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Questa del Rio News

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Historic Duran's Gas Station In Costilla Goes Up For Sale



Courtesy Photo

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Duran's Gas and Grocery Store is Costilla's one-stop shop for gas and groceries within a 20-mile radius. The store was built in 1976, when current owner, Alma Duran's father, established the business to serve the rural northern Taos County and southern Colorado communities. Located at Highways 522 and 196, in the heart of the beautiful Rio Costilla valley, the business has been carefully and thoughtfully maintained inside and out, with its most recent renovation in 2022.

After more than 48 years of business within the same family, the owners have decided to put the operation up for sale.

Purchasing the business in 1991 from her parents, Alma says she knew it was time to take over the family business. "At that time, I was working as a dental hygienist in Taos and my parents were getting ready to retire. My siblings and I grew up working in the store. My brother ran it for a year, but then I decided to take it over and purchased it from my parents in 1991," Alma says.

Over the years, she along with her husband Demecio (Nemie) have devoted

much of their life and time to making the family business a success, carrying on her parents legacy through their work.

In 2016, Alma and her husband were ready to retire and decided to sell the store to her cousin from Pueblo. After three short years, her cousin unexpectedly passed away, leaving the store to return to Alma and Nemie. "We were enjoying our time retired, but when that happened, something no one expected, we took the store back over and ran it, making major upgrades and improvements," she says.

Now, after having the store back for eight years, Alma says she is officially ready to sell the family business and transition into semi-retirement with her husband. "I think we hoped our kids would take it over, especially our daughter Jannifer who has been a godsend the past few years, running the store and taking care of everything... but there are different obstacles to that. Our kids have careers and lives. Owning a store is a big commitment and we serve our community seven days a week, so we feel selling it to a buyer is going to be the best thing for our family."

Marialuz Duran, daughter of Alma and Nemie, spoke with our publication about her experience growing up in the gas station. Marialuz is an engineer and was dispatched to Alaska on assignment at the time of our interview.

"The store has been a huge part of my life, I basically grew up there. The history of the store is very meaningful to me because my grandparents built, owned and operated the store for many years," Marialuz says fondly.

While many of her memories are entrenched in happy memories, visiting with community members and building relationships with the staff, she says Fridays stand out as a day she hated growing up. "Not many kids would say they hated Fridays, but I did because they were 'grocery days.' That means we would get new shipments of food and my mom would put me to work, opening up boxes, pricing items and stocking the shelves. It was such a chore," she says. Now looking back, Marialuz laughs, saying they weren't actually so bad.

DURAN FOR SALE cont'd on page 8

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See page 3 for details about our funding.

Questa del Rio News

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

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EDITORIAL

Why Didn't You Cover That?

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

One of the most common questions I am asked as editor of the *Questa del Rio News* is why we don't cover a variety of happenings in town, from crimes, criminal cases and outcomes, or immediately breaking news.

The truth? We don't have the resources.

Our staff includes three people. We are responsible for producing 32 pages of news every single month and in addition, we have worked to build up more timely and relevant stories on social media to the greatest extent possible.

In a regular newsroom or even a small newsroom, you would have at the very least, five people available to cover various beats and provide context, background, and vision.

Our staff of three all work full-time jobs, so our work with the *Questa del Rio News* is our part-time job. What we do cover and what we are able to allocate our resources to, we do. And we do it to the absolute best of our ability. What we don't, we simply can't.

Just because we cannot cover every single thing we're interested in covering, there are ways you, our community, can help us increase our coverage.

- Send in your events! Don't assume we saw your social media post, flyer, or event. The best way to ensure we know about whatever it is you're doing is by contacting us directly. News tips can go to editor@questanews.com.
- Send in your news tips! Same as the previous point, don't assume we see your post or issue. More often than not, the algorithm shakes things up

and we don't see your post for several days. If you have a story you want us to cover, reach out by emailing editor@questanews.com.

- Take photos and send them in! Just because we didn't have staff to attend a given event or happening doesn't mean we can't cover it. We just need visuals such as photos to include in our coverage. You can send your photos along with event descriptions to editor@questanews.com
- Subscribe/donate to our paper: while residents in northern Taos County get the issue free in the main, stemming from a grant with the *Questa Economic Development Council*, those funds cover a portion of the overhead we carry. Subscribing or donating will help us establish a long-term future so we're able to continue to serve the *Questa* community.
- Share our stories: The more you're able to share our story links on social media, the more impressions we get and the higher likelihood that we'll be able to sell ads on social media. Advertising dollars help us with our overhead, on a month-to-month basis.

All of these things will help us maintain our current staffing levels and potentially increase the number of staff we have onboard, which means more, comprehensive and accurate coverage of things happening which matter to you.

Thank you for the support you give to the *Questa del Rio News* newspaper. We are a small shop, working to serve the community we love because we believe your voice and your representation is important. We, in turn, appreciate your support.

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

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A Father's Advice For Father's Day

By VALERIE SEGURA

Father and grandfather Marcello Vialpando Sr. was born and raised in Questa, New Mexico. As a young adult, he moved to Denver, Colorado, where he met Rachel, the love of his life. Together, they raised eight children during their 67 years of marriage. Rachel passed away in December 2019, but Marcello still carries his love of her forward to this day.

Today, the Vialpando family has grown to over 120 members, all of whom Marcello and Rachel had the joy of seeing and loving.

We spoke with him about the fatherly advice he would share with our readers for Father's Day and some of the most rewarding parts of fatherhood.

Marcello shared that the most rewarding part of his being a dad was watching his seven daughters and only son grow into responsible adults with families of their own. He proudly says, "It is even more rewarding to see that my daughters' and son's children are growing up."

Today, Marcello is a grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather. His joy continues as he sees his grandchildren start their own families and witness his great-grandchildren graduate. Reflecting on the past, he recalls his most important hope was to see his children graduate from high school, which they did. He smiles proudly and says, "Look at them today."

"I'm seeing my girls having their kids grow up and my grandkids having their own kids. That's more than rewarding; I never thought it would be this way. My main focus was for my immediate family to graduate high school, and now I am so surprised and blessed by how everything is today," he says.

As he continues to reflect, Marcello confidently states that he doesn't think being a dad is difficult. He believes that "if your family respects you, that's more than you need to be a happy father and grandfather." Marcello has no regrets about be-



Photo by Jessica Trujillo

Marcello and great grand daughter walking together, 2022

ing a dad because he feels he has received more than any man could deserve.

He advises young fathers, "Always remember that your family is more than likely going to repeat your ways and your knowledge that you give to them, and when their time comes to be fathers and grandfathers hopefully you have taught them well."

Marcello learned to be a father from his parents' advice, but more importantly, from his wife, who managed the family and home while he worked to support them financially.

Marcello leaves us with these thoughtful words: "Fathers, try your utmost best to teach your family to respect each other and respect other people. Listen to your family's concerns: you never know what you might learn. Always know where your children are and what they're doing as they grow up; that's the only way you will keep your family close and ensure they stay together. Lastly, make time for your family and listen to them at all times, praying that they will continue this and keep their families together as well."

POEM OF THE MONTH

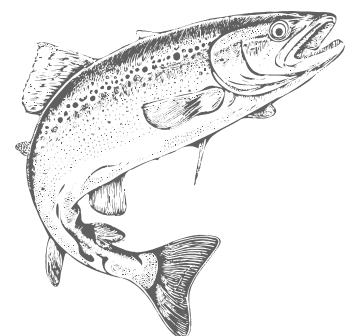
WOKE

To get ahead you must be awake,
But some people treat it as a joke.
Cable news is not a very good plan,
For them, it's you in a frying pan.
Politicians bicker back and forth,
Money in their pockets, of course.
Nature comes out of hibernation,
School's out, take a long vacation.
Springtime is for inside cleaning,
Winter dust keeps it from gleaming.
Outside it's time to cut the weeds,
Dandelions woke-up all the seeds.

—Señor Miguel / Ghost Writer

**JUNE 1: SAT
9:00 AM
Questa Fish Fiesta
at Eagle Rock Lake
2323 Old Red River Rd.**

Join us for an opportunity to enjoy our outdoor recreational areas. Fishers should bring fishing rods and equipment, as well as typical outdoor accessories such as sunscreen, hats, water, and chairs. Note that all fishers 12 and older will need a fishing license. Info: call (575) 586-0694



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

OUR JOURNALISTIC ETHICS POLICY

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

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

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- We are committed to transparency in every aspect of funding our organization.
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- Download PDF of correction policy go to <https://questanews.com/about/>

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Business Profile

Rael's Coffee Shop

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The founders of the current-day Questa community had one thing in common—a vision of a more accessible and sustainable community so locals could have options in Questa, not having to make the long trek to Taos for basic items.

It was in 1927 that brothers Jose Enriques Rael, Jose Antonio Rael and Jose Praxedes Rael made that vision a reality by opening Rael's Brothers Market, providing grocery and general merchandise to locals in the small village of Questa.

In the 1960s, Aaron Rael, the son of Jose Enriques Rael, took over the store with his wife Ruth. He eventually purchased it and renamed it Rael's Market. In the 60s, all three of Aaron's children, Aaron Rael Jr. (Buddy), Roberta Rael, and Cynthia Rael-Vigil worked in the store, helping their parents sell groceries, clothing, denim shirts, jackets, shoes, medical supplies, health and beauty supplies, and dry goods.

According to Rael-Vigil, people were allowed to shop with store credit and pay their bill later when they got paid, to help families get ahead. "To this day, people still tell me that my parents are a big reason their families were able to get by, because they could have groceries and necessities when they needed them, not [only] when they had money to purchase them," she says.

One staple fondly remembered by many locals in the area (including myself) is the fresh sticks of bologna Aaron and Ruth would purchase from Colorado. "Everyone loved the bologna, we would cut it and sell it by the slab. To store it, we would freeze it and sell it for some time. You can't find it anymore, but it was so delicious and locals and visitors loved it," Rael-Vigil recalls.

The store closed its doors in the early 2000s as Aaron and Ruth retired. The family knew they didn't want to sell the operation but had to take a break after years of the constant work of keeping the store going.

In an effort to keep the property operational, the family leased out the building to a business owner who



Courtesy Photo

Cynthia and Valerie work together to make coffee on a Saturday afternoon

opened a gym for a couple years at the familiar store location.

The store was reopened in 2016 by Rael-Vigil, who had the vision to open a gift shop, filled with local artisan merchandise and art. She also knew she wanted to open a coffee shop. Her daughter, Enriquetta Vigil, and daughter-in-law Valerie Vigil, were instrumental in researching drinks and learning how to make them.

"Quetta really put on her entrepreneurial hat and started researching what we would need to be successful, like the coffee bar and syrups and the various ingredients. Valerie had worked at a coffee shop in Taos so she was able to teach Quetta pretty quickly and the two got to work," Rael-Vigil said. As the family started to build up their business, the store started seeing more and more foot traffic from locals and tourists alike. Enriquetta worked on marketing their work on the Rael's Facebook page, keeping people informed of new drinks and upcoming Thursday night music jam sessions, where local musicians gather weekly to play music together.

Unfortunately, in 2021, the family suffered a tremendous loss, as Enriquetta was killed in a tragic accident. Losing an instrumental part of their family, Cynthia and the family drew close to one another as they coped and processed their grief.

"Our community has been there for us every step of the way. We never have walked through this path alone; they surrounded us as if we were their heartbeat. They nurtured us and gave us love and peace. Being part of this community has given us a lot of stability in our lives. Nurturing the connection to the community and keeping the connections alive—it's important. I have always been



Courtesy Photo

The family poses together (left to right) in the store: Armandito, Emmanuel, Valerie, Cynthia and Sophia, gathered under the photo of Enriquetta, which is proudly displayed at the store



Courtesy Library of Congress

A historic photo of Rael's Bro's Market in 1943 by John Collier Jr.

involved in our community and I am so grateful to our people who have been so supportive when we needed them."

Through their loss, the family has continued to work together to make their multi-generational store successful. Everyone plays a different role, her husband Armando (Manders) helps with fixing things along with her son Armando. Her daughter-in-law Valerie continues to help with the coffee shop, making unique and distinct coffee blends to the area. Her daughter Esperanza and granddaughter Sophia, and grandson Robert and Robert's dad Rob Robinson help with deliveries and inventory. Her son Javier along with his children come into the shop to help when they're in

town as well. Her 4-year old grandson Emmanuel is the real manager of the shop, keeping Cynthia on her toes.

At the end of the day, Rael-Vigil is happy with the successes her store has seen over the past eight years. "Our family stays circled around one another, just as my parents would've wanted it. We are keeping our family business alive and ensuring that people know about our current work, but also the history of our business and how we were instrumental in establishing the place we call home on the same family land which has been in the family for generations. I am forever grateful for the support from our community and will forever be involved in our community," she says.

The Questa Business Bridge: Connecting Business Resources, Training, and Services

By LYNN SKALL,
Director, Questa Economic
Development Fund

A bridge connects one place to another and helps you transition from where you are to where you want to be. The Questa Business Bridge at the Questa Public Library is a new service with programming that “Connects the Community to Business Resources, Training, and Services.”

The earliest bridges were in fact stepping stones, and the Questa Business Bridge helps you take the first steps toward your goal of starting a business, growing your existing business, and supporting any of your business endeavors. It’s not just for entrepreneurs and businesspeople, it’s for anyone looking for ways to work smarter, not harder, and to make more money in less time.

The Questa Business Bridge is a “Business Center”

Like you’d find at a hotel, the Questa Library now has a complete “business center” where you can print, copy, fax, scan, access computers, workspace, and hold meetings.

QEDF was awarded a \$25,000 LEADS grant from the NM Economic Development Department to launch the Business Bridge. The funds enabled the purchase of a commercial-grade color Canon copier (with scanner and fax), two Dell desktop computer systems, and an innovative 75” Smart White Board, which is a giant rolling monitor for presentations, webinars, and training, with touch screen technology that enables you to write on it with a special pen and save your notes directly to your linked device.

QEDF has donated all of this equipment to the Questa Library. There’s no charge for use of the computers, workspace, or internet; only a nominal fee is charged for printing and making copies, which pays for replacement paper and support staff.

The Questa Business Bridge is a “Training Center”

Like a fitness center, the Business Bridge helps strengthen your business acumen and pump up your professional knowledge through interactive workshops, one-on-one consulting, mentorships, and other resources. You don’t have to leave Questa to get the



Photo by Jessica Trujillo

training you need.

Like a gym, you only benefit from the resources when you use them. Unlike a gym, these workshops and services are free, sponsored by QEDF, Triad National Securities/Los Alamos National Laboratories, and NM EDD.

To date, in-person workshops have been held for the arts economy, on grant writing, “Introduction to Entrepreneurship,” and managing your finances. Additional workshops are scheduled: writing a business plan, creating a psychologically safe work environment, business budgets for beginners, funding your business, and more.

To host these seminars the Business Bridge partners with the Small Business Development Center, HIVE (the Hub for Internet-based Vocation and Education www.taoshive.com), WESST (www.wesst.org), UNM-Taos, local professionals, and many other collaborators.

For a schedule of workshops, visit the Questa online calendar of events at questanews.com/questa-events.

The Questa Business Bridge is a Strategic Economic Driver

One of the goals of QEDF has been to “build a small business resource center, to explore new tools and resources that will put the community in a better position to grow new business and investment, and to encourage a business climate that supports and promotes local enterprise.”

The Questa Business Bridge is that resource. It provides office solutions,

programming, and technical assistance to help guide and assist you in the direction you want to go to succeed in your business endeavors.

For more information, contact lynn@QuestaEDF.com or leave a message at (575) 586-2149.



CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY TO BUSINESS RESOURCES, TRAINING, AND SERVICES

AT THE QUESTA PUBLIC LIBRARY

JUNE WORKSHOPS

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #c00000;">JUNE 5</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Wednesday 5:30 - 7:30 PM</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #006666;">Market Research and Validation</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">with Ayla Parker, Hive</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">In Person at the Questa Public Library</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #c00000;">FREE</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #c00000;">JUNE 12</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Wednesday 5:30 - 7:30 PM</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #006666;">Social Media for Businesses</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">with Ayla Parker, Hive</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">In Person at the Questa Public Library</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #c00000;">FREE</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #c00000;">JUNE 20</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Thursday</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #006666;">Confidential business counseling services</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">with Anwar Kaelin, UNM</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Schedule apointment at nmsbdc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #c00000;">FREE</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #c00000;">JUNE 26</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Wednesday 5:30 - 7:30 PM</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #006666;">Business Registration and Permitting</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">with Andy Jones, Taos County</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">In Person at the Questa Public Library</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: #c00000;">FREE</p>
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Old Questa Featured In New York City Exhibit: American Latinos

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Over the years, photos from the Library of Congress have circulated across social media, often drawing high interest from locals who are able to have a first-hand glimpse into the days of our grandparents' and great-grandparents' lives.

Rarely, however, are we able to get more information than a quick date and source citing, often recorded by a photographer.

Recently, however, New York-based journalist, author, and filmmaker Alberto Ferreras, who is nationally known for his media projects which explore and explain the diversity and complexity of US Latino experience and is most well-known for HBO's documentary series "Habla," took interest in these portraits. Finding over 170,000 photos in the Library of Congress, he curated an exhibit entitled 'American Latinos' which includes approximately 250 of the many images taken of American Latinos between 1935 through 1943.

Ferreras took some time to speak with the *Questa del Rio News* about his exhibit on display at the Gallery of the Instituto Cervantes in New York City currently through mid-June.

"These photos have been around for almost 100 years, and every decade they are rediscovered for different people and different reasons. They've been used in documentaries about the Great Depres-



Courtesy Photo

Grade School Children in Questa in 1943 by John Collier Jr.

sion—but the thing is, they don't always identify the subject, so they could be Spanish American, or Mexican American, or Puerto Rican," Ferreras says. "I've always had a hard time picturing Latinos in that era, because they were not in the Hollywood films—but after seeing these photos, I am able to picture a past that included us."

Ferreras says that through his studies, he found the vast number of photos, which now belong to the Library of Congress were spurred from a movement by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was working to bring our country out of



Courtesy Photo

Poster for the American Latino Exhibit in New York City

the Great Depression. "President Roosevelt created the Farm Security Administration to help farmers relocate to better land and to teach them how to make their farming ventures more productive and to show living conditions around various parts of the country. That agency had a photography unit, and these photos are a product of that."

Ferreras says he is grateful that the colossal treasure of photos was archived to the Library of Congress, which allows anyone to download them in a high-resolution format.

Starting his work during the pandem-

ic, Ferreras spent three years scanning through over 30,000 photos to see how many Latinos he could find. He says he made this a video project because he wanted a piece that pays respect and tribute to the photographer and the subjects alike.

While his work includes American Latinos from across the country, Ferreras says he was particularly intrigued by the photos taken in northern New Mexico.

"Some of my favorite photos used in the piece were taken in New Mexico, in Questa, by John Collier Jr. who is considered the father of visual anthropology. He took wonderful portraits in Questa in the 1940's, when the majority of the town spoke Spanish. There are also beautiful portraits of Costilla, Taos, Penasco, Rodarte... then you also see Basque sheepherders in Idaho and Nevada and Spanish muskrat trappers in Louisiana. Giving our people an identity, a carved-out place in history. That is my life's legacy."

Ferreras says each of the photos displayed in his work through the American Latinos exhibit treats the subjects and the portraits with respect and dignity, making visible a group that has often been invisible in the narrative of America: the American Latinos.

Ferreras, who lives in New York, says he is interested in continuing work in northern New Mexico to elevate the American Latino identity.



Is This Summer the Right Time to Sell?

Today let's discuss home equity and assess whether this summer is a good time to sell your home, land, or a business property.

Home equity loosely corresponds with how much housing wealth one has

It is the difference between how much is owed on a mortgage and the market value of a property. "Tappable equity" is the amount a homeowner can access while maintaining a 20 percent equity buffer. Homeowners can tap into their equity by doing a cash-out refinance or a home equity line of credit.

Mortgage rates remain high, causing many homeowners to hold onto their current low rates. This has led to many homeowners not listing their homes; creating a scarcity of homes for sale. Although new listings were up 20.6 percent at the end of April compared with the year before, the increase was smaller than the historical average. Low inventory in turn pushes up home prices.

In Taos County, the housing market has a median price of \$542,000. On average, homes in Taos County sell after 79 days on the market, compared to 76 days last year. There were 18 homes sold

in April this year, compared to 26 last year in Taos County. In Colfax County, the housing market median price is about \$275,000 and average days on market was 219. The shortage in inventory in turn pushes up home prices, or in our case, keeps them in the higher price ranges.

While it is still early to say what this summer's market might look like, we have seen some price improvements in our local housing market. With that being said, this summer could very well be a great time to list your property.

Where do you start? First, find a qualified realtor. A realtor will educate and guide on the selling process, discuss the home's market value and pricing strategy and develop a marketing strategy for promoting the home and attracting buyers. A realtor can also answer questions the seller might have and can perform a CMA, or comparative

market analysis. The analysis considers the location, age, size, construction, style, condition, and other factors for the property and its comparables; determining if the timing is right to sell.

Yet no amount of timing or marketing trends should determine what time is right for you; deciding when to sell is a personal decision. Personally, professionally, and otherwise.

Are you ready to move on, or up into bigger? Many sell when they change jobs or when their children switch schools, or when the kids fly the coop and the parents are ready to downsize. Maybe for some, the older they get, having a lot of property becomes too much to handle. So, consider your own situation when deciding whether to put your house on the market now or wait.

Keep in mind when you are ready to sell, I am able and happy to help.

Oldest San Luis Grocery Store Set to Reopen



Courtesy Photos

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The San Luis Valley, settled by the Spaniards in the early 1500s shares close cultural ties with northern New Mexico. The small community has experienced its fair share of struggles, being the oldest town in Colorado and competing with large cities such as Denver and Colorado Springs.

The people are modest and are sure to take care of one another whenever the need arises. Many buildings in town are older but show the antiquated charm of the days when the town was once in its prime.

Unfortunately, through the years, many businesses have closed or fallen into disarray. The only full-service grocery store, known as the San Luis People's Market, has been operating in the San Luis Valley since 1857. It was operational until it was forced to shut its doors in 2023, when building inspectors found asbestos, lead-based paint, and mold in the store.

The Acequia Institute worked to become a fiscal sponsor on behalf of the market to obtain a \$200,416 grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), which is a loan fund to help cover the cost of the asbestos abatement and lead-based paint and mold removal.

According to a Facebook post from the Acequia Institute, they have also secured a generous \$50,000 grant from the Colorado Department of Agriculture to reset the interior of the market, which was gutted for the floor cleanout. The grant is giving the market the ability to install new shelves and gondolas, a new floor, bulk food dispensary and a new checkout stand and office.

"As the only full-service grocery store in San Luis, Colorado, the reopening of San Luis Market will help ensure Coloradans in the valley have access to healthy food in a safe store, and I am glad the state could provide a grant to help reopen this community landmark," said Colorado Governor Jared Polis.

According to a release from CDPHE, reopening the San Luis People's Market is essential, as fresh food and groceries are not easily accessible in the community. The top of the market also offers affordable housing.

The Acequia Institute goes on to say, "We are planning to host a grand reopening ceremony during Santa Ana Fiesta Days, during the last weekend in July. Please plan to visit us for music, poetry, free food, and door prizes including a one-year membership in the food cooperative we are forming."



Courtesy Photos

Grants For Good Recipients Announced

By CONTRIBUTING WRITER
GABRIEL HERRERA,
PUBLIC AFFAIRS
ADVISOR, CHEVRON

Chevron, in partnership with the Taos Community Foundation, is pleased to announce the grant recipients for the 2024 Chevron "Grants for Good" grant cycle. Chevron and the local employees working at the Questa Mine remediation project have a vested interest in enriching the community in which we live and

work, and we are proud to say that 25 non-profit organizations that serve the communities of Questa, Lama, Cerro, El Rito, Costilla, and Amalia will be awarded a grand total of \$100,500 in this year's grant cycle. The grants will provide funding for many great causes within the community, including providing learning and recreational opportunities for youth, cancer support services, support for community events, agriculture, food security, animal welfare, and many others.

The following organizations will receive grant funding:

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 100% Taos County Initiative | High Desert Hounds | Sangre de Cristo Youth Ranch |
| Bridges Project for Education | (fiscally sponsored by Locology) | (fiscally sponsored by Locology) |
| Cancer Foundation for New Mexico | Inspire | Questa Creative Council |
| Casas de Cultura (fiscally sponsored by Locology) | LEAP - Land, Experience, & Art of Place | Santa's Helpers del Norte |
| Catholic Daughters Court Sangre de Cristo #2229 | (fiscally sponsored by Locology) | Stray Hearts Animal Shelter |
| Community Against Violence | Lions Club of Taos | Taos Feeds Taos |
| Creature Comforts Affordable Pet Care | Living Word Ministries | TWIRL |
| Cultivo (fiscally sponsored by Locology) | Questa Farmers Market | |
| Freedom Center Church | (fiscally sponsored by Locology) | |
| Friends of the Questa Public Library | Random Acts of Food and Wellness | |
| Holy Cross Medical Center | (fiscally sponsored by Locology) | |
| - Taos Cancer Support Services | Sala Reach | |
| | (fiscally sponsored by Locology) | |



Red River Brewery & Distillery Recognized Nationally

By STAFF WRITERS

The Red River Brewery is no stranger to awards and recognition, routinely bringing home impressive wins on their locally-sourced products, unique to Red River.

On May 8, the distillery announced through a press release that their Mallette Bros. Gin received a prestigious Double-Gold medal from "The Fifty Best" organization, which conducts its testing with 12 professional judges.

Head Distiller Gavin Whealy proudly states, "This marks the second time our Mallette Bros. Gin has earned a Double-Gold medal from The Fifty Best. We've put significant effort into crafting one of the finest gins available anywhere, and I'm thrilled with its consistently high quality."

The release goes on to say that at the 8750' elevation of the town, Red River Distillery is the third highest distillery in the world. The lower air pressure and cooler temperatures at this elevation influence the distillation process,

leading to spirits that are smoother and have more subtle flavor profiles that can't be matched by distilleries at lower elevations.

The distillery has made their award-winning products, including the Mallette Bros Gin and other Red River Brewery & Distillery spirits, available in over 280 liquor stores across New Mexico and Texas. Southern Glazer's (New Mexico) and Green Light Distribution (Texas) handle their distribution.

The brewery established itself in 2018 and proudly identifies itself as a family-owned business with deep roots in this special mountain community.





Youth Center Makeover with a Little Support

What was your favorite place growing up? Can you picture it? The place that made you feel invincible, that sparked your imagination. The place where you made new friends and lost track of time. Maybe it was a park or sports field. Maybe it was a library, a church, or even a classroom.

All of us have places that we hold dear because they shaped us. Kids growing up in Questa have had those places for decades. But for a while now the C. A. Cisneros Youth and Family Center has not been among them. Questa's youth center has been mostly vacant for years, hosting only occasional events and programs. Instead of serving as a hub for fun and inspiration, the center has been fading from the memories of local kids.

"Even after some repairs, local groups have found the youth center difficult to use," says Questa LOR Community Officer Maria Gonzalez. "The center doesn't have enough furniture for larger groups [and] its oven and other equipment sometimes don't work."

To many Questa residents, it was clear that the youth center needed an update. Over the last year and a half, community groups discussed breathing

life into the building, hoping to transform the center once again into a bastion for kids. At the same time, community members and organizations also envisioned using a refurbished youth center to provide more summer and after-school programs for Questa youth.

One staff member with the Village of Questa reached out to Gonzalez with a clear solution. She wanted to purchase new equipment to make the space functional again. LOR's funding is now helping the village remake the youth center. When finished, the center will have new tables, chairs, couches, bookshelves, and rugs, as well as a new oven, microwave, and TV. A coalition of Questa locals has also come together to launch a new after-school program that will be housed in the renovated center this summer.

"So many of us want to create more opportunities for our kids, and the youth

center is key to that mission," Gonzalez says. "These updates will leave a legacy for Questa's kids."

While one Questa landmark will soon be restored, another local tradition will continue on Saturday, June 15, with the Fiestas de San Antonio del Río Colorado. LOR is proud to support this year's Fiestas and celebrate Questa's heritage.

If you've got a solution to share, you'll be able to find Gonzalez at a booth at the Fiestas. You can also reach her at maria@lorfoundation.org or (575) 665-2001.

LOR works with rural communities in the Mountain West to enhance livability and prosperity while preserving the character that makes each community unique. LOR supports locally led community projects that improve transportation, housing, the environment, education, civic engagement, water, health, and the economy.

DURAN FOR SALE cont'd from page 1

Another fond memory Marialuz carries is the morning cafecito her dad and other elder members of the community would have every morning, where they'd drink coffee, eat donuts, and catch up on current events while reminiscing about the old times. "Nowadays, gas stations are owned by corporations which are pushing small family businesses aside. It's rare to find many friendly faces of people enjoying their morning cup of coffee inside these fast-paced hustle and bustle corporate gas stations," she says.

Growing up, helping her parents run the much-admired business, Duran says her experiences helped shape her into the person she is today. "I saw my parents put in a lot of work into the business to make it what it is today. During high school, college, and summers, I had my own shift and worked at the store. At one point I helped my mom do the

orders and paperwork. This experience really opened my eyes to the amount of dedication it takes to run your own business, while also teaching me responsibility and a good work ethic. Running your own business is not easy, it takes a lot of hard work. That dedication is why my mom has a legacy she is leaving to the store, of a structurally strong business which serves its community."

When it comes to selling the multigenerational business her family has worked so hard to make successful, Marialuz has mixed feelings. "It's a hard one for me. In many ways it makes me sad because it has been a huge part of my life growing up, but I know my parents need to enjoy their retirement. Some days I think to myself 'maybe I should move back home and take over,' but I really do love my engineering career and where I'm at in life. My sisters and I have different career paths and we've come to accept that is okay. We



Courtesy Photo

A look inside the store with a full coffee bar and plenty of snack offerings

will always cherish our memories in the store. I just hope the next owners will enjoy the business and cherish it just as much as we have."

The Duran family has worked hard to keep this high-quality gas station running to serve the northernmost part of Taos County and southern Colorado. It's proven to be a successful establishment for generations and they are looking for the next owners to carry the business forward.

Alma says she is incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to serve the loyal customers from Costilla, Amalia, Garcia, and beyond. In the words of her father, "the people are the backbone of the business, and you can't be successful without local support."

The business is listed with realtor Ryan Trujillo with Berkshire Hathaway Home Services and Taos Real Estate. To schedule a viewing of this investment opportunity, you can contact Ryan directly via cell at (575) 770-8650.

State Announces New Absentee Ballot Tracking System

By KUNM News

New Mexico Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver announced the launch of a new online system that allows voters to track their absentee ballots, and receive email and text updates.

Absentee ballots can be filled out at home over time, as opposed to voting at the polls. Any qualified New Mexico voter can use one, and no reason or ex-

cuse needs to be given. Once completed, voters can submit their absentee ballot by mailing it back or dropping it off at any voting location or ballot drop box.

Toulouse Oliver said in a statement that the new Ballot Scout system improves upon the state's existing tracking system by "offering more information to voters about where exactly their absentee ballot is, in the mailing process."

To use it, first a voter has to request their absentee ballot. That can be done using the state's online portal or a county clerk's paper application. Some clerks' offices also allow voters to call or email their request.

