figure was "moral," no matter what parameters for morality we are using. Respecting the history around a historical figure is certainly not an endorsement of the ethics or morality that governed the person's character when he was alive.

Academia is not just for classrooms, it exists to promote a culture of intellectualism between every citizen. This requires us to face the uncomfortable facts of human history head on and be

courageous in our discourse over such subjects. This can be difficult because facing the uncomfortable facts of human history necessitates facing the uncomfortable realities of human nature; it means recognizing the humanity in the worst among us. However uncomfortable this may be, any psychologist worth his salt will tell you that the first step to solving a problem is to recognize there is one. What could be a more direct way to confront the worst impulses of human nature than to construct a statue of a man who embraced his more violent nature?

I think modern humans could use a little perspective regarding how violent human history actually is. If you were born after World War II, then you have lived in an incredible time of peace and material prosperity previously unknown to humans of past centuries (a peace that may be coming to an end soon, but that is another discussion). Twenty-first century humans in particular seem to take peace for granted. In reality, peace is not the default state of humanity — it takes a level of cooperation that has rarely been achieved in our history.

I am not in favor of tearing down statues. I will always be in favor of erecting more statues. How about we construct a statue of the man who led the Pueblo Revolt, Po'Pay, right next to the statue of Juan de Onate? I think that would be a wonderful conversation starter for the general public.



Courtesy Photo

# Help Those In Need for Pennies on the Dollar, by November 20

Hello friends and neighbors,  
Some of you may be aware of a local initiative that has emerged in Taos County over the past couple of years. Local faith groups and individual members of the community work with Taos Holy Cross Hospital, to retire medical debt of Taos County residents. The new CEO of the hospital has agreed to continue this program this year.

The beauty of this program is that each dollar given retires many dollars of medical debt. Three thousand local families saw \$2.1 million in medical debt forgiven last year, making life a little easier for those who have the misfortune of illness or injury without benefit of proper health insurance.

I experienced first-hand the crushing weight of astronomical medical debt, as the young, blue-collar father

of an extremely premature baby, back in 1975. I also experienced the incredible grace of the wider community, whose generosity covered much of our son's medical care and forgave the rest through programs like this one.

I invite you to make a contribution to the Medical Debt Relief Fund. Again, medical debt is retired for pennies on the dollar, so any amount makes a big difference. You can send your gift to:

Holy Cross Hospital, 1397 Weimer Rd., Taos, NM 87571. Write "Medical Debt Relief" in the memo line. But do it right away because donations need to arrive by November 20.

Thanks for your consideration,  
Jonathan Hutchison  
Feel free to contact me about this at (575) 586-2379.

## PURPLE HEART cont'd from page 1

I could take that, but he told me it was because my dad meant so much to him, he wanted to ensure that my dad's family had the purple heart to pass on to later generations."

Recently, Frank went through surgery and has been working to fully recover. After his procedure, Roger visited him

multiple times per week, keeping him company and offering his support to Frank in whatever way he is able.

"Roger is such a special person because he has a good heart. I don't want this story to be about me, because it's really all about him. He deserves the honor, he deserves the spotlight and respect, not me," Frank says.

### THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE NOVEMBER ISSUE OF QUESTA DEL RIO NEWS!

FRANK RAEI, ROGER BLANCO, JONATHAN HUTCHISON, DOMINICK APODACA, BRITNEY AND ALFREDO ROMERO, MELISSA G. RAEI, MICHAEL CALHOUN, MAYOR JOHN ORTEGA, KIMBER MACDONALD, ANTONIA ORTIZ, JULIE SEGURA, OZELLE SEGURA, SAVANNAH SEGURA, SANTANA SANTISTEVAN, THE SOURCENM, FRAN VIALPANDO, VALERIE SEGURA, MARVINE SEGURA, BRYCE FLANAGAN, BARBARA TRACY, MARTA GLOVER, CHARLENE R. JOHNSON, ELLEN WOOD, QUESTA CREATIVE COUNCIL, SHARON NICHOLSON, ZACH BEHRENS, TONER MITCHELL, JAY BOUCHARD, MELLIE RODRIGUEZ, JOHN WALSH, GHOST WRITER MIGUEL, J. ORTEGA.

# Letter to the President

Dear President Biden:

Thank you for the leadership and transparency provided by the Biden-Harris administration during the last 2-1/2 years. We are grateful for your hard work and unwavering commitment to our democracy.

Mr. President, I am writing to you and copying to several agencies in your administration and New Mexico state government regarding Valle Vidal, a beautiful 100,000-acre property in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in northern New Mexico that is managed by the Carson National Forest. This area is significant to me because my paternal grandmother's family settled there in the 1800s in an area known as Peña Flor. The online description of Valle Vidal encourages visitors to visit "the crown jewel of the forest service properties" in northern New Mexico to enjoy the area's conifer and aspen forests, herds of elk and black bear, and wild turkey. Valle Vidal offers recreational activities such as camping, backpacking, horseback riding, fly-fishing, hunting and trekking, but it is also utilized by outfitters and by cattlemen for grazing livestock. The tourism and industry generated by the area contribute economically to the local communities with needed jobs and local industries. However, since the park is extremely difficult to access, only the intrepid dare to visit because of the rudimentary access roads and safety concerns posed by these road conditions in case of emergencies.

The western access route, NM State Road 196, is maintained by the NM DOT as it runs east through the villages of Costilla and Amalia in northern Taos County. However, as the road leaves Amalia, it is no longer a state road but is a shared road between the Forest Service and the privately-owned Rio Costilla Cooperative Livestock Association Park (RCCLA). The Forest Service has a contractual agreement with the RCCLA to maintain the road as it winds through RCCLA property on its way to Valle Vidal. However, the local Forest Service administration cites a lack of resources and personnel for its inability to fulfill its contractual obligation to keep the road graded and maintained. Due to lack of maintenance, the

road is in a horrendous washboard condition that causes damage to trucks, campers, RVs, large cattle trailers, and emergency vehicles as they attempt to access the parks. As the road further deteriorates, there is a corresponding diminishing number of visitors who are willing to risk their vehicles and their safety to enjoy the beauty of Valle Vidal and RCCLA Park. Many locals, including my family, are reluctant to risk damage to our vehicles and lose out on the benefits of the beautiful natural environment minutes from our homes. These factors adversely affect our well-being and the local economy of northern Taos County and the state of New Mexico.

For the reasons stated above, there is a strong argument for designating Valle Vidal as a National Park under the auspices of the United States Department of the Interior with funding to provide infrastructure such as adequate roads to improve access to this crown jewel. This would allow more visitors and residents to enjoy the beautiful natural environment while becoming aware of the historical significance of this area to the local community. Additionally, the economic boost to the local and state economies would be invaluable.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely,  
Arthur E. Gallegos

President Joseph R. Biden  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20500

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Questa Del Rio News

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.

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## Business Profile

# Puff Daddy's Freeze Dried Candy

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Crunchy chewy candy. You heard that right. Husband and wife entrepreneurs Britney and Alfredo Romero have figured out how to take chewy candy and make it crunchy all while maintaining that same delicious taste. It's known as freeze-dried candy and they have made it their business model through their new popular business, Puff Daddy's Freeze Dried Candy.

Both Questa High School graduates, Britney details the first time she and her husband saw freeze-dried candy. "Antonio is Alfredo's youngest brother. He is in high school and he had the candy in his room. We tried it and thought it was so cool! After some research, we realized that no one sells it locally," says Britney.

At the time, Britney and Alfredo were expecting their second child and were figuring out how to make work and life balance, with two babies under the age of two. "That's when Alfredo said, 'let's open a freeze-dried candy business?' I said 'okay, if you want to



Photo by E. Wilde

### Puff Daddy's Freeze Dried Candy at the 2023 Cambalache

do it, you need to research and figure it out. If you think it's a good idea, I am in," she said.

They traveled to Alamosa to pick up a large freeze-dryer and started experimenting with it over the summer. "It's not easy — there are different settings, temperatures, and prepping methods we need to follow. We did a soft launch in August and our business officially launched in September," Britney says.

Currently, they offer a variety of freeze-dried candy, including skittles, jolly ranchers, caramel apple suckers, fruit roll-ups, lemon heads, and saltwater taffy. "We are planning to expand our options for the holidays so we can

sell holiday baskets and holiday candy," she says.

Being the only local freeze-dried candy producers in the northern Taos County area, they do a lot of their business online and by word-of-mouth. "A lot of the younger kids really like the candy and it's great because they don't have to order it online and get it shipped from other states; they get it right here in Questa," she notes.

Recently, the duo has started attending different events and festivals, including Cambalache and Oktoberfest. Britney says it was a coin toss when they decided to set up their business publicly. "We were really nervous about these



Courtesy Photo

### Puff Daddy's Freeze Dried Candy

events because we weren't sure if we were going to sell anything, but Questa really surprised us. We did amazing for the Cambalache. People really came out and supported us."

The business couple makes the dream work as a team. "Alfredo works for Taos County, and I stay home during the day and take care of the kids while making candy. When he gets home, he will help me bag the different candies I prepared. It's truly a team effort."

While business is going well, Britney says they are working to grow their profile by getting their license to establish clientele in local storefronts. "We've had several businesses approach us and say they want to sell our candy, but we must be licensed to do so. Hopefully, it will be a reality soon."

To connect with the business or to place an order, visit their Facebook page by searching Puff Daddy's Freeze-Dried Candy. You can also contact them by phone at (575) 779-2783 or via email at [puffdaddyfdc@gmail.com](mailto:puffdaddyfdc@gmail.com).

# Supermarket to Reopen Doors on November 11

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The new owner of the Questa Supermarket has officially set his sights on an opening date for the newly renovated business.

"We're aiming for November 11," Dominick Apodaca, grandson of original owners Gomersindo and Ofelia Martinez, tells the *Questa del Rio News*.

A 2011 graduate of Questa Junior/Senior High School, Dominick grew up in the family business seeing his mom, Debra Martinez, work and maintain the operation while his uncle and stepdad were overseas in the early 2000s.

Dominick is no stranger to hard work. "I worked with MTC Trucking and Rust Constructors at the Questa Mine, then went on to work with Brandenburg on the demolition at the mine. I

was laid off in 2019 and decided to head to Colorado to work in the oil and gas industry," he says.

Working his way up to a supervisor position, it was difficult to get his employer in Colorado to accept that he planned to move back home to Questa. "They were trying to offer me as much time as I needed to take care of family business, they just didn't want me to leave. But I knew it was time. I needed to come home so I can carry the family business forward," he says.

Moving back to Questa at the beginning of September, the work hasn't stopped. "We hit the ground running and have been working to get the store renovated so we can reopen. It's been stressful, there's a lot of pressure — but I am just thankful I have my mom,



Courtesy Photo

### Sangre de Cristo Valley Market's red exterior

stepdad, brother, sister-in-law and Daryl Hall helping me every step of the way," he says. The family is working as a team to complete all the renovations themselves.

When asked what type of upgrades

people can expect to see in the newly renovated store, he was quick to point out the new exterior color. "I painted it red, because I changed the name. We

**SUPERMARKET** cont'd on page 5





## Melissa G. Rael

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Being raised in a community where your history connects to every part of your present, it is difficult to find the courage to leave. It is similarly difficult to forge a path and stay.

*Questa del Rio News* is committed to highlighting different members of our community, both those who have created their paths and planted their own roots in the community that raised them, and those who have pursued lives outside of the community – through our Representando series. This series is dedicated to those who are Representando communities in northern Taos County, in various facets of life.

For our November issue, we interviewed Melissa G. Rael. Melissa graduated from Questa High School in 1993. Upon graduation, she moved to Las Cruces to attend New Mexico State University (NMSU) on an academic scholarship. Her mom and dad graduated from NMSU, so following in their footsteps was a natural progression. After three semesters in Las Cruces, she knew it wasn't for her and made steps to transfer her scholarship to Albuquerque, where she could attend the University of New Mexico.

During her junior year, Melissa studied Spanish abroad in Seville, Spain, where she lived with a family for a semester. She recalls how lucky she was



Photo by Elaine Tudor

to learn to cook Spanish food with the family while she attended school. She sometimes makes traditional tortilla Espanola and paella, common native Spanish dishes.

Graduating from UNM summa cum laude in 1997, Melissa double-majored in Mass Communications and Journalism with an emphasis in Public Relations and Spanish. In her senior year, she interned at a public relations firm in Albuquerque and was hired full-time upon her graduation.

During her ten years with the company, she worked her way up from an Account Executive to the Director of Meeting and Event Operations. While moving up in her career, she and her husband, Jonathan Rael, also raised their family, having three sons Jonathan James (JJ) born in 1999, Elijah born in 2000, and Joshua, born in 2002.

In 2006, she realized that if she wanted to continue to pursue her career goals, she would need to take a leap of faith. "The PR firm started planning events for several clients, the company expanded, and there wasn't an opportunity for another promotion. I realized that if I wanted to continue climbing the ladder in my industry, the only way I could do it was by starting my own

business." This realization is what led to the establishment of MGR & Associates, LLC a conference and event management firm.

"When people hear me say I am an event planner, they think I plan weddings and parties, but that is not what I do. We are a soup to nuts, or beginning to end full-service firm and we specialize in planning and managing major conferences and events."

Over the past 17 years, Melissa has built her company by taking on clients throughout the country. Some of her services include marketing, managing registration, logistics, graphic design, site selection, and on-site management.

The company has withstood challenges along the way, most notably the 2020 pandemic. "It was as though our team had to return to school and quickly learn about virtual meeting platforms and transform our skill set to offer online services. Through it all, we ensured our clients didn't lose money when canceling and negotiating future venue contracts. Surprisingly we also increased our clientele. This experience helped us thrive and expand our services," Melissa says. This challenge was undoubtedly a testament to her ability to change direction and adapt, especially when it was crucial and necessary.

When asked about the staffing operations of her company, she shared that she has contractors and how special it was to have the ability to bring on family members as staff for some events, roles which have been filled by her mom Rosalie Ortega, and aunt Lisa Archuleta. "I can bring them along with my team to events to work our registration desk. They are both very organized and love talking to people, so it's a perfect role for them."

The business has turned into a family operation on occasion, with her sons getting involved in the company, and assisting with contract positions as well. "JJ

really shocked me when he joined us for his first conference. It was in Anchorage, Alaska and he was only 19. He was so impressive and professional. I thought who is this kid?" she says as she laughs.

Melissa and Jonathan, both from Questa, have a special place in their hearts for the place they call home. "We have worked to ensure we maintained our ties to home. Our boys love Questa. Growing up, we'd go to Questa to watch my youngest brother Jesus and other cousins play sports, and my boys would say they wanted to move to Questa so they could play all the sports like them. Our kids have gone on to bring their friends to Questa to show them how special home is, and they now love Northern New Mexico, too."

Melissa and Jonathan are also involved in the pilgrimages for vocations. She says she has completed around twelve 100-mile pilgrimages over the years. "My grandpa Bernie started doing the pilgrimage until he was in his 60's. Then, of course, Jon has been doing this for 30-plus years. It was a calling for me to get involved." Her last pilgrimage was in the summer of 2023, and she says it's an experience unlike any other. "When you experience it, it's like a vacation from life. You don't have your phone or any electronics, and it gives you a chance to grow spiritually, reconnect with other guadalupanas, and form a sisterhood bond with them for life."

In addition to her titles of being a busy businesswoman, wife for 25 years, mom, and guadalupana, Melissa has expanded her title to Nana (grandma). Her oldest son JJ and his girlfriend Sydney blessed the family with baby Layla Georgia in 2021. "God knew what he was doing when he gave me a granddaughter. I never had a sister or a daughter, so now I get to do all the fun girl stuff with Layla. We also share a middle name, which makes my bond with her much more special."

### SUPERMARKET cont'd from page 4

will be called the Sangre de Cristo Valley Market moving forward, so the red color is a nod to the name."

As for other changes, Dominick has a big vision for the store. "I am hopeful to work with local farmers and ranchers to get local organic products in the store. I also want to sell smoked meats to customers. I am exploring the potential for having fresh pizza and calzones as well," he says. "I want to have what the

people want to buy, not what they're forced to buy — that's my biggest goal," he continues.

While he couldn't immediately disclose his plans for the former Hillcrest Bank location inside the store, he says he's hoping to incorporate some type of fish and tackle operation in this section.

In reference to his grandma, he says she gets emotional seeing the work being done to bring their once booming family business back to life. "When my grandma tells me that my grandpa would be

proud of me, that hits me, because I realize she chose me to carry our family's business forward."

While looking to the future, Dominick is optimistic for what he believes he can do for the community. "The people of this area deserve more. This place has been a staple for our community for generations and I am proud that I was able to step away from big money in Colorado to come back to my home and invest in my family business this way."

With the soft opening planned for

November 11, Dominick says he hopes to be able to hire on staff in the store in the months following. "I am still working on setting up social media for the new store, but if anyone is interested in working at the store, they can come by and get an application."

Hours for the new operation have not yet been confirmed, however, but he's hopeful to open doors earlier than 7 a.m. to ensure people who are making the daily drive to Taos can stop there if they need to.



# Ponderosa Lodge Transitioning to Upscale Ascend Hotel Collection by Choice Hotels

By STAFF WRITERS

The iconic Ponderosa Lodge in Red River is getting a major facelift. It is expected to be completed by 2024.

