



Questa del Rio News

QUESTA • RED RIVER • CERRO • COSTILLA • AMALIA • LAMA • SAN CRISTOBAL

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See page 3 for details about our funding.

Nine Nights of Faith: Las Posadas and the Christmas Memories of Lorraine Duran

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

In the quiet village of Questa, where mountains hold generations of stories and tradition, many residents grew up guided by the same steady forces: faith, family and the rhythm of small-town living. For lifelong resident Lorraine Duran, those values shaped every memory of her upbringing and every season of her life.

Born Sept. 17, 1942, to Eloy and Emelina Garcia, Duran was raised in a bustling household as the youngest of seven siblings — Gaspar, Marcelina, Norbert, Lino, Conrad, and Florence. The family also raised her nephew, Gilbert, as one of their own. Her father worked long days at the Questa mine and later for the Taos County Department of Public Works, while her mother cared for the home and the children.

Church life defined much of Duran's childhood. Holy days were never missed, and June — the month dedicated to the Sacred Heart — meant daily walks from the family's home to St. Anthony's Church, more than a mile away. She recalled running and playing along the dusty roads with her siblings as they made their way to pray the rosary every day in June.

Life was simple, she said, but full of small joys. Soda was rare, so she and her siblings made a homemade version with baking soda, sugar and vinegar. "It was good and helped with your craving of a soda before we could afford them," she said. "And when we did have a soda, we drank every last drop and cherished it."

Winters brought more homemade treats. Duran remembers brittle made from melted sugar and butter, and her mother's special ice cream — fresh snow mixed with canned milk, sugar and vanilla. Her mother insisted it should always come from the second snowfall, never the first.

One of Duran's most treasured memories is Las Posadas, a nine-day Catholic celebration widely practiced in Latin



Photo by Alyssah Duran

Lorraine Duran shares her cherished Christmas traditions she grew up with in Questa

American communities across North America and deeply rooted in Questa, Costilla and Cerro. Beginning nine days before Christmas, families took turns hosting nightly novenas. Community members carried statues of St. Joseph and the Blessed Mother from house to house, reenacting Mary and Joseph's search for shelter before Jesus was born.

Each evening brought prayer, songs and shared refreshments. Early on, hosts offered simple cups of coffee, punch and homemade treats. Over the years, the meals grew into hearty plates of fried potatoes, enchiladas and warm

bowls of posole.

"It was such a beautiful tradition," Duran said. "People opened their homes with such warmth, and we celebrated with prayer, singing and Mass, then shared a meal together. When my husband, Nilo, and I hosted, my sister Florence always helped us prepare. And when she and my brother-in-law, Felimon, hosted, I helped them. It brought our whole family together."

As time passed, fewer volunteers stepped forward to host, and the tra-

Questa del Rio News

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Got a story? Email us at editor@questanews.com

Published Monthly by the
QUESTA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND
Publicación mensual por

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Providing public access and representation for historically underserved communities in northern Taos County and the San Luis Valley, preserving the culture, history, traditions & stories of the people through strong, meaningful journalism.

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VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

EDITORIAL: The Stories That Unite Us —And Why We Need You

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA,
Editor Questa del Rio News

As the year comes to a close, we find ourselves reflecting on all that our small but mighty community newspaper has accomplished—because of you. Your support has allowed us to continue doing what matters most: telling our stories, preserving our history, and uplifting the voices of northern Taos County.

Over the past year, we've invested directly in our community by covering stories that celebrate who we are and where we're going. We've been there for the moments that define us—from the historic ringing of Los Días led by Bernie Torres and his crew, to the celebration of 85 years of history at the Red River community house.

We've looked at how federal changes could impact our community, followed the progress and implications of the Green Hydrogen Project, and investigated the BestCare Pharmacy case—ensuring accountability for the businesses that serve our people.

We've shined a spotlight on our local athletes, notably the Questa Wildcat Cheer team as they brought home their fifth state title in a decade. We've covered the Village of Questa's ongoing work—its decisions on EMS and fire services, grant funding, and initiatives to serve our residents and we've seen the major investments Red River is making in its infrastructure and tourism grants.

We've walked alongside the pilgrims journeying from Costilla to Questa and to the Santuario. We've honored the lives and legacies of generational norteros whose deep roots continue to nourish this land. And we've highlighted the new generation of community builders whose investments are helping northern Taos County grow and thrive.

In short—we've covered the small

stories and the big ones, the moments of triumph and the quiet acts of care that make our community what it is. We have carried our stories forward with heart, truth, and dedication.

Now, as we plan for the year ahead, we're asking you to help us continue this work. Your donation—no matter the amount—directly supports local journalism that puts our community first. Every contribution is 100% tax-deductible and helps us reach our \$20,000 fundraising goal for the year.

Your generosity keeps the presses running, our reporters in the field, and our stories alive. It ensures that the Questa del Rio News remains a voice by and for the people of northern Taos County.

From all of us at Questa del Rio News—thank you for believing in the power of local news and for standing with us. Together, we can keep telling the stories that bind us, inspire us, and remind us why Questa is home.

HOW TO DONATE

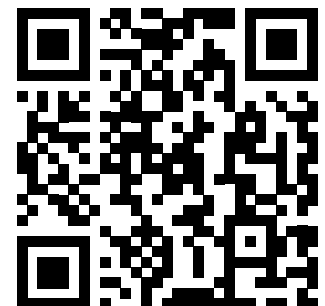
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NINE NIGHTS OF FAITH cont'd from page 1

dition became harder for the parish to maintain.

Christmas, Lorraine said, was always a sacred time for her family. "We would go to midnight Mass when I was a child, and later, when my kids were small, we always attended," she recalled. "We'd leave Mass at two or three in the morning, and it was frigid cold, but that didn't matter. What mattered was celebrating the sacred birth of Jesus together as a family. When I was younger, I was made to go, but as I got older, I truly enjoyed

it. Continuing this tradition with my own children made me feel connected to the memories of my childhood."

Duran carried the values of her upbringing into adulthood. She raised her children — Monique, Jeffery, Dayna and Shannon — and José, her grandson who she raised like her own. Duran was well-known to many in the community as granny, a nickname she got after José was born. Like her parents, she opened her home to her entire family, reflecting the way Questa families look after one another.

Her life was not without hardship. Her oldest brother was killed in World

War II, a loss deeply felt within the family. Duran herself was also widowed young when her husband, Nilo, died Dec. 2, 1988.

Through every joy and every challenge, Duran held close the values she learned on long walks to church, snowy nights of Las Posadas and the simple pleasures of small-town life. Her memories reflect a way of living that shaped generations of Questa families — a life rooted in faith, strengthened by family and sustained by community.

One can still find the tradition of Las Posadas celebrated throughout the parish community beginning on Dec. 16-

Dec. 24. If you're interested in hosting or to find the schedule, you can contact the parish office at (575) 586-0470. The traditional midnight mass on Christmas eve will be held at St. Anthony's Catholic church in Questa.

Las Posadas

Tuesday, Dec. 16- Wednesday, Dec. 24

MidNight Mass

Date: Wednesday, Dec. 24

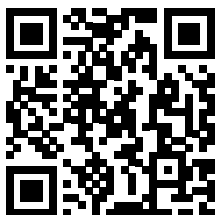
Time: Midnight

Location: St Anthony Church

16 St. Anthony's Rd in Questa

Questa del Rio News

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Good luck, and happy hunting!



Li'l Willie's Shenanigans - 410 W. Main Street, Red River - (575) 754-1719

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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:

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- Minimize Harm.
- Act Independently.
- Be Accountable and Transparent.

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Business Profile

Mrs. Rio's And Thai Kitchen

By LORA ARCINIEGA

Mrs. Rios & Thai Kitchen, located at 218 Main St., is a local gem where the aromas from the kitchen immediately greet patrons and tempt them to order quickly. The restaurant has served locals and tourists for several years with a surprisingly wide variety of offerings that span continents.

Thanks to front man Winai “Win” Intanin and his crew, the kitchen delivers delicious Thai staples, favorite Mexican dishes, and American classics like cheeseburgers.

Win, originally from Thailand, moved to San Luis in 2019 after his longtime friend Vicente, the son of Mrs. Rios, encouraged him to work at the restaurant. Soon after, Win started serving his homeland favorites, and the establishment was formally renamed Mrs. Rios & Thai Kitchen in 2019.