Voters can then go to the ballot tracker on the Secretary of State's website to sign up for email or text notifications about their ballot's whereabouts.

The deadline to request a ballot for the primary election was Tuesday, May 21. Completed ballots must be received by 7 p.m. on primary Election Day, June 4. Although the deadline for absentee ballots passed on May 21, you can still vote in person until 7 p.m. on Election Day.

Learn more about absentee ballots and how to request one on [Instagram @KUNMNews](https://www.instagram.com/KUNMNews).

Questa Visitor Center Drives Economic Development

By LYNN SKALL
DIRECTOR, QUESTA ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT FUND

Questa's location at the crossroads of state highways 522 and 38 on the Enchanted Circle Scenic Byway affords our community traffic from all directions. The Questa Visitor Center is located at the traffic light at this intersection, where visitors are stopped in the heart of town. The Visitor Center gets them to stay a little longer than the 60 seconds it takes for the light to change.

The Questa Visitor Center serves thousands of visitors every summer, providing suggestions about what to see, where to eat, where to spend time (and money), and what not to miss in the Questa area.

To provide the best service for our guests and your business, we ask you to be sure we have your brochure, rack card, or business card at the Visitor Center so we can direct vacationers your way. Are you a local with a book, an artist with small-sized artwork, pottery, or handmade items that we can promote



Courtesy Photo

and sell for you?

The Visitor Center is your local source for Questa branded merchandise, including ceramic mugs, insulated travel mugs, t-shirts, postcards, local artist's note cards, Taos Bakes bars, and a variety of affordable keepsakes, so that friends and family who live out of town or guests visiting our area can purchase mementos to remember us by.

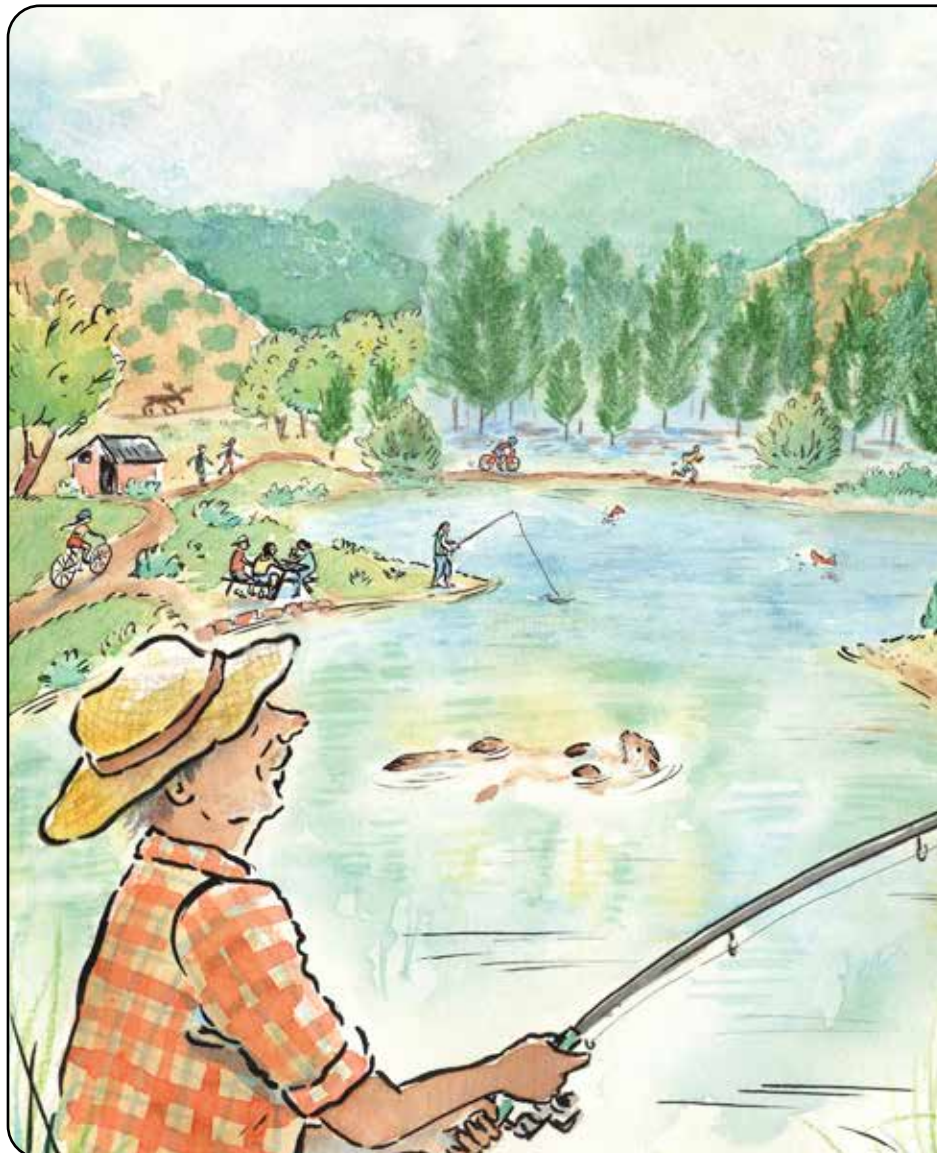
We have a year-round 24/7 ADA-accessible outdoor port-a-potty, generously set up by a grant from the LOR Foundation, so send your "non-customers" our way for use of our comfort station.



Courtesy Photo

The Visitor Center is operated and managed by the Questa Economic Development Fund; the QEDF and the Questa del Rio News have office space at the Visitor Center. Stop by and say hi and drop off your collateral so we can

best promote your business!
Open Wednesday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. through October 6; for more information, leave a message at (575) 586-2149 or go to VisitQuesta.com.



School's Out for the Summer!

The start of summer is just around the corner, which means Questa residents will soon enjoy more time outside fishing, hiking, biking, gardening, and grilling with friends and family. **LOR wants to help even more locals enjoy the outdoors this summer**—whether that means creating access to recreational activities for kids, exploring new ways for seniors to connect with nature, or supporting community efforts to care for the environment.

If you have an idea for a project that could help make life in Questa even better, please contact Maria Gonzalez at (575) 665-2001 or maria@lorfoundation.org to learn how LOR can help. *No formal application required.*

Visit our website
lorfoundation.org

Call or text Maria
(575) 665-2001



Deanna Aragon

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 June issue, we spoke with Deanna Aragon.

Maturity and responsibility was always a part of Deanna's journey. She along with her sisters worked jobs in Red River in their teen years, learning the value of work ethic. Deanna had her son Daniel when she was 16 years old, and this meant she needed to establish her priorities and decide what was important for her future. She graduated from Questa High School in 2014 with honors and was already enrolled at the University of New Mexico in Taos where she obtained her Associates Degree.

She transferred to Las Vegas where she attended New Mexico Highlands University with the goal to obtain her bachelor's degree, and soon after, transferred to the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque in 2016. She graduated with her bachelor's in criminology and a minor in philosophy. A year later she obtained her post-baccalaureate degree for Paralegal studies and became a certified victim advocate.

Through college, Aragon worked full time, carving out her experience working with victims of crimes through the Taos District Attorney's Office, Crime Victims Reparation Commission, and with the New Mexico Attorney Gener-



Courtesy Photo

Deanna Aragon and her son Daniel.

al's Office. "I knew early on that I wanted to work with victims of crimes, and through my journey, opportunities keep pointing to this work," Aragon says.

In the back of her mind, she always had an interest in being a detective and after a couple years of research, she decided to apply for the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department Regional Training Academy in 2019. "It was terrifying and there were moments where I had to ask myself what I was doing. I am a mom; I am supposed to be home with my kiddo," she recalls.

After 24 weeks into the academy and only two left to go, Aragon suffered a devastating ankle break and torn ligaments. "I only had two weeks to go, and this happened. I had to drop out of the academy and was told if I wanted to do it, I would have to go through the entire 26 week academy again."

Although devastated, Aragon remained resilient. In 2020 she applied for the police academy again. "I had a dream and I knew that if I wanted to achieve it, and if I wanted to be a good example for my son, I needed to pursue my dream with every ounce of determination I had."

She completed the 26-week law enforcement academy and has been a Bernalillo County Sheriff's Deputy since 2021. "I am going into my third year in law enforcement, and I have to be honest, it's not easy. You encounter people on the hardest days of their lives and you have the power to remind them—maybe you made a mistake today. That makes it a bad day, not a bad life."

Currently, Aragon is assigned to the Field Services Division where she is a Student Resource Deputy at a Col-



Courtesy Photo

Deanna stands in the center, posing with her colleagues after receiving the award



Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office

May 7 at 4:56 PM

Today, we are incredibly proud to recognize the exceptional efforts of Bernalillo County Sheriff's deputies Deana Aragon, Adrian Velasquez, and Caleb Wenger, who were honored by the Second Judicial District, Bernalillo County, and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) for their dedication to the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program.

The LEAD program is an initiative that diverts non-violent individuals with serious mental health issues or substance use disorders into community-based services and support, rather than the criminal justice system. This approach not only enhances public health but also aims to break the cycle of recidivism by addressing the root causes of criminal behavior.

Thank you Bernalillo County NM for recognizing the hard work and compassionate service of our deputies. Their commitment to innovative law enforcement strategies is transforming lives and strengthening our community.

Today's ceremony highlights what we can achieve when we work together for the health and safety of our community. Congratulations to all our deputies and our partners in this vital program. Your work is making a difference!

#BCSO #LEADProgram #CommunityFirst #LawEnforcement #PublicService #BernalilloCounty

You, Annette A Rael, John Ortega and 119 others

56 comments

Social media post from Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office

laborative Community School. A part of her duties requires her to respond to schools around the city for crimes committed against children, runaway cases, domestic violence cases, and crisis intervention cases. She is also assigned to the Gang Intelligence Recognition and Patrol Unit (GRIP), Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT), and Community Engagement Team (CET).

"Our work is very important because

we're in a time where people don't trust the police. I appreciate being able to bring that connection to people to show them that there are good cops. Not everyone needs to be arrested, I want to help them turn their lives around. I can do that and show them that through my actions."

Recently, Aragon was recognized for her dedication to the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program.

Mayfest in the Mountains Rebrand Met With Mixed Reviews

By STAFF WRITER

Red River kicked off its rebranded “Mayfest in The Mountains,” this year, a shift away from the traditional motorcycle rally and its street vendors, and towards family-friendly and educational activities in the area’s parks, in the wake of last year’s deadly shootout.

We spoke with people who were in favor of the rebrand, and some who felt like the economic impact wasn’t worth the change.

“I think it’s terrible,” said an Old

Tymers employee by the name of Banos. “I’m starting this weekend in the hole because of it.” Old Tymers displayed a large banner at the entrance on Main Street reading “bikers welcome” in hopes of attracting their regular Memorial Day clientele.

“We’re still expecting some of our regulars this year,” said Banos. Other restaurants along Main Street also made efforts to appeal to bikers, including Texas Reds Steakhouse and Motherlode Saloon, who dubbed the weekend’s event “Revive the Ride.”



Photo by Dylan R. Crabb

Levi Curry, of Bearly Awake Coffee, posted on Facebook that this is actually better for local businesses. Historically it’s out-of-town vendors lining the streets,

with wall-to-wall bikes and people, so local businesses have been shortchanged economically.

Others posted, “I like the new look... less people and crowds... It’s a much better image for a family-friendly town.”

Red River also housed the Wall of Honor memorial in its conference center, a memorial dedicated to fallen soldiers of Desert Storm/Desert Shield (1990-91), Operation Enduring Freedom (2001-14), and Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003-11) displaying the names of over 6,500 veterans.

Questa Honors Vets For Memorial Day Weekend

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Questa and Red River experienced favorable weather for their respective Memorial Day weekends. Questa honored fallen soldiers at its 20th annual Healing Fields event.

United States Senator Ben Ray Lujan attended Questa’s Healing Fields on May 26 and spoke about the respect owed to those who sacrificed their lives for American liberties.

“On this solemn day our nation honors the courageous men and women who died in their service defending our

country and for the freedoms that each of us enjoys today,” said the US Senator.

Other speakers at the Healing Fields ceremony included retired Colonel Donnie Quintana, of Pecos, (NM National Guard), now Secretary of the NM Department of Veterans Services, and 1st Sergeant Ronald Gallegos, of Questa, (US Marine Corps, NM National Guard, and US Army Reserve) a Purple Heart recipient.

WATCH: *Stories of Valor: Ron Gallegos (National Purple Heart Honor Mission)* <https://www.purpleheartmission.org/stories-of-valor/us-marine-corps-lsg-ron-gallegos-iraq>

of war for three years and seven months until liberation in 1945; he is the last surviving NM veteran of World War II.

Mayor John Ortega also recognized one military veteran in the audience, a 105-year-old veteran of World War II, retired Sergeant Valdemar DeHerrera (NM National Guard). A native of Costilla, DeHerrera saw combat in the 1942 Battle of Bataan, escaping the infamous death march while still suffering as a prisoner

Village of Questa Councilor Louise Gallegos organized the Healing Fields with the help of volunteers.

WATCH: *Questa del Rio News (QDRN) recording of the VoQ Healing Fields ceremony.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KecXxg57dgA>



Courtesy Photo

WILLIAM J. SALLS, MSN/CRNP

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PUBLIC LIBRARY

Summer Adventures at the Questa Library

By CONTRIBUTING WRITER
SHARON NICHOLSON,
QUESTA PUBLIC
LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Join the fun at the library's summer program. Exciting events are planned for our kids including hiking, forest fun, survival skills, art exploration, and more. We



Courtesy Photo

have new books to read and we will record our adventures. Maybe we will even find some special treasure along the way!

This year we have added more ways to get tickets for the grand prize raffle and even more prizes are planned. So come for the

fun, the chance to get outdoors, old and new friends, and exciting challenges.

The kickoff for the program happens at our annual Questa Truckin' event on Friday, June 7, at 9:30 a.m. Register for the summer reading program, meet some awesome truckers, and see some amazing trucks. Plan to participate in the annual SOUND OFF... we will wake Questa up with the blast of every horn here!

The Summer Reading Program is for children ages 4 through 10. Older kids are welcome and parents are encouraged to participate. We encourage attending all the sessions, but we understand if your family needs to come once, or now and then. And let us know if your child is allergic to anything, or has special needs. Please sign up the first time you attend. If you have questions, please give us a call at (575) 586-2023. Let's make Summer Reading 2024 the best adventure yet!



NORTHERN TAOS COUNTY

Animal
Welfare
Spotlight

BY HIGH DESERT HOUNDS

Protect Your Pets From Common Toxic Plants

One common behavior among pets is their occasional tendency to chew and eat things they should not have. It's planting season in Taos County, and this can be a risky time for our furry friends. We might unknowingly put them in danger by exposing them to toxic plants. Here's a list of some common plants, flowers, and weeds that are toxic to dogs and cats, along with the symptoms your pet may experience if they ingest them. If you are unsure, it's best to keep your canine and feline friends away from any questionable greenery.

- **MORNING GLORY:** Vomiting, agitation, diarrhea, loss of appetite, tremors, hallucinations, and liver failure.
- **PAPER WHITE:** Vomiting, salivation, diarrhea; large ingestions cause convulsions, low blood pressure, tremors, and cardiac arrhythmias. Bulbs are the most poisonous part.
- **PURSLANE:** Weakness, drooling, tremors, diarrhea, metabolic imbalance, and kidney failure.
- **AMARYLLIS:** Vomiting, diarrhea,

abdominal pain, hypersalivation, decreased appetite, lethargy, and tremors in cats and dogs.

