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# Questa del Rio News

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## Northern New Mexico Tradition Dando Los Dias Kicks of 2024



Photo by Dylan Crabb

Bernie Torres and his band of travelling musicians rang in the new year in northern Taos County this morning, in the tiny community Amalia. The band is made up of musicians Bernie Torres, Lina Trujillo, Dean Swift, Mike Gomez, Chris Arrellano, Lino Trujillo, Dan Quintana, and Ron Martinez

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Farmer, rancher, community leader, and Mountain Range Supply and Transport owner Bernie Torres, along with his friends will once again be visiting locals in the northern Taos County area to ring in the new year with the unique tradition of Los Dias.

This year, the group started at the Amalia Community Center at 8 a.m. where locals prepared food and goodies for the traveling musical group as they start their tour to serenade locals, wishing good will and blessings to families, friends, and the greater community.

The musical group then traveled to Questa where they visited Berlinda Trujillo's home, which was extra special considering it is also her birthday. The family surrounded Berlinda as she was honored by the traditional songs of old. "That's the beauty of the tradition, we visit people who stay safe and warm in their homes. It's really just an honor for us as much as it is for them," Bernie says.



Video Capture

Bernie Torres. See their performance on our Facebook and Youtube @Questa del Rio News.

After their trip to Berlinda's home, they went to Barbara and Evaristo's home where the family gathered warmly as they were serenaded by Bernie and friends.

Bernie says his favorite part of the Los Dias tradition is being blessed with Vino de Capulin (chokecherry wine) as they continue their journey from

home to home.

This tradition dates back to Spain which originated from El Dia de Los Manueles. Musical groups would travel from house to house in Spain, signing songs for neighbors in the name of Emmanuel. In the early 1900's, various groups would travel around from house to house in northern Taos County but currently, Bernie's group is the last remaining traveling musical group who participates in Dando los Dias on New Year's Day.

"The group sings poetic verses, old favorites, and spontaneous and humorous ones, composed and personalized for individuals, families, or community groups. It makes people feel unique and special. The singing begins outside the homes and continues when musicians are invited inside where all together, they celebrate el Ano Nuevo with pastelitos, pastries, biscochitos, wine, and when lucky, a tragito of hard liquor," says Natalie Torres Herrera of her brother's group.



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December Fundraising Event On Page 29

# Questa del Rio News

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Got a story? Email us at [editor@questanews.com](mailto:editor@questanews.com)

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

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EDITORIAL

## Looking Forward To 2024



Photo by E. Wilde

### Road to Questa

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Over the past year, our paper has gone through many changes, some good and some difficult. Overall, our goal is to connect communities, ensuring our coverage represents the people which it serves. This will require us to step out of our comfort zone and recommend stories for coverage. The most frequent thing I hear when I approach people, asking if we can tell their stories is “no, I am too shy” or “no, I am not that important.”

Time and time again, our paper has shown that the communities in northern Taos County are important, unique, and our stories are important to tell. I want to encourage you to reach out to pitch your stories to our team. You can request to know what questions we will ask of you before we do the interview, you can request edits on your story before it's published, and you can provide feedback on stories to help us improve for next time. Our paper operates as the voice of the people, but the voice of the people requires a very important component to continue to operate, and that component is you.

2024 is going to be a busy year as our country will, once again, have the opportunity to decide who will lead our country for the next four

years. Difficult conversations based on morals, principles, ethics, and beliefs will likely ensue. In 2020 during the last general election, our country grew divided, causing households to fight amongst themselves, cousins to be at war with one another, and numerous wars to take place on social media, all in the name of who we believe to be the best politician would be for our country's future.

At the end of the day, the only meaningful way you can make your voice heard is by voting in the election. Not registered to vote? No problem. Visit [sos.state.nm.us](http://sos.state.nm.us) to register. You will also be able to learn about polling locations, voter FAQs, how the Secretary of State secures elections, and see election results on this page.

Regardless of your political affiliation or beliefs, one thing will remain true at the end of the election year, and that is we are one community of northeños. We carry shared burdens, encounter similar trials, and experience comparable hardships. A fact is that we are stronger, together, one nation, under God.

I wish that 2024 brings you peace, love, gratitude, blessings, health, hope, peace, and goodness and I pray that we can remain united as we navigate the upcoming election year.

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

DOMINICK APODACA, MAYO ARCHULETA, LEONORA ARELLANO, ZACH BEHRENS, JAY BOUCHARD, LINDA CALHOUN, LAUREL DEANS, BRYCE FLANAGAN, LOVEIDA CISNEROS, ADRIA CORDOVA, PATRICIA GARCIA, MARTA GLOVER, MARIA GONZALEZ, ERNIE GRIEGO, CHARLENE R. JOHNSON, MAKSIM KHUDIAKOV, TONER MITCHELL, SHARON NICHOLSON, BOBBY ORTEGA, J. ORTEGA, JOHN ORTEGA, MALAQUIAS JR RAE, MELLIE RODRIGUEZ, BARBARA TRACY, JOHN WALSH, ELLEN WOOD, I GHOST WRITER MIGUEL, THE SOURCENM, INSPIRE AT FREEDOM QUESTA, QUESTA CREDIT UNION, QUESTA CREATIVE COUNCIL





# A New Year Of Economic Development

By LYNN SKALL  
Director, Questa Economic Development Fund

Chevron established the Questa Economic Development Fund after the mine closed to help stimulate new economic development in Questa and the surrounding communities. Over the past year, QEDF has worked on a variety of programs for the community, many that will be continued in 2024.

The feasibility study to evaluate the construction of a **green hydrogen plant** in our village could position Questa as a leader of sustainable energy production, making us one of the only areas in the country powered 100 percent by green energy. The economic viability of the project is being further explored this year — how many jobs will be creat-

ed, and what is the long-term financial potential?

Recruitment for and promotion of the **Questa Business Park** will ramp up in 2024. Five sites are construction-ready. QEDF works with the New Mexico Partnership, to vet potential companies looking to relocate or establish businesses in New Mexico — at least one will be the ideal fit for Questa!

Community conversations have been held around creating an **area-wide Acequia Association** to have a stronger, unified voice to protect and support local water resources and issues. Please attend and be part of the discussion at a public meeting on **January 10 at 5 p.m. at My Tia's Café in Cerro.**

You're invited to another public meeting to address the development of new **hiking trails in Largo Canyon and beginner rock climbing sites**, plans funded by a New Mexico Trails+ grant. Attend the meeting on **January 24 at 6 p.m. at the Questa Public Library** to share your concerns or support (*see story on page 20*).

QEDF received a **\$25,000 LEADS grant** from the New Mexico economic development department (NMEDD) to create **Business Bridge a business bridge at the Questa Public Library**, "to connect the community to business resources, training, and services."

New computers, a commercial color copier/printer, and smart board will be installed early this year for use by area businesses and residents.

Los Alamos National Laboratory contributed \$5,000 to launch a regular schedule of **free business-oriented workshops** to support start-up enterprises and existing businesses. The schedule will be announced shortly.

For earning the state's economic development organization certification, QEDF has been awarded **\$40,000 from the NMEDD**. Chevron has also pledged additional financial support to QEDF and the Village for many specific economic development projects.

One will address the **shortage of affordable workforce housing**. QEDF hired the Taos Housing Partnership to conduct a Questa-area housing assessment, which will make recommendations for next steps to identify solutions.

Other funding is dedicated to the **agricultural community**; public meetings in 2023 explored an agricultural cooperative. A community-led committee identified a year-round "storefront" co-op model, to sell and promote local produce and products. The Arrowhead Center at New Mexico State University is compiling an economic feasibility study to evaluate its long-term viability.

This newspaper was established

by QEDF to connect the community through regular communication, reporting on area and state news. This past year **Mikayla Ortega — born and raised in Questa — was hired as our new managing editor** and has taken the paper to the next level.

The Village, Chevron, and QEDF all partner with the state to promote Questa as part of the "**New Mexico True**" **advertising campaign**. The state provides a two to one match, turning our \$30,000 into \$90,000 worth of advertising in Texas and Oklahoma. Social media ads, Facebook posts, and Instagram effectively drive visitors to the [VisitQuesta.com](http://VisitQuesta.com) website.

The website helps guests plan their trips to our area, and the **Questa Visitor Center** provides a warm in-person welcome and area information from May through October.

The **QEDF office** is located in the Visitor Center, and is open year-round; so even though the sign says "closed," if there's a car out front, stop in and say hello. Or, email [lynn@questaedf.com](mailto:lynn@questaedf.com), leave a message at (575) 586-2149, or join us for our QEDF board meetings, every first Monday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Visitor Center and via Zoom. Call for the Zoom link and to confirm the meeting. Get in touch and share your economic development ideas!

## MAIL CALL

From Jeanie Masters:

I want to share a **BIG THANK YOU & SHOUTOUT**, TO OUR **ANONYMOUS ANGEL** who bought the turkeys for our clients at the North Central Food Pantry November give-away for the third year in a row. He really is amazing. Our clients and board members thank him, bless him, and keep him in our prayers.

*Congratulations to the Sangre de Cristo Market on a successful and much anticipated grand re-opening*

*(Read article on page 15)*

*Courtesy Photo*

**New owner Dominick Apodaca poses for a photo with his brother Roman Apodaca, mom Debra Martinez and grandma Ofelia Martinez on opening day**

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

### OUR JOURNALISTIC ETHICS POLICY

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

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

### EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE AND DONOR TRANSPARENCY POLICIES

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

- We accept gifts, grants and sponsorships from individuals and organizations to support our paper. Our editorial decisions are not made based on donor support.
- We give no right of review or influence of editorial content.
- We are committed to transparency in every aspect of funding our organization.
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## Sierra Hermosa RV Park

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The Sierra Hermosa RV Park is located on Highway 522, across from the Questa Lumber strip mall. Questa native Bobby Ortega is the owner and operator of the business. “The land we built this RV park on originally belonged to my grandfather, J.P. Rael. I purchased it from my uncle and aunt, who had inherited the land, so that makes running a business on this property pretty special,” Bobby says.

Bobby worked for Centinel Bank for 37 years, but says he had always wanted to open an R.V. park. “In 2013, I heard from the mine that they were going to be expanding but unfortunately, they stopped operations so there was some uncertainty, but I decided in a post-mining economy, an RV park was exactly what our community needed, so I proceeded with my plan,” he says.

When Bobby envisioned his business, he knew he wanted to carry on with the same philosophy he learned in banking, which placed a strong emphasis on customer service. For this reason, guest experience is a big priority for Bobby and his team. “We aim to ensure people enjoy their time staying at the park, because we want them to enjoy Questa and return year after year. I always want to ensure their experience is a good and memorable one,” Bobby notes.

Bobby says running his business on the land that once belonged to his grandfather is more than just business as usual. “As someone who grew up working the land, there is no better way to understand the land than to work it. You gain a deep respect and appreciation for the land you care for, you water, and you cultivate. I have done that for most of my life, ranching and caring for my cows so my respect for the land we now run this business on is a personal one.”

Currently, the RV park has 45 spaces with full amenities including full hook-ups, water, sewer, and electrical. One special draw of the park is the free Wi-Fi that comes with your stay. “I have had people come from across the country and work right here in Questa, New Mexico. Quality, high-speed internet provided by Kit Carson has changed everything and it allows me to offer my



Courtesy Photo

Local Leader and businessman Bobby Ortega

guests what they need to continue to stay connected,” Bobby continues.

In addition to the amenities, the park sits on 4-1/2 acres of land, which is surrounded by 45 acres of open space belonging to Bobby. This provides the opportunity for people to explore and find serenity they’re seeking when they stay at his park. There is a pavilion toward the back of the park, for people who want to have get-togethers or gatherings. There is also a spring-fed lake on the property for guests to enjoy.

The park sits in close proximity to

the main stores on Questa’s main street, Highway 522, and the laundromat is just down the road. Additionally, Bobby adds, “people are able to get to any tourist destination anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour including the Rio Grande del Norte Monument and three wilderness areas.”

Speaking of his time growing up in northern New Mexico, Bobby says “I can recall going to the Otra Vanda (other side of the Rio Grande), taking the cows across the river for the seasonal grazing changes. I know the hiking trails across this area like the back of my hand. I use maps to guide people to places they might enjoy and I am always pointing to local businesses for residents to have coffee, get groceries, or grab a bite to eat. I encourage our guests to support our local businesses every chance I get.”

Nestled in the valley of the Sangre de Cristos, Bobby says he knew he wanted his park to perfectly represent what people will see. “One day, I was looking at Flag Mountain in its glory and thought, that’s it. Sierra Hermosa is a beautiful mountain. That is why we chose its name. It fits perfectly for what people see when they look out at the spectacular view.”

For more information about the Sierra Hermosa RV Park, visit the website at [www.sierrahermosarvpark.com](http://www.sierrahermosarvpark.com)

## Questa Credit Union Takes Extra Steps To Serve Members During Network Outage

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

On November 29, the Questa Credit Union began sharing information on social media to inform members about a network outage, impacting account access.

According to statements posted on employee Patricia Garcia’s social media pages, the bank says the cloud-based provider experienced an outage which impacted customers’ ability to access their accounts and also limiting staff members’ ability to make deposits and view accounts.

Upon further investigation, it was determined the third-party vendor had fallen victim to a ransomware attack on their server. The attack took 60 credit unions offline, nationwide.

Our editor spoke with Marshall Romero, industry manager for the New Mexico Credit Union Division, to ask

tough questions about the attack and how our Questa Credit Union handled the situation. Below is a transcript of the conversation:

EDITOR: Can you tell us if ransomware attacks are common in local banking?

ROMERO: Ransomware attacks are becoming more and more prevalent in the digital world we’re living in. More recently, Lovelace Hospital fell victim to this. Unfortunately, it’s a reality and companies, like the third party vendor the credit union uses, are working to take steps to increase security.

EDITOR: Tell us about how this could impact members of the local credit union?

ROMERO: Credit unions are the only not-for-profit financial entities working to serve local communities. They offer special benefits to the members, including low interest rates,



Photo by E. Wilde

Questa Credit Union

free checking and saving accounts. The list goes on and on. Members also have insurance and safety nets to ensure their funds should they be compromised, which in this case, to the best of my knowledge, they were not.

EDITOR: Can you tell us what QCU did wrong in this situation?

ROMERO: Absolutely nothing. There were 60 credit union banks impacted

by this third-party vendor and there is nothing that the Questa Credit Union could’ve done to prevent it. In fact, they did a lot to ensure they could continue to serve members during the outage, which was notable.

EDITOR: Is there anything the QCU could have done better?

ROMERO: No. They communicated the status with the media, and they kept helping members on an individual basis through their workaround processes. This type of situation could have closed shop for days, but they didn’t.

During the network outage, QCU continued to update members and *Questa del Rio News* with status reports. They apprised us of work-around systems that were built to continue to serve customers throughout the outage, including access to accounts and the waiving of late fees for overdrawn accounts.





## Adria Córdova

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Being raised in a community where your history connects to every part of your present, it's 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 also those who have pursued lives outside of the community — through our Representando series. This series is dedicated to those who are Representando al Norte in various facets of life.