In a press release, the Town of Red River Office of Economic Development says the new boutique hotel is set to modernize the iconic Ponderosa Lodge, offering an upscale experience which will serve as a testament to the town's commitment to further enhancing the tourism industry.

"We are thrilled to embark on this exciting journey of introducing the Ponderosa Lodge, Ascend Hotel Collection by Choice Hotels to our vibrant community," said Max Khudiakov, director of the Town of Red River Office of Economic Development and Tourism. "With this new addition, we aim to cater to the increasing demand for an upscale hotel experience in Red River, further establishing our town as an appealing destination for visitors from all walks of life."

As part of the renovation and enhancements, Ponderosa Lodge, Ascend Hotel Collection, will feature a luxurious hot tub for guests to enjoy after a day of outdoor adventures or exploring the town's rich cultural heritage. This amenity will provide a perfect retreat for visitors seeking relaxation, rejuvenation, and unforgettable memories.

Construction and renovations kicked



Courtesy Photo

## Ponderosa Lodge in Red River to undergo remodel

off on October 9, 2023 and the town believes the completion will take approximately one year.

The press release goes on to say the

Town of Red River Office of Economic Development and Tourism encourages individuals, families, and businesses to follow the progress of the hotel's con-

struction and development, as it signifies an exciting chapter in the town's growth and commitment to providing exceptional hospitality.

# Taos County Approves Grant For Brewery Expansion

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

The Taos County Commission approved the Red River Brewing Company and Distillery (RRBC) for a New Mexico LEDA (Local Economic Development Act) grant of \$150,000 in support of the company's expansion plans to a second location in Red River, a new distillery.

Additionally, the Town of Red River Office of Economic Development and Tourism announced that the RRBC has been granted \$22,754 in funds under the Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP).

"We are pursuing the LEDA grant to expand the distillery production facility in Red River," said owner and manager Michael Calhoun. "We are excited to be partnering with the State of New Mexico

and Taos County. We're a thriving business, growing, and adding people to our team all the time... One of the goals of this grant is to hire five additional people by this time next year and we're gonna surpass that."

Calhoun revealed to the county commission that the RRBC has three new hires lined up for October, "a young lady from Amalia, another from Taos, and another man from Taos."

According to Calhoun, the distillery is already "partially producing" and the tasting room should be open by the upcoming holidays.

LEDA is a piece of state legislation first passed in 2002 to facilitate local economic development. Since then, 83 New Mexico communities have passed



Photo by E. Willde

## Red River Brewing Company will be opening second location

corresponding LEDA legislation, including the Village of Questa.

"To facilitate the funding process, Taos County has agreed to act as the

fiscal agent for this LEDA grant. Serving as a fiscal agent ensures transparent financial management and accountability throughout the project," according to a press release from the Town of Red River. "The collaboration between Red River Brewing Company and Distillery, the New Mexico Economic Development Department, and Taos County demonstrates a concerted effort to foster economic growth and create a thriving business environment."

The Taos County Commission's vote to approve Taos County Ordinance 2023-2 was unanimously in favor.

A recording of the Taos County Commission meeting is available at the following web address:

<https://tinyurl.com/ynbcyfp6>



# PLEASE SUPPORT LOCAL HEALTHCARE

Vote **FOR** the Gross Receipts Tax 

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Election Day is Nov 7



I'm asking you to vote FOR the Gross Receipts Tax during the November 7th election. It's going to be providing funding for the UNM Taos Nursing Program as well as Holy Cross Hospital. Holy Cross will be utilizing these funds for capital improvements and for equipment. All of these are necessary so we can continue to provide great care for this community."

-Dr. Cipry Jaramillo



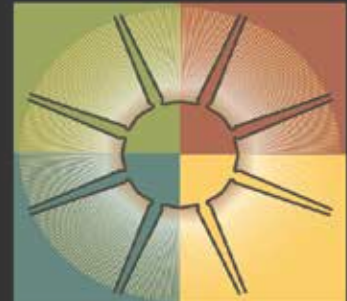
**Cipry Jaramillo, MD**  
Hospitalist



[HolyCrossMedicalCenter.org/GRT](https://HolyCrossMedicalCenter.org/GRT)

## Questa Public Library Celebrate Our Youth

Holiday Show



Artwork by students from Questa Junior/Senior High, Alta Vista Ele, Roots and Wings, Red River Charter and Local Home Schooled Youth

Music By  
Local  
Students

New Textile  
Display

Public Opening  
Nov 4th, 2-4pm

6 1/2 Municipal  
Park Road,  
Questa



# Mayor Ortega Optimistic About Green Hydrogen



By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

In an interview with *Questa del Rio News*, Village of Questa Mayor John Ortega expressed his optimism for the green hydrogen facility in the works for Questa, as a job creator and economic booster. While Questenos expressed concern over the facility's use of water at the August 30 meeting on the issue, the coalition behind the proposed facility made it clear that it would not use the Village's water sources; it would have its own.

"For our facility, we're talking about five acre-feet," said Mayor Ortega. "Five acre-feet is equivalent to about 20 to 21 homes and, I spoke to somebody within the last month, there [is technology]

now that uses two acre-feet, which would be about eight homes. The water would also be 80 to 90 percent recoverable, so to me water is a non-issue."

*Questa del Rio News* then pressed the Mayor on how much water rights the Village would have to prioritize for the facility.

"It's gonna be about 5 acre-feet per year, the Village right now uses about 200 acre-feet per year," said Mayor Ortega.

The Mayor stressed that he is not worried about the water rights and that Chevron and Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) are committed to the project.

While Chevron's donation of 120 acre-feet of water rights to the Village remains in contention at the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer (OSE), Mayor Ortega said that progress is being made in those negotiations.

*Questa del Rio News* also reached out to Caitlyn Clark, a senior researcher in mechanical engineering at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), who happily provided us with information on the benefits and hindrances

of green hydrogen as an alternative energy source.

The first benefit regarding green hydrogen is that it benefits "hard-to-abate industries," like steel production and transportation. Hard-to-abate industries are situations where it is difficult to reduce fossil fuel emissions. The second positive is that green hydrogen enables energy producers to "bypass transmission grid constraints," a complication that may worsen as more of the electric grid moves toward renewables. Green hydrogen can help alleviate such a complication. The third positive is that green hydrogen can help "displace other carbon-intensive processes that contaminate or use lots of water" like the burning of coal. The final benefit that Clark mentioned is "if an entity is investing in facilities that treat and purify large quantities of water to a high quality, one could leverage those facilities in areas where water treatment facilities are insufficient or lacking." In other words, investors could apply leverage to the water treatment industry for areas that need improved water treatment.

Clark mentioned only one disadvan-

tage around the prospect of green hydrogen: water rights. As climate change worsens, water rights may become more limited "in areas with regular drought or where water rights are fully or over-allocated." Although Clark also pointed out that this is not an issue limited to the United States "as we hear this from clients in Australia, the Middle East, and parts of Africa as well." And, as previously stated, Mayor Ortega is not worried about water rights for Questa for the time being.

The coalition behind this proposed green hydrogen facility is primarily made up of the Village of Questa, KCEC, the Questa Economic Development Fund (QEDF), and Chevron, in collaboration with the US Department of Energy. A key player is KCEC, as they own the infrastructure for energy transport. The project would allow KCEC to become 100 percent powered by green clean energy. Currently KCEC is completely solar powered during daytime hours. However the project is still in preliminary stages, with "implementation" set for 2024, according to the US Department of Energy.

## NV5 Engineering Awarded Contract For Wastewater Treatment Expansion Project

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

The Village of Questa (VoQ) unanimously approved a contract for the contracting company NV5 Engineering for work on the village's wastewater treatment expansion project.

Village Clerk Valerie Vigil and Project Manager Jake Lafore presented the proposal to award the contract to NV5 following its submission to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) alongside the Village's application for a USDA Pre-development Planning Grant (PPG), a grant specifically for water and waste disposal projects.

NV5's preliminary engineering report puts the cost of the project at approximately \$49,977 while the environmental assessment review would be an approximate \$75,938.

"We did get notification from [USDA's Rural Development Division] that the New Mexico Environmental Department is going to require an environmental assessment," said Project Manager Lefore. "There's no way to get around that."

Last year, NV5 Engineering worked with the Village on projects relating to La Cienega repairs.

"I'm confident in NV5," said Lefore. "They've worked with us in the past."

The PPG from the USDA offers a maximum of \$60,000 to low-income communities with populations of 10,000 or less. The Village of Questa was awarded the maximum amount.

A recording of the September 26 Village Council meeting is available on the *Questa del Rio News*' Facebook page.



Courtesy Photo

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# Potential GRT and Lodgers Tax Increases Postponed to 2024

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Village of Questa (VoQ) Administrator and Finance Director Karen Shannon provided an update for the Village Council regarding the proposed lodgers tax and a potential increase to the gross receipts tax (GRT) at the September 26 regular meeting. There was no decision on either tax.

Shannon informed the Council that the Village will need time to consider the implementation of the lodgers tax, which is currently being reviewed by Village Attorney Chris DeFillippo. The Council agreed on January 1 as an optimal date for a decision on the lodgers tax, to give adequate time for businesses to weigh in on the issue.

“Part of the issue with this is we need to know when we’re going to start it so that we can make sure we have an ordinance written correctly and that we have the public hearings and advertisements for the public hearings,” lamented Shannon. “But we haven’t had anybody call in about this at all.”

VoQ Council meetings are usually



Dylan R Crabb

Village of Questa Council members

attended by no one other than organizations speaking directly to the Council, individuals or organizations receiving accommodations by the Council, and the press. Regrettably, the public seems to show little interest in attending meetings of their local government.

Regarding the potential GRT increase, Shannon corrected the record on the maximum increase available to the VoQ.

“I sent our ordinance to the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department,” said Shannon. “Questa’s current

rate is at 1.4375 percent and the cap is 2.05 percent. The maximum available increase is 0.6125 percent.”

Shannon explained that the potential increase could be split between the VoQ’s general fund, EMS, fire, and police departments as it is intended to be used for public safety. Raising the GRT by the full amount of 0.6125 percent would place Questa at the same rate as the Town of Taos. This potential increase cannot be addressed again this year; it must be postponed until next spring.

Mayor John Ortega advocated for the rate rise because the VoQ needs more money for emergency department salaries making the positions more competitive with our neighboring municipalities. The Mayor expressed worry about losing our own emergency departments to Taos County, so the VoQ needs to raise their pay.

A recording of the September 26 VoQ Council meeting is available at *Questa del Rio News*’ Facebook page at the following web address: <<https://www.facebook.com/QuestaNews/videos/162971633529449>>.

## Taos Housing Partnership Unveils Plan to Increase Housing Availability in Taos Area

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The Taos Housing Partnership has unveiled a three-year housing roadmap plan to increase access to housing for locals in the Taos area.

The plan details various strategies to address the lack of affordable housing options for Taos area residents. The plan was created in conjunction with consultants who conducted outreach, and stakeholder interviews in the Taos region, and it will provide strategies and activities to bridge the gap, moving forward.

“The report is a comprehensive framework that outlines how we can address the housing crisis, with specific recommendations related to homebuyer education, mortgage assistance programs, and community advocacy and outreach activities” said Executive Director of the Taos Housing Partnership Lisa M. O’Brien. “Community engagement and local investment is crucial to create sustainable solutions and funding sources. THP is excited to lead the implemen-

tation of this work, and will be continuing to facilitate partnerships across all sectors. There is a role for everyone in the community to assist in this effort,” O’Brien added.

The roadmap was formally adopted by the THP Board of Directors in partnership with community leaders and elected officials from the Town of Taos and Taos County, who have been part of the visionary team since 2022.

“I am happy to see this document come to fruition,” stated Town of Taos Mayor Maestas. “The recommendations made in this report will need continued collaboration and partnership to take them off the page and into reality, and all parties continue to work together toward this common goal. THP has provided an excellent framework and action plan toward meeting our housing goals for Taos.”

Additionally, while the plan was not formally adopted, THP created the opportunity to award both grant and technical assistance to housing ideas

that may need assistance to get closer to being shovel-ready projects.

County Manager Brent Jaramillo, who has been part of the leadership team from the beginning, noted, “Taos County is committed to this partnership with THP. The need for more housing options in our community is imperative. We continue to see the demands on our working families, which impacts em-

ployer retention as well as recruitment for vacant or new positions.”

The public is invited to review the 3-year Recommended Housing Roadmap, and learn about technical assistance at their website: [taoshousingpartnership.org](http://taoshousingpartnership.org). See the roadmap plan here: <https://taoshousingpartnership.org/initiatives>

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# LOR Connects Questa Students With Hands-On Learning

By Contributing Writer  
JAY BOUCHARD

Throughout villages in northern New Mexico, there are countless ways to learn new skills. And while students work to excel in the classroom, the Questa Independent School District has recognized learning opportunities are abundant elsewhere, too.

That's why they're implementing an experiential learning curriculum that will expose students to specialized training in fields like carpentry, welding, art, film, agriculture, and more. Logistically, though, transporting students to off-site locations is complicated, as there is a

shortage of school bus drivers throughout Taos County. The district has contracted with a private company to get students to and from school, but in order to expand off-site learning opportunities, they would need to expand the contract with that same transportation company — at a cost. With this need in mind, the district reached out to Maria Gonzalez at the LOR Foundation, which ultimately made a small grant that helped hire drivers to support the new curriculum being piloted this year.

“Transportation in rural villages like ours is a recurring hurdle, particularly for students who don't have access to a ve-

hicle,” Gonzalez says. “When the school district brought up this idea, LOR was eager to help.”

Just last month, local students identified an additional learning opportunity that LOR was happy to support: engaging with Questa's traditional culinary traditions. While there are several hornos (outdoor abode ovens) throughout town, none are located on school grounds. To address that problem, a local resident worked with students and the school district to build an horno and implement a traditional cooking program at the high school.

Funding from LOR helped purchase

tools and adobe bricks for the oven, which became a community effort. Middle-schoolers poured concrete for the project, and Jason Torres and his wife and daughter built the horno over the course of one weekend. The students used the horno to prepare food for the Cosecha event in October and have plans to incorporate the oven into future community celebrations.

Gonzalez is eager to hear more ideas for supporting other community projects in Questa, and she'd love to connect with you. If you'd like to get in touch, she can be reached at [maria@lorfoundation.org](mailto:maria@lorfoundation.org) or (575) 665-2001.

# The History of New Mexico's Roadside Crosses: a Presentation

By Contributing Writer  
MICHAEL WILSON,  
Taos County Historical Society

Descansos, or roadside crosses, are found everywhere in the United States and the world, but are ubiquitous in New Mexico. Unlike in adjoining states, our memorials are protected by NM DOT, recognizing their importance to the culture of the state.

On Saturday, November 4, at 2 pm in the Kit Carson Coop boardroom in Taos, Pete Warzel will talk about the history of descansos and his engagement with them over the last 15 years. It will be a personal exploration that begins visually, seeing the descansos as folk art, and then thinking through the deeper meaning for the families and friends who lovingly place them at the side of the road, as well as for the drivers who pass them and experience the

stunning constructions and flash of color that denotes a memory.

The talk will be accompanied by photographs of rural road and urban descansos. Mr. Warzel will discuss a short bibliography of books and online sites with that address the haunting beauty of the memorials, searching the layers of meaning and intent, and questioning the intrusion of photographing the personal in a public space. The talk will include photographs of several of the descansos that line the roadways of Taos County.

Pete Warzel came west to Denver from Buffalo, New York in 1979 and discovered New Mexico during that move.

Pete has been the executive director of the Historic Santa Fe Foundation since 2014 as well as a founding director of Nuevo Mexico Profundo. Both organizations are dedicated to the history and cultures of New Mexico and to the preserva-

tion of architecture and cultural history during rapidly changing times. He has lived in Denver, Ranchos de Taos, Talpa, and Santa Fe.

Warzel spent a business career in media and entertainment working with large companies in cable television and movie theaters in executive positions, several start-up companies (one in Central Europe) and as a cinema consultant for the Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation. He is a former chairman of the National Association of Theatre Owners. He has published poetry, short fiction, essays, interviews, and book reviews in newspapers, national and international literary journals, regional and national magazines, including New Mexico Magazine, and was the books editor for Montana Quarterly Magazine.

He will retire from HSFF on December 31 this year to pursue more of the writing

and photography that has been a source of learning and the basis for his talk with the Taos County Historical Society. He maintains homes in Denver and Santa Fe and now will explore everywhere in between.

For more info on this program, call Michael Wilson at (612) 743-6546. Please join the Taos County Historical Society! Email Donovan Lieurance at [tchsmembership750@gmail.com](mailto:tchsmembership750@gmail.com)

- What:** Taos County Historical Society monthly program – Descansos of northern New Mexico
- Who:** Pete Warzel, executive director, Historic Santa Fe Foundation
- When:** Saturday, November 4, at 2 pm
- Where:** Kit Carson Electric Coop boardroom, 118 Cruz Alta Road, Taos

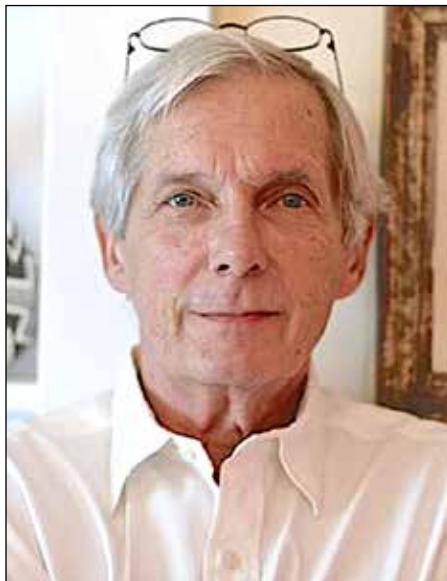


Photo Courtesy Michael Wilson

Pete Warzel



Photo by Michael Wilson

Arnie Cisneros of Questa



Photo by Michael Wilson

"Red Cloth" descanso on Roger Rael's memorial site exiting Questa.