- **LILIES:** Highly toxic to cats; even small amounts may cause severe kidney damage.
- **CASTOR BEAN:** Vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, excessive thirst, weakness, trembling, loss of coordination, difficulty breathing, progressive central nervous system depression, and fever. Convulsions and coma can precede death.
- **SAGO PALM:** Vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, and liver failure.
- **FOXGLOVE:** Vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, cardiac failure, and death.
- **TULIPS:** Drooling, loss of appetite, lethargy, seizures, and heart problems.
- **AZALEAS:** Vomiting, drooling, diarrhea, and weakness. Severely poisoned pets can lapse into a coma and die from cardiovascular collapse.
- **MARIJUANA:** Ingestion of cannabis by companion animals can lead to depression of the central nervous system, vomiting, diarrhea, drooling, increased heart rate, and even seizures and coma. This plant does not affect our animals in the same ways it affects humans and should never be left within reach of our pets.

If you suspect your pet has ingested any of these plants, contact your veterinarian immediately. If you are calling outside of operating hours, please listen to the voicemail of your local veterinarian, as many have instructions on how to contact them for emergency services.

Taos Vet can be reached at (575) 758-



Courtesy photo

Hollyhocks are non-toxic and a great option for a pet-friendly garden. (The above female puppy is looking for a forever home at the time of assembling this issue. For more information, inquire at High Desert Hounds; contact details below)

7310. Taos Vet is on call for after-hours emergency services on Mondays, Tuesdays, and most weekends.

Angel Fire Vet can be reached at (575) 377- 3165 and will respond to emergency situations as they have the capacity to do so.

If you are unable to reach anyone for emergency services at these offices, please do not wait. The nearest 24-hour emergency clinics are Alpine Veterinary Clinic in Alamosa, Colorado and Roadrunner Veterinary located in Algon-

dones, New Mexico. Alpine Veterinary Clinic can be reached at (719) 589-2615 during operating business hours and at (719) 852-2561 for 24-hour emergency services. Roadrunner Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Hospital can be reached (505) 384-6420. ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center can be reached at (888) 426-4435.

High Desert Hounds at
(469) 644-8323, or
HighDesertHoundsTaos@gmail.com, or
through our website at
www.HighDesertHounds.Org

Historical Society's Lecture June 1: Aldo and Estella Leopold

By CONTRIBUTING WRITER
MICHAEL WILSON
TAOS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Taos County Historical Society's monthly program on Saturday, June 1 at 2 p.m. will focus on Aldo Leopold, considered by many to be the father of wildlife ecology and modern conservation. With his wife Estella, Leopold began his career in New Mexico and Taos County.

Dr. Richard Rubin of Taos will describe the Leopolds' New Mexico histories, their brief time in Tres Piedras, and their influence on land ethics practices here. With the recent restoration of the Leopolds' 1912 home, "Mi Casita," the U.S. Forest Service has a declared mission of historic preservation, conservation inspiration, and ecological education.

The Rubins have published "Living the Leopolds' Mi Casita Ecology" through Nighthawk Press (2022). The book's proceeds are dedicated to the Friends of Mi Casita Fund at the Taos Community Foundation.

Richard and Annette Rubin have 55 years of experience in Arizona and New Mexico, beginning with the Indian Health



Estella and Aldo Leopold at Mi Casita

Service and University of New Mexico medical residency—to their current retirement home in Arroyo Seco. He serves as

the U.S. Forest Service authorized steward of the Leopolds' national historic site cabin known as Mi Casita.



Courtesy Photo

Dr. Richard Rubin



Courtesy Photo

Mi Casita national historic site, Carson National Forest, Tres Piedras

Who: Taos County Historical Society
What: Aldo and Estella Leopold in Tres Piedras
When: Saturday, June 1, at 2 p.m.
Where: Kit Carson Coop boardroom, 118 Cruz Alta, Taos
Contact: Michael Wilson at (612) 743-6546

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06/21 Imagination Storytelling with Twirl	07/16 Special Birthday Surprise!
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QUESTA HISTORY TRAIL

For National Trails Day, **Celebrate Questa** with live music, local foods, and the Questa Art Market—a festival event! 10 am to 4 pm, June 8, at the Farmers Market site.

Walk the Questa History Trail with guest experts and listen to oral history at "Story Box" stations.

Enjoy the work of over 15 local artists and crafters, listen to great music, and treat yourself to fresh homemade food!

Historic St. Anthony Church

Arcane Ramblers will play from 2 - 4 pm

Delicious local food from two chefs

Arellano Brothers will play from 11 am- 1 pm

Saturday June 8

Come to celebrate both history and the richness of our present lives!

QUESTACREATIVE.ORG

Questa Graduates Step Into Their Next Chapter

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

Questa High School held its graduation ceremony honoring its graduating class of 2024. Class President Esteban Gomez began the morning's event with a congratulatory speech for his fellow classmates.

"I think about all the adventures that we've had and all the circumstances that we've been through... we've been through a lot," said Gomez solemnly. "I'm glad to say we've made it together as a team... I always remember the last day as the best day—the last bell ringing, all of us running to the door, and then that one feeling knowing that you're all gonna see each other at the same time next year. That's all gonna end now. Just know that that end is the start of a new chapter."

Valedictorian Nathaniel Rael and salutatorian Ricardo Sanchez also approached the podium to provide passionate send-offs to their classmates.

"For years we've walked these halls together, shared laughter, tears, and memories, and now as we prepare to start our own individual journeys there's a sense of both fear and excitement through it all," said Sanchez. "There will be moments of doubt and setbacks and obstacles to overcome but, just as Kobe Bryant never backed down from a challenge, I refuse to let fear hold me back."

"The beginning of our lives, it starts



Photo by Dylan Crabb

Questa Graduates 2024



Photo by Dylan Crabb

Salutatorian Ricardo Sanchez



Photo by Dylan Crabb

Valedictorian Nathaniel Rael

today," said Rael. "Each of us will have a different path. That road may not be easy to reach and there will be dark times, but I want you to remember we went through a pandemic, experienced hybrid learning... that was a very dark time for us, but we made it."

New Mexico's Lieutenant Governor Howie Morales traveled to Questa to make an appearance at the graduation event and addressed the audience after the class president, valedictorian, and salutatorian.

"There is something special about Questa," said the Lieutenant Governor. "We're here to celebrate each one of you... I travel all across the country to share what we're doing in New Mexico when it comes to early childhood education and what we're trying to do to ensure that we have groundbreaking opportunities for all of our students, and I would put all our students across the state of New Mexico against any student across this country... Never forget where you're from and always be proud to know that you come from Questa, New Mexico, home of a community that takes care of their own."

A recording of the celebration event can be found at the Questa del Rio News' Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/QuestaNews/videos/1889243474858791>



Questa High School
Senior Night 2024

Questa Sophomore Claims State Championships In Track & Field



Courtesy Photo

The Questa track & field team stands ready to leave for the State Championships with equipment gifted to them by the LOR Foundation

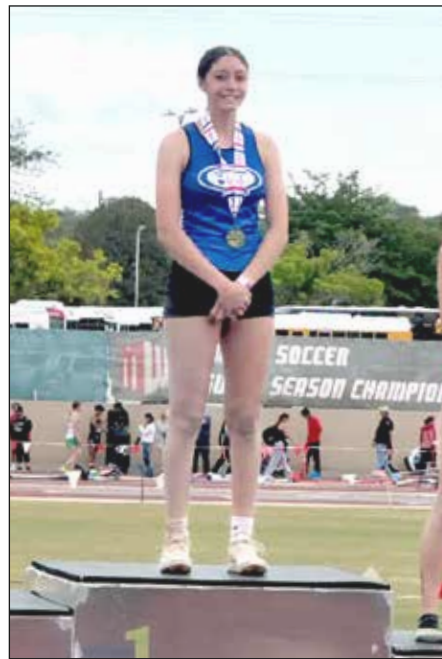
By STAFF WRITERS

It was a big month for Questa's track & field athletes, starting with sophomore Alyse Lovato bringing home two first-place medals in the Girls High Jump and Girls Triple Jump. She also scored second place in the 400-meter dash, bringing home a silver medal and was rated as the second highest individual female scorer in the 2A division.

The following students also placed for the following categories:

- Freshman Jacovo Cardenas came in 9th for boys Javelin Throw
- Junior Jacob Vallejos came in 8th for the boys 300-meter Hurdles
- Junior Alianna Gonzalez came in 5th in the girls Triple Jump
- Junior Aliyah Santistevan came in 6th in the girls Javelin Throw
- Junior Kamryn Cardenas came in 9th for girls Shotput
- Senior Antonio Romero came in 12th for boys Triple Jump

Additionally, the Questa High School girls and boys teams both came in seventh place for the girls and boys 4 x 100 meter relay in division 2A.



Courtesy Photo

Alyse Lovato stands proudly after winning first place



Questa High School Art Show



Courtesy Photos

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From Questa Mayor John Ortega and The Offices of the Questa Mayor

PAID FOR BY MAYOR JOHN ORTEGA

Plans For Questa Fiestas On June 15 Press Forward

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Plans for the Questa Fiestas are pressing forward, as multiple organizers work together to make the event a success. “We are really working to ensure people can return this year and feel the same community vibe we had last year,” Chairperson Katrina Gonzales says.

Members of the planning committee include Maria Gonzalez, who is responsible for the Princesa and Reina pageant; Alyssah Duran who is responsible for fundraising, and Daniel Cordova, responsible for musical talent. In addition, JoAnn Cisneros is responsible for food vendors and Yolanda Sanchez for craft vendors.

“We are seeing some slow progress from the community. Last year, we had Monte Carlo Grill running the bar, but they’re unable to do it this year, so I am

waiting to hear back from the Alley Cantina in Taos to see if they are interested in taking it on,” Gonzales says.

The committee is also planning to have a “fun jump” for kids, a horseshoe tournament, and the much anticipated pizza oven vendors from last year. The group is also working with Living Word Ministries, Red River Community Church, and Freedom Church to plan kid-friendly outdoor fun. Gonzales says she is hopeful and anticipates that the Questa Fire and EMS will be running the burger stand again this year.

“We’ve had a few hiccups and it’s been difficult bringing everything together this year, but we keep moving forward. I really want to ensure we continue moving forward and keep this tradition alive,” she says.

When asked what might be beneficial



Courtesy Photos

to unite the community in the future, without hesitation, Gonzales points to joining forces with St. Anthony’s Church in Questa. “Historically, the celebration would start with a mass at St. Anthony’s... and then the mayordomos would travel to the Molycorp Fields where the priest would bless the ground before the

Fiestas officially commenced,” Gonzales recalls. “That is what brought many together, was the celebration of the feast day of St. Anthony’s... I hope one day we can join together again.”

Right now, Gonzales says she hopes she can gain more buy-in from the community. “I really want our community to come together for this event. This is more than just “the Fiestas.” This is a chance for us to come together, neighbor to neighbor and catch up on life. What is happening in your life? How are you doing? These things make the community stronger, and I sincerely hope we will see our people come together for this event to reconnect.”

If you would like to obtain a vendor permit, you can contact Village Clerk Valerie Vigil at vvigil@villageofquesta.org or by phone at 575-586-0694.



Celebrate Questa!

On Saturday, June 8, the Celebrate Questa! event finds the Questa History Trail team joining with the Questa Art Market artists, local chefs, and popular bands, to celebrate this area’s history, culture, and artistry.

Local history experts will be present along the Questa History Trail, the half-mile walking trail that reaches from the village’s only traffic light and snakes around to the hidden historic plaza with its restored St. Anthony’s 1840s adobe church, and back to highway 522.

The interpretive signage along the route reveals and explores a true microcosm of northern New Mexico history.

The shaded market area that the trail passes through, the Questa Farmers Market site, will host about 15 area artists and craftspeople. Find locally made jewelry, beadwork, yarn art, fused glass and much more. Questa Farmers Market youth interns’ work—abundant plantings and the beginning of an orchard, help make the space inviting. A children’s activity table will be set up so

your little ones can be occupied while you enjoy the art.

Wonderful food will be available from Farmers Market regulars Wendy Medina serving local favorites, plus Chef Casey with his gourmet creations from regional ingredients.

And some of your favorite local musicians will perform: from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Chris & Rodney Arellano will play their unique danceable Nuevo Americano music, and from 2 to 4 p.m. enjoy the Arcane Ramblers’ special brand of all-natural, handmade string tunes, oldtime, Americana, and other musical arcana on guitar, banjo, mandolin, and fiddle.

This celebration of our Questa History Trail is a National Trails Day event, honoring the value of every kind of trail throughout our country.

Our trail was one of the first projects designed after the closing of the mine, on the heels of the restoration of the San Antonio de Padua (St. Anthony’s Church), a testament to the Questa citizens who chose against all odds to not abandon this historic church after major structural failure occurred in 2008, but to rebuild and restore it. Within, it is a beautiful exhibit of the many local craftspeople’s work that

helped bring it back to life with their generations-old skills. A local guide will be on-site for those of you not familiar with this incredible story.

The Questa Creative Council board members will be present to share the ways we strengthen community through arts, culture, history, and education. You can join us with a membership or much appreciated donation. Volunteer

opportunities abound for our many projects and events; come chat with us at our booth!

Parking is available behind the trail’s welcome kiosk at the traffic light (look for the white tent), or along the edge of the Visitor Center/Market parking lot just below. The festivities will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., hope to see you celebrate with all of us!






Questa Fiestas

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By Toner Mitchell

Cutthroat Time

On May 17, after an unforeseen delay of a couple weeks, the annual stocking of Rio Grande cutthroat trout in its namesake gorge took place. The event was sparsely attended, due to the lack of advance notice, but the spectacular day made up for it. The rim country was almost impossibly green, giving off the sagey aroma of the recent precipitation. Chimayoso to the south and Blanca to the north cut the blue sky like snowy daggers. The baby cutthroats were ready to resettle their ancestral home, and about 40 stalwart fans were happy to oblige them.

My hiking partners were my friend Kevin and his twins Finley and Wiley, whose third-grader energy inspired me, while wearing me out. On the way down from Big Arsenic, Wiley quizzed me on a variety of animal topics, and by the time we reached the riverside, we'd come to the conclusion that an octopus is a more magical animal than a chameleon, by virtue of the fact that an octopus not only has the ability to change colors like a chameleon, but can squeeze into the tiniest of spaces and befuddle predators

by shooting ink out of its como se llama.

But the fun didn't end there. After we placed our fish bags in the river water to acclimate, Finley introduced me to Sourpatch Kids, a type of candy so sour it made me try to swallow my head, lips first. Then Wiley asked his dad to lower him into the river by his feet, which after several times appeared to be such a gas that the boy's sister demanded to be dunked.

As I watched, my mind wandered back a few short years to when my own son was playing here. This was my extended family's favorite time of year to gather all the cousins for a camping trip, and the gorge is where we usually ended up. How many times have we hiked this hike and found a calm pool with enough boulders to heat up on after swimming in the snowmelt? Watching Wiley and Finley frolic shocked me into realizing that those days of wet and laughing cousins may have passed without a proper goodbye. Now that they are heading off to college, my son and his cousins will be too busy to relive this, even if they are ever in the same place at the same time. Though I could tell he was doing so, I really wanted to tell Kevin to savor this moment.

Yes, due to Gus' impending high school graduation, I'm grieving the fact that time never stands still. Even so, I didn't know how much having a blast with a couple rambunctious chicos would rub salt in this wound.

Though I guess I should have. The Rio Grande gorge is nothing if not a quick journey through time. Kids play-



Courtesy Photo

Third-grader Finley Terry

ing, baby cutthroats finning and splashing at invisible insects, the knees that were once my superpower now being my liability. The Rio Grande gorge itself, the result of the draining of the ocean-sized Lake Alamosa a mere 440,000 years ago, is a blink of a geologic eye. Fossils of Rio Grande cutthroat trout have been unearthed from the drained lake bed, and you know what that means. The



Courtesy Photo

Wiley Terry places his fish bag in the water to acclimate

Rio Grande gorge is younger than the fish Finley and Wiley released into it. As a species, the cutthroat trout have been around for over 10 million years. That's nothing.