When diners walk in, they are immediately greeted by Win and quickly handed a menu. The service is fast and the food is served piping hot. The restaurant is also known for its delectable, in-house made Thai iced tea, alongside



Photo by Lora Arciniega

Winai “Win” Intanin add holding his Thank You Award from Legion Post 142

a robust menu of beer, wine, cocktails, and sake.

The menu is affordable, with most items priced between \$10 and \$15—a fact reflected in the restaurant’s 4.6-star rating on Yelp and a 4.5 rating on Google reviews.

Win recommends several popular Thai dishes, including Basil, which is a choice of meat stir-fried with garlic, bell peppers, onion, carrots, and basil sauce. Another favorite is Pad See-Ew, featuring fat rice noodles stir-fried with a choice of meat, egg, carrot, and broccoli in a sweet dark soy sauce. He also recommends



Photo by E. Wilde

Mrs. Rio's and Thai Kitchen Store front in San Luis, CO

Pad Kee-Mao, which uses fat rice noodles stir-fried with a choice of meat, egg, onion, pepper, carrot, and basil leaves in a basil sauce.

If you're in the mood for Mexican fare, some of the most popular items are the enchilada plate, chile relleno plate, and the combination plate, all recommended by Win.

Recently Win was presented a “Thank You Award” by the American Legion Post 142 in San Luis, in recognition for his hard work and outstanding dedication to veterans, a recognition Win is very proud of. The award em-

phasizes Win’s time and efforts and a deep appreciation from the Veterans in San Luis.

A kids menu is also available. Mrs. Rios & Thai Kitchen is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and can be reached at (719) 672-0211.

Hours of Operation

Tuesday - Sunday
11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
218 Main St, San Luis, Colorado
(719) 672-0211

Frank Rael to Reopen Questa Favorite as Frank's Eats & Sweets Heavenly Delights

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

A year after closing his longtime restaurant, beloved Questa baker and restaurateur Frank Rael is preparing a comeback.

Rael, who operated his eatery for seven years before shutting its doors in mid December of 2024, announced he will reopen a year later under a new name: Frank's Eats & Sweets Heavenly Delights. The restaurant will return to its same location in Questa with a refreshed menu, new hours and long-awaited upgrades.

“We will have a salad bar, pizza and wings available to start,” Rael said. And for locals who have been missing his signature bakery case, he confirmed that his popular pastries — including donuts, turnovers,

cinnamon rolls and cream puffs — will be available once again.

Rael said staffing challenges drove his decision to close earlier this year.

“We closed our restaurant because we didn't have help,” he said. “It was too hard to keep operating with unreliable help. Many of the younger generation never liked to work without a cell phone in hand, and when you're waiting on patrons, you need to focus and provide good customer service.”

This time around, Rael has his sisters joining him once again to help run the day-to-day operations and he plans to seek additional staff as the business grows. He said he is currently making “many much-needed upgrades” to the space to



Photo by Frank Rael

prepare for the reopening.

The restaurant plans to serve baked goods and coffee in the morning, as well as a pizza, salad and wings for lunch and dinner. Rael expects to be open Thursday through Tuesday.

As of this issue, Rael still doesn't have a firm reopening date due to a delay in permitting, however, hopes to be reopened by mid-to late December or right at the beginning of 2026.

Rael thanked the community for its continued support during the transition.

“Thank everyone for their support and encouragement,” he said. “I look forward to serving you in the near future and returning to serve our good people in the community of Questa.”

Questa Artist Expands Stained-Glass Work With New Business, Holiday Displays



Courtesy photo

An eight-piece stained-glass nativity set by artist Jolton LaFore shines with color and detail

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Local artist Jolton LaFore has turned a longtime passion into a new business with the launch of Glass Gardens NM, offering handcrafted stained-glass artwork ranging from small custom pieces to large, intricate designs.

LaFore, who has been working with stained glass since he was 19, said the idea to turn his craft into a business came after he and his family sold The Wildcats Den. “After we sold the Wildcats Den, I decided to use my spare time and couple it with a passion of mine which I’ve enjoyed doing for a long time,” he said.

He began selling his work earlier this year, relying mostly on word of mouth. He has since participated in several regional art shows, gaining familiarity with the local circuit. Glass Gardens NM is also active on Facebook and can be found by searching Glass Gardens NM, where LaFore posts new pieces, takes orders and responds to custom requests.

Recently, LaFore completed one of his most ambitious projects yet — an eight-piece stained-glass nativity set featuring Joseph, Mary, baby Jesus, the wise men, a camel and a shepherd boy. “I just posted it yesterday and it’s already getting a lot of comments and likes,” he said. The set, priced at \$300, will be on display Dec. 6

and Dec. 13 at the Grace and Gathering Tea Room at Living Word Ministries with settings at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. The event is \$35 per person to attend. To reserve a spot at the Tea Room events, you can call (575) 613-8010.

LaFore will also showcase his work at the Questa Alumbra event on Saturday, Dec. 13 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Questa VFW Hall and at the Red River Christmas in the Mountains event on Dec. 20 and 21 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Red River Convention Center.

He welcomes custom orders of any size. Those interested can find Glass Gardens NM on Facebook and reach out by direct message or by commenting on his posts.

Showcased at Questa Alumbra Event

Date: Saturday, Dec. 14

Time: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Location: Questa VFW

Red River Christmas in the Mountains

Dates: Saturday, Dec. 20 - Sunday, Dec. 21

Time: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Location: Red River Conference Center



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo

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in your Small Business with Rob Swan

Thursday, Dec 11th

5:30-7pm

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QBEN Roundtable with Lynn Skall:
Business Growth & Expansion
Opportunities

Tuesday, Dec 16th

8:30 am

Monte Carlo

1:1 Confidential Business Consulting
with Anwar Kaelin

Thursday, December 18th

By Appointment Only

Questa Library



Visit our Questa Business Bridge Hub
online for full class descriptions
and to register for a class.



Pinabete Neighbors Launch Effort to Fix Deteriorating Roads

By LORA ARCINIEGA

A group of residents living along the minor roads connected by Llano Road North, known locally as Pinabete or Mountain Valley Acres, have organized a community project to repair and maintain deteriorating dirt roads. These roads are not currently owned by nor the responsibility of Taos County or the Village of Questa, therefore the Pinabete community has been forced to pool resources and labor on their own in order to make the roads safer and more accessible.

The effort, dubbed the Pinabete Roads Project, is a voluntary initiative led by resident and project manager, Dan Kuehn, along with core community members Joseph Cruz, Paul Mooney, Wesly Chapman, as well as approximately 30 residents who have contributed to the project in various ways. Organizers stress that the Pinabete area is not under a homeowners association and does not involve covenants, rules about property, or mandatory dues. "We're residents and landowners living along the dirt roads... but we all share the same roads — and the same challenges," a project statement read. "We have the people, tools, and willpower to make change — but we need coordination and shared effort."

The group originally outlined two funding goals to address the severity of the road damage caused by erosion from water and heavy vehicle traffic. The top goal of \$40,000 would have allowed the project to hire local construction company Sanchez Excavation to supervise road improvements, provide equipment, and a crew of skilled labor. Key improvements under this plan would have included importing quality material from locals Ortega Gravel or Mascareñas Trucking Company (MTC), Inc. to raise a 5/8-mile stretch of road by 9 inches, installing cul-

verts at driveway entry points, crowning and creating swails for drainage, improving existing bar ditches, and using a roller to compact the finished road for durability.

When organizers realized the \$40,000 top goal was financially unfeasible, they adopted a more pragmatic approach: "We'll do what we can with what we've got." The community ultimately raised close to \$6,000 through small donations ranging from \$50 to \$500. This amount was enough to secure 235 tons of base coarse road material from MTC in Costilla and rent a skid steer for two days, with remaining funds allocated for a roller to pack the road after grading.

The minimum goal of \$5,000 relied heavily on volunteer labor and equipment. This minimal option has already been put into action after having raised enough money in donations and pledges to initiate the project. Thanks in part to an affordable permit to extract Red River washout material from the US Forest Service, and generous gratis loading and delivery of material by Entact, organizers have coordinated the initial phase by spreading Red River runoff material as well as new material delivered by MTC. Pinabete local Wesly Chapman volunteered long days recently to spread the material, avoiding major disruption to his neighbors. Next steps include clearing drainage and reinforcing existing bar ditches. "Once we get everything done and ready and looking good we will bring a roller in to pack it all down and hopefully keep it in place over the winter," Kuehn said.