For our January issue, we spoke with Adria Córdova.

Adria moved to Albuquerque upon her graduation from Questa High School in 2006. She was quick to build a community in her new home as she attended the University of New Mexico (UNM). She is credited for being a founding member of the local chapter for the nationally Latina-founded Kappa Delta Chi sorority. She was also involved in ALPFA - The Association of Latino Professionals for America and several other networking groups during her time at UNM.

"Growing up in a community like Questa, I knew how important it was to

have a strong network of people around you. This is why I was motivated to create strong networks when I left home," Adria says.

Adria graduated with her Bachelor's degree in business administration with an emphasis in organizational leadership in 2010. "My decision to pursue a business degree came from interning at the Questa Mine during high school and my summer/winter college breaks. It was there that I was exposed to real business experience, from accounting, to HR, to warehouse management."

Adria was working at Kirtland Air Force Base when she decided to pursue her MBA. "I always knew I wanted to leave New Mexico and experience living elsewhere, but in order to make that happen, I needed to find a good job that would allow me to venture out." She shares about one day when she was at work and saw that General Mills was on campus for a recruiting fair. "I decided to leave work early that day, because I wanted to speak with the recruiters." This gut feeling paid off, leading Adria to a position with the company at their world headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

"I moved in the middle of winter; it was cold and I was all alone so I recognized quickly that I needed to build community in my new home." This is what led Adria to reaching out to the ALPFA Chapter. "I joined the Twin Cities chapter and quickly made many friends who became family," she says.

Just one year after being transferred to Minneapolis, General Mills went through a company-wide restructuring, resulting in a transfer to Philadelphia.

For so many years, her relationship with her family was maintained through FaceTime calls and telephone calls.

"There were many times my family would keep me on FaceTime for hours so I could still be a part of the family



Courtesy Photo

Adria speaks to graduates during UNM's Fall commencement ceremony

gatherings," she recalls.

Like many others, the COVID-19 pandemic caused Adria to pause and re-evaluate her journey. "I remember being alone in my apartment and thinking, what am I doing here? That was when I decided to come home."

In 2021, Adria was ready for a change; a new challenge in her career. "Although I loved General Mills, I wanted something different. I was determined to find a role where I could leverage the skills I had gained at General Mills, but also have the opportunity to explore a new path." This is what led to her transition into the tech space where she currently works as a lead solution engineer at Salesforce. The position was a great fit, as it allowed her to work remotely in her hometown communities in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico.

Adria describes herself as a problem solver. "I work with companies throughout the country and help them solve their problems through our technology solutions and products. The goal is to help companies improve their business

performance so they can deliver value to their clients," she says.

When asked how she likes living back home, she was quick to express how happy she is to have returned. "I love being closer to family! It's so wonderful to be here to celebrate birthdays and special occasions as well as watch my nieces and nephews grow up, all things I've missed out on over the years. Being within driving distance to family and friends is something I don't take for granted. It's also great to return home for a while after being gone for nearly 20 years, because the same community that raised me is still here, and that is a beautiful blessing."

Recently, Adria was invited to be the guest speaker at the commencement ceremony for the UNM Anderson School of Business. "It was such an honor to represent the alumni, and to represent northern New Mexico. I love telling our story of where we're from and the values we were raised with, and how growing up in a small town allowed us to build a unique skill set for a successful future. I think my story is a testament to that."

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# Local Leaders Look Forward To 2023 With Renewed Hope

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

For the new year, we decided to reach out to Questa Mayor John Ortega and Red River Mayor Linda Calhoun to ask for their outlook for the 2024 year.

## Questa Mayor John Ortega:

On behalf of the Village of Questa, I am happy to announce that the village has been awarded multiple grants through Capital Outlay, the New Mexico Department of Transportation, the New Mexico Department of Finance, the New Mexico Department of Tourism, and the New Mexico Finance Authority. These grants were made possible by the due diligence and dedication of the village staff.

Because of these awards, residents, neighbors and visitors can expect to see multiple projects implemented in 2024. These projects range from infrastructure road and bridge improvements, recreational furnishings, a community recycling project, and a community planning opportunity. These projects in 2024 are in various stages of implementation.

Some projects people can expect to see include a Taos Bakes expansion with construction, the planning, design and engineering for a new water well, Cabresto Road phase 2 & 3 drainage and improvement project, Embargo Road plan and design, Embargo Bridge

(Llama Bridge) plan and design to create a pedestrian walkway, Shirley Drive reconstruction, road improvements throughout town, a new playground, and acquiring new recycling receptacles.

The village is also working to create a new comprehensive plan for the village. We are also eager to continue working with the Green Hydrogen Project, and we are seeking further funding to plan and design a wastewater treatment facility to increase sewer capacity so we can extend sewer lines in new areas of the community. Additionally, the Village of Questa will also have two police officers attend the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy to become certified police officers, for a total of five certified officers protecting the Village of Questa.

I want to ensure our residents know I am accessible to talk about any issues or concerns you may have. My calendar will have dedicated office hours to speak with our community. You can contact Valerie Vigil at 575-586-0694 or email at [vvigil@villageofquesta.org](mailto:vvigil@villageofquesta.org) for scheduling.

In addition to office hours, I would also like to invite the community to Coffee with the Mayor and the Chief of Police every first Monday of the month from 4:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Overall, it's been a great year, and I hope 2024 is even better. I would like to

see continued community events such as Fiestas, the car show, Christmas Parade and many more. These events bring the community together and unite us as Questeños, and that's a good thing. I am also hopeful to see a continued drop in property crime, with our continued law enforcement presence. I am also happy to see a reduction in speeding through our community. I would also like to see continued support for our fire and EMS teams.

As a reminder, the fire department is always looking for volunteers, so if you are interested contact Chief Raynelle Sanchez Cordova to join. We are always recruiting EMT's to join our staff, so if you know anyone looking for EMS work, we got it.

## Red River Mayor Linda Calhoun:

It's hard to believe that 2023 is quickly coming to an end. As we look forward to 2024, Red River has a lot of exciting projects on the horizon.

We've received funding for a new public works/public safety maintenance and storage facility and are planning on breaking ground any day now. We have also awarded a contract to a housing developer and are looking forward to finally tackling the workforce housing shortage. These along with a major sidewalk project on Main Street and re-

paving High Street should prove to keep us very busy.

One of my biggest hopes for the new year is to be able to finally see construction and material costs begin to stabilize and see more interest in bidding on some of our larger projects. 2023 was an election year and elections always highlight where improvements can be made. We will be implementing a new town government website to improve communications with our residents. This website will also give us the capability to be more transparent with all our meeting agendas and recordings more readily available.

As we begin 2024, we are praying for lots of snow not only for our ski season, but also to help with any threat of forest fires going into the summer. We were very fortunate to be named Best Ski Town in North America by USA Today for the second time in the past couple of years. Tourism is our only economic driver, and we are always looking for ways to improve. The event that occurred over Memorial Weekend was devastating to our community. We are looking forward to seeing that event evolve into a family friendly event with the emphasis on remembering and honoring our Veterans. We are excited for 2024 and wish everyone a Happy New Year.

# Village Council Passes Resolution For 2024 Legislative Priorities

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

The Village of Questa Council passed a resolution outlining their priorities for the upcoming New Mexico legislative session during their regular meeting on December 12 of last year.

"Whereas, the legislative priorities include support for legislation on the following: sewer system improvements, Cabresto Road improvements, Embargo Road improvements, a new fire department building, a new ambulance emergency vehicle, a wildland fire truck, the Veterans Healing Field, the Questa skatepark, an animal control program, and the green hydrogen facility."

The resolution was passed by the Council unanimously.

The priorities will be delivered to the New Mexico Legislative Council Service (LCS). Questa Project Manager Jake Lafore explained to the Council that a select few, high-cost projects will be delivered directly to Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham, but they have not yet been identified.

"We were told by the North Central New Mexico Economic Development Department (NCNMEDD) that road projects are going to be given very low priority from the Legislative Council... We're still gonna send them in," said Lafore.

High-priority projects will be projects that have already started but are not complete, which include some of Questa's road improvements.

Mayor John Ortega believes the priority for the sewer system improvements to be among the most important and the most likely to come through the NM Legislature. Any new projects will likely need to be submitted to the Governor.

*Questa del Rio News* reached out to lobbyist Robert Romero of Robert Romero & Associates regarding these legislative priorities and which ones are likely to come through for the village.

"At this point it is hard to say for sure. The skatepark has received funds in the past, therefore it may have a good chance," said Romero. "Regarding the hydrogen facility, hydrogen energy is a priority of the Governor, so we are hopeful."

Romero explained that there are usu-

ally more requests for funding than what is available and that projects that have been designed and are "shovel-ready" usually have priority over projects yet to be designed. Road projects are usually funded independently from the Legislature. The Legislature gives money to the state Department of Transportation and they divide it among its districts. Last year, Questa received about a million dollars for road projects from the DOT.

Robert Romero & Associates LLC can be reached via email at [robertpromero@gmail.com](mailto:robertpromero@gmail.com). New Mexico's 2024 legislative session begins on January 16 and ends on February 15. Taos County's municipal day at the Capital will be January 31.

FOR MORE NEWS, PHOTOS & EVENT INFO VISIT [QUESTANEWS.COM](http://QUESTANEWS.COM)



# The LOR Foundation Looks Forward to a Fruitful New Year

By Contributing Writer  
AEDON HANNON

Despite the cold and dark of winter, the Questa community remains filled with warmth. Whether it be family gatherings, church services, or simply lending a helping hand with snow, locals show the beauty of Questa and rural living every day.

For many residents, the new year is an opportunity to both reflect and look forward. Here at the LOR Foundation, we're doing the same.

Last year was filled with success and celebration, as dedicated Questaños improved their community by strengthening schools, aiding first responders, and expanding youth sports. Over the course of the year, LOR was thrilled to support more than 30 community projects conceived of and carried out by Questa locals.

"We had so many inspiring solutions come from the community last year," says Maria Gonzalez, LOR's Questa

community officer. "I'm excited to see even more ideas this year, especially around housing and water."

Those two things — water and housing — are important for any rural community, and LOR is excited to see the innovative ideas that Questa residents bring to the table to help address challenges such as these.

"It doesn't matter who you are, we want to hear from you," Gonzalez says. "Questaños know best what will benefit current and future generations, and at LOR we want to lend a hand and make those solutions a reality."

As the year kicks off, Gonzalez is looking forward to discussing new opportunities with residents while also recognizing the work of Questa's 2023 community champions. Anyone with an idea or a passion for helping the Questa community can reach her by email at [maria@lorfoundation.org](mailto:maria@lorfoundation.org) or by phone at (575)-665-2001.

The LOR Foundation wishes everyone a happy and healthy 2024!

# U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich Takes Aim at Gas-Operated Semi-Auto Firearms in GOSAFE Act

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Senator Martin Heinrich, New Mexico's senior senator in our nation's Congress, introduced a bill last month to amend the U.S. criminal code regarding firearms (Section 922 of Title 18), specifically gas-operated semi-automatic firearms.

S.3369, the Gas-Operated Semi-Automatic Firearms Exclusion Act, or the GOSAFE Act, states "...it shall be unlawful for any person to import, sell, manufacture, transfer, receive, or possess, in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, a firearm, device, or combination of parts..." related to gas-operated semi-automatics.


To fully explain this bill, here are a few terms defined:

The principle function of a firearm is to propel a projectile with an ignition sequence. When a bullet is fired upon ignition, it creates a gas that burns quickly; most firearms today are made to protect the firearm as well as the

user from being harmed by that gas. The term semi-automatic simply refers to a firearm's capacity to load the next round automatically (in contrast to an old-fashioned revolver where the user manually turns each chamber before firing the trigger). A fully automatic allows for the firing of multiple rounds at once. In short, a semi-automatic fires one round with one trigger pull while a fully automatic fires continuous rounds with one trigger pull.

A gas-operated semi-automatic firearm is designed to utilize the gas from ignition to power a function to discharge the spent cartridge case and insert a new cartridge, typically referred to as "cycling the action." The function uses a system of pistons and ports in the firearm to increase reloading speed, while still requiring a trigger pull for each round, in keeping with the definition of a semi-automatic.

TAKING AIM cont'd on page 14



## 2024 LEGISLATIVE REQUEST:

At least **\$350 million** to ensure the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund can be self-sustaining and weather economic downturns throughout the lives of our children.


### Overview

Last session, the governor, bipartisan legislators and a broad coalition came together to pass SB9 and create the state's first-ever funding stream for land and water conservation: the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund. This historic investment can leverage millions of federal dollars, create jobs and build critical infrastructure in local communities to better protect us from wildfire, flood and drought, safeguard our water supplies, preserve our agricultural heritage, and grow our outdoor recreation economy.

### Problem & Opportunity

Initial seed money was invested, but not enough to ensure a sustainable funding source or meet the demand from all New Mexico communities. This session, the governor and legislators have the opportunity to secure our legacy by prioritizing budget surplus dollars and maximizing investments in the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund.

[EnchantmentFund.org](https://EnchantmentFund.org)





# Hundreds Turn Out For Questa Village Christmas Celebration



Photo by John Ortega

Trucks adorned with lights line up in preparation for the parade



Photo by Living Word Ministries

Children from Living Word Ministries enact a living nativity

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Primos, primas, neighbors, and friends caught up with one another over warm cocoa and hot stew as beautiful floats donned with Christmas lights, nativity scenes, and Christmas cheer filled the streets of Questa on December 9.

The parade started at 5:30 p.m., and locals from Questa, Costilla, Amalia, Cerro, and Red River filled the streets to watch the parade drive down Questa's main street.

When it ended, people gathered around Perovich Park, where Living Word

Ministries Church enacted a live nativity, portraying the night Jesus was born. Live donkeys were in attendance, too, making the scene feel like a night in Bethlehem.

Following the play, Mayor John Ortega thanked many of the key players who made the night a success. A small

countdown from five brought the village Christmas tree alive, filled with twinkling lights, to end the evening.

Following the events of the evening, Santa and Mrs. Claus sat talking with children and posing for photos with the community.

## Taos Orthopedic Institute Collects Christmas Gifts For Local Questa Family

By STAFF WRITERS

The employees of the Taos Orthopedic Institute joined together to collect gifts for a local Questa family. "Every year, we do gift exchanges, but we realized, we don't need the gifts, and it would be better to buy gifts for a local family who could use them," says one of the group organizers.

Great work to the staff who made a local family's Christmas merry and bright.



Courtesy Photo

The group works together to load up the presents to deliver to the local Questa family



Courtesy Photo

Group poses with all the gifts they purchased for a local Questa family



# Alumbra Holiday Market A Huge Success

By STAFF WRITERS

Local vendors and artisans filled the Questa VFW on Saturday, December 9, for the 2023 Alumbra de Questa Holiday Market.

They brought their finest hand-made and handcrafted products to offer

local shoppers in advance of the Christmas holiday.

Vendors offered unique, high-quality gifts of painted artwork, ceramics, hand-carved/hand-tooled wooden furniture and fixtures, handmade leather bags, belts, and accessories, jewelry, Christmas wreaths

and decorations, and even homemade eco-friendly fabric Christmas bags to use in lieu of disposable wrapping paper.