Photo by Michael Wilson

Beloved Melissa Medina's family decorates her road marker regularly throughout the year



# Students Attend Solar Eclipse Watch Party

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Questa Independent School District students joined together at the Questa High School to observe the October 14 annular solar eclipse from the football field. The event was organized by the QISDs Business Manager Domingo Torres.

People were encouraged to go at 10:30 a.m., which was deemed the best viewing time for the eclipse.

Kids got to enjoy hot cocoa and

apple cider as they looked at the eclipsing sun through a Celestron Nexstar Evolution 9.25" telescope. The telescope had a solar filter to protect kids eyes from the sun.

Julie Segura shared photos of the event with *Questa del Rio News* on Facebook. She says, "I thought it would be nice to show the community what the staff is doing to provide opportunities for our students and the overall community."



Photo courtesy Julie Segura

Students take turns looking at the eclipsing sun through a specialized telescope



Photo courtesy Julie Segura

Annular solar eclipse



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# Into The Blue: Questa Homecoming 2023 Recap

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Questa's 2023 Homecoming week (October 2 through 7) was filled with blue pride as students showed their school spirit.

Students participated in dress-up week, where each day of the week followed a theme, with different themes for Alta Vista and Questa Junior/Senior High School. Themes included neon day, dress-like-a-staff-member day, music genre and dress-like-a-celebrity-day, class colors, and wildcat gear day.



Courtesy Photo

Siblings Faith and Lukas Cisneros dress like Snoop Dog and Ronnie Dunn for music genre and dress-like-a-celebrity day



Courtesy Photo

Alianna Gonzalez imitates teacher Mr. Severns for dress-like-a-staff-member day



**The Questa Volleyball Teams** reigned victorious over their homecoming games against the Dulce Lady Hawks. The JV team swept Dulce in two sets, with these scores: set 1: 26-24 and set 2: 25-8. The varsity Ladycats swept Dulce in three sets with the scores: set 1: 25-13, set 2: 25:18, and set 3: 25-22.

**The Questa Soccer Team** played Taos JV on Friday, October 6, and after a long game of strong defense, the Wildcats lost, but kept Taos at only one point. The final score was 1-0.

Friday night ended with a bonfire and Saturday began with a parade through Questa's main street.



Photos by E. Wilde

Questa Volleyball

**The Questa Football Team** reigned victorious for Homecoming on Saturday, 10/7. The Questa JV Football Team remains undefeated this season, beating Pine Hill JV 54-0. The Questa Varsity Football team beat Pine Hill varsity 52-0.

During the varsity game, the homecoming court was presented to the school community.

Markie Mascarenas and Alyana Leon were crowned Questa Homecoming King and Queen Royalty and Isaac Vialpando and Allison Segura were crowned Prince and Princess Royalty.

- Other members of the homecoming court included:
- 6th grade: Nelson Fernandez and Mia Gonzales
- 7th grade: Trey Cloud and Giana Young
- 8th grade: Isaac Vialpando and Allison Segura
- 9th grade: Ethan Herrera and Winter Hernandez
- 10th grade: Alyssa Cintas and Anthony Roberts
- 11th grade: James Garcia and Alyana Leon
- 12th grade: Markie Mascarenas and Marivel Gonzalez



Photos by E. Wilde

Questa football homecoming game



Markie Mascarenas and Alyana Leon were crowned Questa Homecoming King and Queen



Nelson Fernandez and Mia Gonzales

**The Questa Cheer Team** worked diligently to represent each team and the school throughout the homecoming weekend. Coach Maria Medina synopsized their work over the week-long event, which included: participating in dual sport practices Monday-Wednesday, performing for the pep rally Thursday, cheering at the Volleyball game Thursday, cheering at the soccer game Friday, walking in the parade Saturday morning, and cheering at the football game Saturday night.

It takes a community to raise children and continued support and love to keep them strong as they learn and grow in academia and sports. Questa is lucky to have both.



Photos by E. Wilde

Questa Cheer Team



12th grade Queen Marivel Gonzalez and family



Isaac Vialpando and Allison Segura were crowned Prince and Princess Royalty



# Supporting Questa Students, Athletes or Not

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

For this issue, we intended to do stories, recapping the records of our Questa sports teams, doing highlights on specific students. We mixed those articles.

For this issue, we are going to talk about something much more important, and that is the importance of supporting our students, athletes or not.

*Every two hours and 11 minutes, a young person in the United States commits suicide. Every single year, over 5,000 young people in the United State will die to suicide. Over 2.7 million youth in the United States report to be experiencing major depression.*

I once heard it said that this generation is the saddest generation, with the prettiest social media pictures.

The pressures they feel to be present on instagram, facebook, twitter, snapchat, tiktok to be, and do, and act certain ways to gain status, popularity, clout, which could all be stripped away in an instant with the wrong click, a post, a like, a share, posting too much, or not posting enough...

*It's exhausting.*

Just imagine, the crushing pressure young people feel to be students right now. You have to be so many things to so many people, in-person and online, focus on your studies, play sports, participate in extracurricular activities, try your best, be role models, work hard, to be met with ridicule because it's not enough.

Kids play sports and participate in extracurricular activities to escape the real world, increase their endorphins, improve their mental health, practice sportsmanship, to learn lessons about winning and about losing, while having fun.

At the end of the day, scores and team records mean nothing.

The lessons young people learn through participating in sports and extracurricular activities will serve as lessons they will carry for the rest of their lives. How we react when things don't go our way, or when we lose, or when decisions are made which we don't agree with, sets an example for our kids on how they should react to adversity.

It's our job as adults to support them when they win and when they lose. To show up and cheer for them, love them, encourage them, and be there for them... all of them, regardless of the score, regardless of the record and regardless of the team, because the students matter, their futures matter, their mental health matters, and their lives matter.

Congratulations to our fall season 2023 Wildcats and Ladycats!



## SOCCKER:

Coaches Bill MacDonald and Spencer Warnock

- #00: Ysidro Garcia-8th Grade
- #1: Marcus Mascarenas- Senior
- #2: Abby Tucker-Freshman
- #3: Nathaniel Rael-Senior
- #7: Frank Palermo-Sophomore
- #8: Dedrick Rael-Sophomore
- #14: Donny Santistivan-Junior
- #15: Aaliyah Santistevan-Junior
- #18: Colman Mahony-Junior
- #22: Alyse Lovato-Sophomore
- #24: Isaac Ortega- Senior
- #25: Ricardo Sanchez- Senior
- #26: Antonio Romero- Senior
- #42: Ricardo Leon- Sophomore
- #90: Jacob Vallejos- Junior

## JUNIOR HIGH FOOTBALL

Coaches Damean Craven, Larry Roybal Jr, Dwayne Ortega, Mark Ortega, Ernie Griego

- Lukas Cisneros-8th grade
- Koda Segura - 8th grade
- Bo Ortega - 7th grade
- Diego Ortega - Freshman
- Izyk Gallegos - 7th grade
- Wesley Tannahill - 8th grade
- Jeremiah Tannahill - 7th grade
- Joel Santistevan - 7th grade
- Jose Cisneros - Freshman
- Matt Vigil - Freshman
- Izziah Gonzalez - Freshman
- Micah Gonzalez -8th grade
- Larry Roybal III - 8th grade
- Urijah Griego - 8th grade
- Noah Mandonado -Freshman
- Remington Smith - 8th grade
- Hector Hernandez - 7th grade
- Ezekiel Henderson -8th grade

## HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Coaches Jeremiah Burke, Dante Urrea, Luis Romero

- #2: Carlos Ortega- Junior
- #3: Antonio Romero- Senior
- #4: Covo Cardenas- Freshman
- #9: Tristan Halterman- Freshman
- #11: Martin Rivera- Senior
- #22: Noah Rael- Sophomore
- #27: Adam Gordon- Sophomore
- #48: Ricardo Sanchez- Senior
- #52: Joseph Halterman- Sophomore
- #58: Isaac Ortega- Senior
- #69: AJ Leon- Senior
- #70: James Garcia- Senior
- #72: Joaquin Martinez- Sophomore

## JV VOLLEYBALL

Coaches Diane Leon and Jennifer Vialpando

- #4: Estrella Hernandez- Freshman
- #5: Janae Dominguez- Sophomore
- #7: Madison Schave- Freshman
- #8: Mariana Ortega- Freshman
- #9: Mia Ramos- Freshman
- #17: Melinda Rael- Freshman
- #18: Marivel Gonzalez- Senior
- #19: Aaliyah Piper- Sophomore
- #21: Ariana Medina- Sophomore
- #24: Esperanza Vallejos- Freshman

## VARSITY VOLLEYBALL

Coaches Michelle Garcia Spears, Diane Leon and Jennifer Vialpando

- #1: Amalia Gonzalez- Senior
- #2: Alyana Leon- Junior
- #3: Joshlyn Medina- Sophomore
- #10: Jocelyne Ortega- Sophomore
- #11: Delilah Rael- Junior
- #13: Alianna Gonzalez- Junior
- #14: Ashlynn Rael- Junior
- #15: Aliyah Santistevan- Junior
- #19: Aaliyah Piper- Sophomore
- #20: Kiara Arellano- Junior
- #21: Ariana Medina- Sophomore
- #25: Alexis Brown- Junior

## QUESTA CHEER

Coaches Maria Medina and Angel Medina

- Maliyah Dominguez- 8th grade
- Mariana Ortega- Freshman
- Karla Trujillo- Freshman
- Aaliyah Piper- Sophomore
- Hailey Rael- 8th grade
- Joshlyn Medina- Sophomore
- Analea Cisneros- 8th grade
- Carlos Ortega- Junior
- Madison Schave- Freshman
- Alyssa Cintas- Sophomore
- Kaylei Cordova- Freshman
- Olivia Martinez- Freshman
- Yesenia Medina- Sophomore
- Ysenia Medina- Sophomore
- Ysidro Garcia- 8th grade
- Ariana Medina- Sophomore
- Janae Dominguez- Sophomore
- Sierra Ortiz- 8th grade
- Maria Bella Arguello- Freshman
- Marissa Ortiz- Sophomore
- Amarissa Cintas- Freshman







**QUESTA  
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

## It's the Questa Holiday Youth Show at the Questa Public Library!

Come and see the exciting artwork produced by our local youth artists at the opening of their show, on Saturday, November 4, from 2 to 4 p.m. There will be refreshments and prizes and youth will provide the live music.

This year students from our four local schools will be participating, from Questa Junior/Senior High School, Alta Vista Elementary, Red River Charter School, and Roots and Wings Elementary — as well as home-schooled children.

Over 200 pieces of art will be on display! The work encompasses many different subject matters and techniques. Landscapes, still life, abstracts, and portraits that are created using pencil, acrylic, oil, watercolor, and printmaking materials will be gracing our walls. Fun sculptural work will also be displayed. There should be something for everyone to enjoy at this exciting and creative show.

Thanks to the art teachers from all these schools, and parents, for encouraging and promoting their students' creativity. Creative problem-solving is an extremely important and valuable skill which carries over into the real world, helping individuals find many different ways to find solutions to everyday problems.

This will be a fun and exciting show with all the elementary school-aged children receiving ribbons for their artwork and the junior/senior students receiving juried awards and prizes.

During the opening on November 4 from 2 to 4 p.m., guests will be entertained by listening to music performed



Photo by Peggy Trigg

at the 2022 Questa Holiday Youth Show at the Questa Public Library

by our local youth. Thank you to our local music teachers! Art-making tables will also be set up, so you will be able to make a favorite holiday decoration or card. The event will be catered to provide the most excellent refresh-

ments, so please come out and help us show our support and encouragement for the many creative children in our community. Hope to see you Saturday, Nov 4, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Questa Public Library!

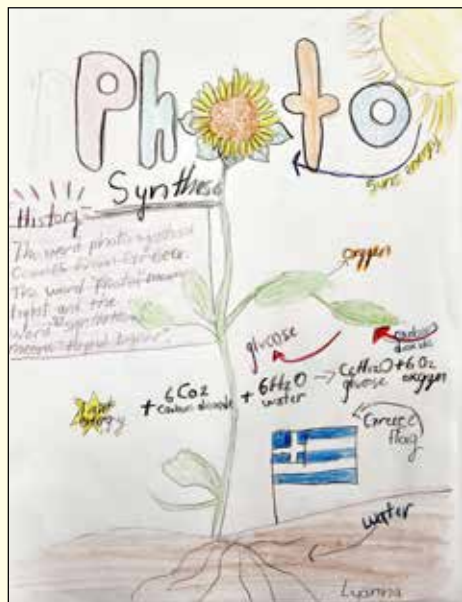


Photo Courtesy John Walsh

7th Grade Science: Lyanna



Photo Courtesy John Walsh

Paradise Drawing by Hayley C.

## HALLOWEEN

By Contributing Writer  
SIERRA O

It was Halloween, the night everyone was waiting for. My friend and I were going trick or treating when we saw this girl soaking wet down by the river. We offered to give her a ride and she got in the back of the truck with us. We took her where she wanted to go and dropped her off at her house. We then went on with our night but discovered her jacket in the back seat of the truck. Since we knew where she lived, we decided to take it to her

house. I got out of the truck with her coat and knocked on the door. A man opened the door, and I explained what happened. He said that was impossible. I was a little confused at that point, so he explained that his daughter had passed away a few months ago. He said she fell in the Rio Grande and froze to death. I was shocked because she had died right where we picked her up. How could she have left her jacket in my truck? Did I pick up a ghost?



Courtesy Photo

2nd Grade Fall Board



# QHS Celebrates Cosecha Tradition, Dating Back Centuries

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Questa High School saw its first Cosecha event on October 17. Cosecha is a New Mexico tradition stretching back to the old Spanish Empire.

It's a celebration of food, harvest, and life; "Cosecha" translates to "harvest" in English. This traditional practice saw its first days in northern New Mexico at Costilla schools.

"We placed the 100 ears of corn in the horno at about 8:30 last night," said Princi-

pal Kimber MacDonald. "It's a New Mexico tradition stretching back to the Pueblos and obviously the Spanish took it on. It's a celebration of food and community."

The school cooked corn for the Cosecha because of its historical importance as a traditional crop for this area.

"I think this is an important event to celebrate our history and culture," said Esteban Gomez, student body president.

Antonia Ortiz from the Fort Garland Museum and Cultural Center was also at the Cosecha celebration, preparing an

instructional session for the students on how to make adobe bricks, as adobe is an integral part of architecture in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado.

Brian Salazar brought two therapy goats to the Cosecha, of the seven that he raises on his ranch in Costilla for purposes of animal and nature therapy.

"Everything was cooked in the horno — the corn, the beans, the beef, the chicha, everything," said Barbara Martinez. "We started this tradition in Costilla, at the Rio Costilla school. "It was a special event and

we fed the community."

Barbara Martinez and her sister, Debbie Garcia, joined with the Torres family, who started the Cosecha tradition over 30 years ago at the Rio Costilla school. It began with a simple class on New Mexico history with an intent to "combine curriculum with culture," according to Barbara. Debbie still teaches first grade at Alta Vista School.

Jason and Leticia Torres constructed the horno with funding from the LOR Foundation and Chevron.



Photo by Dylan R. Crabb

Student, Marlena, enjoying her corn that was cooked in El Horno



Photo by Dylan R. Crabb

Students and Principal MacDonald shucking corn




Photo by Dylan R. Crabb

Students posing at La Cosecha celebration



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## The Numbers Are In!

It's time to report on the results of this past summer's Questa Art Tour! Participating artists and hub leaders shared their results with us on their sales: 9 percent made sales of over \$3,000 during the weekend event, 15 percent had sales between \$1,000 and \$3,000, 19 percent of artists reported sales between \$500 and \$1,000, and 46 percent earned under \$500. Only 11 percent of participants did not make any sales, but greatly enjoyed the chance to interact with a wide variety of art enthusiast visitors on the tour.

Most guests were from the Questa area and Taos County. The next largest group was from greater New Mexico, with major numbers of out-of-state visitors who reported staying along the

Enchanted Circle. Many planned their visit around Questa Art Tour dates!

Questa is becoming much more aligned with overall state statistics in terms of tourism visits. We are no longer just the place where one turned east to go to Red River! Much of New Mexico's visitation comes from drive markets — primarily from the surrounding states of Texas, Arizona, California, and Colorado, plus those ever culturally interested New Yorkers.

According to the New Mexico state tourism department, 2022 set new records for visitation, with an estimate of almost 41 million trips, surpassing the previous year's record. Great news for Questa; trips to New Mexico more frequently include cultural and outdoor activities compared to the U.S. average, where 60 percent of all trips here included an outdoor activity versus the U.S. average of 48 percent. Almost half of trips to New Mexico included a cultural activity, while the U.S. average was only 29 percent. As to activities that directly add to our state's economy, and potentially Questa's; visitors also make more purchases here than the U.S. average, and dine more frequently at local restaurants.