The most recent update to the project was on Nov. 12, when Granite performed the necessary grading for the project free of charge. The material was then packed down by a roller completed by Sanchez Excavation, with both activities leaving the



Photo by Dan Kuehn

Granite performing grading operations on Nov. 12



Photo by Dan Kuehn

Dump of material from MTC

road in good, drivable condition.

Residents and supporters wishing to contribute to the Pinabete Roads Project have two options for funding: through a dedicated GoFundMe campaign, or by directly depositing funds into the Pinabete Road account (#4771-00) at the Questa

Credit Union to avoid platform fees. Organizers stress that all funds go directly to the road work, with a commitment to full transparency regarding expenditures.

You can check for updates about the project and see before and after pictures by visiting pinabete.us.

Questa School Board Advances Sale of Red River Charter School Property, Other District Properties

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The Questa School Board held their regular school board meeting on Nov. 19 where they discussed the process of selling three district-owned properties, including the long-anticipated sale of the former Red River Charter School property.

The board also discussed the future of the Amalia School property, the former Administrative Building near the Questa Sangre de Cristo Market, which have been

inactive for years.

Board members voted to initiate the steps required to sell the sites, a move that Red River residents and local officials have pushed for over several decades. Red River Mayor Linda Calhoun publicly thanked community members for attending the meeting, writing on social media that "this has been a long time coming and something that has been worked on for over 50 years."

Questa School Board President Jason Rael said the action taken Monday, Nov. 19 is only the beginning of what will likely be a lengthy process.

"This process could take up to a year," Rael said. "There are a lot of steps involved to ensure we're selling the properties legally and correctly."

The board expects to vote next on a formal resolution outlining the steps necessary to advance the sale of the Red River

Charter School property at their next regularly scheduled meeting on Dec. 17.

Agendas for future school board meetings are publicly available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4x5t39hf>

School Board Meeting

Date: Wednesday, Dec. 17

Time: 6 p.m.

Location:

Questa Admin Building Board Room

Heinrich Secures \$375K for New Wildland Fire Truck in Questa as Government Reopens

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The Village of Questa will receive \$375,000 for a new wildland fire truck, funding secured by U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich as part of a \$207 million appropriations package for New Mexico. The announcement comes just days after Congress approved a deal to reopen the federal government, ending a 43-day shutdown.

Questa officials said the village applied for the funding earlier this year. Mayor John Ortega thanked both village staff and Heinrich for delivering a crucial piece of equipment for a community surrounded by public lands.

“Thank you to our staff for your hard work in applying for this money,” Ortega said. “Thank you Senator Martin Heinrich for knowing that we live in an area surrounded by wilderness and a national monument, and thank you for helping the Village of Questa and Questa Fire Department with an important tool



Photo by E. Wilde

to protect our beautiful community and our beautiful mountains. We definitely appreciate it.”

The new wildland fire truck is

expected to boost Questa’s ability to respond swiftly to fires in brush and rural areas — a growing concern amid hotter temperatures, persistent drought, re-

duced snowpack and increasingly severe wildfire seasons throughout the West.

Heinrich, a member of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee, highlighted the broader package’s benefits for New Mexico, which includes investments in housing, nutrition programs, veterans’ services and military infrastructure.

“I’ve spent months fighting to secure funding for critical investments in New Mexico, and they are now signed into law,” Heinrich said in a statement. “From housing and nutrition programs that support working families, to resources for our veterans and investments in military infrastructure that strengthen our national security — these investments reflect our values.”

Questa officials said the fire truck funding could not have come at a more important time, as communities statewide brace for another potentially dangerous fire season.

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MON-DEC 8: 7:00-9:00 p.m. - Cerro VFW	<i>Happy Holiday Season!</i>

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Slim Margins Highlight High Stakes in Local Elections

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

Voter turnout in Taos County's 2025 local election reached just 25.73%, with 6,733 of the county's 26,161 eligible voters casting ballots, according to unofficial results released by the Secretary of State's Office.

In Red River, one of the tightest races of the election saw Justin Brandenburg and Angela Howles-Black win for Town Council. A total of 384 voters participated in Red River's municipal election, which saw a notably higher turnout than the county average. Of the town's 764 registered voters, 50.26% cast ballots.

In the Questa Independent School District race, Jason Rael, Michael Cordova, and Valerie Vigil won the three

open school board seats. Incumbent Jose Lovato lost to Vigil by 61 votes. Turnout for the Questa school board race was 39.64%, with 1,630 ballots cast out of 4,111 registered voters across Questa, Amalia, Costilla, Cerro, and Red River's Precinct 7. Red River voters are included in this race because the Red River Charter School operates under the Questa district.

In uncontested local races, Questa Municipal Judge Michael Rael received 271 votes and will remain in office, while Red River Municipal Judge candidate Cimmaron Dugas, also unopposed, earned 169 votes.

Incumbent Questa Council Member Brent Jaramillo secured another term with 289 votes, running unopposed. Daryl Ortega, also unopposed, received

105 votes and will replace Councilwoman Katrina Gonzales, who did not seek reelection.

Countywide, voters approved the Holy Cross Hospital Mill Levy, with 5,117 voting in favor and 1,495 opposed. The measure will increase property taxes by \$1 for every \$1,000 of taxable property value, meaning a homeowner with a \$100,000 taxable property will pay roughly \$100 more annually.

In Questa, two ballot measures tied to local education passed comfortably. Voters approved a \$13 million General Obligation Bond for the Questa Independent School District, allowing the district to issue bonds to fund major building renovations. The measure passed with 624 votes in favor and 225 against.

The Capital Improvements Tax Act—a continuation of an existing two-mill property tax—also passed, with 540 voters in favor and 195 opposed. The measure funds capital improvements at Questa schools, Roots and Wings Community School, and Red River Valley Charter School.

Voting remains a cornerstone of democracy across the nation. This election underscores how your single action to make your voice heard at the polls could change an entire outcome of an election. Your voice matters in forming local, statewide and national government. According to the great John Lewis, "the vote is precious, it is almost sacred. It is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have in a democratic society, and we have to use it."



Questa School Board
Director Jason Rael



Questa School Board
Director Michael
Cordova



Questa School Board
Director Valerie Vigil



Red River Town
Councilman Justin
Brandenburg



Red River Town
Councilwoman Angela
Howles-Black



Red River Municipal
Judge Cimmaron
Dugas



Village of Questa Town
Councilman Brent
Jaramillo



Village of Questa
Municipal Judge
Michael Rael

not photographed Daryl Ortega

Community Support Rallies During Shutdown Stress

By LORA ARCINIEGA

The longest government shutdown in U.S. history, lasting 43 days, concluded on Nov. 12. The shutdown ended as President Trump signed a bill passed by Congress to extend government funding until Jan. 30, 2026.

The final agreement did not include the health care extensions sought by Democrats. However, the legislation permanently funds several key programs until the end of September 2026, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), benefits targeted at women, infants and children (WIC), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Congress.

All government workers who were furloughed during the shutdown will receive back pay for missed checks. However, the possibility of a renewed shutdown remains, as the current funding is set to expire on Jan. 30.

For local communities and the many families relying on programs like SNAP and WIC, the future remained uncertain through October and half of November. However, the New Mexico state gov-

ernment was able to provide assistance until benefits were reinstated. As often happens during times of adversity, local residents and organizations rallied to support one another.

"The future looked uncertain, but as we do during times of uncertainty, our communities band together and become stronger when facing hardships," said one local community member.

Many local organizations offered assistance to residents facing food insecurity. The Grill at El Monte Carlo provided a free thanksgiving luncheon on November 26. The Cerro VFW, Post 9516, offered a free Thanksgiving meal to all on Thanksgiving Day. The local Catholic Daughters group provided a donation to the local food pantry to help offset the costs of the holiday meal. Additionally, Kit Carson Electric Cooperative helped government workers affected by the federal shutdown by not disconnecting electricity for nonpayment.

Freedom Center Church will host its annual Food and Clothing Giveaway on Dec. 1 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. During the giveaway, Taos Feeds Taos will be

taking applications for those interested in assistance.