Organizers say this year had record participation from local vendors. The Questa Ladies Auxiliary was also present selling food to event-goers. Questa

Creative Council Board Chair Alberta Bouyer shares “the quality and variety of gift merchandise was impressive, and all the vendors cooperated to make the venue welcoming and fun. The QCC really enjoyed getting to know more of our talented neighbors.”



Jewelry and locally sourced gifts by local artisans were on display Saturday, December 9.



Rachel León displays her one-of-a-kind pieces to locals at the Alumbra Market

# Active8 Hosts Community Dinner Soon After Vida del Norte Coalition Announces Being Fully Funded



Courtesy Native Winds Radio Facebook

Active8 stands ready to serve as people get a free homecooked meal

By STAFF WRITERS

It didn't take long for Active8 with the Vida del Norte Coalition to spring into action, hosting a community dinner, with support from the LOR Foundation. Residents from northern Taos County communities gathered at the Questa VFW on Sunday, December 17 to enjoy a meal together before the holidays commenced. Organizer Maria Gonzalez says, “we had a great turnout! Thank you all for coming

out and allowing our youth to give of themselves this time of year.”

The Vida del Norte Coalition is a group created to prevent substance misuse among northern Taos County's youth. To learn more about their work or to learn about upcoming events, visit [vidadelnorte.com](http://vidadelnorte.com)

Courtesy Native Winds Radio Facebook

Northern Taos County communities join together for a community meal on Sunday, December 17





# An Abuelitas Love Carried On Through Memories

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Abuelitas are a sacred gift. They feed you, nurture you, and pray for you. If you're lucky enough to have one in your lifetime, carrying their lessons, memories, and love with you for the rest of your life is inevitable. It's also certain the prayers they sent to heaven on your behalf will surround you for the rest of your life.

This is true for longtime resident, mother, and abuelita Mary Arellano. Mary was generous, genuine, meek, humble, sincere, and always had a knack for making everyone feel like someone. Mary passed away in 2018 and her absence in the Questa community has been tremendous.

We spoke to her daughter, Leonora Arellano, about how her family keeps her memory alive, especially during Christmastime. "My mom loved Christmas. For us, the most important part about Christmas was not about presents, it was about going to midnight mass. We knew the importance and significance of this holiday was about Jesus, and that was because of my mom," Leonora says.

Mary was involved in the Christmas Posadas for a big part of her life. "The posadas represent when Joseph and Mary are going from place to place looking for somewhere to stay before she gives birth. People in our communities open their homes and cook and make their stop as hospitable as possible," Leonora recalls.

When Mary opened her home for the Posadas, she would cook for over



Courtesy Photo

Mary and Leonora make empanaditas for Mary's last Posada in December 2017

a week. "She would get started early, making the tamales, empanaditas, biscochitos... I would help her, and my boys would too. When they grew up, their kids also got involved in helping ensure everything was ready for the night."

Leonora says that to this day, she cannot serve store-bought tamales for Christmas. "My boys know the difference and they always ask me for Grams tamales. It's a lot of work, but I am happy to do it for them."

Although Mary passed away in 2018, her family still processes their grief. "We still keep her home as our central gathering point for many holidays," Leonora says. Although five years have passed, Leonora will still find herself missing her mom. "Even at my age I still cry



Courtesy Photo

Mary sits proudly with her three daughters Leonora, Angela and Vilma

for my mom. You just take for granted that they will always be there. You must treasure that time with them because it goes so fast and in a blink of an eye, they're gone."

Being an abuelita herself, Leonora finds herself following in her mother's footsteps, having a very special relationship with her own grandkids. "I love that my grandkids were able to make memories and stories of their own, of my mom. They were able to make luminarias for the Posadas and help cook with her before she passed. Those memories are so special to all of us."

Mary's faith in God was admirable. She passed this on to her children and grandchildren, encouraging them to always cling to God during difficult

times in their life. "My mom lost my dad when me and my sisters were very young. He was killed in a car accident, and she really leaned on her faith to get her through that time because she had us to raise. That is what taught us that if you don't have faith, you don't have anything. If you have God, you have hope," she notes.

This Christmas season, Leonora joined with her sisters Angela and Velma to make Grams famous tamales. "It's so much work but this is one way we are keeping my mom's memory alive. She isn't here physically, but she is in every conversation, she comes up during every holiday... she may not be with us, but she is here and we will never let her memory die."

## Mis Crismas Memories In Northern New Mexico

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

This story was written with help from Loveida Cisneros.

Mayo Archuleta is 93 years old and lives in Cerro, New Mexico. We asked her about her childhood during the Christmastime in northern New Mexico.

"My sweetest memories of Christmas are engrained only in my heart. I remember, very fondly how exciting it was living through Christmas when I was small," she says.

When asked about the memories of Mis Crismas, a tradition unique to northern New Mexico, she says, "I remember me and my brothers and sisters would

wake up very early. We would dress in layers and would be out the door very early to search for bags or sacks which we could fill up."

Mayo recalls there were no cars back then, so they would set out on foot. "We would be rushing from home to home with our sacks or pillowcases. When we would knock on doors, we would say in unison "Mis Crismas! Mis Crismas!!" When doors would open, goodies including hard candies, peanuts, and fruit would pour in "if we were lucky," Mayo says.

She recalls there was so much snow



Photo Courtesy Leroy Cisneros

Mayo sits enjoying a beverage on a beautiful New Mexico day

MIS CRISMAS cont'd on page 17



# INSPIRE At Freedom Center Church In Questa

By Contributing Writers  
at INSPIRE

It has been a long-time dream of Kristi Gonzales, owner and pastor of Questa's Freedom Center Church, to open an early childhood program. Pastor Gonzales is deeply committed to the well-being of the Questa community and has spent many years dedicated to the support and service of its youth and families.

It is difficult to find childcare for young children ages 0 to 4 in Questa. "Families are often left to balance care between family members, themselves, and others," says a community member. A recent community needs assessment of Taos County conducted by the Paso a Paso Network, only reinforced this reality — that Questa is a childcare desert. It was through persistence and collaborative efforts that Pastor Gonzales's dream would come to fruition.

Simultaneously, village leaders were working with Taylor Etchemendy, owner and director of INSPIRE Bilingual Early Learning Center in Taos, to support the



Photo by Jessica Trujillo

Teacher Savannah H. engages toddlers in light and shadow play using the light projector; children are developing their spacial awareness and visual perception

access and availability of early childhood education and care in Questa. INSPIRE is a 5-star bilingual program and currently has two facilities located in downtown Taos, supporting over 100 families daily.

INSPIRE had been awarded a Local



Photo by Savannah Herrera

Toddlers exploring INSPIRE's art studio using tempera paint and paintbrushes; children are using their fine motor skills which helps them develop dexterity and hand-eye coordination

Early Childhood Systems Building grant from the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department to open new facilities in both Questa and Arroyo Seco. This presented an opportunity for INSPIRE and Freedom Center Church to collaborate. Pastor Gonzales,

Taylor Etchemendy, and Jessica Trujillo met in late spring to discuss potential collaborations.

On December 11, INSPIRE at Freedom Questa opened its doors to serve six infants and 12 toddlers daily. The program is led by master teacher and director, Jessica Trujillo, and staffed by Questa community members. Their commitment and dedication to the children and families of Questa is inspiring. "We are thrilled to be able to provide this service for Questa and surrounding areas. We are dedicated to expanding services and could not have done any of it without the support of local leadership and the amazing women that worked tirelessly to open the facility," says Etchemendy. "Children are capable, curious, creative and joyful. They are our future. It is our responsibility to support our youngest citizens in their development and well-being."

To be added to the wait list or check for availability, please contact Amanda Escobar at [amanda89escobar@gmail.com](mailto:amanda89escobar@gmail.com).

**Denim & DIAMOND**  
Father  
Daughter Dance

**THURSDAY  
JANUARY 11  
6:00 - 8:30 p.m.**  
@ Alta Vista Music Room

Logos: LOR FOUNDATION, etc.

**NERF Battle!**  
SATURDAY  
PREK-5TH GRADE  
**2-4:30PM**  
**JAN 27** 2024  
@ ALTA VISTA GYM

**Fun for the whole Family!**  
Nerf guns and Ammo provided

Logos: LOR FOUNDATION, etc.





## Questa Creative Council's New Year Wishes

- that every creative child finds the instruction and materials to develop their talents!
- that every skilled craftsperson and artist in Questa has an opportunity to sell their work!
- that we are all able to Shop Local with more opportunities to find what we need/want!
- that local musicians continue to be celebrated, and paid!
- that Questa's traditional music is maintained and shared!
- that everyone in this special community works together to create visible, tidy, cared-for, attractiveness in our Village!
- that our youth are never at a loss for what to do, when artistic activities await!
- that Questa's historic diversity continues to be honored in our growing population!
- that we learn each other's many talents and skills and learn to respect what we each bring to the table as our post-mining future develops!
- that the Creative Council gains a headquarters/gallery space site in downtown!
- that Questa continues to grow its reputation as a creative, artistic place to live or visit, surrounded (and made up of) much beauty!



Courtesy Photo

Diane deFremery and Mary Jo Kelly at the first Questa Quick-Draw event this past summer



Photo by E. Wilde

Raffle at the community holiday party at Sala



Courtesy Photo

Monique Belitz, one of the artists on the Questa Art Tour



Courtesy Photo

Flavio Cisneros, left, shares old family letters at the Gathering Memory event at the VFW, with Estévan Rael-Galvez, right



Photo by

Wild Rivers Paint-Out artist at work

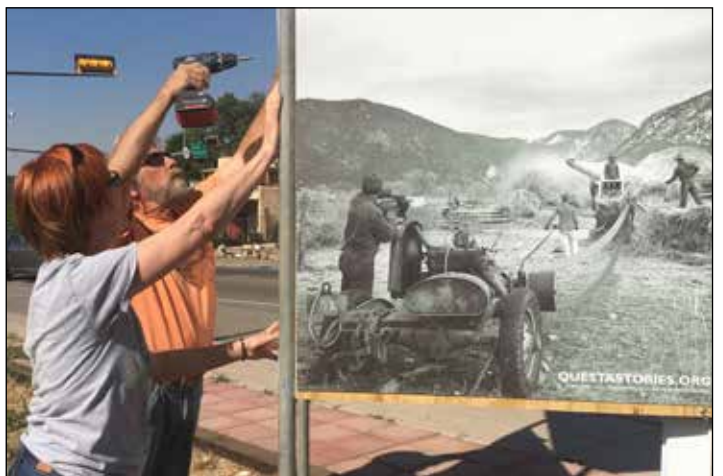


Photo by P. Trigg

QCC volunteers tending to the History Trail kiosk

## Art Kits for Kids Distribution By The Questa Creative Council

By QUESTA CREATIVE COUNCIL

It was a fabulous holiday art material drive. Thanks to your donations, the Questa Creative Council was able to give out over \$1,600 worth of fun, FREE creative art materials to local youth on December 18 through 21. Thanks also

goes out to the Questa Public Library for providing the space and distributing the goodies. Art materials included acrylic paint sets, canvases, brushes, watercolor sets, watercolor paper, sketchbooks, oil pastels, crayons, and sidewalk chalk. Again, thank you for helping us make this a colorful holiday season.



Courtesy Photo

Kids create on Fridays at the Questa Library



# Documentary On Southern Colorado And Northern New Mexico Historic Families

By STAFF WRITERS

The movie "A Story to Tell," produced by Down to Earth Media, LLC, is about Esperanza "Hope" Lobato-Gallegos, who has been researching her family's genealogy for a number of years, specifically focusing on the names of her paternal and maternal grandparents, Gallegos and Lobato, respectively.

Through her research, she discovered that on July 10, 1751, the King of Spain

granted to Captain Juan Jose Lobato, son of Bartolome Lobato, possession of Las Trampas Land Grant.

The governor of New Mexico approved the Land Grant for twelve families. Hope's great-great-grandfather Pedro Lobato and his three sons voted in the first territorial election in 1861. He was a legislator during the establishment of Colorado in 1865 and 1866. Pedro also served on the Union ticket in the House of Representatives.

Juan Bautista Lobato established the first Pony Express route from southwestern Colorado to Denver.

The communities depicted in the film are in the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico.

Esperanza, great-great-granddaughter of Pedro Antonio Lobato and Concepcion DeHerrera, received the First Family Certificate of Recognition, signed by Colorado Governor Bill Owens, on September 30, 2003.

ens, on September 30, 2003.

The film addresses the past, present, and future of these Spanish-speaking communities. "Being granted and entrusted with these stories for the purpose of this documentary was an honor and a blessing," Father Sergio Robles of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Conejos, Colorado says. He continues, "if we lose our traditions, we lose our identity."

The movie trailer can be purchased by visiting [downtoearthmedia.org](http://downtoearthmedia.org).

## Local Artist Omjaya: Insights On Northern New Mexico And Its Influences On His Work

*Interview was conducted by Kritical Ear, who spoke with artist Omjaya*

**The land of enchantment attracts people on the spiritual path. What led you here to Questa?**

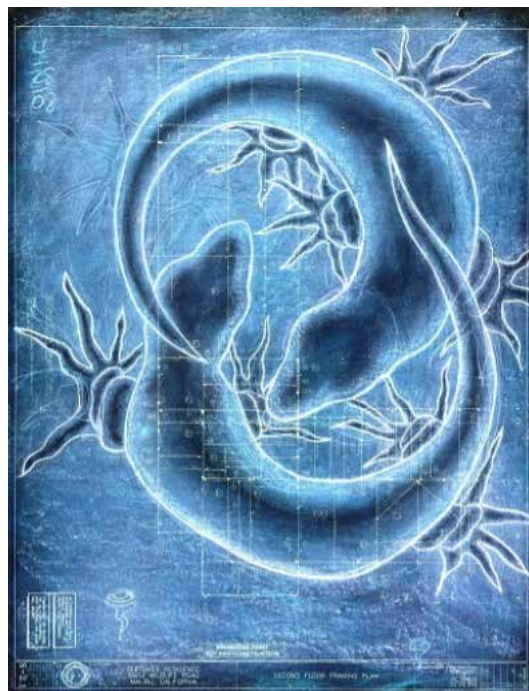
The wisdom teachers, the medicine givers, and the merging of the Indian and Spanish traditions. There is an energy here that is not seen but felt, and it's both humbling and inspirational.

**Now that you are in your 60s, you've changed your name again.**

Yes, I have. Growing up is the point of life, isn't it? It's not easy cultivating one's maturity and rising into higher forms of consciousness. It requires teaching and effort. Omjaya is who I am striving to become, maybe that's why I came to Taos. A mentor said to me, "Who we are now is what we have been, and who we will be is what we do now." This is a great proverb.