So let's enjoy them while we can, whatever and whoever "they" are: our children, our fish, the days of our lives—for though time may not always be our friend, it will always be our companion.

Latir Volunteer Fire Department Chief jona olsson Steps Down

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The Latir Volunteer Fire Department took to social media to share big news—jona olsson has stepped down after an impressive 25 years of service as the Chief of the Fire and EMS divisions, and Sunshine Valley resident Tyler Eshelman is replacing her in this capacity. Eshelman has been assuming this role since January of this year.

The release notes that olsson joined the department in 1999 and since, has strived to raise the bar in training, performance, and professional development. Alone, olsson has reportedly responded to 1,050 calls for service, demonstrating to the community firsthand her high level of experience, care, and dedication.

Her dedication to improving the resilience of the community has made a difference. She has effectively trained the fire department personnel to respond to house fires, wildland fires, calls for medical service, and motor vehicle crashes.

Eshelmann has big shoes to fill, but he appears up to the task, as the department shared in social media posts, "Tyler is a natural leader. His executive perspectives, collaborative approach, and diverse skill set beautifully support the hands-on needs of our community. Tyler has immersed himself in the latest firefighting practices and administration and he has already made visible strides in recruitment, organization, station improvements, and fleet preparedness, as well as cohesive response with



Courtesy Photo

New fire chief Tyler Eshelmann (center) poses with his wife Amelia and their nephew Matias as they suit up to serve the community

neighboring districts. We look forward to experiencing more of the energy and dynamism that Tyler brings to LVFD, as we proudly celebrate our 40 years of



Courtesy Photo

Outgoing Chief jona olsson

service to the El Rito, Sunshine, Latir, and surrounding communities."

The department intends to celebrate all of the contributions olsson has made to the community in the coming months with a formal celebration event. Stay tuned to their social media at facebook.com/latirvfd for announcements.



BIRD IS THE WORD

By Bryce Flanagan

Taking a Backseat to Politics and Profit

With more than 90 million birds infected across 48 states, and the bird flu discovered in one of four samples of milk taken from across the country, this outbreak of bird flu is the deadliest and most widespread in history.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's disastrous COVID response led to emotional reaction superseding scientific evidence, along with hundreds of thousands of preventable deaths. With bird flu, the CDC is poised to repeat this mistake.

Global knowledge on COVID continues to evolve: in April the World Health Organization released new guidelines on airborne pathogens that includes respiratory diseases like COVID and bird flu (the CDC long denied that COVID was airborne, insisting it was only spread by droplets). The fact that respiratory diseases like influenza are airborne wasn't a new discovery—more so it was an acknowledgment of what many virologists have been saying for a decade. In the early days of COVID, the WHO focused its advice on

rigorous hand washing and downplayed the effectiveness of masks. Because of these lax guidelines, employers were reluctant to provide protective equipment, leading to 3,600 deaths among healthcare workers in the first year of the pandemic.

In a CDC web page deleted as of May 15, an advisory committee to the CDC ignores the WHO's findings regarding airborne viruses: whereas the WHO makes no distinction in distance traveled among different diseases, the CDC claims some viruses only travel a short distance and others travel farther. Dr. Julian Tang, a clinical virologist at the University of Leicester, calls these distinctions "totally artificial," and likens the spread of pathogens to cigarette smoke moving through a room, with those closer to the smoker in greater danger of inhalation than those who are more distant, but both are still at risk of inhalation. "You think viruses stop after three feet and drop to the ground? That is absurd," he stated.

The CDC also prescribes loose-fitting masks over the far more effective and expensive N95 masks. In an online statement, the National Nurses' United Union said these guidelines "prioritized employer costs and profits (often under the umbrella of 'feasibility' and 'flexibility') over robust protections."

The CDC has drastically scaled back its recommendations regarding COVID, changing the isolation period from two weeks at the start of the pandemic, to the current duration of two days. A big push for returning people to workplaces comes from real estate lobbyists, who stand to lose millions from unused commercial offices.

While doctors and nurses say the CDC isn't doing enough, agricultural and dairy lobbyists say their response is too much. The Biden administration

has taken an on-the-ground approach to testing dairy farms to monitor and track the spread of bird flu. "It's over-reach. They don't need to do that. They need to back off," said Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller in an interview.

While Texas was the first state where bird flu was diagnosed, officials have refused to allow the CDC to conduct field studies there. Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding doesn't see bird flu as a CDC matter: "Decouple it from an FDA and a CDC issue," he said, "This is a workforce concern that really ought to be expressed from the USDA and Secretary [Tom] Vilsack."

Because it's an animal disease, responsibility for testing falls on the USDA. Currently, farmers are only required to test if they're moving lactating cows across state lines, leaving millions of cows untested. The Biden administration recently announced financial incentives for farmers to voluntarily test their workers and cows for the virus. Farms can be compensated with up to \$28,000 for profits lost to testing, though some say this isn't enough. This is in addition to compensation provided by the USDA for livestock culled to prevent disease

spread. Testing every animal would be time-consuming and expensive, so if just one animal tests positive the entirety are killed.

This strain of bird flu represents the culmination of multiple factors: the destruction of wetlands for development means migratory waterfowl, the primary carriers of bird flu, have fewer places to land and when they do, they have less space to congregate, making it easier for disease to spread. And because agriculture has become industrialized and only a few corporations create the majority output of meat, one infected bird could infect thousands of cattle and chickens at a single farm.

Because of the laissez-faire approach to disease by the USDA, we don't know how many cows are currently incubating the virus. We do know, thanks to a recent collaborative study between St. Jude's and the University of Copenhagen, that cows share the same flu receptors that humans do, providing one less mutation the virus would have to adopt to infect humans. Whether bird flu is contained or is allowed to spread further, possibly infecting humans, depends on where our government's priorities lie.

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West Latir Ditch Association Awarded \$8.1 Million for Forest and Watershed Restoration

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Big news for one northern New Mexico acequia association in Taos County: The West Latir Ditch Association (WLDA) has been awarded \$8,121,663 to fund their Collaborative Forest Fuel Reduction and Watershed Protection initiatives. The grant was designated from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as a part of President Biden's Investing in America initiative.

"The Biden-Harris administration is putting historic resources into efforts to confront the wildfire crisis, which is threatening people, communities and resources across the nation," said Deputy Agriculture Secretary Xochitl Torres Small. "The Community Wildfire Defense Grants are just one of many ways we are helping communities adapt to larger, more complex and more frequent wildfires," she continues. In total, the program is poised to invest \$1 billion over five years to assist at-risk communities through grants to local and Tribal communities.

In the aftermath of the Calf Canyon/Hermit Peak Fire, the West Latir Ditch Association became proactive in the acquisition of funds to restore its watershed and protect the community from wildfire. The project has been led by Mayordomo Tom Esgate, a 25-year career forest and watershed restoration specialist.

"Our acequia is excited to be taking a lead role in what may be one of the largest forest and watershed restoration projects ever undertaken in Taos County," says



Courtesy Photo

Tom Esgate

Esgate. "We look forward to working with our partner, Latir Volunteer Fire Department, and the El Rito-Latir community."

In addition to the most recent \$8.1 million grant, over the last year WLDA and partner landowners have acquired over \$1 million to implement watershed restoration treatments in the El Rito/Latir community. Partner and funding sources to date include: The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), New Mexico State Forestry (NMSF), New Mexico State Land Office, U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Among previous WLDA awards is a \$400,000 U.S. Forest Service Non-Federal Land Grant. Most of those funds will be available for treatments on private land.

An example of how the association is working to reduce dangerous fuels includes a project which was funded by the Natural Resources Conservation Services. From January to April of this year, the



Courtesy Photo

A view of the area where mitigation treatments were conducted from January through April of this year

association worked to mulch dead trees where they stood, breaking the dead trees into mulch which was then spread across the ground. This process returns carbon to the soil and provides a seed bed for native grasses and forbs, effectively mitigating the wildfire risk.

Soon, WLDA will begin a landowner sign-up for additional work in the grant's designated project area. Landowners interested in participating can fill out and submit an application. The applications will then be ranked for funding priority based on several factors that will include the level of treatment that a landowner is willing to have implemented on their land. It is anticipated that work under this grant will begin in November or December of 2024.

"WLDA has a keen interest in restoring

and protecting our watershed as it provides irrigation water for our parciantes. Returning the forests in our watershed to a healthy condition will not only make our forests more resilient, it will also reduce our wildfire risk," said Esgate.

To read more about the USDA's Wildfire Mitigation grant program and how to apply, visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/grants/cwdg/how-to-apply>.

Community meetings on future projects will be held in June or July of this year. Latir community members can contact Tom Esgate to be added to the list to be notified of future meetings. Tom.Esgate@gmail.com or (530) 310-0146.



Photo courtesy of gounlimited.org

Seeking Volunteers to Assist with Adaptive Bike Audit June 1 & 2

By STAFF WRITERS

The Enchanted Circle Trails group is working to conduct an audit of trails in the Taos area, to determine suitability for adaptive bikes.

The audit is being done on behalf of Global Opportunities Unlimited, a 501(c)3 non-profit based in Taos.

Volunteers will be asked to guide and assist with getting bikes through tricky sections or inaccessible routes which can still be accessed, with a

bit of work.

The audit is being held June 1 and 2. There are two additional volunteer opportunities being held:

**July 12-13: Angel Fire
Sep 5-7: to be determined**

To learn more about any of the upcoming audits and how you can get involved, you can visit <https://www.gounlimited.org/>. If you're able to assist, please send an email to info@enchantedcircletrails.org

QEDF, NMSU Collaborate For Agricultural Co-Op

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

The Questa Economic Development Fund (QEDF) held a meeting in collaboration with New Mexico State University's (NMSU, Las Cruces) Arrowhead Center on prospects for an agricultural and food cooperative that would encompass northern Taos County as well as Costilla County in Colorado. Representatives from the San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition (SLVLCF) were also in attendance.

The goal behind the agricultural co-op is to connect local farmers and ranchers together in a common and sustainable market for local food and goods, strengthening local food security.

The Arrowhead Center is a project of the NMSU for promoting entrepreneurship and strengthening small businesses.

"The hope is that the co-op meets some of the food security needs, providing greater access and opportunity for local food producers," said Arrowhead

Center Economic Development Officer Kristin Morehead.

A major drive behind regional food co-ops is concern around so-called food deserts. A food desert is an area in which residents have limited access to healthy food options or have to travel long distances for healthy food options—they typically have more impacts on economically poorer individuals. The Food Depot, a non-profit based in Santa Fe, estimates that there are about 4,850 food-insecure people throughout Taos County. "Food-insecure" describes people who lack a proper amount of food and do not know where their next meal will come from.

Morehead explained to the audience of about ten people the costs and benefits of forming this idea into a legitimate business, including the cost-benefit having a brick-and-mortar establishment to sell product, versus food producers gathering in an open space to sell products themselves. She outlined the different

products that could be sold, membership fees and benefits of membership, and marketing tactics.

She emphasized five questions that should be discussed in the initial phases of a potential Questa-area food cooperative: who are you serving, what are you doing, how are you going to do it, what resources are available in your community now, and who are the people leading the charge? While Morehead continuously emphasized localism and community involvement, it seems ironic that that message is being delivered by an organization based in Las Cruces. However, that does not take away from the importance of the message.

SLVLCF Project Coordinator Jae Sanders raised an important point around cattle raising and meat production, suggesting that meat producers may be more common throughout the San Luis Valley than fruit and vegetable producers. Issues around meat production involve more strict government

regulations.

"To do public retail sales, you need USDA certification," said Sanders. "However, a private co-op or a private membership... just a handful of community members and a handful of ranchers who work among themselves... it's not open to the public, then there's that potential to keep it local."

The point is to facilitate local commerce and increase people's access to good food.

Kristin Morehead can be reached at (505) 433-1827; kmorehea@nmsu.edu.

Jae Sanders can be reached at (575) 999-5319; jae.slvlocalfoods@gmail.com.

Citations:

NMSU's Arrowhead Center

<https://arrowheadcenter.nmsu.edu>

San Luis Valley Local Food Coalition

<https://slvlocalfoods.org>

USDA Meat Regulations

https://www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media_file/2021-02/Fed-Food-Inspect-Requirements.pdf

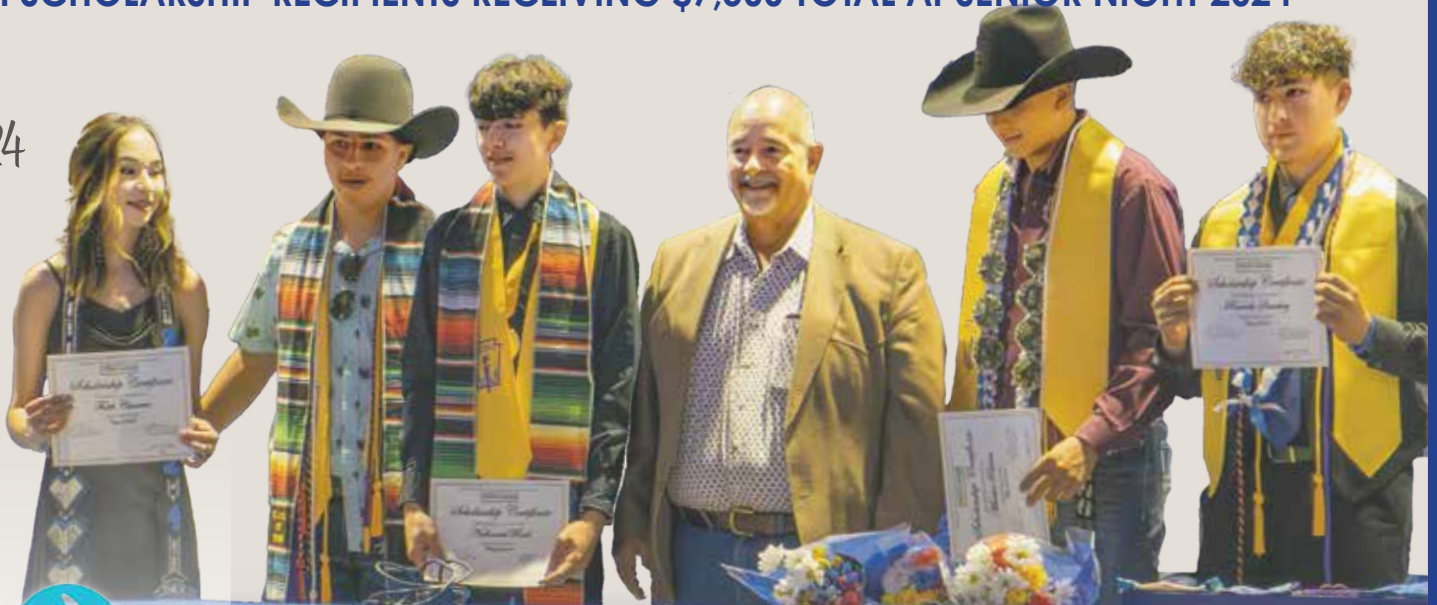
https://www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media_file/2021-02/Fed-Food-Inspect-Requirements.pdf

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The Kit Carson Electric Education Foundation has awarded \$45,000 in scholarships to 31 northern New Mexican high school graduates of the class of 2024. The Foundation leverages scholarship dollars provided by KCEC's wholesale power provider Guzman Energy.

Pictured above; KCEC board president Bobby Ortega with the Questa High School 2024 recipients.