The local Honor Society Chapter at Questa High School is also lending a hand. At their November meeting, the chapter launched a district-wide food drive collecting items until Dec. 4. Led by Honor Society Students and sponsor Santana Santistevan, the effort is in response to the lack of SNAP benefits some families faced during the shutdown. The LOR Foundation joined the effort sponsoring a pizza party for the winning class at each school as well as a generous donation to help students purchase items needed.

The Honor Society is also responsible for stocking the local Little Food Pantries located at Freedom Center Church and Living Word Ministries, a project that started back in 2023 with guidance from Del Endres, facilitator of the Little Free Pantries in Taos. Honor Society members collect donations every Thursday and immediately restock the pantries, noting that items are often depleted upon return. While the district-wide drive ends Dec. 4, residents are encouraged to

continue donating directly to the Little Food Pantries at Freedom Center and Living Word Ministries in Questa at any time. The Honor Society is also seeking to expand the program's reach. If any individuals or organizations in the Costilla or Amalia communities are willing to host a box, students would be excited to provide it.

The shutdown created significant financial stress for many in small communities across the region, leading to numerous calls and visits from concerned family members. While furloughed government employees are guaranteed back pay, missing one to two paychecks can cause great fear and stress for households.

Recent statistics underscore the vulnerability of many Americans, showing that 49% are living paycheck to paycheck and are worried about their personal finances. Financial experts recommend gaining control of one's financial situation by creating and sticking to a budget, living within one's means, and avoiding the use of credit cards for everyday needs.

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Town of Taos Renames Kit Carson Park to Red Willow Park

By JOHN MILLER, ABQ JOURNAL

The Town of Taos Council voted at a special meeting Nov. 18 to rename Kit Carson Park to Red Willow Park at the request of Taos Pueblo, opening a new chapter in a decades-old dispute over the 19th-century frontiersman's appellation adorning the central green space.

Councilor Genevieve Oswald, who chaired the committee to rename the park, voted for the change alongside councilors Darien Fernandez and Corilia Ortega, while Mayor Pro-tem Marietta Fambro cast the sole no vote. Mayor Pascual Maestas, who will be succeeded by Mayor-elect Dan Barrone next year, was absent.

Fambro's term also expires at the end of 2025 and she had objected to renaming the park during her bid for Taos mayor this fall.

During Monday's vote, she told the council she was most concerned about late changes that were made to the final resolution and logistical questions the document failed to address, including how new park signage would be financed and Taos Pueblo's future involvement in oversight of the space.

"It is not that I feel this is not acceptable," she said, "but I think that the time frame that we had to review and look at the financial part and the staffing part, I just think we could have tabled it and gone further to get that information, so my vote is no."

The vote was preceded by more than an hour of presentation by Oswald, who said she motioned to revisit the issue last year after she was contacted by a town resident and "old family friend" to investigate a prior town council's vote to rename the park in 2014.

"The committee was formed to fulfill a decision that was made in 2014," she said, "but our work has always been about more than just a name, and we approached this task with care, recognizing the need to address historical harms and foster civic relationships. Our process was designed to be inclusive, transparent and rooted in community values."

Significant public outcry dogged the town council's vote to rename Kit Carson Park in 2014 and reemerged in the town after the council voted to revisit the matter late last year.

While councilors in November 2014 voted 3-1 to change the name to Red Willow Park, Taos Pueblo's tribal government at the time ultimately



Courtesy Photo

The Town of Taos Council voted at a special meeting to rename Kit Carson Park to Red Willow Park

objected to the change, arguing that the tribe had not been consulted in advance of the vote.

In addition to Chair Oswald, this year's Kit Carson Park Renaming Committee has met monthly and was composed of five members, including Taos Pueblo Second Sheriff Jesse Winters, who joined Oswald for the Nov. 18 presentation.

"Thank you for the opportunity to have a chair at this renaming process," he told the council. "I know that I was basically a bridge between my people and the relationship with the town of Taos and this process of the renaming of the park. It was a long process. I did my due diligence of trying to get my people's voice heard."

While Oswald was designated a non-voting member of the committee, she said she felt there was no conflict between her role as chair, her own personal advocacy to rename the park and her decision to cast a vote regarding the name change Monday.

"When the resolution got written, it got written with consideration that I'd like to vote in the final vote," she said Tuesday. "I was a non-voting member of the committee, and therefore I don't see any conflict of interest, because the com-

mittee guided their work, and ultimately they chose a name that was given by the Pueblo. So I did as any elected official is expected to do, and I cast my vote."

At the committee's final meeting on Oct. 23, Taos Pueblo presented a five-page letter to the town that contained six stipulations. They included a request that the town adopt a formal land acknowledgement that the park is "unceded Tiwa territory," issue a public apology and rename the park Red Willow Park, among other items.

In response to Fambro's question regarding whose government would finance projects necessitated by the name change, Oswald said the town would bear full responsibility.

"It is our property," Oswald replied.

Fambro also raised concerns about whether the resolution's language regarding ownership of the park was clear.

"At this time, with some pretty limited time to look at all of this, I do not believe that there are any federal or state statutes that we are running afoul of with this resolution," Jessica Nixon, the town's attorney, answered. "However, I do think that there are still questions on behalf of both the public and the town that deserves some consideration and discussion."

According to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, Kit Carson Park had been so-named since 1965, about 100 years after Carson's death in southern Colorado on May 23, 1868.

Carson and his wife, Josefa Jaramillo, who preceded the Army scout and Indian agent by just a month in death, is buried alongside him in Kit Carson Cemetery. Several other Taos luminaries of the era were also laid to rest there, including Mabel Dodge Luhan and Padre Antonio José Martínez.

In 1843, the Carsons purchased a home on nearby Kit Carson Road that is now a museum and National Historic Landmark. Carson National Forest, which falls under federal jurisdiction, is also named for Carson.

Efforts to rename Kit Carson Park date as far back as the 1970s, when protests were held in the area and condemned Carson's role in Westward Expansion, most notably his leadership during the forced relocation of 10,000 Navajos and 500 Mescalero Apache to an internment camp on the Bosque Redondo from 1864 to 1868.

A sign in the rear of the Town of Taos Council chambers on Monday labeled Carson a "culture killer, slave owner" and perpetrator of genocide, a claim Santa Fe historian and author of the 2006 biography of Carson, "Blood and Thunder," Hampton Sides, said is not historically founded.

"He was most ferocious in his attack of the Navajo at a time when Taos Pueblo just hated the Navajo, absolutely hated them and feared them, because the Navajo would come down and steal their cattle and sheep and kill people and steal women," Sides said. "Sometimes you'll hear the word that he was genocidal, which is just simply not true."

Fambro noted that, in a town of roughly 5,000 residents and 33,000 in the county, just over 150 people participated in the renaming process.

"With all of the meetings, with all of the panelists and presenters and citizens' forums, it's something like 50. With surveys, that number goes up three times," Oswald said. "So we had plenty of community engagement."

Oswald told the Journal it was not her intention to "relitigate" whether the name of the park should be changed.

"I initiated this process because it was something that hadn't gotten completed, and therefore my goal was always to complete the process," she said.

Your Guide to Christmas Events in Northern Taos County

By STAFF WRITERS

Northern Taos County communities are gearing up for the holiday season with a full lineup of Christmas events throughout December, offering residents and visitors a chance to celebrate with parades, markets, tree lightings and family-friendly festivities.

In Questa, **Santa's Helpers del Norte** will be hosting their annual gift give-away to local children. The group has been giving gifts to local kids since the 1990s. The event will take place from **4 p.m.-7 p.m.** at Lisa and Ralph Rael's residence on north Kiowa Road.

Santa Claus has a special message to all the little boys and girls: Be good and be kind to each other, Santa Claus is making the list and checking it twice, he's going to find out if you're naughty or nice! Santa Claus is coming to Questa!

After you get your gifts, head over to **Community Cocoa and Cheer** happening on **Dec. 13 from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.** at Perovich Park. The event will feature a bonfire for s'mores, cider and cocoa, and live music by the local mariachi group. Organizers said the live nativity and

twinkle light parade, longtime traditions in previous years, will not take place in 2025.

Earlier that day, Questa will also host its annual **Alumbra Holiday Fair** from **10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** at the Questa VFW. Local artisans will sell handmade arts and crafts, offering opportunities for holiday gift shopping.