**A multi-disciplinary artist, where do you find your influences and inspiration?**

Inspired by cave drawings and sand mandalas, I work with charcoal and pastels on paper, my fingers directly touching, blending, and creating bold lines that blend into space. This medium



*Courtesy photo*

Art by Omjaya

is very sensual and satisfying to me, The Dance-by Omjaya Maxwell is a method I use to begin and finish a composition in one session. As an artist I seek inspiration from nature and the cosmic world around us. A simple line — visual or musical — can alter the mind; a shape or sound can satisfy desire. Minimal and complete, this work encourages one to remember the sacredness of love, and

is abstract enough to invoke a dream. We are surrounded by so much beauty and potential that is overlooked with the mind of struggle and chaos. It is a constant challenge to be in the state of love, gratitude, and compassion. That being known, the work I create is from a spiritual intention and a focused discipline. The ease at which this work flows from thought to creation is a testimony of a

universal language, one that is all-knowing and rooted in sacred wisdom.

**Omjaya, you were born and came from the water's edge of California. How has living in northern New Mexico influenced you?**

I see the same sun and the same moon. People are similar, they are talking of the potential of spirit life, or they are hiding behind an illusion that puts them in fear. The land of New Mexico is enchanting, romantic, and naturally mysterious. I've been told that the desert valley near our home is known as the "Valley of the Whales." Yettis, UFOs, the Pueblo and the indigenous people who show us great wisdom: it's all here if you seek it. I find that very influential, don't you? Yes, I do.

**OPENING RECEPTION:**

Saturday, January 6, 1 p.m.

**SHOW DATES:**

January thru February

**LOCATION:**

OmniHum Gallery  
246 Ledoux St., Taos NM

All are welcome.

For more information about the artist, visit [omjayamusic.com](http://omjayamusic.com).

**Sustain your Community** ADVERTISING HERE! [Sales-1@QuestaNews.com](mailto:Sales-1@QuestaNews.com) for Rates!



# Questa High School Graduate Becomes Statewide Self-Advocate For People Living With Disabilities

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Laurel Deans is a 2003 Questa High School graduate. Her family moved to Questa from Tucson, Arizona when she was in grade school. “My mom homeschooled me when we first got to Questa, but I decided I wanted to make friends, so she put me in school during my high school year,” she recalls.

Laurel has autism, but says she doesn't view it as a disability, rather, her superpower. “I am just like everyone else. I might talk differently or have a different perception of the world than others, but when you get to know me, you will find we are more similar than not. People don't see my disability, they see me as a person first and that's how it should be,” she says.

After graduating, she held several jobs in the northern Taos County area, including the coffee shop in Questa, the Questa Deli, and Timbers. She also attended UNM-Taos recreationally to



Courtesy Photo

Laurel stands proudly after a Special Olympics meet, displaying her 1st place medal for the swimming category in 2022

learn sign language, guitar, and Flamenco. Deans is fluent in sign language, and she prides herself in being able to teach others how to communicate with individuals who are hearing impaired.

Deans eventually moved to Albuquerque where she got involved with

various advocacy groups. “I have been involved with various organizations. I served on the board for the Development Disabilities Council with the Governor, I was on the board for Elevate the Spectrum, and I currently serve on the board of directors for the ARC of New Mexico. I am also a Special Olympics athlete.”

Living alone and independently in Albuquerque, Laurel shares that she does need some assistance with things like buying groceries. During the COVID-19 pandemic, her assisted living staff dwindled, which forced her to reconsider living alone in Albuquerque. “My mom told me I should move in with her in Santa Fe, so I decided during the pandemic, that was a good idea,” she shares.

When asked why she is so dedicated to being a self-advocate for individuals with disabilities, she says that while her experiences have been mostly good, her friends' experiences have not. “I have seen a lot of people be treated poorly be-

cause of their disabilities and I realized the strongest tool we have is our voice. I just want to encourage people to use their voice, because everyone deserves to be treated with dignity.”

Laurel shares that she eventually wants to get back to Albuquerque and start living independently again. “When I was there, I was in the Nutcracker on the Cracker on the Rocks play for three years. I also had so many friends there, and I just like it more than Santa Fe.”

While she has been in Santa Fe, Laurel has started volunteering at the local stables, working with horses. “Horses help my anxiety, so I love going out to spend time with them,” she says. Her two favorite horses' names are Mouse and Ben. She has also been working with preschool children at her mom's school. “I really enjoy working with the kid-dos. They call me Yoyo or Lolo because they can't pronounce my name,” she shares jokingly.

TAKING AIM cont'd from page 13

The GOSAFE Act aims to regulate the parts involved in creating a gas-operated firearm — the pistons and ports designed to harness and vent a firearm's ignition gas and increase the rate of fire.

The GOSAFE Act also lists exemptions to the proposed prohibitions, stated as “the importation or manufacture by or for, sale or transfer to, or possession by or under the authority of, the United States or any department or agency thereof or a state or tribe, or a department, agency, or political subdivision thereof.”

There is also a listed exemption in direct relation to the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, stated as “the importation or manufacture for, sale or transfer to, or possession by, a licensee under Title I of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 for purposes of establishing and maintaining an on-site physical security protection system and security organization required by federal law, or the transfer to, or possession by, a contractor of such a licensee on-site for such purposes or off-site for

purposes of licensee-authorized training or transportation of nuclear materials.”

The final, general exemption includes legal gas-operated firearms that were in circulation prior to enactment of the GOSAFE Act.

The GOSAFE also lists specific exemptions for firearms of particular characteristics, including:

“A rifle that is a single-shot rifle; is a breech loading rifle with a capacity not to exceed two rounds of ammunition; is a muzzle-loading rifle or smooth bore shoulder-fired firearm; uses a bolt action, lever action, or pump action to cycle the action of the rifle; or has a permanently fixed magazine with a capacity not to exceed ten rounds of ammunition that cannot be converted or changed to accept more than ten rounds of ammunition.”

“A shotgun that is a single-shot shotgun; is a breech loading shotgun with a capacity not to exceed two rounds of ammunition; is a muzzle-loading shotgun; uses a bolt action, lever action, or pump action to cycle the action of the shotgun; is a semi-automatic or auto-loading shotgun; or has a permanently fixed

magazine with a capacity not to exceed ten rounds of ammunition that cannot be converted or changed to accept more than ten rounds of ammunition.”

“A handgun that is a single-shot handgun; is a breech loading handgun with a capacity not to exceed two rounds of ammunition; is a muzzle-loading or smooth bore handgun; uses a bolt action to cycle the action of the handgun; is a single or double action revolver; is a single or double action semi-automatic handgun that uses recoil to cycle the action of the handgun; or has a permanently fixed magazine with a capacity not to exceed fifteen rounds of ammunition that cannot be converted or changed to accept more than fifteen rounds of ammunition.”

The GOSAFE Act is being described by Senator Heinrich as well as his partisan colleagues as “common sense gun regulation,” that protects traditional firearms. The bill currently awaits a review by the U.S. Senate Finance Committee.

You can contact Senator Heinrich at <https://www.heinrich.senate.gov/contact>.



## Congratulations to All-District Fall Sports Athletes in Questa

### SOCCER:

2nd team goalkeeper: Ricardo Leon  
1st team defender: Isaac Ortega  
1st team midfielders: Jacob Vallejos  
2nd team striker/forward: Frank Palmero  
Honorable Mention: Aliyah Santistevan

### FOOTBALL

Carlos Ortega

### VOLLEYBALL

1st team: Alyana Leon  
1st team: Jocelyne Ortega  
1st team: Delilah Rael  
Honorable mention: Alianna Gonzalez  
Honorable mention: Ashlynn Rael

FOR MORE NEWS, PHOTOS & EVENT INFO VISIT [QUESTANEWS.COM](http://QUESTANEWS.COM)





## Questa Bridge Falling Down

By Contributing Writer  
JOHN WALSH

Questa Middle School science class sponsored a popsicle stick bridge-build- ing competition between the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade science classes. The

objective of the competition was to see which team of students could build the strongest bridge to span a one-foot gorge. The rules of the competition were that it could only be built of popsicle sticks and Elmer's School Glue.

Each class was divided into two-per- son teams. Students got to choose their teammate. Each team was initially given 50 popsicle sticks and a bottle of Elmer's glue. We quickly found out that 50 sticks would only create a skeleton structure. Eventually the students used 6,000 sticks, between 35 teams. They ran through 13 bottles of glue plus a quart- size refill bottle.

Part of the project was to draw out a template that they would try to create. Students then started gluing sticks together, which brought on the first

challenge. If you don't know how slow Elmer's School Glue dries, I know some students who will advise you. It is very slow. Putting together elaborate bridges in a fixed amount of time caused multi- ple adjustments in design.

The next challenge was to figure out which way a popsicle stick needs to lay to maximize its strength. They learned that laying a stick flat was easy to break, while standing on its side gave it much more strength. We studied some truss designs and how the triangle shape was used because of its strength of design. Adding vertical sticks to each trian- gle really beefs them up. After several hours of intense concentration and a weekend drying time, the day to break bridges arrived.

Monday morning the scene was set.

Two tables were placed a foot apart and the first bridge was placed across the gap. A small chain was looped through the bridge, suspending a bucket under- neath. Water bottles were then added one by one to the bucket and no one knew when the critical compression weight would collapse the bridge.

We ended up having to go to a jani- tor-size bucket that would accommodate 30 water bottles plus a 1-liter water bot- tle. This weight only broke a few of the lighter bridges. Eventually we had to add a box on top with multiple science books to break the heavy-duty bridges.

Each class ended up with a class survivor, which will be entered into the finals. We are waiting for one of the teachers to bring in 80 lbs. of barbells for the finals.



**WHOSE  
BRIDGE  
WILL  
PREVAIL?**

## Sangre de Cristo Valley Market Brings Food Security To Northern Taos County

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

After the Questa Market shuttered its doors eight months ago, the Questa Su- permarket has reopened with a full make- over, including a rebrand to its name, the Sangre de Cristo Valley Market. Business owner and grandson of the original owners Dominick Apodoca says his first month has exceeded expectations.

While the opening day was pushed back from the original November 11 date,

November 29 was met with much antic- ipation. On that morning, the parking lot was packed with cars full of people waiting to see the results of the renova- tion. Community members were greeted with coffee and Frito pies.

Twelve miles from De Market Food Store in Red River, Twenty-four miles from Smith's Grocery in Taos and 39 miles from the San Luis Peoples Market in Colorado, the SDC Valley Market

is essential to food security for people throughout northern Taos County. While new owner Apodoca's main supplier at this time is Affiliated Foods Inc. out of Amarillo, Texas, he has ambitions to deal with local farmers and cattle grazers to support our local economy.

Ironically, food insecurity often plagues areas of the country that are most important to the food industry as a whole. Many rural villages and towns

lack a variety of food retailers, resulting in food deserts. Data from the U. S. Depart- ment of Agriculture reports an estimated 12 percent of American households with food insecurity in 2022, an increase from 10 percent in 2020. Food deserts repre- sent a paradoxical flaw of modernity, to be simultaneously surrounded by excess while lacking basic necessities. Local food sources in the form of farms and retail markets are critical for food security.



# Red River Snags #1 Ski Town Title For Second Year

By STAFF WRITERS

Red River has been named the best ski town in North America for a second year.

"We are thrilled to be named the Best Ski Town in North America for the second time," exclaimed Director of the Office of Economic Development and Tourism Max Khudiakov. "This recognition further solidifies Red River's standing as a premier winter sports destination. Our town offers breathtaking slopes, top-notch amenities, and unparalleled hospitality that ensures visitors have an unforgettable time."

Mayor Linda Calhoun shared her appreciation for the dedication and hard work of the town's residents in receiving this prestigious recognition. "Our community takes immense pride in creating an environment that exceeds visitors' expectations, and being named the best ski town in North America by USA Today reiterates the tremendous ef-

forts made by everyone involved," stated Mayor Calhoun. "We invite skiers and snowboarders from around the globe to come and experience the magic of Red River and be a part of our special winter traditions."

In an effort to continue to improve visitor experience, the Red River Ski Area (RRSA) is working on upgrades to its infrastructure. Carson National Forest issued a press release, requesting public comment on their plan to replace the Copper Chairlift. The public comment period was for the month of December, 2023. The RRSA operates on a special use permit from the Carson National Forest, requiring all construction, reconstruction, decommissioning, and improvements to be reviewed for environmental impact to the land.

In RRSA's proposal, the intent is to replace the Copper Chairlift seating with a 3-seater chairlift, believing this will modernize and improve the experience for winter sports activities and other



Photo by E. Wilde

View of the town of Red River from the Red River Recreation Area's Ski Lift in summer

intensively managed outdoor recreation opportunities for large numbers of national and international visitors. This upgrade would also modernize and im-

prove the consistency with the existing lift network within RRSA.

A timeline for the project upgrade at RRSA has not yet been specified.

## Red River Brewing Company & Distillery Opens Second Location



Courtesy Photo

Michael and Sharon Calhoun cut the ribbon on the new location, surrounded by friends, family, and employees

By STAFF WRITERS

Red River Brewing Company & Distillery announced the grand opening of the Red River Distillery Tasting Room, located at 619 E. Main Street in Red River. The announcement came via press release and social media posts on December 16.

"We've created a cozy and inviting space where customers can sample our award-winning lineup of craft spirits

made right here in Red River, including vodka, gin, whiskey, rum, bourbon, rye whiskey and sotol," stated Sharon Calhoun, owner and operations manager at Red River Brewing Company & Distillery.

Customers can sample any of the spirits made at the distillery on Main Street in Red River, additionally they can purchase bottles of their favorites to take home or give as gifts for their friends and



Courtesy Photo

Newly renovated space at 619 E. Main Street now hosts the Red River Distillery Tasting Room

family. "We are proud to open our tasting room and invite everyone to come and taste our products. We hope to provide a memorable and enjoyable experience for our customers and become a destination for locals and tourists alike," Sharon says.

Red River Distillery's master distiller Gavin Whealy says he is thrilled to share his passion for craft spirits with the community. "We're one of the highest

elevation distilleries in the world. The low atmospheric pressure up here means we distill at relatively low temperatures, which makes for very smooth and mellow flavor profiles. Plus, as everyone knows, the Red River water we use is really, really good."

The tasting room will be open every day from 1 to 8 p.m. and will offer craft cocktails, a bottle shop, and gifts.



# Red River Reports Strong Business Growth In 2023

By STAFF WRITERS

The Town of Red River Office of Economic Development & Tourism announced in a press release, a surge in business growth in 2023, with several new businesses opening shop toward the end of 2023.

One of the highlights of this growth is the opening of the **Red River Brewing Company & Distillery's Tasting Room** and Production Facility #2. In the words of the brewery's representative, "we are excited to open our doors to the Red River community with our new Tasting Room and Production Facility. The support we received from the economic development programs has been invaluable in realizing our growth plans, and we are eager to share our craft beers and spirits with both locals and visitors."

Another notable addition to Red River is **Snarky Malarkey's - Gifts Gone Amiss**. This unique retail store offers a wide selection of "inappropriate" gifts, catering to those with a sense of humor that leans towards the unconventional. "We are thrilled to bring our one-of-a-kind store to Red River," said the owners. "Our aim is to provide a fun and quirky shopping experience for locals and tourists alike, and we can't wait to see the community's reaction to our unique product offering."