A report by UNM that studied the creative economy of New Mexico notes: "With a genuinely unique history, a creatively engaged population, and a strong national and global reputation, New Mexico is well positioned to succeed in the development of its [arts] economy." Further, "...to appreciate the importance of arts and culture to New Mexico's economy, consider that primary employment for this sector is roughly equal to the state's construction industry and 50 percent larger than the manufacturing

industry. Total wages for the arts and cultural industries roughly equal the total paid by the state's mining industry, and more than the total paid by hotels and restaurants."

All of this affirms Questa's beautiful outdoors and the financial benefits of focusing on arts offerings. Given the cultural traditions, living history, and continuing local lifestyles that build on creative and artistic endeavors, Questa is well placed to benefit from these trends!

### IT'S A TIME TO THANK YOU

**SATURDAY: DECEMBER 2**

**4:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

**La Sala**

**2331 HWY 522, Questa NM**

The QCC will host an open house community celebration. It's a time to thank you, our amazing artists and participants, organizers, volunteers, generous supporters, and fans of our events and projects. Join us for food, drink, music from local favorites Chris and Rodney Arellano, and Mark and Justin of the High Desert Acoustic Duo. Plus we'll hold a raffle, with prizes.

### THE ALUMBRA DE QUESTA CHRISTMAS CRAFT MARKET

**SATURDAY: DECEMBER 9**

**10 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

**Questa VFW**

The Alumbra de Questa Christmas craft market will again be held on the second Saturday in December at the Questa VFW. Find your favorite local craftspeople (or sign up to have a booth! Go to <https://questacreative.org/alumbra-holiday-fair/> and download the form) Food, music, fun, an appearance by Santa, and a great chance to SHOP LOCAL for your holiday gifts!



Photo by E. Wilde

Questa Quilters at the library hub



Photo by E. Wilde

Fun at Cosas Hermosas



Photo by E. Wilde

Artists at the new hub in Cerro during this past summer's Questa Art Tour

## Taos County Arts and Culture Industry Generates Over \$70 Million in 2022

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

According to a press release from the Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6) economic impact study, \$15.9 million in spending by non-profit arts and culture organizations and \$54.8 million in event-related spending, supporting 958 jobs and generating \$11.3 million in local, state, and federal government revenue — contributed to commerce throughout Taos County.

These statistics may be under-report-

ed, since only 73 percent (63 out of 86) of total arts and culture non-profits in Taos County participated in the study.

The AEP6 study is conducted by the Americans for the Arts non-profit organization, dedicated to promoting art and culture throughout the nation by "inspiring and enriching communities and schools." The organization has existed for over 60 years; in 2010 they celebrated their 50th anniversary.

Funding for the local study was provided by the LOR Foundation, the

Millicent Rogers Museum, and the Taos Arts Council, with the Taos Community Foundation providing technical support.

"This local data collected in Taos County puts numbers on what we know — the arts and culture sector is a key driver for the Taos County economy as well as one of our cornerstones for quality of life," said Executive Director Greta Brunschwyler of the Millicent Rogers Museum. "For every dollar invested in local arts and culture non-profits, Taos County got an economic impact return

of four dollars in audience spending on food and drink, lodging, and shopping with local businesses. That's big."

The average Taos County arts event attendee spends \$30.50 per person per event, not including the cost of admission. Non-locals represent 67 percent of visitors, spending an average of \$96.60 per person per event.

Across the nation, arts and culture is a \$151.7 billion industry, supporting 2.6 million jobs and generating \$29.1 billion in government revenue.



# Alumbra de Questa Christmas Market on December 9

By STAFF WRITERS

The Alumbra Christmas Market will take place again this year for its 8th year!

Alumbra de Questa is a community fair, put together in an effort to keep all our resources in Questa for the holiday season. Through this effort, the money that people would normally spend outsourcing to major corporations is instead kept in circulation in our own small northern communities.

“At Alumbra, we support our own local artists, artisans, craftspeople, and creators, thus supporting our own local economy. We also win by purchasing unique, hand-made gifts for our loved ones which are more personal, meaningful, and lasting,” stated Questa Creative Council Executive Director Sierra Hedberg.

The holiday market is full of light and cheer for the season, a place people can enjoy lunch or dinner, strolling through the market with the family while sipping hot chocolate and listening to live local music... and maybe even a visit with Santa Claus!

For this year's fair, organizers hope to have at least 25 vendors selling a wide

variety of locally made art, crafts, and goodies. Last year there were 18 who participated. What's also new is that the QEDF has handed off the administration of the event to the QCC.

“In years past, Alumbra has been attempted in an outdoor setting. However, the market has transitioned into being an indoor market, held at the Questa VFW. This is more appealing for vendors, musicians, and attendees so we can all keep cozy and warm. Mark your calendar! The market is a ONE DAY ONLY event and runs all day at the VFW on December 9 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.,” Sierra says.

When asked about what the hopes and goals for this year's market is, Sierra says, “our hope for Alumbra de Questa 2023 is that we see our village come together, surrounding one another with the warmth of presence.

We hope to see our local artists thriving, provided this opportunity to sell their products, as well as happy village people checking off their holiday shopping lists. We hope the Alumbra Market this year exudes its true meaning and tradition, representative of the brave hearts of our village people, and as a place



Courtesy Photo

Santa, elves and neighbors at the Food Pantry booth at Alumbra Santa Claus in attendance at Alumbra, when it was held out-of-doors

that Questa continues to shine brightly through darkness. We hope it is a fun, holiday event that our village looks forward to and makes a part of their Questa holiday traditions. There will also be a live Nativity you won't want to miss.”

Want to be a vendor? Call Sierra

at (575) 586-5658 or email [questacreativecouncil@gmail.com](mailto:questacreativecouncil@gmail.com). You can also download the application on the QCC website: <https://questacreative.org/alumbra-holiday-fair/> or pickup registration forms at Rael's Market or the Questa Post Office board.

**Alumbra de Questa**  
 ~CHRISTMAS MARKET~  
 Saturday, December 9, 2023  
 10 am - 4 pm @ The Questa VFW  
 Your one-stop-shop for local ~ Music ~ Vendors ~ Food ~ Santa!

For more info contact: Sierra 575-586-5658 or [questacreativecouncil@gmail.com](mailto:questacreativecouncil@gmail.com)

A project of: **QUESTA CREATIVE COUNCIL**



# Questa Outdoor Education Program Seeks to Connect Students to Nature

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA AND DYLAN R.N. CRABB

The Questa Independent School District launched the Outdoor Education Program in 2021. It was spearheaded by Principal Kimber MacDonald, built on previous efforts by Bill MacDonald, Diane Leon, and Spencer Warnock. All staffers continue to contribute and support the growth of the Outdoor Education Program currently.

"The opportunity for students to get outdoors is essential," said QISD staff member Maya MacDonald. "It allows them to connect with the space they live in and creates lasting connections to the outdoors. The kids deserve every opportunity to explore this incredible place we call home."

The Outdoor Education Program also has added benefits for kids who may be struggling in the classroom to find ways to lead and empower themselves and others. "Kids work toward earning these trips, understanding they

are a privilege, not a right. When the students return to the classroom, they bring new skills in leadership, autonomy, finding success in set boundaries, and problem solving to their work in the classroom. The confidence instilled by these trips is very important for many students," Maya adds.

The program has organized dozens of trips over the last three years with four winter ski trips. The goal is to give every class at least one outdoor hands-on experience, these are usually local hike trails. Once the snow starts to fall, the ski trips will begin. "Students are already buzzing about the upcoming ski season, with many setting their sights on exploring new terrain and others switching disciplines, mostly from skiing to snowboarding," she adds.

Supported by the Questa Schools Board of Education and largely funded by the LOR Foundation and the Taos Community Foundation, Maya says the staff of the schools are so incredibly grateful to have the chance to provide



Courtesy photo

Students taking a fall trip to Columbine Canyon Trail in Carson National Forest for a hike

these opportunities for the students. "These organizations ensure we're able to cover the transportation costs, fees, and

other associated costs with the program. Having this funding is an incredible gift for our students."

## SENIOR MENU: NOVEMBER 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
All Meals Served With 8oz. 2% Milk as available		<b>1</b> Meat loaf, Gravy, Sweet Potatoes Green Beans, Wheat Roll, Strawberries w/Angel cake	<b>2</b> Bean Burrito Smothered, cucumber salad, Roasted Brussel Sprouts, peaches, Greek Vanilla Yogurt	<b>3</b> BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwich, Stewed Tomatoes, Coleslaw, mandarin oranges
<b>6</b> Chili Dog, French Fries, Carrots, Cantaloupe	<b>7</b> Soft Chicken Tacos, Pinto Beans/ Salsa Calabacitas, Spiced pears w/ granola	<b>8</b> Tossed Salad, Crackers, Sliced Apples	<b>9</b> Pork Posole, flour tortilla, Orange	<b>10</b> <b>Closed</b> Veterans Day
<b>13</b> Orange chicken, steamed brown rice, oriental vegetables, Fortune Cookie, Pineapple Chunks	<b>14</b> Pork chop Gravy, Lemon Herb Orzo, broccoli spears, Roasted Zucchini w/ roll, applesauce	<b>15</b> Beef Burrito Supreme, Spanish Rice Calabacitas, Diced Mango	<b>16</b> turkey, mashed potatoes/gravy, green beans w/ Slivered almonds, corn bread stuffing/ Roll, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie w/ whipped topping	<b>17</b> Frito Pie, Pinto Beans, Beet and Red Onion salad, Gelatin w/ banana
<b>20</b> Pepperoni Pizza , HB Egg, Greek Nonfat Vanilla, Peaches, Crackers	<b>21</b> Spaghetti w/ meat sauce Italian Blend, Vegetables, Tossed Salad w/ Dressing, Wheat roll, Fruit Cocktail	<b>22</b> Tuna salad Sandwich, Asparagus, Roasted Cauliflower, Apricots	<b>23</b> <b>Closed</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Closed</b> Thanksgiving
<b>27</b> Baked Fish, wild rice, Vegetable medley, Banana	<b>28</b> Cheeseburger W/ FF, Cucumber and tomato, Salad, Watermelon	<b>29</b> Grilled Cheese sandwich LS tomato soup, Capri Vegetables/ HB Egg Fruit Salad w/ vanilla yogurt	<b>30</b> Chicken Bow Tie Alfredo, Italian Veggies, Garlic wheat roll, Tropical Fruit Salad	Taos County Senior Program (575) 737-8927 PLEASE NOTE THAT THE 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 donations recommendations are \$1.50 and up. Lunches for people under 60 years old are \$7.50 a person.

To qualify call the Ancianos at (575) 586-0508. They will fill out an assessment and file an application.

Currently, exercise classes are not available.

Donations for transportation is encouraged.



# New Off-Highway Vehicle Education Grants Rewarded In Carson National Forest

By STAFF WRITERS

The state's Off-Highway Vehicle program made major contributions to the Carson National Forest in their most recent grant cycle.

They announced \$20,000 to the Town of Red River to lease a snow-grooming machine to accommodate snowmobiling and cross-country skiing in the Carson National Forest, \$10,000 to the Red River Off-Road Coalition to lease equipment and purchase materials to repair the upper 3 miles of Pioneer Creek Road in the Questa Ranger District, and \$5,000 to the New Mexico Off-Highway Alliance to purchase equipment and supplies to maintain the Elephant Rock single-track trail network in the Questa Ranger District.

Since 2011, the OHV Program has awarded more than \$2.5 million in grants to land management agencies,

non-profits and law enforcement agencies to address local areas of concern or improve existing OHV routes.

Previous grants have assisted with the reopening of such notable OHV routes as the Elephant Rock Trail in the Carson National Forest's Questa Ranger District.

In addition, the OHV grants have assisted with education and safety-awareness campaigns throughout New Mexico. To date, thousands of hours have been dedicated by OHV grantees on public lands to keep New Mexicans of all ages safe.

Funds for these grants are user-generated revenues from OHV registrations collected in the state's Trail Safety Fund and administered by the Department. No General Fund or Department of Game and Fish monies are used for OHV grants.



Courtesy NM Game and Fish

As a reminder, all OHVs that are operated on public lands in New Mexico must be registered. OHV users cannot ride on paved roads unless a local ordinance authorizes paved-road use. All OHV riders and passengers under the

age of 18 must wear an approved helmet and eye protection, and operators under the age of 18 must carry proof of having completed OHV safety training.

More about OHV laws and rules can be found at [B4Uride.com](http://B4Uride.com).



## Paper Leaves

While walking through the forest with his grandfather, Ukrainian high school student Valentyn Frechka posed a simple question: Can paper come from leaves instead of entire trees?

A few years of experimentation and several awards later, Frechka patented his process and founded the RE-Leaf Paper Company, where he creates environmentally friendly packaging, cardboard, and non-printable

paper from the fiber extracted from fallen leaves.

As of 2020, RE-Leaf is processing 20,000 tons of leaves a year, and is planning to export the innovative technique across the globe, encouraging traditional paper companies to replace their use of felled trees with fallen leaves instead.

Imagine planting and preserving a forest to make paper and a profit, all while helping the planet for generations to come.

*This story brought to you by Arroyo Seco Live.*

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## U.S. Forest Service Conducts Prescribed Burn in Questa Ranger District in October

By STAFF WRITERS

Fire crews conducted a prescribed burn in mid-October. They called the operation the McCrystal Rock Prescribed Burn.

Over the two-day period, crews were able to successfully treat 4,000 acres in the Valle Vidal.

“Treating 4,000 acres in two days is a major accomplishment,” said Questa District Ranger Adam LaDell. “With weather and conditions changing, we’re going to shift to patrolling and monitoring until the fire is called out.”

Officials say a smaller organization of fire personnel will remain in the area to continue checking the fire by walking

the unit boundary, mopping up edges and monitoring any remaining interior burning.

While the area remains open, officials say visitors should take caution when entering a recently burned area. Visitors are also asked to slow down and drive with caution whenever smoke is present, or firefighters and apparatuses are working on or near the roadways.

*The McCrystal Rock Unit is part of the larger 21,000-acre Valle Vidal Northeast Prescribed Fire Project. The goal is to improve wildlife habitat by, in part, promoting grassland and meadow growth and health while simultaneously reducing the risk of wildfires.*



Photo courtesy from Nicole Cardenas

Prescribed burn in Valle Vidal

## State Introduces New Prescribed Burn Training For Landowners

By MEGAN MYSCOFSKI,  
KUNM Radio via the Source NM

Many private landowners and small organizations conduct controlled burns in New Mexico, but the federal guidelines can be of limited help to them. A new voluntary certification program called for by a 2021 law is now up and running to teach New Mexicans how to safely conduct a prescribed burn.

The Prescribed Burning Act called on the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department’s Forestry Division to create the training program.

“I think it’s an accessible training. It’s engaging. It doesn’t take too long,” State Forester Laura McCarthy said of the 4- to 5-hour training for landowners and contractors who have conducted burns for years, as well as those new to owning a large plot of land.

It includes online and experience components, and there is no timeline for completing it.

The committee that created it included members from both inside and outside of state government, and McCarthy says the 2022 wildfire season, and especially the Calf Canyon/Hermit’s Peak Fire, did impact the content of the training.

“It does appear that their contingency plan and the resources that they had available in the event that they needed to use the contingency plan were insufficient,” McCarthy said.

The training covers contingency planning and other safety measures.

“You want to have thought through what can go wrong and then you want to have access ready, quick access to the resources you need,” McCarthy said.

The act also limits liability for those who complete the training in the case that a prescribed burn causes damage.

This coverage is made possible by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and KUNM listeners.

## Wildfire Risk is Causing an Insurance Bubble in New Mexico

By BRYCE DIX,  
KUNM News via The SourceNM

Extreme weather events fueled by climate change are causing insurance premiums to skyrocket in some places across the United States.

A new report shows New Mexico and the Southwest sit at the center of the problem.

First Street Foundation, the non-profit behind the report, estimates that roughly 39 million properties across the country are being underpriced by insurance companies for their climate risk.

That’s why some homeowners living in areas prone to natural disasters could see a significant jump in their rates. Like in southeast New Mexico’s Lea County, which is projected to see an 82.6 percent increase in structures destroyed by wildfire annually in the next 30 years — the thirteenth largest increase in the entire nation.

Co-author of the report Jeremy Porter said it’s not a matter of if, but when the insurance bubble pops.

“People have these monthly expectations and if you see a 500, 400 percent increase in insurance, there are real, quantifiable consequences associated with that,” Porter said.

These warnings come amid trying times for insurance providers.



Photo by Patrick Lohmann / Source NM

**A member of a flood-damaged acequia walks past burnt trees April 8 during the annual cleaning in the burn scar of the Hermits Peak-Calf Canyon fire**

According to the credit rating agency AM Best, insurers recorded a \$24.5 billion net underwriting loss in the first half of 2023, which nearly surpasses the \$26.5 billion in losses recorded for all of 2022. The agency also views climate change as the single largest risk to the insurance industry.

California, Louisiana, and Florida are already seeing substantial increases in insurance premiums or companies flat-out refusing to offer coverage in risky areas.

While most people can still obtain insurance in the private market, some property owners in high-risk areas have had to turn to state-mandated insurers of last resort for their coverage. Specifically, here in New Mexico, this is called the F.A.I.R., or Fair Access to Insurance Requirements plan.