Living Word Ministries in Questa will hold an **immersive Christmas experience** on **Dec. 6 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.** at 12 Llano Road. The event, "**Under the Bethlehem Stars**," will guide visitors through a walk-through Christmas village and live nativity reenacting the story of Christ's birth. Activities will include children's craft tables, letter-writing for seniors, bonfires and homemade green chile stew. The event is free and open to the public.

In **Red River**, the town will host its annual **Christmas Parade** at **5 p.m.** on **Dec. 20**. A **Christmas market** will follow **Dec. 20-21 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** at the Red River Convention Center, featuring local vendors and last-minute holiday shopping.

Red River kicked off the holiday season with the community's annual "**Switching On of the Holiday Lights**" event on **Nov. 27 at 7 p.m.** in **Brandenburg Park**. Attendees

sang carols, enjoyed hot cocoa, cider and cookies, and visited with Santa.

Red River will be hosting their **annual Christmas Parade** on **Sat. Dec. 20 at 5 p.m.** on Main Street.

Questa del Rio News will be hosting a holiday bake sale to help us meet our December fundraising goal of \$20 thousand dollars to help sustain our paper. Our bake sale will be on **Saturday, Dec. 27** at the Red River Der Markt. Stop by after you get off the slopes or before the Torchlight Parade to get some homemade baked goods and hot cocoa or apple cider.

Together, these events mark a festive start to the Christmas season across northern Taos County, drawing fami-

lies and visitors to gather in celebration and community.



Photo by E. Wilde

Christmas Tree at the Red River Conference Center, Red River



Photo by E. Wilde

Live Nativity Reenacting Christs Birth by Living Word Ministries, Questa



Photo by E. Wilde

Local Arts & Crafts make for thoughtful holiday gifts. Many vendors found at the Alumbra Market, Questa



Photo by E. Wilde

Brandenberg Park lit for the holidays, Red River

HOLIDAY EVENTS

Alumbra Holiday Fair

Date: Saturday, Dec. 13

Time: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Location: Questa VFW, Questa

Santa's Helpers del Norte Christmas

Date: Saturday, Dec. 13

Time: 4 p.m.-7 p.m.

Location: Ralph and Lisa Rael's residence
179-A North Kiowa Road, Questa

Community Cocoa & Cheer

Date: Saturday, Dec. 13

Time: 5 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Location: Perovich Park, Questa

Under the Bethlehem Star

Date: Saturday, Dec. 6

Time: 4 p.m.-7 p.m.

Location: Living Word Church 12 Llano Road, Questa

Red River Christmas Market in the Mountains

Date: Saturday Dec. 20 and Sunday Dec. 21

Time: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Location: Red River Conference Center, Red River

Red River Christmas Parade

Date: Saturday, Dec. 20

Time: 5 p.m.

Location: Red River Main Street, Red River

Questa del Rio News Holiday Bake Sale

Date: Saturday, Dec. 27

Time: 4 p.m.-8 p.m.

Location: Red River Der Markt Food Store, Red River



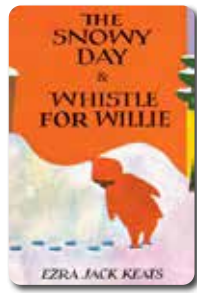
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from the Librarian's Desk...

Sharon Nicholson

A View from the Top of the Christmas Tree

Picture this: a fresh-cut Christmas tree from the Questa Ranger District standing tall in our high-ceilinged recep-



tion area—its branches reaching out like it's trying to hug everyone in the library. The scent of pine mingles with the quiet rustle of pages, and suddenly, the library feels like a forest of stories.

From my imaginary perch at the

very top of that tree, I see traditions old and new weaving together like garlands. There's the timeless joy of curling up with A Christmas Carol, and right beside it, the modern sparkle of streaming holiday playlists and QR codes linking to festive reading lists. Popcorn strings may have given way to LED lights, but the heart of the season—connection, kindness, and shared stories—still shines brightest.

So, whether you're baking Grandma's biscochitos or stopping off at Rael's Market for a Carmel Apple Latte, remember to embrace your traditions. From the top of the tree, the view is clear—there's room in our lives for something old

(traditions), new ideas, and maybe even something borrowed from the library.

Sent with Best Holiday Wishes from your faithful library staff...Audri, Carole, Sharon, and Terri!

Holiday Reading Picks

- **Classic Comfort:** A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens
- **Heartwarming Modern Tale:** The Christmas Train by David Baldacci
- **For the Little Ones:** The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats
- **A Touch of Mystery:** Hercule Poirot's Christmas by Agatha Christie
- **Local Flavor:** New Mexico Holiday Traditions by Ana Pacheco

Voces de Nuestro País

By CLAIRE COTE, MICHAEL RAEL,
AND PEGGY TRIGG

Historias de la familia, amor, aventuras, y desventuras dichas por la gente de nuestro país

Voces de Nuestro País ~ Voices of Our Place is a monthly story gathering at Questa Library. Featured guests share their stories of family, history, love, adventures, and misadventures as told by the people of our area. We are excited to announce that Voces de Nuestro País is now available as a monthly audio and video podcast!

Find the "Voces de Nuestro País" podcast on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon music and Youtube; just search for "Voces de Nuestro País" and you will find our first two episodes. By sharing these stories on multiple online platforms, we hope to widen and deepen the community connection experienced at the Voces de Nuestro País in-person events. Please tell your friends and family!

Our second Voces de Nuestro País event took place on November 8. It was a moving conversation between three long-time musician friends, Dino Archuleta, Fritz Davis and event MC Michael Rael. Dino's stories were tear-jerking to gut splitting - tragic, poignant and hilarious stories of his family and wild days, growing up in Cerro and performing in unusual settings. With humility and humor, Fritz Davis shared about his early life in Kansas that led him to settle in Red River and his life as a performer, musician and newspaper editor. Hear all their stories on the Voces de Nuestro País podcast on your favorite podcast app or Youtube or find a CD at Questa Library.

Join us for the third "Voces de Nuestro



Photo by Claire Cote

Featured story-sharers Fritz Davis and Dino Archuleta with MC Michael Rael at the Voces de Nuestro País event at Questa Library on November 8, 2025



Courtesy Photo

Louise Gallegos

País" story-sharing event at Questa Library on December 13, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. This month's featured guests will be Louise Gallegos and David Cisneros. Louise Gallegos is currently serving her fifth term on the Questa Village Council, with time off from 2012 to 2018 to focus on the res-



Courtesy Photo

David Cisneros

toration of St. Anthony's Catholic Church. She also serves as a commissioner for the Questa Citizens Ditch Association. Come listen to Louis's stories of being born into a large family, growing up in Questa, and navigating struggles of life, faith and determination. Next, hear stories from

David Cisneros, a local unsung hero. From humble beginnings in Cerro to serving in the Navy for twenty years, then back home again to assist his community here in multiple ways. For decades he helped people keep clothes clean and food cold and cooked through honest and generous servicing and selling of appliances. Michael Rael is MC and curator for this monthly gathering hosted in collaboration with Questa Library and Voices of the Northern Rio Grande, a program of local nonprofit, Localogy.

Audio recordings, videos, and images from "Voces de Nuestro País" events are also being added to our community digital archive, a local repository and resource established by Voices of the Northern Rio Grande and Questa Public Library with support from the Manitos Community Memory Project. Learn more about the community archive and listen to stories from community members at QuestaStories.org and QuestaLibrary.org.

These story-sharing sessions take place on the second Saturday of every month at Questa Library. Save the Date: on January 24 we'll be hosting a special Open Mic Story-Sharing Event; stay-tuned for more details. We hope you can join us!

If you have stories you'd like to share, please let Michael Real know. You can often find him at Real's Market or email him at rael870@gmail.com.

Voces de Nuestro País Story-Sharing Event

Date: Saturday, Dec. 13

Time: 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Location: Questa Library

This month's featured guests will be Louise Gallegos and David Cisneros.

Learn More at QuestaStories.org



The Gift of the Holidays: Alumbra de Questa

As usual, the Questa Creative Council (QCC) will host the community's festive holiday event with mountains of goodies on the second Saturday in December. Stop by and find local arts, crafts and friends, including community groups like the library and QCC. It will be held on Saturday, Dec. 13, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Questa VFW.