The collaboration between Cimarron-based **Blu Dragonfly Brewing Company** and **Madam's Lounge and Theatre** gave birth to a new taproom in town. The representatives of **Blu Dragonfly Brewing Company** expressed their excitement, stating, "partnering

with **Madam's Lounge and Theatre** to create this new taproom has been a fantastic opportunity for us to expand our reach into Red River. We look forward to serving our specially crafted beers to all the beer enthusiasts in and around the area."

Lastly, **T-Bucks Restaurant** has reopened under new ownership, boasting a revamped menu that includes freshly made donuts and mouthwatering breakfast options. The owners of the restaurant expressed their enthusiasm, saying, "we're thrilled to take the reins of this beloved establishment and offer the community delicious breakfast options that will start their day off right. Our donuts are a special treat that we think everyone will enjoy."

According to the release, the Town of Red River Office of Economic Development & Tourism expressed pride, welcoming these businesses while "celebrating their contribution to the town's prosperity." The release goes on to say, "with increasing opportunities for locals and visitors alike, Red River is poised for growth and continued success heading into the new year."



MIS CRISMAS cont'd from page 10

and temperatures were frigid, but that never stopped them from Mis Crisman adventures. "Sometimes, if we went to a relative's home, they would invite us in for warm cider or hot cocoa. I love walnuts and I can remember trading my candy for walnuts," she says.

Mayo says she and her siblings didn't get store-bought gifts, but knowing the family could be together, and the kids could ask for goodies on Christmas morning was such a treat.

When asked about her thoughts about Christmas today, she says "so many people get caught up in gifts and the hustle and bustle to make Christmas perfect, they forget what is important. Being together with your loved ones is a gift and that is what's important. Sometimes you can share a meal, not even a fancy meal, just a meal that is shared in love. That's a blessing for others and for yourself."

When asked if there was anything else she felt was important to share, she says "never let go of your faith and always keep your daily prayers."

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

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# Questa del Rio News

**Editor's Choice**



**APRIL**  
BACK-TO-BACK  
STATE CHAMPS!



**AUGUST**  
GONZALES  
FAMILY  
RODEO LEGACY  
CONTINUES



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**JUNE**  
BIKER GANG  
VIOLENCE  
OVERTAKES 41<sup>ST</sup>  
ANNUAL MEMORIAL  
DAY BIKER RALLY



**MARCH**  
AGUA ES VIDA,  
AND NORTEÑOS  
ARE WILLING  
TO FIGHT  
FOR IT





# Eight Best Covers of 2023



**JANUARY**  
QUESTEÑO  
JARED MARTINEZ  
PUTTING PEOPLE  
BACK ON THE  
MOON: PART 1



**JULY**  
REVIVAL OF  
THE FIESTA  
DE SAN ANTONIO  
UNITES  
NORTEÑOS

RE-READ ANY STORY ONLINE AT [QUESTANEWS.COM](http://QUESTANEWS.COM)



**MAY**  
QUESTA  
FEATURED  
IN NEW YORK  
TIMES



**NOVEMBER**  
A VETERAN'S  
PURPLE  
HEART, GAINED  
IN SACRIFICE AND  
GIVEN IN LOVE





By Toner Mitchell

## The Land Of Enchantment Legacy Fund, Round Two

Happy new year, and welcome to another conservation funding season! On January 16, our elected representatives will begin discussing bills dealing with education, housing, energy, and other important issues. It's a short session this year, which means legislators will focus on budgetary matters — in other words, how our government will spend our money. As in recent years, New Mexico is blessed with a budget surplus from

significant oil and gas revenue.

In last year's session, the legislature united around the idea of investing in land and water conservation, creating the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund, with an initial investment of \$100 million for existing stewardship programs. These programs range across a number of state agencies, including the New Mexico environment department, the agriculture department, game and fish, energy, minerals, and natural resources, as well as the economic development department's outdoor recreation division. In addition to funding projects directly, the Legacy Fund would provide non-federal matching dollars required by certain federal programs that can boost conservation investment significantly.

In a way, Questa helped pave the way for the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund. The village's commitment to restoring the Red River not only showed the power of locally driven initiatives, but the importance of non-federal funding sources to make projects more expansive and durable. The department of game and fish and the environment department were the main agencies

behind Questa's restoration projects; thanks to having leveraged federal conservation dollars. These agencies were able to build projects several times as large as what local stakeholders had originally planned.

But Questa isn't the only town seeking to improve its local fishing or diversify its recreation and agriculture economy. In fact, there are many towns and conservation-minded entities that would be happy to duplicate Questa's success. One hundred million dollars should be enough funding to meet such a demand. Amazingly, it's not.

Half of the 2023 Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund consists of expendable money going straight to conservation projects. We can imagine a day when this funding will be entirely spent. The remaining portion of the Legacy Fund is a trust fund, wherein a \$50 million corpus accrues interest that will be diverted every year to worthwhile projects. Once the expendable portion of the fund is gone, the trust fund portion will be too paltry to be able to keep up with demand.

That is, unless the corpus amount is increased in the 2024 legislature. A

group of stakeholder advocates and legislative leaders are mounting a movement to increase the interest-yielding corpus of the Legacy Fund — \$350 million is a reasonable target — and it's in all of our interest to support their efforts.

A larger fund would continue to enable tribal communities, acequias, soil and water districts, and community groups to apply for funds to implement projects enhancing water and land resources. The River Stewardship Program, which has funded restoration of the Red and Cimarron Rivers, streams in the Jemez and Gila regions, will hopefully be applied to the Rio Chama basin and more arid regions where wildlife would benefit enormously from revived riparian habitats.

Particularly in the wake of the tragic Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon wildfire, it's important to have adequate funding to address the present and future challenges presented by drought, fire, and flood. Also, it's important to help children get outdoors, as the Outdoor Equity program has been able to accomplish across New Mexico, creating a legacy of natural resource stewardship for the next generation.

## New Outdoor Recreation In Questa?

By Contributing Writer  
LOREN BELL  
Director, Enchanted Circle  
Trails Association

The Questa Economic Development Fund invites all area residents and interested parties to a public meeting on January 24 at 6 p.m. at the Questa Public Library. We are exploring the potential for community trails in and around the Largo Canyon area, southeast of the Village of Questa, as well as the development of additional climbing areas in Red River Canyon. We would like further community input to help shape this planning process as we explore our outdoor economy's untapped potential.

As part of a long-term vision for revitalizing Questa's economy, the QEDF's Recreation Opportunity Report identified proposals for developing new recreation options in the region. These enhancements will provide residents with better access to the many physical, mental, and spiritual benefits the great outdoors provides.

Increased outdoor recreation will bring more patrons to our area and businesses, and will also encourage new recreation-oriented entrepreneurial enterprises. Industries looking to start businesses in

new communities often cite outdoor recreation as a key factor in their decision.

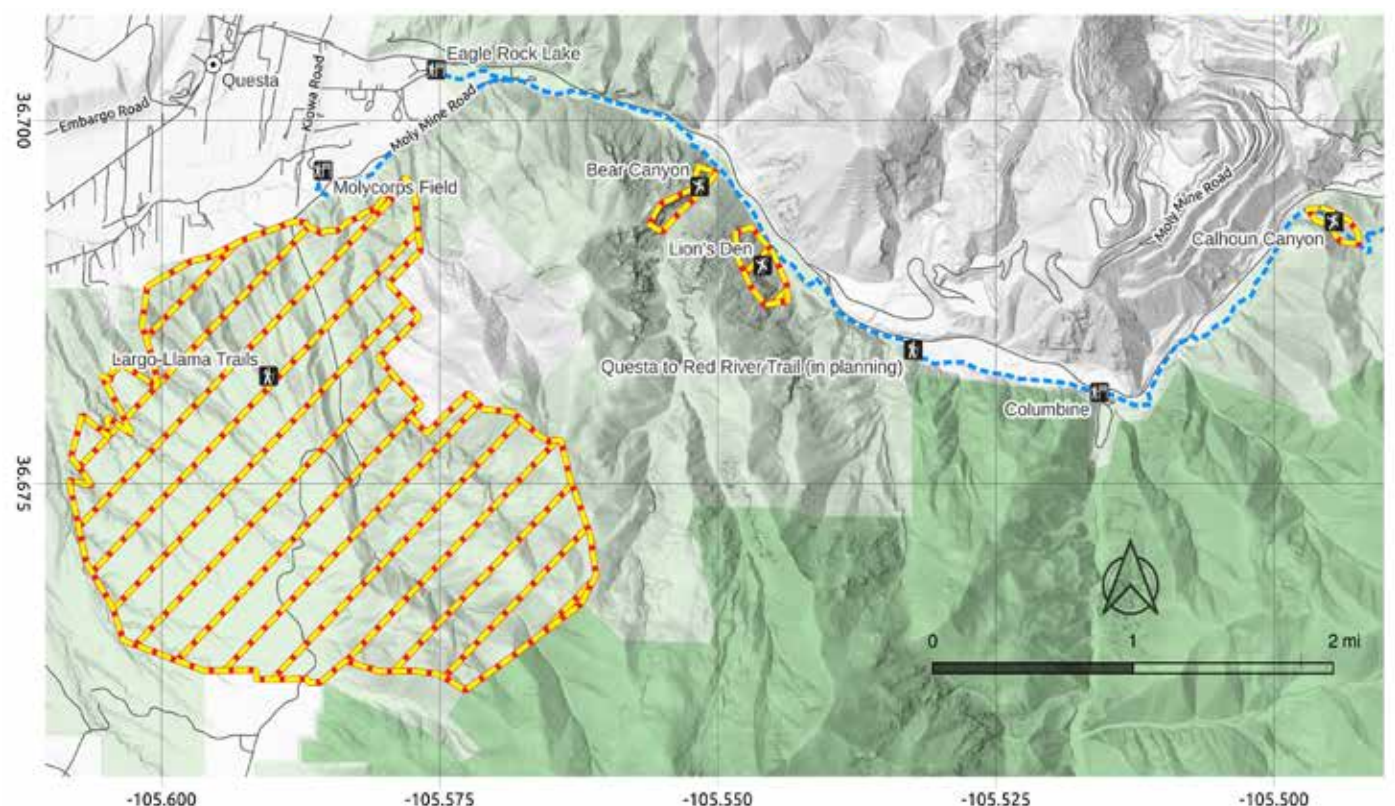
In December of 2023, the QEDF was awarded a Trails Plus Grant from the New Mexico Economic Development Department for \$28,050 to explore the feasibility of two of the Tier 1 recommendations

from the Questa Recreation Opportunity Report. The grant includes the public meeting and incorporating the public comments into the conceptual plans for mapping these recreational opportunities.

The first is a network of multi-use, trails for all abilities in the Largo Canyon

area. This area of the Carson National Forest provides undulating terrain and access to vistas overlooking Questa and is perfect for a trail network that will appeal

RECREATION cont'd on next page







## BIRD IS THE WORD

By Bryce Flanagan

### The Beautiful, Mischievous, And Sacred Peacock

Peafowl hardly seem to be a fit for the harsh climate of New Mexico. Whereas native birds have adapted to desert conditions with camouflage and smaller frames to better fit into crevices and burrows, peacocks exhibit 200 ornate, glittering feathers and can weigh up to 13 pounds with a 6-foot long “train,” the tail feathers they drag behind them. Despite these hindrances, peafowl have thrived in New Mexico even as native species decline. Their presence here, so far removed from their native India, is a testament to both their temerity and their captivating beauty.

I spoke with Alicia, a zookeeper at the Albuquerque BioPark Zoo, about how peafowl came to New Mexico in the first place. While there isn't a dearth of records regarding the first peafowl colony, we know this much: In the 1880s, the eccentric founder of Arcadia, Elias J. “Lucky” Baldwin brought some 50 of the birds back from his trip to India and let them roam his 8,000-acre ranch. The peafowl proved to be useful to ranch operations, eating snakes and snails and letting out their piercing alarm call at the sight of a predator. By 1947, the ranch had been mostly sold off and the peafowl no longer had the expansive area they once roamed, leading them to spread out to the surrounding community. No exact record of the peafowl population in New Mexico exists, but it's thought that some peacocks, descendants from Baldwin's original colony, were taken west as pets and escaped their enclosures, as many people assumed peafowl were incapable of flight. Alicia explained part of the reason for their survival and propagation is their omnivorous diet and their “eat first, ask if it tastes good later” approach to food. “They're very similar to chickens in that respect,” and much like chickens, you can see their dinosaur ancestry when they're on the hunt for insects.

The peafowl at the BioPark were never purchased: zoo staff simply began

feeding them and setting aside space for them to roost and seek shelter during the cold and that became a de facto habitat for them. The peafowl spend their days dust bathing, sunbathing or wooing a mate (peacocks form harems of up to five peahens during mating season). Despite being an invasive species, peafowl aren't especially harmful to local ecosystems since they largely stay near heavily populated areas. But they aren't without their detractors — peacocks can be aggressively territorial and have been known to chase after whoever unknowingly crosses into their turf. They eat gardens, peck at car fenders, and leave behind droppings befitting their large size. The biggest complaint is their mating call, a high-pitched screech that can be heard from blocks away.

In my conversation with Alicia I noted that typically the more colorful and sexually dimorphic a species of bird is the harder time they have surviving, but the opposite is true in the case of peafowl. She brought up the theory of “runaway selection,” a sexual selection mechanism proposed by Ronald Fisher in the 1900s to explain extreme male ornamentation through persistent, intentional female choice. Seemingly maladaptive traits, like a peacock's train of tail feathers, are the result of female preference overriding natural selection,

and within a few generations this preference would lead to runaway selection through positive feedback, exponentially increasing the occurrences of the trait.

I also had the chance to speak with a caretaker at the Taos Ashram about our local peafowl population and their spiritual significance. Peacocks have been a staple of spiritual and religious beliefs for centuries: they are mentioned as denizens of the Garden of Eden, they were symbols of immortality during Roman times as people noticed their feathers never lost their luster, and they feature heavily in the Hindu pantheon, with the god Ganesh using a peacock as his steed. The Hanuman devotees see peafowl as the playful form of the god Krishna and take pride in the care they give to them. They get all the cat food and oyster shells they can eat and have a large enclosure that keeps them warm at night and safe from local predators like foxes and weasels. The ashram has cared for peafowl for about ten years, and the peafowl in turn are more domestic than most. They freely wander into the kitchen or temple if it suits them and even allow themselves to be herded (sometimes). Peafowl in captivity have been known to live up to 50 years, so with some luck the Taos peacocks will be around for decades more.

## NM Forest Service Launches Statewide Recreation Pass

By STAFF WRITERS

In early December, the New Mexico Forest Service launched a new recreational pass, the Enchantment Pass, specifically for select day sites on national forest land in New Mexico, to include Carson National Forest.

The pass will be accepted at designated sites and areas, such as day-use sites, parking areas, picnic sites and trailheads on the Carson, Cibola, Gila, Lincoln, and Santa Fe national forests. A full list of sites across the state is available online.

According to the release, revenue generated from the Enchantment Pass will be reinvested into local forest recreation sites in the form of trash pickups, septic and toilet pumping, painting, cleaning, addressing the backlog of deferred maintenance, conducting patrols, maintaining highly used trails and campsites, and more.