**BODY
MIND
SPIRIT**



By **BARBARA TRACY**

FIRE

Fire is the third element in our series of the four elements. When we think about the element of fire, we can consider that this is the element that can harbor or release negativity simply by our intent to be honest and truthful with ourselves and look deeply into our thinking processes to discover what it is that we are holding on to in thought or belief that may be causing disharmony, unhappiness and even illness. When we choose to look with deep honesty inward

for our answers instead of directing our displeasure toward another, we can become free. Because all that another represents is a mirror of our own thinking, that is secretly held within. When you recognize these patterns of thinking and believing, you have the opportunity to make your own determined decision to let it go and you can begin to make changes in what you choose to allow in your thinking and believing.

Action! That is the nature of fire. Action that is transformative, taking one from anger to calm, loss of self-esteem to healthy self-esteem, from fear of rejection to healthy self-confidence, transforming from sensitivity to criticism to a healthy non-reactive experience. And finally, trusting the life journey as it comes to you.

Fire is our personal will, our personal power, and it is out of balance when we are inconsiderate, manipulative, abusive or selfish or when we harm others with

anger and destruction. The power of an out of balance fire element, some of which has been spoken of above, also include jealousy, manipulation, aggression and domination—all of which can create physical problems with the digestive system, such as ulcers, diabetes, energy imbalances, colon and intestinal problems, pancreatitis, indigestion, liver problems and adrenal dysfunction. Here we can understand that those thoughts, attitudes and beliefs when we hold on to them can create such havoc in the body. It is useful to know what probable thoughts may be related to our symptoms, as it allows one to clue track those symptoms in their possible relationship to our beliefs and attitudes and meet them without judgment or criticism. The work is to let them go and move into a place of higher mind.

“Anger has many faces, from jealousy, rage, competition and aggression to resentment and blame. These are all

associated with positioning and power struggles. The ego is out to get what it wants in its own way and when it wants. When fire energy is positive, the fiery emotions warm and lighten the heart so that we can enjoy laughter, joy and creative transformation.” —Farida Sharan, PureHealth.com

It is also important to know that when our fire element is low from too much inertia, this too can cause an inability to digest food, experience being cold, have a lack of energy, absence of passion and an inability to make necessary changes. Help for the fire element can be sunbathing, saunas, sweatlodges, heat treatments, good nutrition, healthy diets, moxibustion, massage and exercise as well as good sleep patterns and quiet contemplation.

We can rise above power struggles which are the work of the ego by aligning to the greater inner peace that is within each of us.

SENIOR MENU: JUNE 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 Cheese Baked penne Pasta, California Blend Vegetables, White Beans, Wheat roll, Fruit Cocktail	4 Hamburger Beef Stew, Tossed Salad, cornbread, Apple	5 Tossed Salad, Pineapple Glazed, Chicken, Brown Rice, Grilled or Roasted Asparagus, Sweet roll, Tropical Fruit salad	6 GC Cheeseburger, Three Bean Salad, Coleslaw, chopped Watermelon	7 Chicken stir Fry, Stir Fry Vegetables, Brown rice, Mandarin oranges, Fortune cookie
10 Country Fried steak, Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy, Green Beans, Okra, Wheat bread, Pineapple tidbits	11 Chicken & Rice Pot pie, red Cabbage, Apple, w/ red onions, Broccoli, Roll, Chopped Cantaloupe	12 Red Chile Pork Posole, Zucchini and diced tomatoes, 6in Flour tortilla, Diced Mango	13 Chef Salad, Ranch Dressing, crackers, Fruit Salad	14 Chicken Salad Sandwich, Tomato Soup, Crackers, Carrots, Mixed Fruit
17 Garlic Herb lean Baked Pork Chop, Brown Rice Pilaf, Roasted Brussel Sprouts, Italian Green Beans, Wheat Roll, plum	18 Red Chile Beef Enchiladas, Calabacitas, Pinto Beans, Pear	19 Closed	20 Chicken and Noodles, Chateau Blend Vegetables, roll, Spiced Peaches	21 Beef Hot Dog, Sweet Potatoes, Broccoli Salad, Light Nonfat Vanilla Yogurt Strawberries/bananas
24 Spaghetti w/ Meatballs, Italian Blend Vegetables, Wheat roll, Pineapple & Mandarin Oranges	25 Santa Fe Chicken, Chuckwagon Vegetables, Cilantro-Lime Brown Rice, yellow squash w/ diced tomatoes, Cinnamon Applesauce	26 Frito Pie, Pinto Beans, Cucumber Salad and tomato salad, Cantaloupe and Honeydew	27 Tater tot casserole, Tossed Salad, WW Roll, Banana	28 Bean & Cheese Soft Taco, Picante Sauce, Spanish Slaw, California Blend, Fruit Salad
	All Meals Served With 8oz. 2% Milk as available	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

An Example of Overcoming a Small Problem

Some of the experiences with my practices demonstrate how much they've changed my everyday perspective on life. Some time ago, I had a three-hour drive to a speaking event in southern Colorado. All

my props and books and CDs were safely packed in my car, and my daughter was driving so I could get a little shuteye before going onstage. We had brought snacks, and I had a huge bath towel—no, it was more like a beach towel—to cover my clothes while munching on slices of apple, cheese wedges and crackers. I didn't want anything that would mess up my elegant crocheted dress. I didn't even hug the dog before we left, because he likes to put his toenails in the crochet holes and pull. But, no. If you're thinking I ruined my dress that day, uh-uh. That's not it.

When we arrived at the venue, I stepped out of the car and looked down. My feet were still in my bedroom slippers! I immediately realized that my strappy shoes, the ones that go with my elegant crocheted dress, were still waiting by the door of my bedroom, instead of in the trunk of my car

where they should have been. These bedroom slippers are not the kind that could pass for shoes—they're the fuzzy kind, the dirty fuzzy kind. I'm fastidious about making sure everything is flawless for my gigs and this was a major slip-up.

I'm proud to tell you that all I said was, Oh, dang.

And here's what I mean about how I've changed. Formerly I would have said, OH DAMN!! all caps, maybe 16 exclamation points plus a few choice expletives. Perhaps I would even have stamped my fuzzy-slippered foot. Worst of all, I would have held onto that negative feeling, allowing myself to go down into the rabbit hole of bleakness. That would have thrown off my pace during my talk and believe me, audiences notice that kind of thing.

Instead, I did one of my quickie practices to center myself and ask for divine

assistance. Then when I got inside, I took off my dirty slippers and my socks (those fuzzy slippers are too wide so I wear them with socks) and I gave my talk in bare feet. Sort of bohemian-style. Even got a standing ovation.

It was a good reminder: maybe those things I think are so important aren't really so crucial, after all. Like being perfect. Like never making mistakes.

Big and little, in momentous and in less earth-shaking ways, my practices have transformed my life.

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

Un Ejemplo De Cómo Superar un Problemita

Algunas de las experiencias con mis prácticas demuestran cuánto han cambiado mi perspectiva diaria sobre la vida. Hace algún tiempo, tenía un viaje de tres horas a un evento donde iba a hablar en el sur de Colorado. Todos mis accesorios, libros y CDs estaban bien empacados en mi coche, y mi hija manejaba para que yo pudiera descansar un poco antes de subir al escenario. Habíamos llevado bocadillos, y yo tenía una toalla de baño enorme —era más bien una toalla de playa— para protegerme la ropa mientras comía rodajas de manzana, queso y galletas. No quería que nada estropeara mi elegante vestido de crochet. Ni siquiera abracé al perro antes de salir, porque le gusta meter las uñas en los agujeros del crochet y tirar de ellos. Pero si piensas que arruiné mi vestido ese día, para nada, eso no fue lo que pasó.

Cuando llegamos al lugar de la presentación, salí del coche y miré hacia abajo. ¡Todavía tenía puestas mis pantuflas! Inmediatamente me di cuenta de que mis zap-

atos de tiritas, los que hacían juego con el elegante vestido de crochet, estarían todavía junto a la puerta de mi cuarto, en lugar de en el maletero del coche, donde deberían encontrarse. Las pantuflas que llevaba no eran de las que podrían pasar por zapatos —eran peluditas, del tipo despeluzado. Soy muy meticulosa y siempre me aseguro de que todo esté impecable para mis eventos y esto fue un gran descuido.

Tengo a orgullo contar que todo lo que dije fue: "Ay, caramba."

Y aquí es donde quiero explicar cómo he cambiado. Antes hubiera dicho, ¡OH, MALDICIÓN!! en mayúsculas, tal vez con 16 signos de exclamación y algunas palabrotas. Quizás incluso habría dado patadas en el piso con las dichas pantuflas peludas. Lo peor de todo es que habría mantenido ese sentimiento negativo, permitiéndome caer en el agujero de la angustia. Eso habría afectado el ritmo durante la charla y créanme, el público se da cuenta de esas cosas.

En lugar de proceder así, hice una de mis prácticas rápidas para centrarme y pedir asistencia divina. Luego, cuando entré, me quité las pantuflas sucias y los calcetines (esas pantuflas peludas son demasiado anchas, así que las uso con calcetines) y di

mi charla descalza. Vamos, con un estilo un poco bohemio. Y al final recibí una ovación con todo el público de pie.

Fue un buen recordatorio: quizás esas cosas que creo que son tan importantes, no lo son tanto, después de todo. Como ser perfecta. Como no cometer errores nunca.

En lo grande y en lo pequeño, de maneras trascendentales y en otras menos

impactantes, mis prácticas me han transformado la vida.

Ellen Wood de Questa es una autora galardonada y también una artista que usa el nombre de Maruška. El sitio web de sus libros y pinturas es <https://questacreative.org/ellen-wood/>. Para comunicarse con Ellen escriba a ellen@howtogrowyounger.com

Traducción de Teresa Dovalpage

Are allergies making you miserable?

JR (Malaquias) says:



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I DARE YOU

By MARTA GLOVER

I Remember When

'I remember' almost always refers to the past. Sometimes people, places or situations can live in our memory forever. We may even long to relive some of those times. They helped shape our lives and who we are today.

Spring has brought some welcome changes in color and new growth. Here we are, already into June. Summer is coming, the kids will be out of school. Time to barbecue and swim and visit family and friends. Some of us are still planting in the garden and landscaping like crazy.

What do you remember about this time of year? Do you have a memory you would like to share from your past? A memory from your childhood, adulthood, or old age? How did it impact you? What do you remember? What has stayed with you all these years? Was there a certain scent, a distinct smell you

remember each time you visited there?
I remember when...

Rod:

Lambing time. The first of May. Lasted 21 days. 50 ewes had 100 babies on the ground within 21 days. This was in Antago, Wisconsin, 70 miles from Lake Michigan and 20 miles from Superior. They were English Moreno sheep who had a Dorset gene which were known to produce twins. Princess, a black sheep, had triplets seven years in a row and took great care of the babies. A third of the flock were her offspring. They were fun to watch. Their whole day playing, I marveled at their activities. In the evenings when we were done with dinner, we would watch them running full speed ahead, turn 180 degree angle and run in the opposite direction.

Barbara:

I remember back in the day when it would snow in town and you could walk in the middle of the road kicking snow. Zero traffic. Birch street and Liebert street were dirt. It was so quiet, so magical. The main traffic light was the only one, no traffic lights south of town. Ranchos was a separate town, Sagebrush Inn was way far away. Big stretch of mesa with nothing.

Jason:

I remember catching fireflies in the

fruit orchard in Nebraska and keeping them in a jar by my bed like a night light. I have only ever seen fireflies in Taos Canyon at the end of June. Last year I saw them. They appear to be the same here and in Nebraska but there are fewer here. I am concerned that the fireflies could be killed by pesticides.

Alice:

I remember collecting used cigarette butts outside at the local small town tavern. We would try to find the biggest one to smoke. I was 13, probably too young to smoke. I wanted to be, I was a real cowgirl and this was the start of it. Right when it was getting warm, we would ride our horses to the river and take their saddles off and ride bareback into the river. The water was over their heads. The horses loved swimming. One time, my horse who had never crossed the river, went right in and plunged under the water, completely under water. Rose flying out of it with me still shooting in the air on all fours! An amazing feat.

Lanny:

I remember when I was in grade school at the end of the school year when spring fevers were rushing and everyone was excited. The teachers could not control us and we were overflowing with joy. In town now in Amherst, Massachusetts, the students are sleeping overnight at the university mall. They

are protesting that the Palestinians are being starved. The police are arresting students. There are five colleges here, it's going on all over. It's not alright. Graduation is coming. Kids are in an uproar. Still the river runs high, the apple blossoms are here and everything is coming to life.

Helga:

I remember springtime growing up next to a lake. It was warm enough to jump in but it was freezing and icy cold and then the sun would warm you up again. This is in southern Germany, a lake called Ammer Lake, in an area called the Five Lake Lends. The lake had a specific smell; a little swampy, cattails, water plants and ducks lived there. It was 3 km wide and 20 km long. In the winter it would freeze and we would ice skate on it. Back in the day the Haflinger horses were used to draw carts carrying barrels of beer. They would drive the wagons across the lake on the ice.

Meg:

I remember horseshoe crabs at Holly Pond growing up. They were a big deal to catch and scary with all their legs and sword. They looked prehistoric. The pond led out to Long Island Sound. There was a little beach and alot to explore especially at low tide. We could ride our bikes there. All the neighborhood kids and families played there.

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS



By DAWN PROVENCHER

Finding Your Happiness

Turning on the news, opening a newspaper, listening to a current event's podcast can all set our mood for the day, often negatively. Harsh weather, violence, illness, worldwide troubles. There are so many things having an effect on us which we have absolutely no control over. What we CAN control is how our mind and body react to this never ending flow of negativity.

Here are some easy tasks we can all practice on a daily basis to bring more peace and happiness into OUR life.

First, TURN OFF THE FLOW OF

BAD NEWS. Instead of turning the TV on in the morning or before going to bed, and tuning in to a news station, turn on your favorite music instead. Sing along, move to the music, stretch, remember the first time you heard this song. Who was with you? How old were you? If we could see our brains hearing or making music, we would see an increase in blood flow to the areas that

Sit with that cup in hand and make a list of ten things you are grateful for. Your family? Your garden? Your bad haircut is growing out? That there is food in your cabinets? Your dog? Be grateful AND make a list. Actually write the list down and make a new one each day. I like to light candles around the house each morning and with each flame, name something in my life

gently. Say "Let's just talk about good things for the next five minutes. Remember when you made the tres leches cake everyone thought was so delicious? Isn't it great that the kids are back in school again? Do you want to share a case of green chile this year? Have you seen the sunflowers in Cerro?" Happiness is contagious. Spread and accept joy.

Now DO something for someone. Does the person behind you in line have only a few items? Tell them to go ahead. Is there an older friend or relative who would love a quick visit or a phone call from you? Reach out. Do you have an afternoon a week to spare? Volunteer to read with a child at school. Make cookies for your doctor's office staff. Write a silly note and leave it where someone you love will find it. Tell a child they have good manners.

The easiest and most important thing you can do to help to dispel bad feelings is just to breathe. Slowly breathe in while counting to five, hold it for five, breathe out for five. This can be done anytime throughout the day if you feel your anxiety starting to grow. Breathe!

Make having joy and sharing joy a habit.

generate and control emotions. Old rock and roll? Big band music? Mariachi? Classical? Find what makes you smile and turn it up!

Make your bed and tidy the house (with the music still playing). Make the bed, feed the cat, fix your tea or coffee, put things in their place, and start your day with contentment.

that makes me thankful. When I see the little flickers throughout the day, I get a reminder.

Surround yourself with positivity and people who make you happy. If a friend starts a conversation with how someone has wronged them, or how their job is horrible, or that their head aches so badly they can't even think, stop them



Quarterly Check-In With Questa Police Department

We obtained data from Mayor John Ortega on the Questa Police Department's stats for the first quarter of the year.

By the Numbers:

- As of April 2023, the Village of Questa Police Department responded to approximately 1,400 calls for service within the Village of Questa.
- QPD conducted approximately 600 traffic stops.