Just in time for holiday buying, here are a sampling from your neighbors who've already signed up to be at the market: candles, skincare products, crosses, leatherwork, felt ornaments, wood and stone jewelry, furniture, bead and crochet work, recycled crafts, foods, and pottery.

This is Questa's biggest local holiday



Courtesy Photo

Many attended and enjoyed learning how to make traditional foods the right way, on Saturday Nov. 8 at Living Word

shopping spot and focuses on supporting local artists/makers. We hope to see you there in one fashion or another! (If you are interested in vending this year, check out the QCC website to see if spots are still available, or call us with any questions: (575) 586-5658.

Art Kits for Kids

Art supplies for area kids add to the holiday spirit, distributed for free at

Questa Library. Supplies were purchased from a fund drive we held earlier in the year (and you can still contribute!). This is an annual event, to ensure that all children can engage in art activities that nurture their creativity, from teens to the littlest ones!

The free supplies, including paper, paints, paintbrushes, and more will be distributed at the Questa public library on Friday, Dec. 12, from 11 a.m. until 3

p.m., first come, first served.

Traditional Foods Cooking Class

We started the holiday season off last month, sponsoring a cooking class of traditional treats led by Flavio Cisneros, at Living Word's kitchen. Yummy biscochitos, prune pie, and other treats were sampled and demonstrated. Many people came and enjoyed themselves!

Wishing you warmth, peace, joy and light as we move through darker days. Contact us at QuestaCreativeCouncil.org or (575) 586-5658 and support our mission to strengthen and sustain community enrichment and economic opportunities through arts, culture, history, and education. We always need volunteers and everyone is welcome.

Alumbra Holiday Market

Date: Saturday, Dec. 13

Time: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Location: Questa VFW

Art Kits for Kids distribution, with Questa Library

Date: Friday, Dec. 12

Time: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Location: Questa Public Library

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Fifty Years of Faith, Family and Northern New Mexico Roots: Larry and Gloria Sanchez

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

For Larry and Gloria Sanchez, faith has always been the anchor — in their home, in their marriage and in every challenge they faced together. It guided them through job losses, the raising of children and grandchildren, and ultimately through five decades of life as partners rooted in northern New Mexico.

Their 50-year marriage, celebrated in November, is one they say could not have endured without God at the center.

“Everything we have, we leaned on God for,” Gloria said. “That’s what carried us.”

Both grew up in Questa, where neighbors were extended family and almost everyone spoke the same northern New Mexico Spanish. The couple married on Nov. 26, 1975.

“We grew up around each other all our lives,” Gloria said. “Our families had known each other since forever.”

As a young woman just out of high school, Gloria worked as a secretary at the local school, where Larry was 18 and a senior in high school. Larry, who grew up without a father, remembers how tight money was back in school.

“Veinte centavos por lonche (twenty cents for lunch) was a lot back then,” he said. “You know who used to pay for my lunch? Tony Espinoza. Pues éramos pobres (we were poor), what can I say. My mom raised us alone de chiquito (from when we were small) and I didn’t have a dad. Mr. Espinoza probably felt sorry for me. So he would call me forward, y Iba pa allá y pagaban por mi lonche (and I’d come forward and he’d pay for my lunch).”

Larry enlisted in the Army in 1971 and served two years in Germany. While he was overseas, Gloria once noticed a framed photo of him behind a bar at the Golden Q during a reception.

“Everyone was talking about him like he was some celebrity saying he was going to visit the Golden Q soon,” she said. “I thought, ‘What is so great about this guy who is coming back from Germany?’”

When Larry returned home, he worked for the Village of Questa’s water department and later at the mine. He often helped clear rocks on the road near Gloria’s mother’s house. “I’d stop and



Photo courtesy Jaydn Jeantete

Larry and Gloria’s vows are blessed by Fr. Jason on Nov. 8

talk to him and from there, he asked me out,” she said.

For their first date, they took a trip to Santa Fe for an Antonio Aguilar concert — and still laugh like shy teenagers remembering it.

Their 1975 wedding was planned in just two short weeks after Gloria’s coworkers at the mine suggested a pre-Thanksgiving ceremony to give everyone a long weekend. Gloria found her dress in Española, booked the Golden Q for the reception, relying on family to plan their whimsical wedding. Her aunt fashioned her pillbox hat, sewed her veil to make it the perfect addition to her dress. Her aunt also baked a beautiful wedding cake.

Gloria was 28 and Larry was 24 when they married at St. Anthony’s Catholic Church. “It all came together beautifully,” she said.

Their shared faith became the foundation of their marriage.

“Marriage takes commitment, trust, and hard work,” Gloria said. “It takes love, patience, sacrifice. What really helped me was being Catholic and devoted to the calling of marriage.”

Gloria and Larry have one daughter, Therese, who was 6 when they got married.

Therese is married to James Padilla and together they have three children -- Zachary, 29; Alexis, 24; and Thiago, 15 — and a 7-month-old great-granddaughter, Rosalie Grace who is daugh-

ter to their oldest grandson, Zachary. Over the years they helped raise their grandchildren, cared for aging parents, and supported their daughter through life’s challenges.

They also navigated job changes and layoffs at the mine, including a move to Parachute, Colorado in 1986 during one of the mine’s layoffs. After three years, they returned to Questa, where Larry worked as a mill foreman and supervisor, retiring after 24 years with UnoCal and Chevron.

“What it is también (also) is you got your wife to support you. I think that allowed me to be more engaged in the community, which I did with the help of my wife — otherwise I couldn’t have done it. I have served as a Questa councilman, and I was appointed by Bill Richardson as a county commissioner. I was very involved in the

community. Mi mama me decía, ‘Mijito, es un honor pero hazme un favor, mijito.’ And I’d say, ‘What, Mom?’ And she’d say, ‘Cuida los pobres’ (my mom used to tell me, son, it’s an honor but do me a favor and I’d say what mom, and she’d say look out for the less fortunate) and I did take that to heart.

Larry always carried the lessons his mother taught him into public service guiding every decision in his life.

On Nov. 8, the Sanchez’s celebrated their 50th anniversary at the Red River Convention Center with 325 guests. Family from across New Mexico attended, the Bad Boys band played, and several of Gloria’s classmates reunited for the occasion.

The highlight came when Fr. Jason from St. Anthony’s Parish blessed their vows — a moment both say felt like the greatest gift.

“God has been our cornerstone,” Gloria said. “Through every up and down, He kept us together and strong so having our new priest be apart of our special day made it all the more special.”



Holiday 'Shop Questa' Campaign Kicks Off With \$1,000 in Prizes and Daily Drawings

By STAFF WRITER

Questa's holiday season is shining brighter this year with the launch of the Holiday Shop Questa campaign, a local promotion to inspire residents and visitors to celebrate the season by supporting local businesses.

Organized by the Questa Economic Development Fund (QEDF) and sponsored by the LOR Foundation, the campaign encourages the community to "Love Questa & Shop Local!" this holiday season. When shoppers visit local merchants, they can enter to win local gift certificates through daily drawings with over \$1,000 in local prizes.

Throughout the month of December, residents and visitors are encouraged to frequent local merchants for all of their holiday shopping needs and dining experiences. Each time they visit participating Questa-area businesses they can enter the drawing for giveaways.

Look for the clear entry boxes with the 'Shop Questa' holiday logo near store



registers, making it easy to drop in an entry form. Drawings will be held daily throughout the month, with each winner announced on *Questa del Rio News* Facebook page.

Prizes include gift certificates for local shops, restaurants, and service providers, driving even more business to local merchants, and showcasing the variety of shopping possibilities in and around the

Questa area.

The excitement builds toward the Grand Prize Drawing, where one lucky entrant will receive \$250 in cash on December 31 to spend throughout the community. All entries made throughout the month will automatically be eligible for the Grand Prize drawing.

Supporting local merchants not only brightens the season for the community

and your gift recipients, it also bolsters the economy of the entire community. When \$100 is spent locally, \$68 stays in the community, re-circulating to pay workers, purchase supplies, and support local charitable causes. The dollars spent in small businesses are re-spent six to fifteen times, driving economic activity that generates jobs, and contributes to the long-term investment in community services and infrastructure.

The Holiday 'Shop Questa' giveaway is open to the public, and participants need not be present to win. Winners will be notified by phone. Entrants must be at least 18 years of age, and each person may win only once through Dec. 30, 2025. No purchase is necessary, and the odds of winning depend on the total number of entries received.