The Enchantment Pass adds to a number of existing options for accessing select day-use recreation fee area sites across New Mexico. Most simply, visitors can usually pay by cash or check on

site, but there are many other pass types available for purchase including:

America the Beautiful Pass: An \$80 annual pass that gives holders access to select national forest sites and National Parks across the nation.

Senior Passes: With the same benefits as the American the Beautiful Pass, options include an annual \$20 pass or a lifetime \$80 pass.

**Additionally, there are also free passes for:**

- People with a permanent disability

- Fourth-graders
- Volunteers
- Active military, dependents, veterans, and Gold Star Family members

The Enchantment Pass and select other passes are currently available at the supervisor's office in Taos and the Canjilon, Camino Real, and Questa ranger stations. It is always recommended to call ahead to make sure passes are in stock. Locations, hours, and contact information are available online at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/contactus/carson/about-forest/contactus>.

RECREATION cont'd from previous page

to hikers, runners, equestrians, mountain bikers, and casual walkers

This area is located near Molycorp Field, accessed via South Kiowa Road, off NM-Hwy 38. Molycorp Field is proposed as the trailhead for the Largo Canyon Trails. The vision is to make this

area a community recreation hub with ample parking for trail users and outdoor enthusiasts.

The second Tier 1 opportunity is to expand rock climbing options in Red River Canyon. This region is already home to world-class climbing, however, most of the routes cater to highly skilled climbers and lack appeal for a beginning to intermediate audience. By expanding the route

options for a broader range of skill levels, more climbers will be attracted to Questa, stay longer, and spend more money in our community.

We are looking for community feedback on these two projects, and we want to hear your ideas for these developments, and to understand any potential concerns or impacts that we can work to mitigate during the planning process. We look

forward to brainstorming with you on how to most effectively enhance Questa's economy through sustainable outdoor recreation while ensuring maximum benefit for area residents.

For more information about these projects and the public meeting, contact QEDF Director Lynn Skall, at [lynn@questaedf.com](mailto:lynn@questaedf.com) or leave a message at (575) 586-2149.



**BODY  
MIND  
SPIRIT**



By **BARBARA TRACY**

## A Prayer for the New Year

I remember many years ago, while on the farm with my grandparents, there was a devastating tornado that was so dark and so loud, I thought it was the end of the world. I was quite young at the time and can remember bits and pieces of the event: I remember our grandmother ushering everybody into the root cellar where we sat on the dirt floor and huddled up together. It seemed to last for an eternity, but eventually we came

out of the root cellar. The farmhouse was still standing, some trees had been uprooted, and a couple of out-buildings were decimated. There was a deep muddy trench running across the pasture and yet the barn was still standing. When we surfaced and went inside the house, our grandfather began to gather shovels and other tools together. He put them in his car and set out to see who he could help. He was gone for the entire rest of the day and into the night. When he came home, he was exhausted, and it was clear that he had been crying. As the story was relayed to me in later years, our grandfather had come across some very sad situations and did his best to help, but in some cases it was hopeless.

I remember our uncle Francis coming back from the war, World War II, that is. The first time I saw him after his return I could hardly recognize him. He was so thin and extremely quiet. It was explained to me that he was suffering from shell-shock, as they called it in those days. I

do know that he did what he felt was the right thing, but I will say that he paid dearly for the rest of his life for what he felt was his duty.

These two stories bring to mind thoughts about what is really important in this life. What comes to mind in this moment is Kindness, Love, Compassion, Understanding, Courage, Patience and working together for the good of the whole. I suppose this all comes about because of the absolute senseless cruelty and death toll that happens during war. How do we as world citizens help to end these wars? One way is through prayer. We have all witnessed that killing each other is not a path to peace.

### A Prayer for the New Year

I pray to have the strength and the kindness that my grandfather had in a time of great need.

I pray that we the people of this great planet Earth awaken and remember we are one family called humanity, on one

earth. And that we have the wisdom to lay down all weapons of destruction of any kind, turn around, and walk away.

I pray that all people in every country will have an honest government. A government that is dedicated to the people and the good of each nation. That all those who are greedy and power hungry are relieved of office, no longer using the people to line their pockets.

I pray that the many, many children that have been used and abused be free from their captors and find peace in this world.

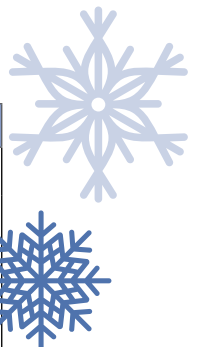
I pray for a world where one feels safe to speak their truth without fear of repercussion from any government, neighbor, or friend.

I pray in this coming year that the world leaders have great awakenings of the heart and mind that lead to dedication to Universal peace and love.

May we all find that deep connection of one soul to another.

## SENIOR MENU: JANUARY 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>1</b> <b>Closed</b>	<b>2</b> Sloppy Joes, Potato Wedges, Sliced Tomato, Jalapenos, Broccoli, Banana	<b>3</b> Shredded Chicken & Bean Burrito, Calabacitas, Green Chile, Sour Cream, Peanut Butter Cookie	<b>4</b> Frito Pie, Mixed Vegetables, Carrot Raisin Salad, Tropical Fruit	<b>5</b> Salisbury Steak, Low Sodium Gravy, Mashed Potato, Green Beans, Wheat Bread w/ Margarine, Mixed Fruit
<b>8</b> Beef Stroganoff, Penne Pasta, Chateau Vegetables, WW Bread w/ Margarine, Low Fat Vanilla Pudding	<b>9</b> Chicken Breast w/ Low Sodium Gravy, Scalloped Potato, Green Beans, Wheat Bread w/ Margarine, Banana	<b>10</b> Beef Stew, Beets, Crackers, Peaches in Nonfat vanilla Greek Yogurt	<b>11</b> BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwich, Baked Beans, Peas and carrots, Applesauce	<b>12</b> Chile Cheese Dog, Coleslaw w/ Dressing, Mixed Fruit
<b>15</b> <b>Closed</b>	<b>16</b> Macaroni in Tomato Sauce, Italian Vegetables, White Beans w/ margarine, Crackers, Chocolate Pudding w/ Cherries	<b>17</b> Fish Sandwich, Lightly Salted Potato Chips, Mixed Vegetables, Mandarin Oranges	<b>18</b> Beef lasagna, California Blend Vegetables, Crackers, Plums	<b>19</b> Sausage & Mushroom Ragu Penne Pasta, Tossed Salad w/ Light Dressing, Garlic Roll, Orange
<b>22</b> Bratwurst w/ Bun, Sauerkraut, Onions & Peppers, Potato Chips, Ranch Beans, Diced Pears	<b>23</b> Beef & Papas, Pinto Beans, Chuck Wagon Vegetables w/ margarine, Flour Tortilla, gelatin	<b>24</b> Sweet and Sour Pork, Steamed Brown Rice, Oriental Veggies, Wheat Bread w/ Margarine, Fruit Cocktail	<b>25</b> Tamale W/Red Chile,Pinto Beans, Calabacitas, spiced apricots	<b>26</b> Tuna Salad, Cucumber Salad, baby carrots, celery sticks, Tapioca Pudding
<b>29</b> Chicken Fajita, Spanish Rice, Buttered Mixed Vegetables, Salsa, Diced Mango	<b>30</b> Beef Soft Tacos, Mixed Vegetables, Salsa, Peppers and Onions, Refried Beans, Mixed Fruit	<b>31</b> Green Chile Relleno, Mixed Vegetables Refried Beans, Spanish Rice, Mixed Fruit	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.





**LIVE  
LOVE  
LAUGH**

by Ellen Wood  
a.k.a. Maruška

## Want To Grow Younger?

It's now 2024 and a younger you is within your reach. Just keep yourself vital-ly alive and vibrant so you'll be healthy and ready to take advantage of the astounding scientific advancements that are coming. Every day progress takes place in molecu-lar biology, organ and tissue regeneration, and nanotechnology. Breakthroughs in these fields will potentially eliminate

age-related illness and give us youthful skin, organs, and brains.

Also, keep this in mind: when you allow the belief that you can grow younger, you've taken a significant step toward making it happen.

New scientific discoveries are revealing what many wise teachers and healers have taught for centuries: our thoughts and beliefs create our reality. Quantum physicists have found, to their complete surprise, that matter is affected by thought, a discovery that rocked the boat for the scientific com-munity. Scientists have since peered into the life of our trillions of cells and found that they are actually responding to the environment of our thoughts and beliefs. What we say to ourselves about who we are and how we age does matter! As Henry Ford once said, "If you think you can or you think you can't, you're right."

As the science of epigenetics shows,

our fate is not controlled by our genes. Instead, non-genetic factors over which we can have control send signals to our genes to express themselves differently. More specifically, our beliefs and behaviors including diet, exercise, skincare, prayer, and our thoughts about and responses to life, strongly influence the expression of our genes.

This is good news, my friend! For me it means the APO-e4 Alzheimer's gene I have inherited has the opportunity to remain in the off position. I spent five years accepting the symptoms of Alz-heimer's as my fate. Then, 20 years ago, I made a conscious choice to grow younger. My behaviors and my genes followed my belief, and now Alzheimer's is just an unexpressed potential in my life.

Yeah, well, so I can't sleep. Even though I toss and turn most of the night, I'm convinced I'll find a cure for my insomnia.

For one thing, this month I'm going to a therapist in Santa Fe who specializes in insomnia. Also, I have an appointment in June at Stanford Sleep Center for a consul-tation (yep, that's how far out the schedul-ing is.) And if they say I qualify for a sleep study, I'll go to California again.

May you be blessed with good health, prosperity, positive beliefs, and enormous love in 2024.

*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)  
Ellen Wood a.k.a. Maruška  
Artist, Columnist and Award-winning Author  
[www.HowToGrowYounger.com](http://www.HowToGrowYounger.com)

## Quieres Rejuvenecer?

Ya estamos en el 2024 y tienes un "tú" más joven al alcance de la mano. Solo necesitas mantenerte vitalmente vivo y vibrante a fin de estar saludable y en disposición de aprovechar los asombrosos avances científicos que se avecinan. Cada día hay más descu-brimientos en la biología molecular, la regeneración de órganos y tejidos y la nanotecnología. Los avances en estos campos podrían eliminar potencial-mente las enfermedades relacionadas con la edad y brindarnos piel, órganos y cerebros juveniles.

Además, ten en cuenta esto: cuando permites la creencia de que puedes reju-venecer, ya has dado un paso significati-vo hacia hacer realidad esta creencia.

Los nuevos descubrimientos científ-icos revelan lo que muchos sabios maestros y sanadores han enseñado durante siglos: que nuestros pensamien-tos y creencias crean nuestra realidad. Los físicos cuánticos han descubierto, para su completa sorpresa, que la ma-teria se ve afectada por el pensamiento, un descubrimiento que sacudió a la comunidad científica. Desde entonces, los científicos han explorado la vida de los billones de células que forman el cuerpo humano y han descubierto que estas realmente responden al entorno de nuestros pensamientos y creencias. ¡Lo que nos decimos a nosotros mismos sobre quiénes somos y cómo envejece-mos sí importa! Como dijo Henry Ford:

"Si piensas que puedes o piensas que no puedes, estás en lo cierto."

Como muestra la ciencia de la epigenética, el destino no está contro-lado por nuestros genes. En cambio, los factores no genéticos que podemos con-trolar les envían señales a los genes para expresarse de manera diferente. Más específicamente, nuestras creencias y comportamientos, incluyendo la dieta, el ejercicio, el cuidado de la piel, la oración y nuestros pensamientos y respuestas ante la vida, influyen fuertemente en la expresión de nuestros genes.

¡Esta es una buena noticia, mi amigo! Para mí, significa que la variante del gen APO-e4 asociada con el Alzheimer que he heredado tiene la oportunidad de permanecer apagada. Pasé cinco años aceptando los síntomas del Alzheimer como si fueran mi destino. Pero hace veinte años tomé la decisión consciente de rejuvenecer. Mis comportamientos y mis genes siguieron los dictados de mi creencia y ahora el Alzheimer es solo un potencial no expresado en mi vida.

Sí, bueno, no puedo dormir. Aun-que doy muchísimas vueltas casi todas las noches, estoy convencida de que encontraré una cura para el insomnio. Para empezar, este mes voy a un tera-peuta de Santa Fe que se especializa en insomnio. Además, tengo cita para una consulta en el Centro de Sueño de Stan-ford en junio (sí, así de anticipada está la programación). Y si dicen que califico para un estudio del sueño, volveré a California.

Que tengas muchas bendiciones de salud, prosperidad, creencias positivas y un amor inmenso en el 2024.

*Ellen Wood de Questa es una autora galardonada y una artista que usa el nombre de Maruška. El sitio web para sus libros y pinturas es <https://questacreative.org/ellen-wood/>. Si quieres ponerte en contacto con Ellen escríbele a*

[ellen@howtogrowyounger.com](mailto:ellen@howtogrowyounger.com)  
Ellen Wood alias Maruška  
Artista, Columnista y Autora Galardonada  
[www.HowToGrowYounger.com](http://www.HowToGrowYounger.com)  
Traducción de Teresa Dovalpage

## JR (Malaquias) says:

**"Make sure your vehicle is in your New Year's Resolutions."**



**We'd appreciate it. And see if you can connect the verbs to the correct nouns on the right side."**



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I DARE YOU

By MARTA GLOVER

## How Has 2023 Influenced You?

Well, we got through 2023 with joy, sorrow, loss, frustration and peace. Was there an incident in your life that you dared to let those feelings be voiced, expressed, or known? Did you learn from this experience and will you do things differently in 2024? Is there a person, animal or place in nature that has influenced you? Is there a story you would like to share? Is there something you would like to say to your family, friends and community about 2023? Many of the stories I heard had to do with change. A shift happened within your self. Even when a situation was intense or uncomfortable, a hope and often a solution was at the end of the story. Each experience presented a learning curve. How can we support each other more? Let's perform simple acts of grace by allowing a person to be, accepting where they are, by being attentive and appreciative of their personal journey. These are the gifts of beauty that are within us to give this season and beyond.

### Jason:

"I feel overwhelmed by the time restraint to answer that right now! Can I text you later?" Then all of a sudden

the words, the story unfolds. "In order to heal there has to be a release to make room to allow for the beauty for what is to come. A release, a forgiveness needs to happen for you to be able to see what's in store for yourself. To allow your path. As I travel through this life every person, place or thing is given to me is my destiny to learn from along with pain and suffering to learn to be my greatest self. Trust in your journey."

### Frances:

"Hmm, that's a lot of questions in this question. It's a full question." Here it comes...

"A friend of mine had a bike crash last Friday. It looked like he was badly hurt. An ambulance came and took him to the hospital with his wife. I went to the hospital, and his wife was very somber and upset. She was realizing her husband could die before her and felt shocked by this and wanting comfort. Two days later I visited them around dinnertime at their home. His wife asked me to stay for dinner and I said No, thank you. Her husband walked over to me and hugged me and I felt deep emotion. I asked myself, what is wrong with me to not want to stay for dinner with them? As a child at dinnertime there were seven children and two adults — nine people in trouble. Concentration at the table was too much, too sad. Parents arguing at the table, my siblings witnessing their distress. I sat through this night after night. These are the consequences of eating dinner with people. Because of this experience, I now today practice having dinner with people instead of walking away."