## How to Make your Property Bear-Proof

By STAFF WRITERS

Bear sightings have been reported across the Questa and Red River area via social media posts. Officials are asking residents to take extra steps to make their properties bear-proof. Some ways you can do this include:



Photo courtesy Nicole Cardenas

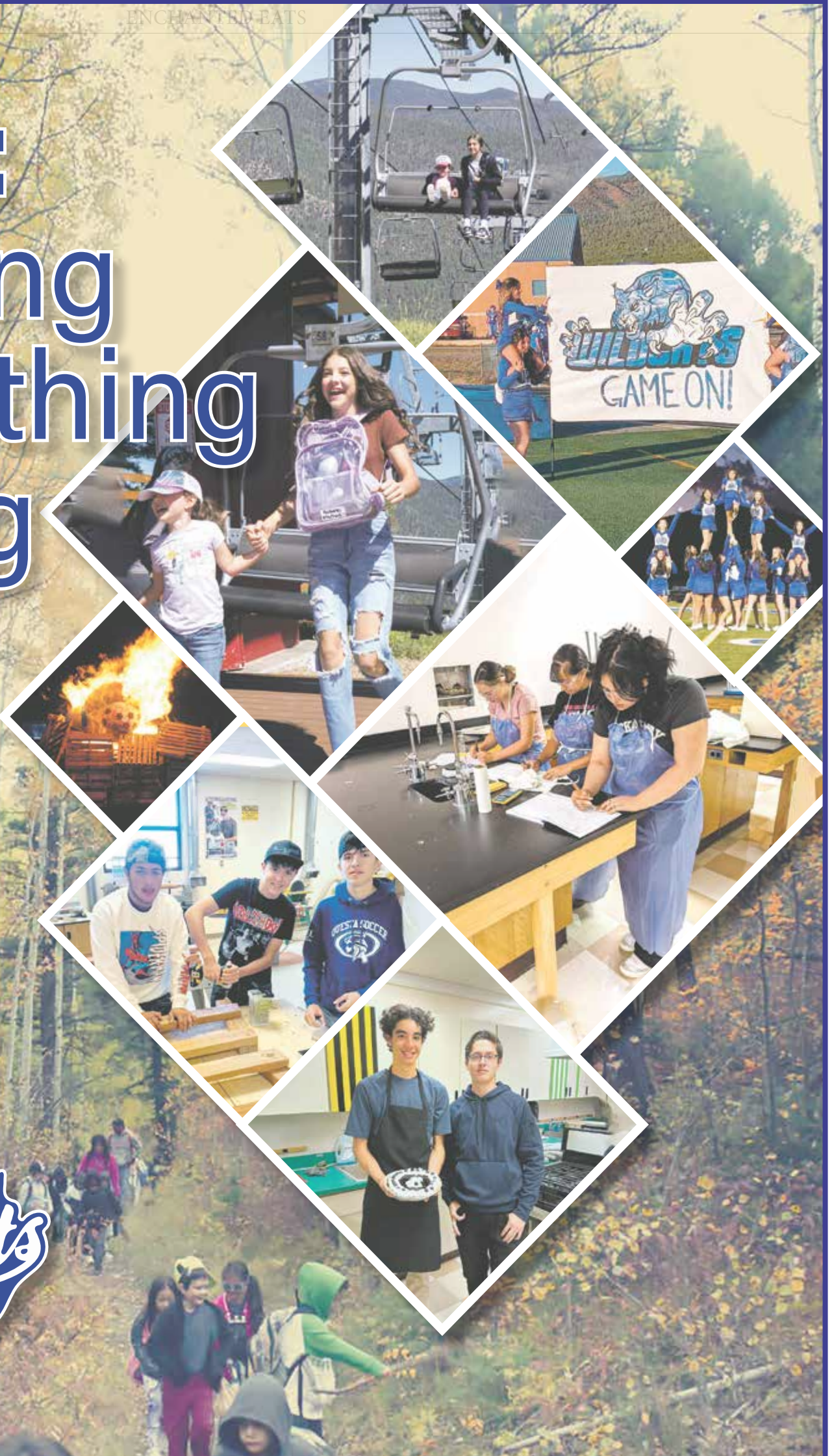
Bear seen on N. Kiowa Road in mid-October, 2023

- Locking dumpster or trash cans.
- Properly dispose of food in locked trash cans.
- Do not leave food in your vehicle overnight.
- Keep windows and doors closed and locked overnight.
- Close garage doors and lock vehicle doors.
- Lock livestock in gated, secured areas.
- Pick ripened fruit from fruit trees.
- Ask neighbors to join you in bear-proofing their property.

If a bear is causing havoc to you, your neighbors, or your wildlife, please contact New Mexico Game and Fish at (505) 476-8000.



# QISD: Building Something Strong



#questastrong

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







By Toner Mitchell

## Another Spectacular New Mexico Autumn

Autumn can be a pretty rough time for a New Mexican fisherman like me. In the north, pretty much every day in late September through October is sunny and blue, which makes every other color jump out. It's like the sun and the plants have conspired to play my heartstrings with the perfect mix of optimistic joy and melancholy. I have difficulty with fall because I always forget that the season doesn't last forever, and the fact that the actual point of it is that it will end.

There's a lot of ritual around autumn in New Mexico, like the Balloon Fiesta, apple and berry picking, and going on walks through yellow aspen groves with people we love. My personal favorite ritual is fishing the Rio Grande. I usually try to hike into the gorge, mainly because the fishing is so good at this



Photo by Toner Mitchell

Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout

time of year.

That is if you time it right, which I didn't this year. My buddy Stucky and I were a couple weeks late. The nights had turned cold, so the fish didn't warm up until the middle of the afternoon. We didn't catch a lot of fish but were grateful for the generosity of a few.

We hiked in from the La Vista Verde Trailhead, up the hill from the Taos Junction Bridge near Pilar. The maintained trail goes along the western rim,

with several DIY paths breaking off to the right heading into the crack. You don't realize until you reach the riverside that those paths are made by bighorns, and that sheep are built for traveling in that boulder and landslidy terrain, and you're not.

As if to emphasize this point, a gang of five very robust rams ambled up to the opposite bank as soon as we stepped into the Rio. It wasn't clear which ram was the big boss. Each had a full curl



Photo by Toner Mitchell

Rio Grande, New Mexico

on his horns, and they moved together amicably, ripping mouthfuls of grass and nibbling at sagebrush. The fact that the group was all males suggested that any major head-butting was finished for the year. They seemed so relaxed. And fat.

Unlike other spots in the gorge, that stretch of channel is too narrow to allow a safe crossing, which was too bad, because (as always seems the case

**TROUT UNLIMITED** cont'd on pg 24



## BIRD IS THE WORD

By Bryce Flanagan

## Bald Eagles and the Case For Conservation

The Bald Eagle became the national bird of the United States on June 20, replacing the white eagle that previously adorned the national emblem with the only eagle native to North America. This status as a symbol didn't net the bald eagle much favor from ranchers and livestock owners however, who declared

it a varmint fit for extinction in the early 1900s. Bounties of up to two dollars (the equivalent to \$25 today), were paid by the feet and by the head. At our nation's founding, more than a quarter million bald eagles were estimated to have graced our skies. By 1940, when the Bald Eagle Protection Act was passed, more than 100,000 had been killed in the name of ranching and lumber interests. The protection act didn't extend to Alaska until 1959, and thousands more eagles were killed during those 19 years.

This act didn't save bald eagles from the clutches of extinction, as by 1963 their nesting pairs numbered just 413 in the entire United States. The culprit was DDT, an insecticide that poisoned eagles and other carnivores when they ingested prey that fed off poisoned insects and led to eggshell thinning. This wasn't immediately clear at the time, however, and special interest lobbies for ranchers fought tooth and nail against banning the pesticide. Thomas Shepherd Jr. laid out the attitude of these lobbyists

in a speech to the Soap and Detergent Association in 1971, in which he labels conservationists and ecologists part of a "disaster lobby." Shepherd laments "the tragedy is that DDT, while it probably did kill a few birds and fish, never harmed a single human being except by accidental misuse." To be clear, DDT causes nausea, seizures, tremors, and cancer in humans, and stays in a familial bloodstream for at least three generations. Mr. Shepherd is also playing fast and loose with the term "few" here, when the deaths of millions of birds and fish can be attributed to the use of DDT. To this day, birds still fall from the sky from DDT coursing through their veins, as seen in St. Louis, Michigan. Nor is this lackadaisical attitude toward DDT a relic of the past: Pro-extinction interest groups tout the boons of the chemical as the solution to malaria in Africa. It's not enough that children become stricken with malaria, they demand that they and their children's children also be subjected to the toxic effects of DDT.

Never mind creating a new pesticide or searching for answers in genetic engineering — no — DDT is the end-all be-all to insect-borne disease, period. Conservationists won out in the end, and today the bald eagle population is at an all-time high of 350,000.

You don't have to look far to find a modern analogy for the fight to save bald eagles. In our own back yards, the decades-long battle over the Lesser-Prairie Chicken rages on. As of October 6, thanks to a last-minute veto by President Biden, the chicken is protected. Not all would have it this way. Former state representative for New Mexico district 3 Yvette Herrel, a Republican, devoted her time in office to fighting protections for the chicken, calling them "unfair" to ranchers and oil drillers. Her replacement, Democrat Gabe Vasquez, likewise favors the extinction of prairie chickens over the bottom line of agriculture and oil interests, voting against protections

**BIRD IS THE WORD** cont'd on pg 26





## Water is...

Water is life. Water is a precious resource. Water defines our quality of life and the choices we make — where we want to live and how we share it and how we take care of it. In New Mexico water is everything. How has being with water influenced your experiences? Water can be big like an ocean or little like a stream. It is a powerful force that demands our respect and attention. The following stories reveal each person's personal experience with being by or in a body of water and what happened there.

Have you ever done something daring with water or in water? Has anything ever happened when you were in water that challenged you?

Were you part of the experience or did you witness an amazing water encounter in nature with a sea creature, a bird or a water mammal? This is an experience that expands you, feeling bigger than you and your world. Was it scary? Was it profound? Was it daring?

**Sonny:**

I had this amazing malamute dog who loved all people and all things in life. He was so friendly. One time we took him to go swimming at the confluence of the Feather River in Spanish Creek in northern California, which creates the mighty Feather River. We were playing and swimming in the river and he saw a family of otters.

His curiosity overwhelmed him and he went to join in with the otter family. This little family of otters played with him. The two babies would swim underneath him and they would go back and forth in the river. It was a delightful sight to watch and be able to experience the pure energy of connection. I witnessed an amazing waterborn encounter.

**Lawrence:**

This morning at Puffers Pond before the sun was shining on the pond, I watched a bald eagle flying around the pond scaring ducks that pass through and ones that live on the pond. The eagle would fly from tree to tree swooping down alarming the ducks. The sun started to come up and the eagle flew to a sunny spot to warm himself. Witnessing this, I felt connected to the drama between the birds and was taken away from my thoughts. I was moved by the quality of connection with the natural world. The quality of "With."

**April:**

One experience was in Tobago in the West Indies where I worked as a wrangler taking out small groups of people horse-back riding. We would ride through the bush then hit the ocean. The horses went right into the water, swimming along the shoreline chest deep in the ocean. Stingrays started swimming all around the horses in between their legs; this did not scare the horses and did not even faze them. Both creatures were at peace with each other. It was like a dance they already knew. It was beautiful to watch. I was not scared because the horse was not scared. The balance of the water between the creatures and me felt fluid, really natural.

**Penelope:**

The most amazing water story was when we traveled to the waterfalls called Iguazu Falls, in Argentina or Brazil. It is where you can view the falls from two different locations in a natural reserve. In both countries it is a spectacular sight. We went in these boats, all our valuables in watertight bags. You get really wet and get dangerously close to the edge of these massive falls. I was scared and awestruck by the danger and the beauty. It was the most dramatic natural sight I have ever seen. It was profound, scary, and daring.

**Doug:**

I remember as a teenager, about 13 or 14, my stepfather and I planned a big

fishing trip on Rock Creek. At the time I was bold, dangerous and fearless. My stepfather continued up the trail and I went below to a fishing hole down the cliff side. The water was enormous, raging and running fast. As I was working my way down, I slipped and started sliding down the cliff to the edge of the raging water. I slipped into the water up to my waist. I miraculously stopped and grabbed onto the rocks so as not to fall down the waterfall below me. Thank God, I did not die! This was a terrifying water experience where I surely could have died — no survival if I had fallen all the way into the water. By the way, in the end I did not even catch a fish.

**Marta:**

What about tears? What about all our experiences with tears of emotional water? Crying is a release of deep feelings... An experience that moves you to do things you might not ordinarily do, because you are so moved. Strong feelings bring on tears. I have lately been empathetic and compassionate towards my family, my friends and the suffering of the world. This morning I woke early, started a fire, let the dogs out, then in, and went back to bed. I lay there and prayed. I prayed for all the pain of my family and friends and extended that out. The praying brought great tears, tears of compassion. I dared to let myself truly feel for others and then sent the love out. Water has many forms and can change instantly.

## Recap of Questa 2023 Cambalache

By STAFF WRITERS

People from the community came out in great numbers for the 35th annual Cambalache celebration on Sunday, October 1. Live music kept the energy light as

attendees visited booths of local vendors at the final Questa Farmers Market in this annual season-ending event.

The Quetta Vigil Frito-Pie-Eating contest was held once again this year with

both adult and kid categories. Contestants were charged a two-dollar entry fee. The time limit to gobble as many pies as they could was two minutes.

The day wound down with the burning

of the Cucui right around 5 p.m., People sent their peñas — the worries, anxieties, hurts, and grudges — up in smoke over the Sangre de Cristo Valley, releasing these things which no longer serve them.



Photos by E. Wilde

Cambalache 2023, held in the parking lot of the Questa Visitors Center. The traditional annual burning of the Cucci and Peñas



Frito Pie Eating Contest- Adult Winners: 1st place: Martin Maes 2nd place: Devin Medina, tied with Dion Medina 3rd place: Andrew Cardenas, tied with Annette Romero



Frito Pie Eating Contest- Kids 13 and under Winners: 1st place: Kortnee Hardy, tied with Kayliana Aragon 2nd place: Emilio Montoya 3rd place: Ernesto Montoya



## BODY MIND SPIRIT



By BARBARA TRACY

### Tidbits Of Life

“Let your life lightly dance on the edges of time like dew on the tip of a leaf.” — Rabindranath Tagore

When I was a very small girl, we lived next to a large park for a short time. In the early morning as the sun came up, I remember hearing the mourning doves as they greeted the day with their gentle cooing. Somehow my young mind believed the sounds the doves made were the little purple violets in the park opening up to greet their day. This was a very magical time for a blossoming

imagination into the mysteries of life.

“Our thinking minds deprive us of the happiness that comes when we are living fully in the moment.” — Ram Dass

Our passage through time and life is filled with beauty, mysteries, challenges, blessings, joys, sorrows, and the myriad of other experiences that are designed to teach us and help us unfold into a deeper part of our self.

“Whenever you feel restless, that means you have gone far away from reality. When you are close to reality, there is tremendous rest, calm, quietude, grace, silence, peace.” — Osho

Sometime in the 1950s, while driving to work our mother was at a stop sign as a young driver came over the hill and broadsided her car. This caused her car to careen over a very long and very steep hill, rolling over and over at least five or six times. The end result was a car that was almost unrecognizable and yet our mother walked away without a scratch. The people that arrived to help

were truly amazed and referred to it as a miracle. Our mom had a difficult time even believing that any of it had happened. She would say, “How did I live through that?”

“I would rather live in a world where my life is surrounded by mystery than live in a world so small that my mind could comprehend it.” — Harry Emerson Fosdick.

My sister has had a debilitating medical condition for many years. This condition is very painful and makes it difficult for her to sleep. One particular night the pain was overwhelming, and while she laid in bed asking for help, a gentle warm golden energy wrapped around her, — she referred to it as warm butterscotch — and she gently drifted off to sleep.

“There is a larger frame to the painting than the one that bounds life’s events.” — Ram Dass

My grandson had just left after having a farewell dinner with the family

on his last night in New Mexico. He had made the choice to move to Los Angeles. A new adventure to say the least, and a fearless step into the unknown. He sent a text message after leaving, telling of an experience while driving back to his apartment.

“I had to stop in the middle of Ranch Road... there was an owl standing fearlessly in the middle. He let me walk up to him, within like two feet, before he flew away.”

Everything has a purpose and the purpose of the appearance of the owl as defined by Charlotte Kirsten is inner wisdom, change, Intuitive development, transformation, good luck and self-actualization — all of which seemed to be an out-picturing of the great change our grandson was making.

“We are ready to see and taste the full sunset now and no longer need to prove it or even describe it. We just enjoy it, and much more!” — Richard Rohr

## MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS



By DAWN PROVENCHER

Over the river and through the woods! Grandma’s dressing recipe! Family and friends! School holidays! Ho-ho-ho! Merry Christmas! Gift giving! Tamales! Bizcochitos! Travel! Eat, drink, and be merry!

Ah, the holiday season. A time for joy and love and happiness, right? Not always, and not for everyone. The holiday season often brings with it dread, anxiety, and depression. If just thinking about what lies ahead over the next few months makes your stomach flutter even

a bit, read on.

The feeling that everything must be perfect, alcohol disrupting a long-awaited function, family issues boiling over, children’s schedules changing, financial realities, loss of family in the past year, unreal expectations... when we consider the stress we can feel during the holidays, it is almost surprising we make it through at all. Signs of stress differ from person to person, but if you find yourself with sleep problems, confusion, or anything that makes you feel out of sorts... check yourself for stress.