- Over 20 arrests have been made, including arrests for narcotics infractions, domestic violence, and other violent felonies and misdemeanor offenses.
- 11 arrests have been made for driving under the influence (DUI).
- 10 arrests have been made for outstanding warrants from other jurisdictions.
- At least 7 cases have been handled where QPD has obtained arrest warrants for infractions that have occurred within village limits and the offender has been arrested in other jurisdictions.

Personnel:

- Recently, Village of Questa Police Chief Ronald G. Montez was nominated as the Chair of the Taos County DWI council.
- All officers currently employed by the Village of Questa Police Department are certified and each have several years of experience, apart from Keith Haws, who was recently brought on to the department.
- The department currently has one vacancy they are looking to fill.

Attempted Child Abduction Reported In Questa

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

A possible attempted child abduction reportedly happened in Questa on Thursday, May 9. Two elementary school-age children got off the school bus at their usual stop near the Casitas, approximately half a mile from Alta Vista Elementary School.

According to one of the children's mothers, when the children exited the bus, they observed a white male in his mid-30s in an older gold color Chevy truck parked nearby. The children observed a white dog in the back seat.

As the children left the bus, the man stared at them, then told them to get into his truck so he could drive them home. Both children refused and the man sped off south on Hwy 522. The mother notified the police and the school district.

"It's terrifying. My daughter called

me crying when this happened. Questa used to be a place where we all knew one another, we knew our cousins and extended family. It's not like that anymore and it's hard to believe this kind of stuff can happen in our small community," one girl's mother says.

We reached out to the Village of Questa Police Department to get more information on this incident, they are looking into this incident.

This incident underscores the importance of teaching children about stranger danger. Encourage your children not to leave with or get into the vehicles of people they don't know. If you observe anyone trying to lure children away in a vehicle, call 911 and take photos of the potential suspect and their vehicle license plate.

This report intentionally leaves out identities of the two girls as they are minors.

Local School Districts Clash With State Over 180 Days

By DYLAN R.N. CRABB

On April 18 of this year the New Mexico Superintendents Association, along with 57 New Mexico school administrations, filed suit against the State of New Mexico's Public Education Department (PED) in the 9th Judicial District Court. The suit challenges the PED's Rule 6.10.5 NMAC on school instructional time requirements, calling it "unlawful." The rule mandates a minimum of 180 instructional days starting in the 2024-25 academic year with an exception for districts which meet a particular threshold of performance metrics in the form of a 10 to 15 percent increase in test scores.

"This lawsuit is about giving local districts local control," Questa Independent School District (QISD) Superintendent John Maldonado told the Questa del Rio News. "A lot of schools have already made their budgets for next year and this mandate hurts rural districts the most because a district like [Albuquerque Public Schools], who has several teachers for one subject, can cut their budget more easily than we can."

Superintendent Maldonado explained how this mandate goes against what the Legislature voted on last year, referring to NM HB 130, which set a minimum of 1,140 instructional hours in an academic year while still allowing districts to organize those hours into either a 4-day or a 5-day school week. HB130 passed the NM House of Representatives unanimously and passed the NM Senate 34-6; it was signed into law by Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham on March 16.

The mandate was initiated in March of this year and Governor Lujan-Grisham's communications team has stated publicly they "want to assure New Mexicans that their public education department remains dedicated to promoting a robust learning environment and fostering excellence in education throughout New Mexico," despite the fact that the Governor signed a contradictory bill last year.

This lawsuit also comes on the heels of the Yazzie-Martinez lawsuit, which alleged that the state was failing in its duty to provide K-12 students with an "equitable and college-ready" education.

NM District Judge Dustin Hunter has issued a temporary hold on the mandate from PED pending the litigation which allows school districts to continue with their own calendar. The QISD Board voted on a 150-day calendar last month in defiance of the PED's mandate.

While the PED's justification for their mandate is to increase instructional days for students, only 38 percent of NM public school students can read at grade level.

"Most of us know that standardized tests are inaccurate, inequitable, and often ineffective at gauging what students actually know," the National Education Association stated last year.

Furthermore, the Economic Policy Institute came out against test scores as a sole performance indicator a decade ago.

The US News & World Report ranks New Mexico #50, dead last, in education compared to other states, and #49 overall. WalletHub ranks New Mexico as the worst American state to live in.

Citations:

NM PED Rule 6.10.5 NMAC
<https://www.srca.nm.gov/parts/title06/06.010.0005.html>

NM HB 130

<https://nmlegis.gov/Legislation/Legislation?Chamber=H&LegType=B&LegNo=130&year=23>

Yazzie-Martinez Lawsuit

<https://nmeducation.org/the-yazzie-martinez-impact/>

Standardized Testing is Still Failing Students

<https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/standardized-testing-still-failing-students>

Problems With The Use of Student Test Scores to Evaluate Teachers

<https://www.epi.org/publication/bp278>

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<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/new-mexico>

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ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

SKYDANCE ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY by Charlene R. Johnson
JUNE 2024

MODERN MEDIA

“There is no squabbling so violent as that between people who accepted an idea yesterday and those who will accept the same idea tomorrow!”
—Christopher Morely

At the end of May, Jupiter, ruling planet of Aquarius (which rules publications) entered into the sign of Gemini, which rules communication. Here it will remain for a year. The media is now up-front and center and as we all know, news reporting isn't what it used to be. The days when a reporter would show up on the scene of an event with notepad and camera in hand for an accurate depiction of said event are long gone. It seems that accuracy and technology do not necessarily go hand in hand. In an age when people can post anything about anybody and even make up events or happenings without ever having seen or been part of them, it makes research for “just the facts” more than difficult. What is one to believe? As we leave the Age of Pisces, the Age of Belief, we are faced with the truth, ruled by Gemini, that mere belief is no longer enough. The age of Aquarius is the Age of Knowledge and it is sorely needed now.

Good people continue to try to do a good job as reporters, but it seems a losing game when so many more deliberately undermine them for their own ends. It has become very difficult to tell the black hats from the white hats and yet our world hangs in the balance. The upheaval, divisiveness and animosity always predicted for this time of changing Ages is clearly aided by our changing technology and access to the latest news, fake or otherwise, by all people worldwide. What a blessing; what a curse. Our job as people who chose to show up at this time is to continue to remember the true meaning of Aquarius: the Brotherhood of Man AND a time for the pouring forth of knowledge—no longer blind belief.

Everyone: This month's energy can assist in careful thought and consideration.

ARIES ♈ Planet: Mercury ♀ MARCH 20 – APRIL 19

Dynamic: While your intelligence usually rules, you may find feelings overriding it by month's end.
Direction: Perhaps they can work together?
Soul Thought: What is intelligent feeling?

TAURUS ♉ Planet: Vulcan ♀ APRIL 19 – MAY 20

Dynamic: You may get fired up and overthink things.
Direction: Pause.
Soul Thought: “If you want to teach people a new way of thinking... give them a tool, the use of which will lead to new ways of thinking.” —Albert Einstein

GEMINI ♊ Planet: Venus ♀ MAY 20 – July 20

Dynamic: Your communication skills should be strong this month.
Direction: Use them for good, only.
Soul Thought: The purpose of any conflict is always to find harmony.

CANCER ♋ Planet: Neptune ♆ JULY 20 – JULY 22

Dynamic: You come so close; you can almost open that mysterious door!
Direction: Then, the unknown will be known.
Soul Thought: Do you want to know?

LEO ♌ Planet: Sun ☉ JULY 22 – AUG 22

Dynamic: It's an age-old question this month.
Direction: To think or to feel, that is the question.
Soul Thought: Or...?

VIRGO ♍ Planet: Moon ☾ AUG 22 – SEPT 22

Dynamic: You're good with the details and the organization.
Direction: Time to look up and see the big picture.
Soul Thought: NOW, what can you do?

LIBRA ♎ Planet: Uranus ♁ SEPT 22 – OCT 22

Dynamic: You sense that security comes with relationship.
Direction: Does it?
Soul Thought: What needs to be secured?

SCORPIO ♏ Planet: Mars ♂ OCT 22 – NOV 21

Dynamic: This is a good time for your resources and someone else's to work together.
Direction: Money, possessions and/or skills.
Soul Thought: It's all just energy.

SAGITTARIUS ♐ Planet: Earth ♁ NOV 21 – DEC 20

Dynamic: If you sometimes feel all alone, it's because you have important work to do.
Direction: Trust, and plod on.
Soul Thought: “Without great solitude no serious work is possible.” —Pablo Picasso

CAPRICORN ♑ Planet: Saturn ♄ DEC 20 – JAN 19

Dynamic: You may have to defer to the authority of another.
Direction: Don't worry; what goes 'round comes 'round.
Soul Thought: Perhaps they are worthy of deference?

AQUARIUS ♒ Planet: Jupiter ♃ JAN 19 – FEB 18

Dynamic: An old school friend may show up this month.
Direction: Catch up on new times.
Soul Thought: It's time for good friends.

PISCES ♓ Planet: Pluto ♇ FEB 18 – MAR 20

Dynamic: Those heavy feelings should be dissipating now.
Direction: Trip the light fantastic!
Soul Thought: “The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are.” —Joseph Campbell



By J. ORTEGA

“UNFROSTED”

Starring: Jerry Seinfeld, Jim Gaffigan, Amy Schumer, and Melissa McCarthy

RATED: PG-13

Now Streaming on Netflix

First Impression: While it has its moments and plenty of funny characters, “Unfrosted,” which is legendary standup comedian Jerry Seinfeld’s directorial debut, falls mostly flat under the weight of its absurd space-race style premise of tension between breakfast cereal behemoths Post and Kellogg’s to create the most fabled of breakfast pastries: the Pop-Tart.

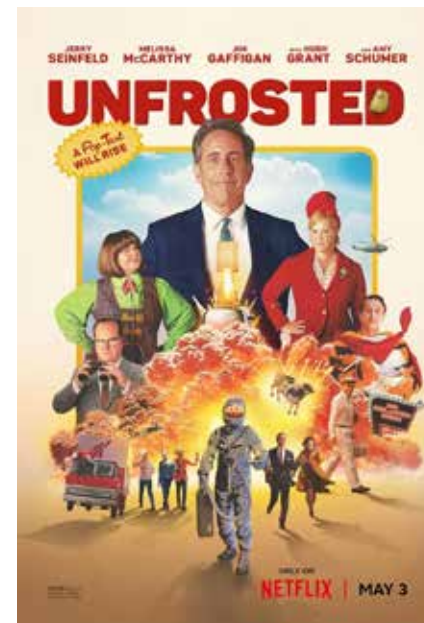
If you are a fan of the show “Seinfeld,” or in my case a super-fan, who can quote characters’ famous lines and recall in which episode the line was said—with ease—it’s been kind of a bittersweet year. We saw the series finale of the show “Curb Your Enthusiasm,” created by Larry David, the guy who co-created “Seinfeld” with Jerry Seinfeld. “Curb” ran for 12 seasons over the course of the last 24 years. The show is a showcase for Larry David (who plays a fictional version of himself) to show off his “neurotic Zen.” His insecurities and unique complaints about societal norms and culture have become legend and lore for people who never wanted “Seinfeld” to end... it was an endearing love letter to fans of the original show, about nothing.

And that’s where I’m perplexed by some of the choices Jerry Seinfeld made, post-“Seinfeld.” Some of his most notable recent work has been kind of head scratching, to say the least. It started in 2008, when he announced he was making a new animated movie called “Bee Movie” where bees went on strike and sued the human race for the return of their honey. What? Really, Jerry? You take ten years off from doing anything noteworthy in Hollywood and you come back with bees? Maybe I was taken aback because “Seinfeld” was such a cutting-edge show—it wasn’t afraid to tackle any issue of its day

and wasn’t afraid of the controversy that followed. So, in hindsight, maybe it was Larry David who was pushing Jerry Seinfeld this whole time? It’s hard to try to determine what motivates an artist to take the chances and choose the projects they do, but I really did enjoy when Jerry focused on his stand-up comedy. I loved his film “Comedian,” (2000) in which he returned to the world of stand-up comedy, and later his Netflix show, “Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee,” where he would showcase a famous comedian friend, taking them out for coffee and to pick their brains. This is where Jerry is at his best: when he’s analyzing where he’s making assumptions and forming ideas with his peers. It’s amazing and very much like seeing the tv show “Seinfeld” rematerializing before your very eyes.

So, when I watched his latest project, “Unfrosted,” I was again scratching my head as to why he would make such a big fuss about the creation of something like the Pop-Tart? Maybe it’s because of Jerry’s love of cereal—a well known fact from his show: he notoriously had at least 12 boxes of cereal in his apartment at all times. Maybe he just wanted to have fun with his friends, notably Jim Gaffigan and Amy Shumer, who are obviously having lots of fun playing rival cereal makers Kellogg and Post? In the end, don’t overthink it. It’s a fun romp with plenty of noticeable cameos and nostalgia for boomers and gen x to gobble up by the cereal bowl.

Final Verdict: 2 ½ out of 5 stars



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

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



Recognizing Rosie Sanchez

When did you start teaching? What drew you to it?

In 1993, I started with the Mesa Vista Headstart Program. In 1998, we transitioned over to Youth Development Inc. I have been with YDI for 26 years and teaching for a total of 31 years.

I took this job because my daughter Jacquelyn was attending at that time. Before then I had been a stay-at-home mom and enjoyed being with my girls. When I got this job I never thought about staying here for this long. Once I started working with the children and seeing them learn their self-help skills, I realized that this is what I wanted to do. In 2000, I decided to pursue my degree in early childhood education.

What has been the best part of teaching?

I think for me the best part of teaching are the relationships I have built with the children in those years that I taught them. When the children start school, most of them are three years old. This is a big step for them and their parents to entrust us with their babies. As each day goes on it

gets easier for the parents to leave and children to come to school. Before you know it they are waving bye and not wanting to leave at the end of day and I am hearing those sweet words "I love you, teacher."

What has been the most challenging part of teaching?

The most challenging part of teaching was trying to finish my associate degree when we lost my oldest daughter Christina. The only thing that kept me going was the joy the children would bring. I remember struggling in the morning to go to work, but once I was spending time with the children the ache in my heart would subside. I accomplished this goal and received my associate degree in 2004 and continued my education and received my bachelor's degree in 2012.

What is something you hope all your former students know about your time with them?

I hope all my students know that I once loved them all as my own. I hope to have had a positive impact in their life, as they did in mine.

What's the silliest thing or thing a student has ever said, that still make you giggle to this day?

When we are out in public and I see one of my former students with their families, working in their field of expertise etc., as a grown successful man and woman, and they still call me "Teacher Rosie."

Anything else you want to add?

I couldn't be where I am today without the support of my husband Moises, my four daughters, Denise (Davin), Yvonne (Ted), Jacquelyn (Nando) and Audrea (Marcus) and all my 15 grandchildren, who I was able to teach the majority of.



Courtesy Photo

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OBITUARIES



Cruz Chavez
d. May 17, 2024

Cruz Chavez age 74, a resident of La Cordillera, passed away May 17, 2024.

He was preceded in death by his son Cruz Chavez, II; grandson Andres Chavez; parents George & Manuelita Chavez; mother and father-in-law Mercedes & Hernando Jaramillo; sister Loretta DeHerrera; nephews George Salazar, Brad Jaramillo and Nikolas Martinez; nieces Antonia Mares and Fran Chavez; brothers-in-law Lawrence Jaramillo, Paul Martinez, Orlando Salazar and Richard Valdez.

Cruz proudly served his country in the United States Army and New Mexico National Guard, later he was employed by and retired from the Taos Municipal Schools. He was an honorable man with strong family values. Cruz was a Dallas Cowboy's fan and a dedicated Taos Tiger fan.