### Andy:

"I am retiring. It's very exciting! I realized I am good at making wreaths. I love foraging outside and creating something from nature. I like the outcome of the wreath. It's a satisfying skill. I ask, Do you think you will make seasonal wreaths? Yes, I like making the vines and using things that will match the season. I want to try garland and swags. My days teaching at school have been very stressful with construction in the school building with jackhammers going. I go home to my little table, my nature platform incorporating ribbons and nature goodies to create wreaths. I have fun figuring it out. On my walks now I scout out the area for supplies. I am invested in it for 2024."

### Charles:

"Let me think on that. 2023 was a blessing, I am still breathing. Everything is pretty much the same for me. Blue, my dog, is teaching me every day how important it is to be alive. She is very happy and takes excellent care of my house. I am not happy with mankind as a whole. No kindness, no concern, no real thought of your fellow man. People tend to be thinking of themselves. Such a history of genocide and violence. My solution is we need more kindness towards our fellow man. We are not taking care of ourselves and need to support mental health institutions. How long can we fix things with money? We are overwhelmed and need to value and respect our culture in the way of our ancestors."

### Jenny:

"I recently was in Baja and felt my experiences there spoke to me in a

heartfelt way. I felt a real heart connection with the land being off the grid, and speaking the language authentically brought me so much joy inside. I had a scary experience in the ocean that pushed me out of my comfort zone that I had to learn from. My husband likes to go far out in the ocean. We were with another couple who wanted to see the turtles. We had just come back from a long swim and I was tired but we went out again. I realized I was running out of gas and told my friend I cannot go further out. I started to swim to shore. I felt like my limbs were 500 lbs and the shore was a distance away. I made it, struggling to the cove. I had to scale the cliffs and walk back to the town. The good news was I found a beautiful trail on my way back. I was able to learn a lot about my body and how to listen to it. I also have worked my relationship with my husband in a new way when communication is needed. It was a big scare that taught me to listen to my body and now I have another chance."

### Anne:

"In 2023, one of the most complicated years of my life, I learned to love myself. I recognized how I've let others mistreat me in both subtle and not so subtle ways. And I accepted it. My body finally said "no" to all the ways I allowed others to harm or disregard my feelings. I won't speculate how a lifetime of old behaviors might've resulted in my body breaking down to where I sit down. But as the dawn of the solstice blankets us with greater light, the greater light within me begins a long healing journey of self-love."

## Postal Service Offering Four More Free COVID-19 At-Home Tests

By Contributing Writer  
AUSTIN FISCHER,  
The SourceNM

U.S. residents can receive four free kits to test for SARS-CoV-2 infection, the virus which causes the COVID-19 disease.

You can place your order at <https://special.usps.com/testkits>. There are no shipping costs. You do not have to give a credit card number; you only need to give your name and address.

Those who need help or do not want to order online can call 1-800-

232-0233 or text via teletypewriters at 1-888-720-7489.

The majority of people who are infected do not show any symptoms. As one way of tracking where the virus is spreading, public health experts use test positivity, the proportion of tests taken that comes back positive in a given time period.

The latest data available from November 16, 2023, shows 23% of tests taken in New Mexico came back positive, according to the New Mexico Department of Health. DOH officials have said

most COVID tests are taken at home but there are still some health care providers in the state offering more accurate tests that are analyzed by laboratories.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Friday COVID-related emergency room visits and hospitalizations are increasing slightly.

The numbers of positive cases, hospitalizations, and deaths from COVID-19 have spiked every year between November and April since the pandemic began in 2020, research has found.

This will be the first winter since the

federal government stopped requiring private health insurance plans to pay for COVID-19 tests. The average price of an at-home test is \$11, according to KFF Health News.

USPS previously gave out free tests in September. People who did not get that round of tests can get eight tests this time.

The government is only offering one order per household. As with previous test distributions, they do not allow multiple people living at the same address to order tests.



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WE HAVE SOME EXCITING NEWS TO SHARE WITH EVERYONE!!

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# ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

SKYDANCE ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY by Charlene R. Johnson  
JANUARY 2024

## THE NEW RENAISSANCE

**“A new Renaissance focused on the year 2025 is formulating what will in some measure repeat the high standards of new thinking in art forms characteristic of the last Renaissance that scintillated throughout the city states of Italy in old Europe.” —Dr. Douglas Baker**

According to the ancient teachings we call the Wisdom Teachings, the year 2025 has long been thought to be the time when we would finally be completely immersed in the Age of Aquarius. The time of transition which has resulted in the upheavals we have all witnessed and experienced will finally calm down and, “A new spiritual potential energy will begin to manifest slowly after 2025, while the present energy is rapidly passing out,” said Alice Bailey, another ancient wisdom teacher. Douglas Baker explained that the new Renaissance of 2025 will make the old Renaissance look like child's play. The year 2025 is when two major cycles are being replaced by two new cycles: The 2000-year cycle of Pisces is being replaced by the new cycle of Aquarius, and the 25,000-year cycle of the Greater Zodiac also resets. It is this powerful synchronicity which will activate the new Renaissance. “This type of synchronicity potentially enables a “quickenings” in the development of consciousness in all kingdoms on the planet.”

Baker goes on to explain: “Man has to come to KNOW that which he BELIEVED for the 2,000-year Piscean cycle. Pisces rules belief while Aquarius rules knowledge; this is the Age of Knowledge. Therefore, 2024 is a year of preparation, one more year of unrest as well, but hopefully only one year. By 2025 we hope to begin to heal from the global upheaval and attain the vision of a new world order which includes a new global “religion” for all people of the world. “The intensification of light, which is what has contributed to much of the present world unrest, will continue until after 2025, after which a relatively stable period will intervene. . . with new teachings on astrology, among other subjects, to come after 2025.” THIS esoteric astrology IS the astrology for the future, for the Age of Aquarius. These two big pivotal years will see several of our “generational” planets changing signs, a huge synchronicity which cannot fail to impact us.

**Everyone:** “There is no question that the work to be done in familiarizing the general public with the nature of the Mysteries is of paramount importance at this time.” —Alice Bailey

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

**Dynamic:** Reaching now for your highest aspirations may gain you the mountaintop.

**Direction:** Then what?

**Soul Thought:** To fall or fly.

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

**Dynamic:** It's time to use your forge.

**Direction:** Truly or symbolically.

**Soul Thought:** What to forge?

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

**Dynamic:** It's a good time to study something important.

**Direction:** Kindle the flame.

**Soul Thought:** What is Spiritual Fire?

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

**Dynamic:** Another year of moodiness or deep-diving?

**Direction:** Choose to dive.

**Soul Thought:** What would you sacrifice on behalf of humanity?

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

**Dynamic:** The trip hasn't been easy.

**Direction:** What of value is?

**Soul Thought:** When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

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

**Dynamic:** Your evolution is that of humanity's.

**Direction:** From response to conscious service.

**Soul Thought:** “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in service to others.” —Mahatma Gandhi

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

**Dynamic:** The material world continues to call.

**Direction:** But does it deliver?

**Soul Thought:** What is true Value?

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

**Dynamic:** Someone is feeling superior to you, or v.v.

**Direction:** Determine if it's appropriate.

**Soul Thought:** Define superiority.

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

**Dynamic:** Your shift is from verbal banter to caring, nurturing.

**Direction:** For the Whole Earth.

**Soul Thought:** “We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.” —Native American saying

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

**Dynamic:** One more year's opportunity for learning who you really are.

**Direction:** Use it well.

**Soul Thought:** The Real You.

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

**Dynamic:** It's a time for accumulation.

**Direction:** Choose carefully.

**Soul Thought:** What does humanity need in abundance?

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

**Dynamic:** This is the month you make the shift.

**Direction:** Feel into it.

**Soul Thought:** We all need this!

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.



By J. ORTEGA

## 2023'S BEST AND WORST STREAMING MOVIES

I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday season. For January, we're going to recap the best and worst films of 2023. This year was good for movies and not great for television. I have to admit, I saw more films that I enjoyed this year than I hated, so that's a big positive. I wanted to announce that in addition to my Streaming Wars column, I will also be starting a companion podcast where I can get more in-depth with the reviews and also include some streaming television reviews as well. The final details are still being hammered out, but expect to hear more in 2024 — stay tuned for that!

Without further ado \*drumroll\* . . . here are the best and worst streaming films of 2023!

### Best Streaming Movies 2023

#### 5. *The Super Mario Brothers Movie:*

The best animated movie of the year, in my opinion, plus it righted a lot of wrong from the live action film from the 90s. The voice acting is great, and the story is serviceable. (Streaming on Netflix)

#### 4. *Dungeons and Dragons: Honor Among Thieves:*

Ok hear me out before you roll your eyes — you don't have to be a level 7 dungeon master to enjoy this wildly entertaining film starring Chris Pine and Michelle Rodriguez — you really won't regret it. (Streaming on Paramount+)

#### 3. *Killers of the Flower Moon:*

Martin Scorsese's epic about a series of murders of

the wealthy Osage tribe will haunt you long after the film is over. Just a word of caution: it's over 3 and half hours long so it meanders a bit for my taste, but Lily Gladstone gives a knockout performance, outshining Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert DeNiro, which is a feat rarely done. (Available to rent on Amazon Prime, Apple Tv)

#### 2. *John Wick: Chapter 4:*

What can I say? It's the best action film of the year, heck, maybe even the decade. The action just keeps getting more and more spectacular with each film and this may have reached its zenith. (Streaming on Starz app)

#### 1. *Oppenheimer:*

This is hands down Christopher Nolan's finest film. The technical aspects are great along with the acting. It's an important film that demands your attention. I'm sure it will get a lot of Oscar buzz and it will be well deserved. The only issue is that it didn't cover the aftermath of nuclear testing in New Mexico and how it affected the people and the land here. NOTE: An interesting read is “Nuclear Nuevo Mexico” by Myrriah Gomez. It may polarizing to some but that's the point. (Available to rent on Amazon Prime, AppleTV) Worst Films of 2023

#### 5. *The Machine:*

Comedian and Podcaster Bert Kreisher crashes and burns in his debut movie. (Streaming on Netflix)

#### 4. *Indiana Jones and The Dial of Destiny:*

Disney continues to destroy countless childhoods with their feckless cash grabs of rebooted franchises. (Streaming Disney+)

#### 3. *Fast X:*

Stop making these movies! 10 is enough! (Streaming on Peacock)

#### 2. *Pain Hustlers:*

I'm tired of bad films glorifying dirtbags who become wildly rich and successful at the expense of regular people. (Streaming on Netflix)

#### 1. *The Flash:*

Marvel's superhero golden goose is at long last dead and The Flash did its part in killing it. (Streaming on Max)

## MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

By DAWN PROVENCHER



## Just Ask!

Family history is YOUR history and MY history. One day, if you are lucky, you will find yourself in my situation — the oldest living generation of your family. But one ramification of this is there is no longer an older

person to ask about family history. So, ask now while the wealth of stories is all around you!

Here are some questions you could ask — pick and choose, write your own, but be sure to document the answers, who you are asking, and the date. I promise you this will be a family treasure for years to come. Teachers, this could be a classroom assignment. The northern New Mexico area is rich in history that must be saved and this is a fun and simple way to start.

JUST ASK cont'd on page 28





In this month's edition of Enchanted Eats, we present some local flavors. Winter is coming! And we're not complaining, because these winter meal ideas will keep us feeling cozy even when the snow is falling and the winds are blowing. We hope you celebrate the new year and stay warm by making the recipes below. Happy 2024!

## Tortillas

Recipe by Angela Ortega, Questa

- 2 c flour
- 2 t baking powder
- 1-1/2 t salt
- 1 t powdered milk
- 1 c warm water

1. Combine dry ingredients in a bowl.
2. Slowly add in water and knead until dough forms.
3. Place dough ball in refrigerator for 10 minutes.
4. After dough has rested in refrigerator, transfer it to a lightly floured work surface.
5. Divide into about 10-12 equal portions. Turn each piece to coat with flour. Form each piece into a ball and flatten with the palm of your hand.
6. Heat a large pan over medium heat.
7. Roll each dough piece into a rough circle, about 6-7 inches in diameter, and keep work surface and rolling pin lightly floured. Don't stack uncooked tortillas on top of each other or they will stick together.
8. When the pan is hot, place one dough circle into the pan and cook for 45 seconds to 1 minute or until the bottom surface has a few pale brown spots and the uncooked surface is bubbly. If browning too fast, reduce the heat a bit. If it's taking longer than a minute to see a few pale golden brown spots on the underside of tortillas, increase the heat a bit. Flip to the other side and cook for 15-20 seconds. The tortillas should be nice and soft but have a few small brown spots on the surface.



## Chicken Pot Pie

Recipe by Melissa Lovato, Albuquerque

### Pie Crust:

- 2 c flour
- 1/2 t salt
- 1/2 c olive oil
- 8 T ice-cold water

1. Mix dry ingredients together.
2. Add oil and water and mix all together.
3. Knead until dough forms.
4. Roll out two crusts (bottom crust and top crust).
5. Set into pie pan and set aside.

### Filling:


- 1-2 cans cream of chicken soup
- 1 c peas
- 1 c carrots
- 1/2 c cubed potatoes
- 2-3 chicken breasts (about 1 pound)
- Salt, pepper, onion powder, and garlic powder to taste
- \*if filling seems too dry, add a little chicken broth

1. Gather all ingredients and preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Boil the cubed chicken with the carrots, peas, and potatoes for about 15 minutes.
3. Drain and set aside.
4. Mix in cream of chicken soup and seasonings.
5. Place the chicken-vegetable mixture in an unbaked pie crust.
6. Cover with the top crust, seal the edges, and cut slits in the top to allow the steam to escape.
7. Bake until the pastry is golden brown and the filling is bubbly, about 30-35 minutes.


*If you have a recipe you would like featured in an upcoming issue of Enchanted Eats, please submit to [assistanteditor@questanews.com](mailto:assistanteditor@questanews.com)*




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OBITUARIES



**Andy Baca Jr**  
**d. December 15, 2023**

Andy Baca 56, of Questa peacefully passed away on December 15, 2023. He is preceded in death by his father Andy A. Baca, grandfather Perfecto Baca, grandmother Susan Baca, grandmother Veroniz Espinoza, and nephew Mario Baca. After graduation he attended El Rito UNM receiving certification in auto mechanics, also construction. Andy always had an awesome sense of humor. He would always make you laugh. He enjoyed watching football, especially when his beloved Raiders were playing. He loved his dog "Tebo". He loved to play pool. During the summertime you could find him at the lake fishing or helping his friends. Very proud of all his nieces and nephews, loved them all the same. He is survived by his mother Estella Baca, sister Diana Baca (Javier Barbosa), brother Mario (Heather) Baca, nephew Andy (Celeste) Baca, nephew Daniel "Bubba" Martinez, niece Marrisa Baca (Jason Salazar), nephew Eric Salazar, niece Esperanza Salazar, niece Katalina Salazar, great nieces Camilla, Andee Baca, and many family and friends.