The first thing on our to-do list needs to be to acknowledge this reality and to be determined NOT to allow ourselves to lose sight of what is important to us and what we truly want for the holidays. Make a list (I know I write this often) and post it on your bathroom mirror or on your fridge. For example, it might look like this:

1. I am thankful for my health and I am going to continue my personal health routine.
2. I love my family and friends, but I won’t let them stress me out.
3. I will spend within my budget.
4. Some things are not important and I will not let these things cause me stress.
4. I can buy or ask someone else to be responsible for food, hosting a get-together, decorations, transportation. I don’t have to DO IT ALL.
5. Time spent with my children is remembered longer than the latest electronic device.
6. I can say no to anything that won’t bring me joy.
7. I will honor my absent loved ones by volunteering my time at the community kitchen, to the Angel Tree, or a donation to their favorite charity.

Depression during the holidays can

be an even bigger issue. Just like stress, many things can contribute to this condition. Here in northern New Mexico, we enjoy over 15 hours of sunshine in August and 10 hours or less in November and December. We know sunlight is crucial for the development of mood-altering hormones. Also, the holiday season falls at a time when we assess the highs and lows of the past 12 months. Recently, our community and our world have both experienced significant lows. Share your thoughts with others. Do not build a wall and think you are alone. You are never alone. Talk with your health care provider and your loved ones. In New Mexico, we have 24-hour access to mental health professionals, by calling (855) 662-7474 or text 988 on your cell phone.

Have a holiday season that makes you happy.

### TROUT UNLIMITED cont’d from page 22

with fishing) the fishiest water was on the other bank. Such hair-splitting comes naturally, especially when you’re not catching as many fish as you think you should be.

My excuse: the gorgeousness of the day — the reds and the yellows, the smell of sage and the royal blue sky, had raised our expectations to a point where reaching them would have been

impossible. It wasn’t like the fish weren’t biting. We each caught a few browns and rainbows on different flies, big and small, which indicated that the fish weren’t picky.

They were just deep. In such swirly currents that the Rio is known for, achieving a natural drift isn’t easy. You have to adjust your weight and tippet constantly and try to keep your leader straight. No doubt we had strikes when our leaders were too slack, and being

distracted by bighorn rams and the beauty — the pleasant warmth of the sun and the challenge of moving among the boulders without falling on our faces or into the river — didn’t help.

One of my fish was a Rio Grande cutthroat. It was about a foot long, meaning that it was a survivor from one of the stocking events at the Big Arsenic campground near Questa. Not from this year’s event; those fingerlings wouldn’t have grown so big in

the few months since we stocked them this spring. This fish would have been stocked in 2019, or some time before the pandemic caused the suspension in cutthroat stockings.

My cutthroat had survived predation from browns, rainbows, northern pike, crayfish, otters, and fishermen. It had grown to adulthood, traveling more than 20 miles of canyon, through high water and low. Just to eat my fly and make my day.





## LIVE LOVE LAUGH

by Ellen Wood  
a.k.a. Maruška

## Nothing Ages You Faster Than Stress

Let's look at the science of aging. DNA is the genetic material that makes up the chromosomes, and each chromosome starts its life with a lengthy protective cap — a specific sequence of DNA, at each end. These caps, called telomeres, are like the plastic-coated tip of a shoelace which keeps it from unraveling and sticking to others.

Throughout life, the telomeres get shorter and shorter. Scientists are learning

that eventually, when they become so short that cellular damage begins, deterioration associated with aging occurs, such as muscle loss, malfunction of crucial organs, extreme weakness and frailty.

In a Harvard-affiliated study, researchers boosted the cellular levels of telomerase, the enzyme that lengthens and repairs telomeres in mice — and saw significant signs of age reversal. Even fur on the mice that had turned gray was restored to dark fur. The researchers were surprised to see such dramatic results. In measurable ways, the mice grew younger.

Some interesting new studies focus on the relationship between stress, telomere length, and cellular aging in humans. Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn, a Nobel laureate who first identified the enzyme telomerase, has examined the effect of psychological stress at the cellular level. With Dr. Elissa Epel, a research psychologist interested in chronic stress, studied telomere length and the associated enzyme in two groups of mothers. One group had normal, healthy children; the other group had children with a

chronic illness. Dr. Blackburn and Dr. Epel found significant differences between the groups: the longer the mothers had been caring for their chronically ill children, the lower their telomerase levels and the shorter their telomeres.

Although genes play a role in telomerase production, stress is not genetically based. The chronic stress these mothers experienced came from outside the body and affected the body's ability to repair itself. Increased stress levels, the scientists found, can measurably accelerate the aging process at the cellular level. (The research team found similar effects among primary caregivers for partners with dementia.)

If you, like most people, have accepted the belief that age reversal cannot happen, it's time to replace it with a belief based on new information — that it is possible to reverse the signs of aging and grow younger. Reducing stress is one of the most effective ways to do it.

Everybody has stress-inducing challenges, but we can practice ways to respond instead of reacting that will greatly

reduce the effect of stress on our bodies. In the meantime, change your belief about aging. On November 18, I'll turn 87. Yippee! I'm healthy, enjoying my life and bursting with creative ideas.

Speaking of creativity and releasing stress, I hope you'll join me for The Questa Creative Council open house a few weeks later, on Saturday, December 2, from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m.! You are invited to this celebration at Sala, in Questa, 2331 Hwy 522. Let's show our appreciation for all the amazing local artists, generous supporters/members, and volunteer QCC event organizers and you — the community! There will be live music all afternoon from local musicians, a raffle, food, and dancing! Members, come and bring a new member friend. Everyone is invited. See you there!

*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 <https://questacreative.org/ellen-wood/>. Contact Ellen at [ellen@howtogrowyounger.com](mailto:ellen@howtogrowyounger.com)*

## Nada te envejece más rápido que el ESTRÉS

Vamos a echarle un vistazo a la ciencia del envejecimiento. El ADN es el material genético que forma los cromosomas, y cada cromosoma comienza con una larga tapa protectora, una secuencia específica de ADN, en cada extremo. Estas tapas, llamadas telómeros, son como la punta recubierta de plástico de un cordón de zapato que evita que este se deshilache y se pegue a otros.

A lo largo de la vida, los telómeros se hacen más y más cortos. Los científicos están aprendiendo que al cabo del tiempo, cuando se vuelven demasiado cortos, comienza a ocurrir daño celular, lo que lleva al mal funcionamiento de los órganos vitales. También se produce pérdida de masa muscular y, cuando pasan más años, se produce tanto debilidad extrema como fragilidad. Los científicos han descubierto que cuando los telómeros se acortan demasiado, se produce el deterioro que se asocia con el envejecimiento.

En un estudio afiliado con la Universidad de Harvard, los investigadores aumentaron los niveles celulares de telomerasa, la enzima que alarga y repara los telómeros, en ratones —y observaron signos significativos de reversión de la edad. Incluso el pelaje de los ratones que se había vuelto

gris volvió a ser oscuro. Los investigadores quedaron sorprendidos al ver resultados tan dramáticos. De manera medible, los ratones se hicieron más jóvenes.

Algunos estudios nuevos, muy interesantes, se concentran en la relación entre el estrés, la longitud de los telómeros y el envejecimiento celular en los seres humanos. La Dra. Elizabeth Blackburn, premio Nobel que identificó por primera vez la enzima telomerasa, ha examinado el efecto del estrés psicológico a nivel celular. La Dra. Blackburn y la Dra. Elissa Epel (una psicóloga de investigación que analiza el estrés crónico) estudiaron la longitud de los telómeros en dos grupos de madres. Un grupo tenía hijos sanos y normales; el otro grupo de madres tenía un hijo con una enfermedad crónica. La Dra. Blackburn y la Dra. Epel encontraron diferencias significativas entre los grupos y descubrieron que cuanto más tiempo habían cuidado las madres de su hijo crónicamente enfermo, más bajos eran sus niveles de telomerasa y más cortos eran sus telómeros.

Aunque los genes desempeñan un papel en la producción de telomerasa, el estrés no tiene base genética. El estrés crónico que experimentaban estas madres provenía del exterior del cuerpo y afectaba la capacidad del cuerpo para repararse a sí mismo. Los científicos descubrieron que los niveles elevados de estrés pueden acelerar de manera medible el proceso de envejecimiento a nivel celular. (El equipo de investigación encontró efectos similares

entre los cuidadores principales de parejas con demencia.)

Si tú, como la mayoría de gente, has aceptado la creencia de que la reversión de la edad no puede ocurrir, es hora de desechar esa creencia. Reemplázala con otra basada en nueva información: es posible revertir los signos del envejecimiento y rejuvenecer, y reducir el estrés es una de las formas más efectivas de conseguirlo.

Todos enfrentamos desafíos que generan estrés —pero podemos practicar formas de responder en lugar de reaccionar que reducirán en gran medida el efecto del estrés en nuestros cuerpos. Mientras tanto, cambia tus creencias sobre el envejecimiento. El 18 de noviembre cumpliré 87 años. ¡Órale! Tengo salud, disfruto de mi vida y estoy llena de ideas creativas.

Hablando de creatividad y liberación del estrés, espero que me acompañen durante la jornada de puertas abiertas del Consejo Creativo de Questa que tendrá lugar dentro de unas semanas, el sábado 2 de diciembre de 4:30 p.m. a 8:30 p.m. Los invitamos a esta celebración en Sala, en Questa, 2331 Hwy 522. Vamos a mostrar nuestro agradecimiento a todos los magníficos artistas locales, a los generosos partidarios/miembros y a los organizadores voluntarios de eventos de QCC y a ustedes—¡la comunidad! ¡Habrà música en vivo toda la tarde con músicos locales, una rifa, comida y baile! Exhortamos a nuestros miembros a que vengan y traigan un nuevo amigo que se una a la organización también. Todos están invitados. ¡Nos vemos allí!

*Traducción de Teresa Dovalpage*

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# ENCHANTED EATS

In this month's edition of Enchanted Eats, we present some New Mexico Thanksgiving flavors. Thanksgiving always brings an opportunity to take a deep breath and be thankful for the wonders of the year. Nothing says Thanksgiving Day like hot red chile over your mashed potatoes or warm pumpkin cookies! If you want to add a few locally inspired dishes to your traditional Thanksgiving meal, check out these flavorful dishes for some ideas. May your Thanksgiving be filled with the joys of home and family, warmed by the blessings of friendship, and touched with the beauty of the season.

## Red Chile

Courtesy of John A Alvarez,  
Tucumcari, NM

Approximately 10-15 dried chile pods  
Stock pot for boiling (filled with water)  
1/2 C chopped onion  
2-3 skinned garlic cloves  
Chicken broth (or water)  
Salt, pepper, garlic powder, and onion powder  
(amounts to your liking)



1. De-stem, de-seed, and rinse clean dried chile pods, checking each thoroughly as some can have mold (discard those), add to stock pot of water, bring to a hard boil, separate chile from water and add to blender with garlic cloves, and chopped onion along with 1 to 2 cups of chicken broth or water. Blend well for 10 to 12 minutes, and you will not have to strain.
2. To a skillet, add puree along with spices to a prepared \*roux (if needed), add chicken broth (1 cup at a time for desired consistency).
3. Bring to a hard boil, then simmer.

\*Roux: thickening agent (cornstarch or flour mixed well with oil (1:1), browned over medium heat, pancake consistency).

Note: Prepared ground beef / steak / shredded chicken / ground turkey / pork can be added.

## Pumpkin Cookies

Courtesy of Samantha Mascarenas,  
El Rito, NM

- 1 C unsalted butter softened to room temperature
- 1 C granulated sugar
- 1 t baking soda
- 1 t baking powder
- 1 / 2 t salt
- 1 t ground cinnamon
- 1 t pumpkin pie spice
- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 t vanilla extract
- 1 C canned pumpkin puree
- 2 C all-purpose flour

## Cream Cheese Frosting

- 1 / 2 C unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- 8 oz cream cheese, softened to room temperature
- 3 C powdered sugar
- 1 t vanilla extract

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Cover a large cookie sheet with parchment paper and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 1 minute. Add sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and pumpkin pie spice and beat until well combined.
3. Add one egg and the vanilla, then beat well until yellow streaks are gone. Add

- the pumpkin puree and beat again until it's incorporated. Finally, add the flour and beat on medium speed until completely incorporated. Watch the video to see instructions on how to properly measure flour. The dough will be wet, and this is what you want!
4. Use a heaping tablespoon or medium-sized cookie scoop to drop the cookie dough balls a few inches apart on prepared cookie sheet. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until tops are set and no longer look wet. Allow to cool on cookie sheet for a few minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely before frosting.



## Cream Cheese Frosting

1. Beat together the softened butter and cream cheese in a large bowl until smooth and all of the lumps are gone. Sift in the powdered sugar, then add the vanilla. Beat until smooth and creamy, about 2 minutes. Once cookies are cool, frost.

## Cheese Ball Appetizer

Courtesy of Monique and Cherise  
Trujillo, Questa, NM

- 1 block softened cream cheese
- 1 C shredded Colby jack cheese
- 1 / 2 pack of crumbled bacon (cooked, crispy)
- 1-2 chopped green onions
- Chopped walnuts to top

1. Mix all ingredients together (except for walnuts); use a spatula to gather mixture into one lump. Use your hands to form the mixture into a round ball.
2. Gently press the chopped walnuts onto the outside of the ball to coat all sides. Serve with your favorite crackers!

BIRD IS THE WORD cont'd from page 22

for the chicken while declaring his devotion to "ranchers in southeast New Mexico" and "their livelihood."

The irony of regulation and restriction being used to save a symbol of freedom should not be lost. The bald eagle exists, and in the numbers it does today, because "big government" intervened in people's freedom. Let's not sugarcoat conservation as a nicety or paint it as some sort of kumbaya, businessmen holding hands with flower-children everybody-wins movement. Conservation is political, and it demands sacrifice. Unchecked growth and expansion cannot coexist with conservation. I wrote a column a few months ago on why I give a damn about birds, and why I think other people ought to as well. As I write this article, the Fish and Wildlife Service has announced the delisting of 21 species from the endangered species list due to their extinction. One species of fruit bat, ten species of birds, two species of fish and eight species of muskels have been wiped off the face of the Earth, never to be seen again. We don't have to wonder about what proponents of extinction would have to say about this news, then or now. Going back to Mr. Shepherd, these extinctions can be dismissed with a wave of the hand, after all, "some 100 million species of animal life have become extinct since the world began. Animals come and animals go, as Mr. Darwin noted, and to blame ourselves for evolution would be the height of foolishness."

The bald eagle was not saved by good intentions. It was saved by hard-line conservationists fighting for their moral view, that the good of preserving natural beauty outweighs the importance of maintaining ever-growing profit margins. Politicians and businessmen come and go. To abdicate our responsibility as humans to protect and steward our home planet is the height of foolishness.

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# ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

SKYDANCE ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY by Charlene R. Johnson  
NOVEMBER 2023

## FEELING STUBBORN?!

**“Opposites are not contradictory but complementary.” —Niels Bohr**

This month we have a strong opposition which doesn't always exist as strongly as now. Uranus, which lives in a sign approximately seven years, has been in the sign of Taurus since March of 2019, while Jupiter, who typically lives in a sign for about a year, also shifted into Taurus beginning in May of this year. Earth joined these two on October 24, creating a strong Taurean faction on one side of our heavenly chart while Sun, Vulcan, Mercury, and Mars are all in the sign of Scorpio on the opposite side. Since these latter are always close to each other, it's not unusual for them to be in the same sign, but this opposition with our farther out, slower-moving planets, is. And just to set the teeter totter teetering, we end October with the fickle Full Moon, also in Taurus, leaving the Taurean cluster and by mid-month swooping around our skies to instead lend its weight to the Scorpion cluster for New Moon.

Oppositions are very important in astrology as each can serve as an example to the other of where you are going as well as where you have been. They actually have a lot in common, but like any oppositional relationship, they don't always get the compatibility as quickly as they get the opposites bit. As we know, oppositions can both attract and make sparks fly. In esoteric astrology, oppositions are not necessarily considered challenges, but rather strengtheners, like a tug-of-war. Both sides build muscle, lung power, and stamina which can feel both stressful and beneficial. If one side drops the rope everyone falls down. In this case, both signs are fixed, a quality which means loyal, reliable but can also mean stubborn; heels digging furrows kind of stubborn. So, while we may all experience a sense of being pulled in directions we think we don't want to go, especially if you have strong Scorpio and/or Taurus in your chart, it is also time to look to that other side tugging on our stubborn strings and determine what it is they can teach us, and what it is we can offer them.