For more information, contact Lynn Skall at QEDF at (575) 586-2149 or lynn@questaedf.com, and help keep Questa a vibrant, joyful place to live and shop this holiday season.

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Deacon Louis “Eddie” Herrera

By LORA ARCINIEGA

Being raised in a community where your history connects to every part of your present, it is difficult to find the courage to leave. It is similarly difficult to forge a path and stay. Questa del Rio News is committed to highlighting different members of our community, both those who have created their paths and planted their own roots in the community that raised them, and those who have pursued lives outside of the community—through our Representando series. This series is dedicated to those who are Representando communities in northern Taos County, in various facets of life.

For Deacon Louis “Eddie” Herrera, life has never been a string of coincidences, but rather a journey guided by faith and purpose. Born to Berlinda and Eliu Herrera in the small mountain town of Questa, Eddie grew up surrounded by hard work, strong family bonds, and deep faith.

“Everything I am began right here,” Eddie says. “My parents taught me the value of hard work, humility, service,

and perseverance.”

After graduating from Questa High School in 1976—where he served as student body president—Eddie dreamed of attending a four-year university. But during his exit interview, his counselor told him to consider trade school instead. Rather than feel defeated, that moment lit a fire within him. “Sometimes it only takes one person’s doubt to awaken your determination,” Eddie recalls. “I decided then that I wouldn’t let anyone else define what I could or couldn’t do.”

He went on to college, graduating with honors and earning a scholarship to study biochemistry in Mexico City. When he returned home, he planned to attend medical school, inspired by his early experience as a first responder. “When I was 17, I drove the ambulance in Questa,” he said, smiling at the memory. “I remember waiting for emergencies at the old clinic—right where the Head Start building stands today.”

Eddie’s path shifted when, after being placed on a waiting list for medical school and facing financial challenges with his growing family, he came across an ad in the Daily Lobo for an officer position in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “God had different plans for me,” says Eddie.

“The ad said \$1,100 a month,” he laughed. “At that time, that sounded like stability—and a chance to serve.”

That step changed the course of his life. Eddie went through Officer Candidate School and later completed the grueling Airborne Ranger program at Fort Benning, Georgia. His leadership and courage earned him the Merrill’s Marauders Association Award and the General Douglas MacArthur Leadership



Photo by Lora Arciniega

Award—both rare honors recognizing character and service above self.

Over the next two and a half decades, his career took him around the world—from Germany to Panama and the Middle East—where he led tactical missions during Operation Just Cause. Later, the Army sent him to Purdue University for his master’s degree in engineering and then to Caracas, Venezuela, to teach at the Military Engineer College.

Eddie’s path eventually led to senior leadership roles in telecommunications and energy, including serving as Vice President of Engineering for Nextel International and President of an engineering and manufacturing company that designs and fabricates high-power transmission towers and substation structures for major utility companies in the United States. His corporate journey also included a two-year executive management program at Dartmouth College, fully sponsored by Georgia Power Company.

After 26 years of service, Eddie retired as a full Colonel. But even with all those achievements, he sensed there was something more God was asking of him. “After all those years of leading soldiers and engineers,” he said, “I realized the deepest calling was to serve souls.”

That realization led Eddie into the Catholic Church’s Diaconate formation program—a five-year journey of prayer, study, and discernment. “It wasn’t about adding another title,” he said softly. “It was about surrender—about learning to serve the Church with a humble heart.”

Today, Deacon Eddie is on a two-year loan from the Archdiocese of Santa Fe to serve at St. Anthony Catholic Church in his hometown of Questa. He continues to give back as a commissioner for the Llano Irrigation Company and as a long-time member of the Questa Economic Development Board, where he works to create new opportunities for local families and businesses.

Most recently, he achieved another milestone—graduating from Stanford University’s Graduate School of Business Latino Executive Program in November 2025. “Sometimes I have to pinch myself,” he admitted with a smile. “It’s a blessing to be surrounded by such inspiring Latino leaders who share the same heart for service and community.”

Through every season of his life—from the mountains of Questa to the classrooms of Stanford—Eddie has carried one truth in his heart: that life’s greatest honor is not found in medals, titles, or degrees, but in service.

“What gives me the most peace,” he says, “is simply the chance to serve. A servant leader—that’s what I am, and what I hope always to be.”



Questa del Rio News is a non-profit newspaper. Each paper, every month, costs \$3.15 to put together and deliver, which is produced by local people, for local people, providing a platform for our community voices. Help us continue to deliver this unique and essential news that connects us to each other and helps keep this community strong.

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Trey and Maddix Cloud

By LORA ARCINIEGA

For brothers Trey and Maddix Cloud, moving from Albuquerque to Questa in 2023 was a return to family roots that has provided opportunity and small town living. Trey, 14, a freshman at Questa High School, and Maddix, 13, a seventh-grader, are the sons of Dana and Brandon Cloud. Upon moving to Questa, where their mother was raised, the brothers quickly embraced the community and programs it had to offer.

Trey describes himself as calm and reliable, while Maddix is energetic and talkative, preferring to relax when he can. Both credit their shared passion for basketball and involvement in community work as key motivators for their success in Questa.

Both brothers are involved with the Cultivo Program, a youth-focused agricultural internship operating at Cerro Vista Farm. Trey has worked for the program for two summers, and Maddix completed his first summer this year. They expressed excitement and satisfaction in working alongside other students and mentors, particularly enjoying the physical labor and results.

"We meet a lot of new people through the program and we really like that part of it," Trey said, highlighting the social aspect. Maddix added, "I enjoy the harvesting of the vegetables." Both plan to return for the summer 2026 session, highlighting the encouraging nature of the staff. "All the mentors are really nice and encourage you," Trey noted.

The start of basketball season is the favorite time of year for the brothers, who are both dedicated to the sport. Trey has also participated in esports, which is a competitive video gaming sport offered at Questa High School.

Both brothers expressed a connection and respect for Questa High School PE coach Ernie Griego. "I feel



Courtesy Photo

Trey (L) and Maddix Cloud (R)



Courtesy Photo

Justin Powers (L) Maddix (M) and Trey Cloud (R)

like coach Ernie understands kids. He's calm and understands our passion for basketball," Trey said. They both noted that their dedication to the sport is a significant factor in their motivation to maintain good grades.

Looking beyond high school, both brothers are already planning their next moves. Trey hopes to attend college in Albuquerque or Arizona, specifically naming Arizona State University. "I love the weather in Arizona. I'm not a huge fan of the winter and cold. My hope is to play basketball for a university," he said.

Maddix has his sights set on a career in basketball, also considering Arizona or Albuquerque, or "somewhere near New Mexico," to pursue his basketball dream. If a professional career in the sport doesn't pan out, Maddix intends to join the military. "My grandpa, Alfred Valdez, was in the Army and I spent a lot of time with him when I was young and he would always tell me about his stories and I was inspired by it. Me—I want to try out the Marines. I think they are the most disciplined and I think that'll be good for me."

The brothers unanimously cite their parents as their primary source of inspiration.

"They are always pushing me to do better in school and sports," Trey said, adding, "I think I'm a lot like my mom. People say I act like her because she is very caring and helps people out a lot."

Maddix called his parents his role models. "They are good people and I want to be like them and do great things in my life," he stated. The brothers emphasized the consistent presence of their mother: "Our mom works from home. She has always been here when we needed her."

Trey offered this advice to younger students: "Be kind and curious and take care of your mind and body." He achieves this balance by "not letting anger take over and controlling my emotions and trying to keep calm in most situations." Maddix's advice focused on physical health, noting his observations from his previous home: "Growing up in Albuquerque I saw a lot of kids vape and do drugs. Don't do that. It will mess up your body. Stay in your own lane."

Both Trey and Maddix concluded that their involvement in the Cultivo program and basketball, coupled with the strong daily involvement of their parents, serves as their greatest motivators.

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Questa Ladycat Volleyball Team Shines in Remarkable Season, Concluding Strong State Run

By MIKAYLA ORTEGA

The Questa Ladycats closed out one of the program's strongest seasons in recent years on Friday, Nov. 14, finishing their state tournament run with a determined four-set battle against the Oak Grove Lady Eagles in the Class 2A championship bracket.