**Ben "Speedy" Gonzales**  
**d. December 11, 2023**

Ben "Speedy" Gonzales, age 77, a resident of Questa, passed

away peacefully on December 11, 2023.

He was preceded in death by his son Johnny Gonzales; parents Frank and Ruth Gonzales; grandpa Jose Bailon; in-laws Manuel and Idela Romero; and brother-in-law Manuel Romero, Jr.

For many years Ben was employed by the Moly Mine in Questa and Questa public schools. He loved to provide for his family and worked very hard until the very end. Ben especially loved his grandchildren.

Ben is survived by his wife Sally Gonzales; son Ben Gonzales, Jr; grandchildren Izziah Gonzales, Micah Gonzales, Mariah Jane Gonzales, Zachariah Gonzales and Hezekiah Gonzales; daughter-in-law Pastor Kristi Gonzales; siblings Mary Anne Romero (Ernie), Joann Gonzales (Patrick), Mary Jean Gonzales and Mark Gonzales (Rena); plus many loving nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends.

Public visitation was held on Tuesday December 19 in the Evergreen Chapel of DeVargas Funeral Home. His Celebration of Life was at Living Word Ministries in Questa with burial following at the Pueblito Cemetery.



**John Nicholes**  
**d. November 27, 2023**

John Treadwell Nichols, author of *The Milagro Beanfield War*, passed peacefully on November 27, 2023 at 83, on a last beautiful day in autumn and in the comfort of his Taos home. He was an accomplished American author, amazing father, grandfather, and friend.

John has called Taos home since 1969 when he settled here with his young family. He was an avid naturalist that loved the mountains, mesas, rivers, and streams. And he loved the people, hearing your stories, sharing in

your struggles, and celebrating the small miracles.

Nichols will also be remembered by his family and plentiful circles of friends for his love of music, literature, and life. His unmatched sense of humor will live on in the laughs and memories of those dearest to him.

John is Survived by his brother Tim Nichols and his son Jamal, children Luke Nichols and Tania Harris along with their mother Ruth Harding Nichols. His granddaughter Lucinda Nichols and her mother Dale Lovage. As well as Tania's husband Marco Harris and their children Solana and Sierra.

His family would like to thank the town of Taos and its people who took such good care of him. His friends who brought him joy with stimulating conversations, abundant laughter, and guitar jam sessions. And those he never met but who were connected through his work and words.

We would also like to thank Tim Rivera for taking the time personally to bring John peace with this process and Rivera Family funeral for so respectfully carrying out his wishes.

A Memorial Celebration of John Nichols is being planned by the family to be held in the warmth of spring. Details of the service will be made public in the near future.

Arrangements by Rivera Family Funeral Home. To share a memory, please visit our website at [www.riverafuneralhome.com](http://www.riverafuneralhome.com)



**Bertha Ortega**  
**d. November 21, 2023**

Bertha Ortega, age 66, a resident of Questa, passed away peacefully on November 21, 2023.

She was preceded in death by her parents Silviano and Fedelina Vigil; and brother Joe Vigil.

Bertha is survived by her

children Richard Ortega and Josie Ortega; grandchildren Jeramiah Ortega, Dominic Segura and Devina Segura; siblings Gilbert Snyder Vigil, Mary Archuleta, Rose Ortega (Armando), Charlene Chavarria, Roxanne Ortega and Sylvia Sandoval, plus many other loving relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday November 28, at Living Word Ministries, with burial following at the Cerro Cemetery.



**Anita Theresa Segura**  
**d. December 16, 2023**

Anita Theresa Segura, 70 years old, from Questa, NM passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, December 16, 2023.

She is survived by her husband of 51 years, Steven Segura; Children, Leslie (Rodney Vigil), Stephanie (Timm), Rolando (Julie), Isaiah (Tiffanie Segura); Grandchildren, Nathan, Katrina (Juan Silva), Santiago, Enrica, Alejandro, Elijah (Lourdes), Vida, Areyu, Koda, Cain, Robyn, Rayden; Great-grandchildren, Joziah and Simaya; One living sister; Betty Vigil.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Enrique Vigil and Felomena Gallegos; in-laws Rolando and Jenny Segura; Grandchildren; Jeremiah, Aubrizella and Hunter; Siblings, Lizzie, Pirate, Laura (Eliseo), Della (Sam), Henry (The Mayor) Angela, and other siblings; Special nieces Martha (Bert Vigil) and Bernice Cardenas.

Rosary was recited Thursday, December 28, 2023 at 6:00pm (St. Anthony's Catholic church Questa, NM). Mass of Christian burial was Friday, December 29, 2023 at 11:00am (St. Anthony's Catholic church Questa, NM), with burial following at Our Lady of Guadalupe Cemetery in Cerro, New Mexico.

JUST ASK cont'd from page 26

1. What was your favorite subject in school and why?
2. How did you get to school?
3. What music did you listen to, and how? Radio, records, church? Who were some famous singers?
4. Did you go to the movies? What are some you liked to watch?
5. What was it like to be the (oldest, youngest, only child, etc.)?
6. What were your chores at home?
7. What are some of your happiest memories?
8. Did your family ever travel for vacation or to visit family? Where?
9. What was your first job? How much did you get paid? What did you do with the money you earned?
10. What did you and your friends do for fun?
11. Who was your first crush?
12. Are you named after someone?
13. What was the hardest time you ever went through?
14. Did you have a pet?
15. What was a good book you read when you were young?
16. How did you learn to drive?
17. What did a gallon of gas cost when you first remember buying it?
18. Did you know your grandparents? What are some of your favorite memories of them?
19. What was the craziest thing you ever did?
20. What are some famous events you remember?
21. What invention surprises you the most?
22. What have you always been good at?
23. Describe a favorite meal you had as a child.
24. Tell me something else you want your family to know.

These questions can take place over time. The answers can be recorded or written. These questions will likely lead to others. Let the conversation flow. There will be some surprises, some laughter, and maybe some tears. But mainly there will be a precious, shared history passed on. Do it now.



# Thank You!

*We cannot do what we do without you!*

On behalf of the staff of the *Questa del Rio News*, we would like to send our sincerest THANK YOU to the following donors who helped us during our 2023 December Donation Drive. Because of your help, we will be able to provide continued coverage of our underrepresented communities in northern Taos County. Thank you and HAPPY NEW YEAR!

# \$9070

**NEW MEXICO LOCAL NEWS FUND MATCHED TOTAL**



**\$500+**

Gordon Wesley & Jan Iverson  
Mickey Reilly



**\$100+**

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DECEMBER 31

**\$4535**

DECEMBER 21

**\$3090**

DECEMBER 11

**\$2525**

DECEMBER 1

**\$100**



*We are incredibly grateful to our regular contributors.*





COMMUNITY CALENDAR • JANUARY 2024

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

**JANUARY 1: MON**  
**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**JANUARY 3: WED 6 PM**  
**Questa Independent School Board Meeting**, QSID Board Room, 2256 Wildcat Rd. # A. Info: (575) 586-0421

**JANUARY 6: SAT 1 PM**  
**Opening Reception for Questa Artist Omjaya**, who will be exhibiting his works at OmniHum Gallery January thru February, located at 246 Ledoux St. in Taos. All are welcome. Info: [omjayamusic.com](http://omjayamusic.com)

**JANUARY 7: SUN 1:30 - 3:30 PM**  
**Dance like Nobody's Watching**, women's dance with Sajit Green, at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. Donations welcome! Info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**JANUARY 8: MON 6 PM**  
**Questa Economic Development Fund board meeting** at the Questa Visitor's 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.

**JANUARY 9: 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

**JANUARY 10: WED 5 PM**  
**Area-Wide Acequia Association Meeting**, at My Tia's Cafe at 107 Highway 378 in Cerro; refreshments will be served. Presentation by Consultant Judy Torres of Taos Valley Acequia Association; get clarification on the organization's purpose, benefits, and fees; attend to ask questions. For more info: [lynn@questaedf.com](mailto:lynn@questaedf.com) or leave a message at (575) 586-2149

**JANUARY 11: THUR 6 - 8:30 PM**  
**Denim and Diamond, Jeans and Bling Father Daughter Dance with cookie reception**, at Alta Vista Elementary Music Room. Line Dancing, La Marcha, pre K to 5th graders invited. Sponsored by Living Word Ministries and the LOR Foundation, more info: call (575) 613-8010

**JANUARY 12: FRI 10 AM - NOON**  
**Food for All at North Central NM Food Pantry**, 140 Embargo Rd., Questa. For more info: [questafoodpantry.org](http://questafoodpantry.org) or call (575) 586-0486 or (575) 779-9194

**JANUARY 13: SAT 10 - 11:30 AM**  
**Sala Writing Group** free, via Zoom, link upon request [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**JANUARY 15: MON**  
**Martin Luther King Junior Day** "Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." ~Martin Luther King, Jr.

**JANUARY 15: 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 banned books. Info: (575) 586-2023

**JANUARY 17: WED 6 PM**  
**Questa Independent School Board Meeting**, QSID Board Room, 2256 Wildcat Rd. # A. Info: (575) 586-0421

**JANUARY 18: 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

**JANUARY 23: 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

**JANUARY 24: WED 6 PM**  
**Public Meeting for Largo Canyon Trails Proposal** at the Questa Public Library, 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd. Provide your input, ask questions, express concerns before planning and trail work begins this year. For more info: [lynn@questaedf.com](mailto:lynn@questaedf.com) or leave a message at (575) 586-2149

**JANUARY 25: WED 5:30 PM**  
**Power Hour Yoga with Gaea, in person and online**, \$8 at Yoga Sala, 2331 NM-522, in Questa. First of a new weekly series. info: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**JANUARY 26: FRI 10 AM - NOON**  
**Food for All at North Central NM Food Pantry**, 140 Embargo Rd., Questa. For more info: [questafoodpantry.org](http://questafoodpantry.org) or call (575) 586-0486 or (575) 779-9194

**JANUARY 27: SAT 2 - 4:30 PM**  
**Nerf Battle!** Alta Vista Elementary Gym for Pre-K to 5th grade. Fun for the whole family! Nerf guns and ammo provided. Sponsored by Living Word Ministries and the LOR foundation. more info: call (575) 613-8010



**MARCH 2 - 3: SAT - SUN NOON - 5 PM**  
**Artists and Creative Entrepreneurs - Free Business Development Workshop** for the Creative Economy. This 2-day workshop is funded by a Creative Industries grant received by Taos County from the State of NM. A maximum of 40 people are invited to register; food, snacks, and all materials will be provided at no cost. At Living Word Ministries Fellowship Hall, 12 Llano Rd, Questa. This is the first of three identical workshops being held in Taos County. To register for the Questa Workshop and get more information, contact Lynn Skall, QEDF at [lynn@questaedf.com](mailto:lynn@questaedf.com) or leave a message at (575) 586-2149

**WEEKLY**

**SUNDAYS**

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

**10 AM**  
**Qigong event with Julian**, online only, sponsored by Yoga Sala. More info and link: [yogasalaquesta.org](http://yogasalaquesta.org)

**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)

**Kundalini Yoga**, Meditation & Gong on break until February

**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) not on 20th or 27th

**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** 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.

**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)

**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** 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**

**Contemporary Dance for Adults** on break until March. 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)

**7 PM**  
**Torchlight Parade and Fireworks** at the Lighthouse in Red River.



**WELCOME TO THE NEW AREA ONLINE CALENDAR OF EVENTS!**

The same area online calendar is now shared on all of the following sites...

[QuestaNews.com](http://QuestaNews.com)  
[QuestaCreative.org](http://QuestaCreative.org)  
[QuestaLibrary.org](http://QuestaLibrary.org)  
[Questa-NM.com](http://Questa-NM.com)  
[VisitQuesta.com](http://VisitQuesta.com)

Now you can upload your event once on any of the websites and it will appear on all of the above sites for **FREE!**

**Try it today!**  
<https://questanews.com/questa-events/#/show?distance=15>



## CLASSIFIEDS

### HELP WANTED

**Security Guard Needed,** Securitas: Security Officer needed in Questa, NM. Work schedule is Graveyard - from Mon, Tue, Fri, Sat, and Sunday from 10 p.m.-6 a.m. No security experience required! We can train you. Either call our Recruiter Kevin at (505) 235-7927 or apply immediately [www.securitasjobs.com](http://www.securitasjobs.com)

**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

### NOTICES

**Questa del Rio News Back Issues Needed:** With LOR Foundation's support, *Questa del Rio News* is archiving our newspapers, starting with the first issue in February 2018. We are missing a few months. If anyone has copies of the following issues, please contact Lou McCall (575) 312-3174.

- March, May & October 2019 (if you have extra 2019, we can use them)
- January, May & November 2020
- January 2021
- January, October & November 2022
- January 2023

Please drop them by the Questa Visitor Center on Tuesdays or Thursdays or text or call Lou at: (575) 312-3174. We may have extra papers, if you want back issues, let Lou know.

#### 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 7-10 pm. 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 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-wormer, nail trims, and matt removal are available at additional cost. Book appointment at [slvsPAYneuter.org](http://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 am – 2 pm. 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 am– noon: 140 Embargo Rd. in Questa. If you need an emergency food box or other information, please call: Jeannie Masters (575) 586-0486 or (575) 779-9194, or Nancy Parker (575) 586-2096 or (505) 699-7563. To make a donation, go to [ncfpquesta.com](http://ncfpquesta.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 Anwar Kaelin,** Director of the Small Business Development Center at UNM-Taos. FREE and CONFIDENTIAL offered on the third Thursday of every month, 1–4 pm, 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 2–3 pm: <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)

#### ADVERTISE HERE!

#### CALL FOR RATES

(575) 613-0856 or

[Sales-1@QuestaNews.com](mailto:Sales-1@QuestaNews.com)



NEW ONLINE AREA CALENDAR!  
ADD YOUR EVENTS TODAY FOR FREE



## 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.com](http://www.lwmsite.com) (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 [oeaohoo17@gmail.com](mailto:oeaohoo17@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 Chenrezig 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)

Donate anytime online at [QuestaNews.com](http://QuestaNews.com)



Zed by duane m. abel

[www.corkeycomics.com](http://www.corkeycomics.com)



# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

**Come play with clay!**

## Ceramic Cafe

Thursday evenings, 5-9 pm  
@ Questa Youth Center

Open studio... Tools, clay, and glazes provided!  
Hosted by Anna, a ceramicist full of tips & inspiration

More info: [questacreativecouncil@gmail.com](mailto:questacreativecouncil@gmail.com)



## QUESTA LUMBER & HARDWARE CO.



2349 NM Hwy-522  
Questa, NM 87556  
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FOOD • BEER • WINE • ICE CREAM • DESSERTS


# Yesterdays Diner



**BREAKFAST & LUNCH**

HOURS CAN VARY 7:00 AM - 2:00 PM

[yesterdaysdiner.com](http://yesterdaysdiner.com)  
612 West Main St, Red River NM • (575) 754-6233



## MASSAGE THERAPY

**PATRICK SHAW** MT 4967

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