**Everyone:** November 18 is Leonid meteor shower. Leo is also fixed!

**ARIES** ♈ **Planet: Mercury** ♀ **MARCH 20 – APRIL 19**

**Dynamic:** You have an itch to travel.

**Direction:** Don't forget inside travel as well.

**Soul Thought:** What are your Highest Aspirations?

**TAURUS** ♉ **Planet: Vulcan** ♁ **APRIL 19 – MAY 20**

**Dynamic:** Beware of an urge to go on a spending spree.

**Direction:** At least, do it consciously.

**Soul Thought:** What is worth a “spree?”

**GEMINI** ♊ **Planet: Venus** ♀ **MAY 20 – July 20**

**Dynamic:** You are in a position to be a mediator this month.

**Direction:** Listen to both sides of the story.

**Soul Thought:** We need you.

**CANCER** ♋ **Planet: Neptune** ♆ **July 20 – JULY 22**

**Dynamic:** You have an opposition of your own occurring.

**Direction:** Balance it with the opposition of the whole planet.

**Soul Thought:** Is it Spiritual or Religious?

**LEO** ♌ **Planet: Sun** ☉ **JULY 22 – AUG 22**

**Dynamic:** Once you realize what's holding you back, you can fly.

**Direction:** Set your goals before take-off.

**Soul Thought:** What is a heat-seeking missile?

**VIRGO** ♍ **Planet: Moon** ☾ **AUG 22 – SEPT 22**

**Dynamic:** Your changing attitudes change things around you.

**Direction:** Make them better.

**Soul Thought:** “When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.” —Max Planck

**LIBRA** ♎ **Planet: Uranus** ♁ **SEPT 22 – OCT 22**

**Dynamic:** You've been in this position for a while, but now you have company.

**Direction:** Use them well.

**Soul Thought:** We are all here to be used... well

**SCORPIO** ♏ **Planet: Mars** ♂ **OCT 22 – NOV 21**

**Dynamic:** You are the last holdout.

**Direction:** Be sure it's not pure stubbornness.

**Soul Thought:** There are none so blind as those who will not see.

**SAGITTARIUS** ♐ **Planet: Earth** ♁ **NOV 21 – DEC 20**

**Dynamic:** You're in good company; so are they.

**Direction:** Forge a new tool.

**Soul Thought:** For everyone's journey.

**CAPRICORN** ♑ **Planet: Saturn** ♄ **DEC 20 – JAN 19**

**Dynamic:** Time to slow down for a while.

**Direction:** Instead of climbing, try diving.

**Soul Thought:** The end result may be the same.

**AQUARIUS** ♒ **Planet: Jupiter** ♃ **JAN 19 – FEB 18**

**Dynamic:** Are you waiting for your ship to come in?

**Direction:** Why?

**Soul Thought:** What are your greatest hopes and wishes?

**PISCES** ♓ **Planet: Pluto** ♇ **FEB 18 – MAR 20**

**Dynamic:** You are not particularly caught up in all the foofaraw.

**Direction:** Therefore, your discernment is good.

**Soul Thought:** How to use it for them?



BY J. ORTEGA

### No One Will Save You

Starring: Kaitlyn Dever,  
Elizabeth Kaulev, Zach Duham

Rated PG13

Streaming on Hulu

**First Impression:** “No One Will Save You” is an entertaining yet frustrating alien invasion thriller that will leave you with more questions than answers.

Ah, what can I say about this movie that it refuses to say about itself? You are going to have a hard time believing me but there are literally fewer than ten lines of audible dialogue in this film that clocks in at one hour and 33 minutes. How the film manages to get away with such a feat is by making it as tense and unnerving as possible. This film reminded me instantly of a classic Twilight Zone episode called “The Invaders,” where an isolated woman is terrorized by tiny aliens who have invaded her home. Notably, there is also minimal dialogue in that episode as well, and what is emphasized instead is the terror and unnerving feeling of one's peace of mind being violated by an entity that is not of this world.

The film also has shades of other recent alien invasion movies, such as director John Krasinski's “A Quiet Place” and Jordan Peele's “Nope,” where we are forced to subvert our expectations of what an alien invasion would look like and what the motives of the aliens actually are. Why are they interested in us? What is their end goal for contact with us and our planet? Is it sinister in nature? Are the aliens simply looking to conquer Earth and become the new apex predator? Or are the reasons more egalitarian in nature, where these hyper-advanced beings are looking to help our species become more enlightened and brought up to their speed — heck, maybe even teach us some of the secrets of the universe, so we can all live in peace and harmony?

Unfortunately for us “No One Can Save You” isn't really interested in answering any of those questions and wants to leave its message open to each individual's interpretation.

The film starts out simply enough: we are introduced to a young woman named Brynn (played by Kaitlyn Dever, who delivers a terrific performance in the starring and only main role) who likes to tinker in her home with her small models, and likes to dance to classic music. Brynn is very anxious and antisocial when it comes to her relationship with her community, which is odd at first, but then later explained throughout the course of the film. The invasion takes place rather quickly and we are introduced to the extraterrestrials — which should be very familiar to anyone who's seen or heard of aliens in pop culture over the last half century — green skin, large bulbous heads, giant bug eyes. It's almost comical as to how generic they look. The real joy of the film is seeing Brynn outsmarting the creatures who are equipped with telekinetic powers. But I must warn you as the film reaches its climax, we get a very polarizing resolution and very bizarre ending that is going to either amuse you or make you kind of angry. All in all, I think it's a film worth seeing, just for the novelty of a film like this having been made in the first place!

**Final Verdict: 3 out of 5 stars**



To discover your Rising Sign, or for more information, contact Charlene R. Johnson,  
[www.SkyDanceAstrology.com](http://www.SkyDanceAstrology.com), or email: [SkyDance@SkyDanceAstrology.com](mailto: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.



OBITUARIES



**Isabel Aurora Abeyta**  
d. September 8, 2023

Isabel Aurora Abeyta, Age 93, of Questa, passed away at home on September 8, 2023. She was born in 1930 in Alcalde, NM to parents Vicenita Sena and Francisco Gallegos. Isabel is preceded in death by her parents, sister Ida Rivera, brothers Profio Gallegos and Nesito Gallegos, son Patrick Abeyta, grandchildren Patricia Chavez, Valeen Abeyta, Enrique Abeyta and Gordon Suazo, and husband of 50 years married, Alfred P. Abeyta. She is survived by her son, Alfred Roy (Beatrice Abeyta), daughters Rosann Suazo (Ruben Montoya) and Edith Abeyta; grandchildren Benjamin Jr., Jesus, Diego, Julia and Omar Olivias, Victoria, Alfred Roy Jr., Nicky, Veronica Suazo and Gordon; great-grandchildren Juliana and Leonel Olivias, Erica and Damian, Santiago, Tony, Xavier, Joey, Mikayla, Anjelica, Benito, Diana, Analayah, Diego Jr., Gabriel, Maliah, Malikya, Cruz and Adriana; great-great-grandchildren Oriya, Luna, Anuel, Noriel, Harley, JJ, Mila, Iris, Maliah, Malki, Marehly Marquez, Emyliah Rodriguez, Salvador Marquez, Roy Jr. Abeyta, Andres, Shaylee, Enrique, Zurina, Gianni, Raziya and Roman Abeyta-Baca and many other relatives and friends. Isabel went to school until the eighth grade and got married December 9, 1953 to Alfred P. Abeyta, and they had four children: Roy, Roseann, Patrick, and Edith Abeyta. She was a homemaker and made the best bread, then later worked as a housekeeper in Taos. She was also a Grandma at Ranchos Elementary School. She loved Bingo. We will always keep you in our hearts, fly with the Angels, dance in heaven with Pare Bear, Patrick, Gordon and most of all "Daddy." Rosary was recited on Friday, September 29, and funeral Mass was held on Saturday, September 30, 2023 at San Francisco de Assi with interment to follow at the family cemetery in Edith, Colorado. Arrangements were by Rivera Family Funeral Home.



**Milton Cisneros**  
d. October 20, 2023

Milton R. Cisneros 86, a resident of Cerro, New Mexico, passed away surrounded by his family on October 20, 2023.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Meliton and Margaret Cisneros; brother Charles Cisneros; sisters Eleanor Ortega & Frances Chavez.

Milton is survived by his wife Irma Cisneros; children Nadine Herrera (Harold) and Roger Cisneros; grandchildren Justin Herrera (Lynette), Jared Herrera (Savannah) and Jenae Mirabal (Terence); great-grandchildren Jayvin, GianCarlo, Calaya, TJ, Gianna, Luziano, Elliana and Abel; sister Mae Cisneros, brothers James Cisneros (Patricia) and David Cisneros (Loveida) whom he considered a brother; brothers-in-law Elmer Ortega and Miguel Chavez, in addition to many brothers and sisters-in-law, plus nieces, nephews and cousins.

Rosary will be recited on Saturday, October 28, 2023 at 10:00am, followed by the Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00am at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Cerro. Interment will follow at the Cerro Cemetery.



**Lawrence S. Jaramillo**  
d. September 26, 2023

Lawrence S. Jaramillo, resident of Questa (El Rito), age 75, passed away at his home on September 26. He is preceded in death by son Brad Jaramillo; his father Hernando Jaramillo; in-laws Rufino and Cordelia Garcia; three nieces Bernadine Smith, Naomi Garcia Beall and Brenda Garcia; nephews Cruz Chavez II, Tony Montgomery, and great-nephew Andres Chavez, as well as in-laws Juan Garcia, Isaac Garcia, sisters-in-law Mary

Montgomery, Dorothy Garcia, Grace Valdez (Benito) and Esther Garcia; and Marshall Bailon, a close family friend.

He is survived by his mother, Mercedes Jaramillo; his wife Evangeline Jaramillo; son Brent Jaramillo, daughters Emily Jaramillo and Lenora Jaramillo; grandchildren James Silversmith and Andrew Jaramillo; siblings Marilyn Jaramillo, Sandra (Ben Bowles) Jaramillo, Elma (Cruz) Chavez, Bob (Martha) Jaramillo, Bernie (Geri) Jaramillo, Edwin (Arla) Jaramillo and Vince Jaramillo; brother-in-law Eugene Garcia and sister-in-law Virginia Garcia; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Lawrence was a Vietnam veteran, serving in the U.S. Army, and a member of Charles Cisneros Post VFW 9516. He was a faithful servant to the Knights of Columbus for 27 years. He was a founding member of the Santiago Assembly, Grand Knight, and he also served as district deputy of the Northern Central Region.

When Lawrence was raising his children, he was involved in youth sports; he was always engaged in the community and played a vital role in any organization. Most importantly, he had a very strong work ethic that rubbed off on his family. After retirement from Chevron Mine where he worked for more than 35 years, Lawrence went to UNM-Taos and transitioned to the UNM main campus, receiving a bachelor's degree in psychology in May 2020. He then began a second career as a substance abuse counselor at Rio Grande Alcohol Treatment Program.

His passions were fishing, farming, yard work and being a grandfather. He enjoyed teasing his nieces and nephews. He had a strong faith in God that he shared at St. Anthony's and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Cerro.

A rosary was recited on Friday, October 6, 2023 at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Questa. The Mass of Christian burial was held on Saturday, October 7, at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Questa, and burial followed at the Cerro Cemetery.



**Wilfred Roybal**  
d. October 3, 2023

Wilfred "Fluff" Roybal age 71, a resident of Albuquerque and formerly of Costilla, passed away unexpectedly on October 3, 2023.

He was preceded in death by his grandchildren Nicolas Macias, Katrina Fernandez, Armando Fernandez, Jr., and Donovan Vigil; parents Luis and Mary Ann Roybal; nephew Donovan Vallejos; paternal grandparents Ruperto and Emelia Roybal; and maternal grandparents Modesto and Francisquita Garcia.

Wilfred loved to go fishing, spend time in the mountains, and he was a great cook. He enjoyed working on projects with his hands.

He is survived by his children Enrique Roybal, Eugenio Roybal, Anna Roybal, Mashari Roybal, Armando Fernandez, Manuel Fernandez, and Sara Fernandez; 20 grandchildren and great-grandchildren; siblings Lonnie Roybal (Debra), Jana Vallejos (Ray), Marvin Roybal (Rachel) and Karen Martinez; plus many more loving nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

Public visitation was held on Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Costilla with the rosary which followed. The Mass of Christian burial was held on Thursday October 19, at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Costilla. Burial followed at the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Costilla.



**Fritz Vialpando, Jr.**  
d. October 21, 2023

Fritz Vialpando, Jr. 80, born 5/21/1943 in Greeley, CO. Fritz, a resident of Questa, New Mexico for more than 53 years, passed away peacefully in his home on October 21, 2023.

He is preceded in death by his sons Fritz Vialpando III, and Veto Vialpando Sr.; grandchildren Timothy Vialpando and Veronica Vialpando; parents Elva and Fritz (Frutoso) Vialpando Sr.; sister Marcella Cisneros; nephew Gilbert Cisneros; niece Madalena Pacheco; father-in-law Philip Trujillo Sr.; mother-in-law Martha Trujillo; and brother-in-law Philip Trujillo Jr.

Fritz is survived by his wife of 61 years Irene Vialpando, daughter Denise Vialpando (Dennis), grandchildren Veto Vialpando Jr. (Amy), Juan Cisneros (Ayla), Jose Vialpando, Antonio Vialpando, Cassandra Mecham, Desiree Mecham, and Marcos Mecham; sisters Lydia Rodriguez (Ruben), Dorothy Wright (Bob), Gloria Vialpando, and brothers Richard Vialpando (Florene), and John Vialpando (Rose); sister-in-law Lorene Martinez; uncle Marcelo Vialpando Sr.; several great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.


Fritz was an amazing husband, father, son, brother, grandfather, uncle, godfather, and friend. He was a hardworking, loving man who loved working with his hands and putting time into his hobbies. He was a great mechanic and enjoyed mud bogging and working on trucks and cars in his spare time. Fritz worked at the Molycorp Mine for 23 years and grew great friendships with his fellow miners. Fritz loved fishing and took up painting as a hobby later in life. He will be truly missed by so many people and will be remembered for his quiet antics and quick smile.

Family viewing will be held on Thursday October 26, 2023 at 3:00 pm at DeVargas Funeral Home of Taos. Rosary will follow on October 26, 2023 at 6pm at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Questa, NM. Mass of Christian burial will be on Friday Oct 27, 2023 at 10am at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Questa, NM with burial to follow at El Pueblito Cemetery in Questa, NM.




Submit your loved one's memory to  
[assistanteditor@questanews.com](mailto:assistanteditor@questanews.com)





# Giving Thanks

From our family to yours we wish you a plentiful day!



2420 St. Hwy 522 • Questa, NM 87556  
**575.586.0419**



**WE HAVE SOME EXCITING NEWS TO SHARE WITH EVERYONE!!**

With all the amazing support and business that we've had, J&L Powersports has once again outgrown our current location in Red River.

We are moving to a bigger location and will reopen **December 1st** in Questa. The NEW ADDRESS: 2627 HWY 522 QUESTA, NM 87556.


**575.586.2417**  
**SHOP**

**J&L POWERSPORTS**

We would like to thank everyone for your business and for your continued support!! We could NOT do this without you guys!!

**ATV DIRT BIKE SIDE X SIDE SNOWMOBILE**

**"EVERYTHING OFF-ROAD DONE RIGHT"**



**When Questa Independent School District needed help transporting students off campus for more experiential learning opportunities, they reached out to LOR.**

The LOR Foundation works with Questa locals to kick-start community projects that enhance quality of life. Scan the QR code to see a full collection of LOR-supported solutions from the Questa area.