He is survived by his wife Elma Chavez; son Hernando Chavez (Jacquelyn); daughter-in-law Renee Yopez; grandchildren, Cruz M. Chavez (Suzie), Marcus Chavez (Audrea), Isaiah Chavez, Mateo Chavez (Ruth), Alexis Chavez, Augustine Chavez, Ariana Medina, Ava Chavez, Leyah Chavez, Braelyn Quintana, Isaiah Quintana and Ezekiel Chavez; great-grandchildren, Marikah Chavez, Sienna Chavez, Gianna Chavez, Jacob Chavez and Easton Chavez; siblings Cecilia Valdez, Sylvia Martinez, Lupe Anaya (Mike), Sarah Salazar, Chris Chavez (Mary Lou), Luca Chavez, Carmella Chavez Villafranca and Bettina Pacheco (Manuel); in-laws Marilyn Jaramillo, Evangeline Jaramillo, Sandra Jaramillo Bowles (Ben), Bob Jaramillo (Martha), Bernie Jaramillo (Geri), Edwin Jaramillo (Arla), Vincent Jaramillo (Debbie) and many loving nieces, nephews,

relatives and friends.

Rosary will be recited on Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at 6pm at San Francisco de Asis Catholic Church. Funeral Mass will be on Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at 10am at San Francisco de Asis Catholic church with burial to follow at Los Alamos Cemetery in Los Cordovas.



Paula Louise Espinoza
d. May 18, 2024

Antonito Native Paula Louise Espinoza took God's hand on May 18, 2024, at her home in Antonito, Colorado. Although she is gone, her spirit will live on forever.

After graduating from high school, Paula began her world travels where she lived in Italy for several years, she joined the convent, met the pope, and served her country as a Chaplains Assistant in the United States Navy for over 4 1/2 years. Before being Honorably Discharged on September 24, 1996, Paula received the National Defense Service Medal, the Overseas Service Ribbon twice, a Letter of Commendation, and the Navy Achievement Medal. Following her tour of duty, Paula graduated with Honors from St. Elizabeth's College in New Jersey where she frequently made the Deans Academic List and was awarded the "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges" for her Academic Leadership and Service Achievement. Eventually, Paula returned home to her family and actively endeavored to improve her community. To her, family and community were everything.

Paula was a brave and courageous educator and leader in all aspects of her life. She had an undeni-

able faith in God and the power of prayer, especially through the health issues she encountered during her last years. She spent countless hours volunteering for different causes, especially with the church. She had a warm heart; she was strong; and she was loved by everyone that knew her.

Paula was born in Denver, Colorado to Maria Consuelo DeHerrera and Pablo Lionel Espinoza on June 30, 1970. She is preceded in death by her father Lionel Pablo Espinoza and stepfather Pete DeHerrera. She is survived by her mother Maria, Sister, Pamela Espinoza (Gary), Brother and Sister-in-law Lionel "Hoso" Espinoza (Jeannine), 2 nieces, Xantha Espinoza and Arianna Espinoza, four nephews Stefano Espinoza, GaryLee Quintana (Katie), Anthony Espinoza, and Lucio Espinoza, one great nephew DamienLee Quintana, and an abundance of extended family.

A rosary will be held on Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at 6:00pm at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Conejos. A funeral mass will be held on Thursday, May 23, 2024, at 10:00am at our Lady of Guadalupe in Conejos, followed by burial services at the La Jara Cemetery



Prexedes Sandoval
d. May 6, 2024

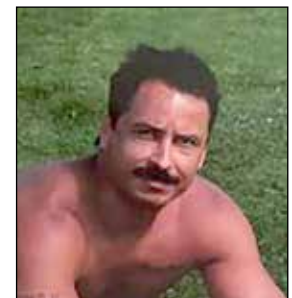
It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved mother, grandmother, sister, and friend Prexedes Sandoval. She gained her angel wings on May 6, 2024 surrounded by her loving family. Prexedes was welcomed into the world on November 19, 1940, the beloved daughter of Antonio Martinez and Emma Cisneros Martinez. Prexedes was a very loving and caring person with a beautiful smile that would light up any room she entered. As a young lady she learned the value of hard work, dedication and love for family that she carried on throughout her life up to the very last day. Prexedes graduated from Antonito High School. After graduation she met the love of her life Abelino Sandoval and the two became one and started their family.

The two were blessed with 5 children, 3 daughters and 2 sons. Prexedes enjoyed working, in her free time she loved gambling, going to bingo, traveling, shopping and making tortillas for her family and friends. Her grandkids held a very special place in her heart and the time she was able to spend with them brighten her day. She will be missed dearly by all who knew her. We will forever be grateful and cherish the memories and love she left with us while she was here.

Prexedes will live on through her children; Dora Duran of Antonito, CO, Valerie Romero of Antonito, CO, Cindy (Paul) Clark of Manassa, CO, and Andrew (Monica) Sandoval of Marysville, WA. As well as 9 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren 2 sisters; Jamie Montoya, Maryann (Alfrio) Sandoval, one brother Chris (Katy) Martinez. She is also survived by numerous cousins and friends.

Prexedes was preceded in death by her parents Antonio & Emma Martinez, one son Timmy Sandoval, one sister, and four brothers. A Rosary was held on Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 6:00 PM at Romero Valley Funeral Home in Alamosa. The Mass of Resurrection was held at 11:00 AM on Friday, May 10, 2024 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Conejos, CO. Interment followed at the La Jara Cemetery.



Rosary was recited on Thursday March 14, 2024 at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church in Costilla, followed by the Mass of Christian burial. The burial will follow at the Garcia Cemetery in Garcia Colorado and a meal will follow at the Parish Hall after the services.



Ronald J. Acosta
d. April, 29 2024


Ronald j Acosta age 67 born in Los Angeles California passed away unexpectedly on April 29, 2024. He got to know the people of Questa by catching rides to and from work. Ronald enjoyed his artwork, The landscapes, portraits, and enjoyed drawing famous actors. A memorial Service has not been scheduled yet.

Joel Martinez April 5, 1946 - April 29, 2024





JULY 5 - 9:00 A.M.
Please join us for a Rosary and Mass at Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Mission Church in Cerro, NM


JULY 6 - 2:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Memorial Celebration
Military Honors
132 Lower Buena Vista Rd.
Cerro, NM



★ FOR MORE INFORMATION
JOEY: (512) 947-5789 or TINA: (719) 337-8349



Questa del Rio News sends their sincerest condolences to all who are mourning the loss of their beloved. May you find comfort and peace in your coming days.





LOCAL FAVORITES TO KICK OFF YOUR SUMMER!

As summer approaches, it's time to dust off the grill and enjoy the vibrant flavors of the season with some local favorite recipes! Kick off the summer with these salads, burgers, and ribs that are perfect for any cookout or casual gathering. Get ready to impress your friends and family with these delicious and easy-to-follow recipes that will become your go-to favorites all summer long.

Burgers

(courtesy of Lora Arciniega, Questa)

- 2 lbs ground beef
- 1-2 T of Dijon mustard
- 1 t salt
- 1 t ground pepper
- Hamburger buns
- Mayonnaise
- Iceberg lettuce

1. Start grill: best to use charcoal, but gas grill is good, too.
2. Mix ground beef, mustard, salt and pepper gently together. Build burgers to your preferred size. When the grill is medium to high temperature, grill burgers for 5-6 minutes on each side for a burger that's well done. Adjust time according to your liking.
3. Build your burger: add mayo on each side of the bun, add crunchy lettuce and a pile of caramelized onions (below).

Caramelized Onions

- 2 T butter
- 2 T olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, sliced

Heat oil and butter on low heat, add onion and cook covered for about 10 minutes. Lower heat and add thyme, salt, and pepper to your liking and cook uncovered for 15-20 minutes, until onions are very soft.

Potato Salad

(courtesy of Samantha Mascarenas, Questa)

- 1 lb diced boiled potatoes
- 1/2 c miracle whip/ mayo
- 1/4 c diced pickles
- 6 boiled eggs (diced)
- 3 T mustard

1. Place the diced, peeled potatoes into a large pot of cold water and bring them to a boil. Boil about 10-15 minutes or until potatoes are tender.
 2. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, mix the mayo, diced pickles, and mustard. Stir until smooth.
 3. Chop the boiled eggs.
 4. Once the potatoes are very tender, drain off all the water. It's okay if they are soft and crumbly. Place the potatoes in a large bowl.
 5. Gently mix in the dressing until it coats the potatoes well. Then stir in the eggs.
 6. Taste, then add salt and pepper to your taste.
 7. Cover the potato salad and refrigerate for 2-3 hours.
- Enjoy!

Pasta Salad*

(courtesy of Allrecipes.com)

- 1 16-oz package uncooked rotini pasta
- 1 16-oz bottle Italian salad dressing
- 2 cucumbers, chopped
- 6 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 bunch green onions, chopped
- 4 oz grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 T Italian seasoning

1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Place pasta in the pot, cook for 8 to 12 minutes until al dente, and drain.
2. Toss cooked pasta with Italian dressing, cucumbers, tomatoes, and green onions in a large bowl.
3. Mix Parmesan cheese and Italian seasoning in a small bowl, and gently mix into the salad. Cover, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving.

Enjoy!

*customize by adding your favorite veggies or protein!

BBQ Ribs

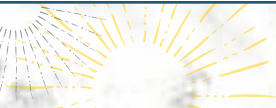
(courtesy of Valerie Segura, Questa)

- 1 rack pork ribs
- Salt
- Pepper
- BBQ sauce
- Water

1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.
2. Defrost and rinse ribs.
3. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Fill a sheet pan with about 1/4 cup of water.
5. Place a rack of seasoned ribs inside a sheet pan and cover with foil.
6. Bake for 3 hours at 325 degrees.
7. After 3 hours, remove ribs from the oven and baste with BBQ sauce.
8. Broil or grill ribs for about 10 minutes.
9. Slice and serve with your favorite sides!




If you have a recipe you would like featured in an upcoming issue of Enchanted Eats, please submit to assistanteditor@questanews.com



Olivia Rael Tribute

d. March 8, 2024



It feels like only yesterday I held your hand in mine and told you how much I would always love you until the end of time.

Your gentle smile warmed my heart as you tried to be strong, but deep inside I knew that it would not be long.

You held a gentle gaze upon all who came to say goodbye, I could not help but turn away so you wouldn't see me cry.

I could not bear the sorrow I held within my heart, but I knew I could not keep you here and soon we would be apart.

It seemed like it was all a dream that would come to pass, but Jesus came and took your hand and you went so quietly to rest in peace at last.

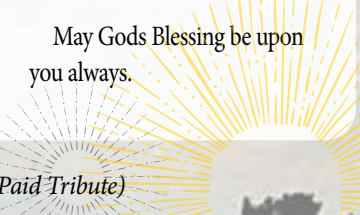
Thank you for the gift of patience you taught me every day. For faith to keep on going no matter what comes your way. For your all your love and kindness and for teaching me to pray.

I Love You Momma


On behalf of Olivia Rael, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who accompanied us during this time. All those who prayed for her and came to see her, brought food, donations, and offered your love and support in each and every way.

To Questa Mayor John Ortega and for arranging the funeral procession, Questa EMT's, Questa Fire Department, Questa Police Department, and Taos County Sheriff's Department, Holy Cross Hospital Medical Personal, Fr. Mike - St Francis Church for anointing her at the hospital, Envoy Hospice for their compassionate care during her final days. Fr. Andrew Ifele and Deacon Marcus Rael-St Anthonys Church, for her Anointing at Home, Wake, Mass and Funeral Services, St. Anthonys Choir and Rachel Leon for the beautiful music, Mikayla Ortega for the Eulogy, Liz Martinez, Hazel Rael, Glenda Griffin, Marsha Martinez, Norma Rael, and Denise Gomez for the beautiful Rosary, Cynthia Rael-Vigil, Jayleen Rael-Thompson and Marsha Martinez for the Readings at her Wake, Angela Rael, Rachel Rael and Amanda Rael for the Readings at her Funeral. Jose Antonio VFW Post 7688 Ladies Auxiliary, Pallbearers: Jose Richard Rael Jr., James Kelly Rael, Jeremy Ortega, Elijah Ortega, Melecio Rael, Joshua Martinez- Honorary Pallbearers Victor Rael, John Rael, Brian Cummings, Micah Martin and Cory Martin. Leroy Romero for donating the use of his backhoe, Norman Garcia, Antonio Garcia, Danny Garcia, and Clyde Cisneros for all the gravesite work. Questa Friendship Circle for the meal and Jose Antonio Mondragon VFW Post 7688 for use of the building and El Pueblito Cemetery and DeVargas Funeral Home for their compassion and professional care, and to Viola Garcia her dear friend who visited her regularly, especially in the final days of her life.

May Gods Blessing be upon you always.



(This is a Paid Tribute)



CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED

Census Field Representative: This is a part-time, temporary job. Representative will conduct interviews primarily in person (door to door) and when requested may conduct phone interviews to collect survey or census data as required within an assigned geographic area. Visit <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/752214800> to apply.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Technician Be involved in projects with our Mining Team and be a part of a growing organization that meets our client's objectives and solves their challenges. In this role you will be responsible for performing and overseeing operations and maintenance (O&M) of the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility, and associated site structures. <https://tinyurl.com/mr25dze5>

Entry Security Guard Assistant, New Mexico Professional Group: Our client, a large, well-known company located in Questa, is now hiring security guards! Security guards are responsible for answering alarms, responding to calls for service, and may apprehend or detain individuals who pose a threat to security. As a security guard, you will monitor access to the company's property and buildings, in order to prevent or stop incidents, such as theft or violence, from occurring on company grounds. To apply, visit Entry Security Guard Assistant job in Questa, NM (newmexicoprofessionalgroupp.com)

NOTICES

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

SLV Spay & Neuter Alliance Mobile Clinic offers low-cost spay and neuter services for cats and dogs in San Luis, Alamosa, and other towns in southern Colorado on a rotating basis. Surgeries include age-appropriate rabies and distemper vaccines. Microchips, bordetella vaccines, dewormer, nail trims, and mat removal are available at additional cost. Book appointments easily online at slvna.org or call (719) 657-7076.

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

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

North Central New Mexico Food Pantry: Second and fourth Fridays, 10 a.m. – noon: 140 Embargo Rd. in Questa. If you need an emergency food box or other information, please call: Jeannie Masters (575) 586-0486 or (575) 779-9194, or Nancy Parker (575) 586-2096 or (505) 699-7563. To make a donation, go to ncfpquesta.com or mail to: North Central Food Pantry, PO Box 1076, Questa, NM 87556. For more information, please email wrmesquire2@gmail.com. If you would like to volunteer, please call Jeannie (numbers above).

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



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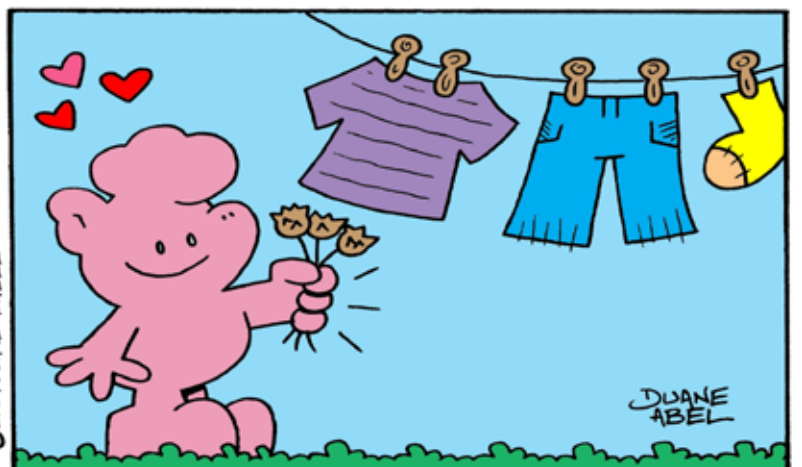


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