Do you have an idea for a project but need support to get it off the ground? Contact community officer Maria Gonzalez at maria@lorfoundation.org or (575) 665-2001. *No formal application required.*





COMMUNITY CALENDAR • NOVEMBER 2023

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EVERYONE BORN IN NOVEMBER!**

**NOVEMBER 1: WED 6 PM**  
**Questa Independent School Board Meeting**, OSID Board Room, 2256 Wildcat Rd. # A. Info: (575) 586-0421

**NOVEMBER 3: FRI 1 - 3 PM**  
**Join Twirl for an Engineering Challenge:** Engineer a Nook that you can fit in! Build your structure from fun materials such as cardboard, newspapers and Brain Flakes. At the Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. Learn about DNA! For children 4-10 years old with Family Engagement. Info: (575) 586-2023

**NOVEMBER 4: SAT 4 - 7 PM**  
**Sala Holiday party and nonprofit fundraiser:** including dinner with chef Casey Eason and silent auction. \$10 a plate. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**NOVEMBER 5: SUN**  
**Daylight Saving Time ends**, set your clocks back one hour

**1:30 - 3:30 PM**  
**Dance like Nobody's looking**, women's dance, at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. Donations welcome! Info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**NOVEMBER 6: MON 6 PM**  
**Questa Economic Development Fund board meeting** at the Questa Visitor Center, 1 NM-Hwy 38; also via Zoom. For the agenda, Zoom link, or more information, email [lynn@questaedf.com](mailto:lynn@questaedf.com) or leave a message at (575) 586-2149

**NOVEMBER 7: TUE 7 AM - 7 PM**  
**Election Day, for voting locations go to:** <https://www.taoscounty.org/174/2023-Precinct-Sites-with-Physical-Address>

**NOVEMBER 10: TUE 1 - 3 PM**  
**Yoga Sala Wellness Series - Natural Dyes and Eco Prints:** facilitator Rae Lewis - optional, bring a pre-washed cotton fabric item to print/dye, free event. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org/wellness-series](http://yogasalaquesta.org/wellness-series) at 2331 NM-522, Questa

**NOVEMBER 10: FRI 10 AM - NOON**  
**Food for All at North Central NM Food Pantry**, in November and December food distribution will be the second and THIRD Fridays. 140 Embargo Rd., Questa. For more info: [www.questafoodpantry.org](http://www.questafoodpantry.org) or call (575) 586-0486 or (575) 779-9194



**NOVEMBER 11: SAT**  
**Veterans Day**, thank you for your service!

**2 - 4 PM**  
**Questa author Gabrielle Herberston book signing** and reading of "Grandmother Winter" at Op Cit. books in Taos. 124A Bent Street, info: (575) 751-1999

**NOVEMBER 14: TUE 6 PM**  
**Village of Questa Town Council Meeting** at Village Town Hall, 2500 Old State Rd 3. For agenda: [questa-nm.com/village-council-meeting-agenda](http://questa-nm.com/village-council-meeting-agenda), or call (575) 586-0694

**NOVEMBER 15: WED 6 PM**  
**Questa Independent School Board Meeting**, OSID Board Room, 2256 Wildcat Rd. # A. Info: (575) 586-0421

**NOVEMBER 16: THUR NOON - 4 PM**  
**In-person, one-on-one, business advising in Questa at the Questa Visitor Center** with Anwar Kaelin, Director of the Small Business Development Center at UNM-Taos. FREE and CONFIDENTIAL for anyone in any stage of business, anyone with a great idea. Make an appointment by visiting: [calendly.com/sbdctaos](http://calendly.com/sbdctaos)

**5 PM**  
**Cerro VFW Post #9516 Monthly Meeting** at 108 NM Highway 378 in Cerro. [litameadphoto@gmail.com](mailto:litameadphoto@gmail.com). Call to confirm meeting schedule (575) 586-2352

**NOVEMBER 17: FRI 8 AM - 7 PM**  
**Congreso de las Acequias:** El agua no se vende: se ama y se defiende. Day 1 of 2

**State Acequia Meeting.** Water is Not for Sale: We Love and Defend Water. Commemorating the 20th anniversary of the acequia water transfer law. Music, workshops, lunch, reception, and film screening - Acequias: The Legacy Lives On. At the Sagebrush Inn Conference Center, 1508 Paseo del Pueblo Sur, in Taos, NM. Register at [lasacequias.org/congreso](http://lasacequias.org/congreso) or call (505) 995-9644

**NOVEMBER 17: FRI 10AM - NOON**  
**Food for All at North Central NM Food Pantry**, 140 Embargo Rd., Questa. For more info: [www.questafoodpantry.org](http://www.questafoodpantry.org) or call (575) 586-0486 or (575) 779-9194

**NOVEMBER 18: SAT 8 AM - 2 PM**  
**Congreso de las Acequias:** El agua no se vende: se ama y se defiende. Day 2 of 2

**State Acequia Meeting.** Bendición de las Aguas, Acequia Self-Determination: 20 Years of Water Transfer Decisions, Teatro de las Acequias, and Awards followed by lunch. At the Sagebrush Inn Conference Center (1508 Paseo del Pueblo Sur) in Taos, NM. Register at [lasacequias.org/congreso](http://lasacequias.org/congreso) or call (505) 995-9644

**10 - 11:30 AM**  
**Sala Writing Group free**, via Zoom, link upon request [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**NOVEMBER 19: SUN 1-3 PM**  
**Drum Class at Yoga Sala**, 2331 NM-522, in Questa with teacher Vanessa Morgan. Sliding scale \$15-25. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**NOVEMBER 20: MON 3 PM**  
**Questa Library Book Club** meets at the Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. Join the conversation. The topic will be the Middle East. Info: (575) 586-2023



**NOVEMBER 23: THUR**  
**Happy Thanksgiving!**

**NOVEMBER 28: TUE 6 PM**  
**Village of Questa Town Council Meeting** at Village Town Hall, 2500 Old State Rd 3. For agenda: [questa-nm.com/village-council-meeting-agenda](http://questa-nm.com/village-council-meeting-agenda), or call (575) 586-0694

**DECEMBER 2: SAT 4:30 - 8:30 PM**  
**Open House Community Celebration** by Questa Creative Council at The Sala, in Questa, 2331 hwy 522 at south end of downtown. It's a time to thank our amazing artists and participants of our events and projects. Join us for food, drink, music from local favorites Chris and Rodney Arellano, and Mark and Justin of the High Desert Acoustic Duo. Raffle with prizes. Info: [questacreative.org/contact-us](http://questacreative.org/contact-us)

**WEEKLY**

**SUNDAYS**

**Area Church Directory** is on page 31, please call to confirm service times.

**MONDAYS**

**Transportation for Qualified Seniors by donation**, Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd. Call for more info and to make an appointment (575) 586-0508

**5 PM**  
**Free Community Yoga, gentle practice with Rae** in person only, free Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**7 PM**  
**Kickboxing**, with Reto in person only, sliding scale \$5-\$15 Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**TUESDAYS**

**Transportation for Qualified Seniors by donation**, Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd. Call for more info and to make an appointment (575) 586-0508

**4:30 - 5:30 PM**  
**Free Kids Ballet with Miss Tuesday**, in person only Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**5:45 - 7 PM**  
**Kundalini Yoga, Meditation & Gong, with Jiwanshakti** in person only, sliding scale \$10-20 Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**7 - 10 PM**  
**Red River Trivia Night, at Red River Brewing Company.** Free to play, prizes for answering bonus questions and for the top teams at the end of the night. Teams limited to 6 players. For more info call (575) 754-4422

**WEDNESDAYS**

**Transportation for Qualified Seniors by donation**, Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd. Call for more info and to make an appointment (575) 586-0508

**9 AM**  
**Gentle Morning Yoga with Gaea**, in person and online, \$8 Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**10 AM - 2 PM**  
**Repurposing Plastic Project:** Come smash plastic and make wire walls! At the old "Movies at Home" building opposite Questa Supermarket on Hwy 522. Call or text (575) 224-7386

**1:30 - 2:30 PM**  
**Wildcat Kitty Club at the Questa Public Library**, for ages 0-3. Older siblings and guests are welcome. Stories, songs, and play. 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. Call (575) 586-2023

**7 PM**  
**Kickboxing, with Reto** in person only, sliding scale \$5-\$15 Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**THURSDAYS**

**Transportation for Qualified Seniors by donation**, Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Call for more info and to make an appointment (575) 586-0508

**2:30 - 4:30 PM**  
**Dropped Stitch Group meets at the Questa Public Library**, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. We knit, crochet, laugh, teach and learn. Bring your projects. All skill levels welcome. Info: (575) 586-2023

**5 - 9 PM**  
**Ceramic Cafe**, come play with clay! Questa Youth & Family Center at 7 Questa Park Road. More info at [QuestaCreativeCouncil.org](http://QuestaCreativeCouncil.org) or call (575) 586-5658. No Classes Thanksgiving Day

**5:30 PM**  
**Power Hour Yoga with Gaea**, in person and online, \$8 Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org) No Classes Thanksgiving Day

**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, Questa. Info: (575) 779-9249

**FRIDAYS**

**9:30 - 10:15 AM**  
**Twirl Theater Play with Amber Vasquez**, play-based class for singing, dancing and storytelling, children ages 2-6, at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org) No Classes Thanksgiving Week

**10 AM - 2 PM**  
**Repurposing Plastic Project: Come smash plastic** and make wire walls! At the old "Movies at Home" building opposite Questa Supermarket on Hwy 522. Call or text (575) 224-7386

**6 - 8 PM**  
**Live Music every other Friday (November 10 and 24)** with Chris Arellano and family and friends, 101 Bar & Grill (formerly The Crazy Beaver), 101 County Rd 13.2, Garcia, CO 81152. Please call to confirm at (719) 672-9022

**SATURDAYS**

**8:30 - 9:50 AM**  
**Contemporary Dance for Adults. For beginners with Monica**, in person only, sliding scale \$5-15 Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa, More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**10:30 AM**  
**Free Community Tai Chi with Reto**, in person only Classes at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa, More info: [yogasalaquesta.org](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](mailto:Events@QuestaNews.com)



**PLEASE NOTE: IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER FOOD DISTRIBUTION WILL BE THE SECOND AND THIRD FRIDAYS.**

140 Embargo Rd., Questa. For more info: [www.questafoodpantry.org](http://www.questafoodpantry.org) or call (575) 586-0486 or (575) 779-9194



## CLASSIFIEDS

### HELP WANTED

**Charles A. Martinez Bus Service LLC** (formally Martinez Buses) now hiring Route & Activity Drivers Drivers must have a Class B CDL with PS endorsement. Positions available now. For more information contact Charlie at (575) 779-5665

**Taos Mountain Casino: General Manager of Hail Creek Travel Center:** The General Manager is responsible for providing oversight of the operations conducted at Taos Pueblo Hail Creek Travel Center and specifically to provide overall planning and management of profit centers and various support functions to maximize productivity and profitability and to meet the growth objectives of Taos Pueblo via the Hail Creek Travel Center. To apply, visit <https://taosmountaincasino.com/job/gm-hail-creek-travel-center/>

**Taos Mountain Casino: Maintenance Technician II:** Repairs and maintains the facility equipment such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC) units, ice machines, refrigerators, grills, burners, and other mechanical and electrical equipment. <https://taosmountaincasino.com/job/maintenance-tech/>

**Taos Mountain Casino: IT Director:** The IT Director is responsible for administering the overall daily operations of all IT departments and complete control and responsibility for design, development, testing, installation, and maintenance of IT operations. The incumbent determines the information services requirements of Taos Mountain Casino, establishing priorities for systems development and data processing requirements, evaluating and projecting hardware and software needs, and developing budget work programs to provide staffing and equipment necessary to implement required computer operating systems and information services. Responsible for overseeing the project management of the casino in cooperation with the direction of the General Manager. <https://taosmountaincasino.com/job/IT-Director/>

**Taos Mountain Casino: Accounting Specialist,** Hail Creek Travel Center: The Accounting Specialist is responsible for working with the Finance Clerk to maintain financial operations for Hail Creek Travel Center. To apply, visit <https://taosmountaincasino.com/job/accounting-specialist/>

**Taos Mountain Casino: Guest Services Host/ Hostess:** The Guest Services Host duties include guest services involving, player club enrollment, guest services information, problem and complaint resolution, promotions and game implementation. <https://taosmountaincasino.com/job/guest-services-host-hostess/>

**Taos Mountain Casino: Cage Cashier:** Distribute moneys to casino guests and employees via checks cashing, conversion of coins, and gaming chips into currency. Protects company assets while dealing with the public in an efficient and courteous manner. <https://taosmountaincasino.com/job/cage-cashier/>

**Taos Mountain Casino: Housekeeper:** Primary responsibility is to clean and maintain appearance of the casino, administrative offices, public areas, restrooms and other assigned areas. <https://taosmountaincasino.com/job/housekeeper/>

### NOTICES

**Questa Senior Center lunches.** Lunches are no longer served to-go. Lunch is served from noon to 1 p.m. and the recommended donation is upward of \$1.50 each. 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Call (575) 586-0508 for more information.

**Red River Trivia Nights:** The Red River Brewing Company will be hosting Trivia Nights on Tuesdays from 7 to 10 p.m. It is free to play and the Brewery will be giving away prizes for the top teams at the end of the night, and for answering bonus questions. Gather your smartest friends and come on down. Teams are limited to 6 players.

**Free Cat Spay/Neuter Vouchers** for lower income households at Zimmer Feline Foundation, (505) 466-1676 or email [TheLoveofCats@comcast.net](mailto:TheLoveofCats@comcast.net)

**San Luis Valley Spay and Neuter Alliance offers low cost spay and neuter services** in Monte Vista, CO. Surgeries include rabies and distemper vaccines. Microchips, Bordetella vaccines, de-worming, nail trims, and matt removal are available at additional cost. Book appointment at [slvspayneuter.org](mailto:slvspayneuter.org) or call us at (719) 657-7076. [slvspayneuter@gmail.com](mailto:slvspayneuter@gmail.com)

**Free Transportation for Qualified Seniors** Monday through Thursday. Donations are encouraged. Questa Senior Center, 148 Embargo Rd, Questa. Call (575) 586-0508 for more information.

**Repurposing Plastic Project:** Wednesdays & Fridays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Come smash plastic and make wire walls! Meet the team, work your body, lift your spirit, and help the planet! At the RPP World Headquarters, the old "Movies at Home" building opposite Questa Supermarket on Hwy 522. For more info, call or text (575) 224-7386.

**North Central New Mexico Food Pantry:** Second and fourth Fridays, 10 a.m. 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 [ncpquesta.com](http://ncpquesta.com) or mail to: North Central Food Pantry, PO Box 1076, Questa, NM 87556. For more information, please email [wrmesquire2@gmail.com](mailto:wrmesquire2@gmail.com). If you would like to volunteer, please call Jeannie (numbers above).

**Questa One-on-One In-Person Business Counseling** with Director of the Small Business Development Center Anwar Kaelin, at UNM-Taos. FREE and CONFIDENTIAL offered on the third Thursday of every month, 1 to 4 p.m., 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 2 to 3 p.m.: <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](mailto:anwar@unm.edu).

**Grief Counseling:** Weekly Grief Support Group is offered Wednesdays at Living Word Ministries through September 13. Group runs from 6 to 8 p.m. and is free. For more information, email [griefshareLWM@gmail.com](mailto:griefshareLWM@gmail.com). "We know it hurts, and we want to help."

**Teen Grief Counseling:** Together we heal! Beginning on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m., October 25 through November, Vida Del Norte will be hosting teen Grief Workshops that will be geared to teach our youth the coping techniques they need to begin healing, understanding, and voicing their feelings. Dinner will be provided. Hosted at Vida del Norte Building.

## CHURCH DIRECTORY

### QUESTA

**ST. ANTHONY DE PADUA CHURCH**  
Father Andrew Ifele (575) 586-0470  
Sunday 8 a.m. only.

**MISSION CHURCHES OF ST. ANTHONY'S:**  
Costilla - Sagrado Corazon - Sunday 9 a.m.  
Cerro - Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe - 2nd & 4th Saturdays 4 p.m.  
Amalia - Santo Niño - 1st & 3rd Saturdays 4 p.m.

**FREEDOM CENTER CHURCH**  
(previously Harvest Questa)  
Pastors Kristi & Johnny Gonzales  
2558 Hwy 522, Questa  
Sunday Service 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
(575) 770-1714  
Visit us online: [freedomquesta.com](http://freedomquesta.com)

**LIVING WORD MINISTRIES**  
Pastors Peter and Gayle Martinez  
12 Llano Road, Questa  
Service: Sunday 10:30 a.m.  
Nursery and Kids' Church at 10:30 a.m.  
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.  
[www.lwmsite.org](http://www.lwmsite.org)  
(575) 586-1587

**PATH OF LOVE**  
Sunday 7:30 a.m. class and meditation in-person north of Questa or on Zoom. For more info: (575) 770-1682 or [gabrielle.herbertson@gmail.com](mailto:gabrielle.herbertson@gmail.com)

**THEOSOPHY**  
Northern New Mexico Alice Bailey Study Group.  
Sunday and Wednesday 10 a.m.-noon on Zoom. For more info, contact Francis at [oeahoo17@gmail.com](mailto:oeahoo17@gmail.com)

**QUESTA CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
2 miles north of Questa on State Road 522  
Sunday Bible Class Sunday 9:30 a.m.  
followed by worship at 10:15 a.m.

**KAGYU MILA GURU SANGHA**  
Tibetan Buddhism  
Monday 11 a.m. Green Tara. Friday 1 pm Green Tara both in-person and on Zoom. For more info [www.earthjourney.org](http://www.earthjourney.org) or contact Gabrielle at [info@earthjourney.org](mailto:info@earthjourney.org) or (575) 770-1682

**KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES**  
(575) 586-1947

### AMALIA


**SANTO NIÑO MISSION CHURCH**  
1st & 3rd Saturdays 4 p.m.

**ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**  
Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.  
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 a.m.  
First Baptist Church of Red River  
103 High Cost Trail  
Sundays 8:15 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.  
Pastor Joe Phillips (575) 754-2882

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



**AA MEETINGS**  
Honesty, Unselfishness,  
Purity and Love.

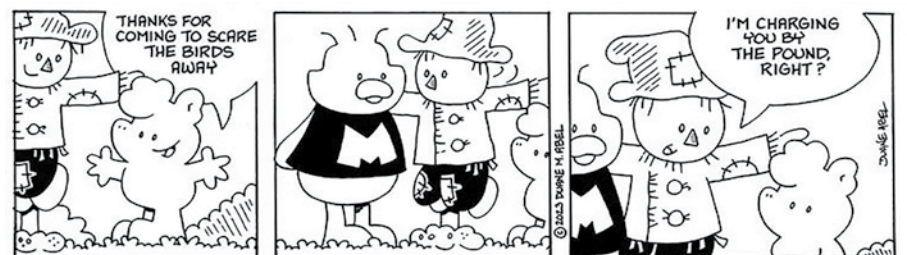
QUESTA:  
Sundays 10-11 a.m.  
Questa Youth Center

RED RIVER:  
Tuesdays 7- 8 p.m.  
417 E. High St.  
(Erik's Workshop)



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zed by dan m. abel

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**BUSINESS DIRECTORY**

**An Open House**  
*Yay!* **community celebration!**  
**Saturday Dec. 2 • 4:30-8:30**  
**AT THE Sala** Arellanos! 5 pm  Live local music  
 Chris & Rodney  Raffle & prizes  
 Homemade food  
 High Desert Acoustic Duo 7 pm  Appreciating you!  
 volunteers & artists who make QCC projects happen!

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**QUESTA LUMBER & HARDWARE CO.**



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 yogasalaquesta@gmail.com  
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Monica McClelland  Functional Diagnostic Nutrition Practitioner

email hello@mindyourgutcoach.com  
 phone 575-754-0122  
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 QUESTA VISITOR CENTER

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 jobs and mentorship for youth



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