Questa entered the state tournament with momentum built on months of disciplined play, a 19-4 regular-season record, and a dominant 9-1 district finish. The Ladycats showed that same competitive edge on the state stage, pushing through pressure and refusing to fold against top-tier opponents.

After dropping the opening set 25-19, the Ladycats rallied in the second, tightening their rhythm and matching Oak Grove point for point. Despite a late surge, they narrowly fell 25-21 but carried their energy forward. In the third set, Questa delivered one of its sharpest stretches of the match, controlling the court with strong serving and improved ball movement to secure a 25-18 win and extend the fight.

Oak Grove responded with an offensive run in the fourth, taking the



Courtesy Vivian Vallejos

Questa Ladycats Volleyball Coach Michelle Spears rallies the team as they played in the second round of state on Nov. 14

set 25-14 to advance and hand Questa its second loss of the double-elimination tournament.

While the match marked the end of the postseason, the Ladycats' performance capped a remarkable year — their third straight state tournament appearance and another season defined by teamwork, resilience and a deep bench of young talent.

Coach Michelle Spears says she is proud of how the girls performed this year. "There was some concern at the end of last season because we lost seven seniors last year, however, our team showed up and picked up where they left off," Spears says the majority of the



Courtesy Vivian Vallejos

Questa Ladycats played against the McCurdy Lady Bobcats in the first round of state on Nov. 13.



Courtesy Vivian Vallejos

Questa Ladycats played against the Oak Grove Lady Eagles in the 2nd game of state on Nov. 14

matches during the season were won in 3 matches.

This year, Sasha Martinez served as the assistant coach and 2025 graduates Alexis Brown and Delilah Rael served as the JV coaches. "I was surprised they wanted to come out and I was really

happy about that. Having these girls on my coaching squad gave the girls a different perspective than what I was able to give them because these girls were on the court with several of them last year, so they related to them in a different way than I could," Spears said.

When discussed what happened when the team went to state, losing in the first round to McCurdy, who they had just beat for the district championship, Spears says, "something I have seen with our team is that they tend to expect too much of themselves. They want perfection and try to play to that, instead of playing their game. When they play comfortably and play as themselves, they dominate."

Spears says she is excited and hopeful for the next season of volleyball. "I love the sport and helping these girls realize and play to their full potential— I love it and I am really looking forward to continuing to grow our Questa volleyball program."

The Ladycats leave the court having once again raised the bar for Questa volleyball, representing their school and community with heart, grit and undeniable success.

Ladycats Basketball Set for Competitive 2025-26 Season

By STAFF WRITERS

The Questa Ladycats basketball team opened the 2025-26 campaign on Nov. 29 with a road matchup at Raton, launching a season that features early travel tests, key midyear home stands, and a district slate packed with rivalry energy. The Ladycats dominated against the Raton Lady Tigers by 30 points with a 55-25. This year's team is being coached by Erica Padilla and Cody Schave.

Regular season

Nov. 29 – @ Raton, 2:30 p.m.
Dec. 4 – @ Springer, 5:30 p.m.
Dec. 15 – @ Coronado, 5:00 p.m.
Jan. 6 – vs. Springer, 5:30 p.m.
Jan. 6 – vs. Taos, 6:00 p.m.
Jan. 16 – vs. Clayton, 6:00 p.m.

District Games

Jan. 22 – vs. Escalante*, 6:00 p.m.
Jan. 24 – @ Mora*, 2:00 p.m.

Jan. 29 – vs. Mesa Vista*, 6:00 p.m.
Jan. 31 – vs. McCurdy*, 2:00 p.m.
Feb. 3 – @ Escalante*, 6:00 p.m.
Feb. 5 – @ Peñasco*, 6:00 p.m.
Feb. 12 – vs. Mora*, 6:00 p.m.
Feb. 14 – @ Mesa Vista*, 2:00 p.m.
Feb. 19 – @ McCurdy*, 5:00 p.m.
Feb. 21 – vs. Peñasco*, 2:00 p.m. (Final regular-season home game)



Photo courtesy Vivian Vallejos

Questa Ladycats open the season Nov. 29 against the Raton Lady Tigers with a big win.

Questa Boys Basketball Looks to Build Momentum as 2025-26 Season Tips Off

By STAFF WRITERS

The Questa High School boys basketball team is gearing up for a full slate of competition as the 2025-26 season began on Nov. 29 with a road matchup at Raton. With a schedule that mixes early non-district tests and a challenging district lineup, the Wildcats are aiming to establish their identity early and carry that momentum into the heart of winter play. The team dropped a heartbreaker in their season opener Saturday, Nov. 29, falling 42-40 to Raton after a frantic final minute. The Wildcats led most of the game and were up late in the fourth before Raton rallied to tie and take the lead off a turnover. Down five with seconds remaining, Questa hit a dramatic 3-pointer and drew a foul to pull within two, but the final free throw missed, and Raton took the win.

This year's team is coached by Steve Rael. Below is the schedule for the Questa Wildcats basketball team:

Regular season

Nov. 29 – @ Raton, 4:00 p.m.
Dec. 2 – vs. Antonito, 5:00 p.m. (Home opener)
Dec. 4 – @ Springer, 7:00 p.m.
Dec. 15 – @ Coronado, 6:30 p.m.
Jan. 6 – vs. Springer, 7:00 p.m.
Jan. 12 – @ Antonito, 5:00 p.m.
Jan. 16 – vs. Clayton, 7:30 p.m.

District games

Jan. 22 – vs. Escalante*, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24 – @ Mora*, 3:30 p.m.
Jan. 29 – vs. Mesa Vista*, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31 – vs. McCurdy*, 3:30 p.m.
Feb. 3 – @ Escalante*, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5 – @ Peñasco*, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 12 – vs. Mora*, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 14 – @ Mesa Vista*, 3:30 p.m.
Feb. 19 – @ McCurdy*, 6:00 p.m.
Feb. 21 – vs. Peñasco*, 3:30 p.m. (Senior Night)

Questa del Rio News is a nonprofit newspaper created by norteños, for norteños. Each monthly issue costs \$3.15 to produce and deliver, and every dollar directly supports the storytelling, reporting, and community voices that keep Questa connected and strong.

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By Toner Mitchell

Collaborative Project Addresses Conflict on Public Lands

Across the American West, the health of public lands— and their potential as economic and recreational assets— rests on the balance of soil, vegetation, and water. Their relationship to one another is symbiotic, so much so that if one of them is missing or impaired, the other two will be also, soon if not immediately. In the absence of living soil, plants struggle to take root, and precipitation evaporates quickly or runs off. Without plant cover, soil can cook or freeze to death, at which point water quite literally heads for greener pastures. And without water...well, there's a reason we all say, "Water is life."

In New Mexico as elsewhere, public land users often value these three vital resources for different reasons. Conservationists and recreationists may see a lush meadow as habitat where bugs, mice, and deer can find plenty to eat, where stored groundwater feeds trout streams to keep them cool.

Ranchers and farmers love green meadows too. Tall grass means food

on tables and roofs over heads. Grass is more than just money to rural New Mexicans; in this poverty-challenged state, it provides an opportunity to create wealth where such opportunities are slim.

From these differing perspectives have emerged different goals, which have resulted in painful conflict for many years. Each user group — ranchers and farmers on one side and conservationists on the other — have come to view its counterpart as benefitting at their expense. Both sides have valid arguments. Conservationists have documented negative impacts on habitat from cattle, especially near streams and riparian areas. Ranchers have been forced out of areas where their families have worked profitably for many generations. Lawsuits have been filed, at a substantial cost in money, time, and the continuation of flaring tempers.

Beginning in 2024, Trout Unlimited (TU) initiated the Bridging Culture in Cattle Country project with the aim of diminishing this conflict in northern New Mexico. The basic idea was simple: bring rancher and conservationist volunteers together on public land improvement work. Through 2024 and 2025, TU led nine collaborative work days, in which fences were repaired, water pipelines and drinking troughs installed, camping areas cleaned, protective flight diverters affixed to barbed wire, and protective enclosures constructed. Importantly, meals were shared between erstwhile adversaries.

These seemingly simple projects will have important effects on the quality of public lands in a portion of the Santa Fe National Forest in the Jemez Mountains, an area popular with recreationists and



Photo by Leslie Welch

Brandon Trujillo and daughter Annalysia cleaning campsites

productive for ranchers. The focal area is inhabited by three federally endangered species, — the New Mexico meadow jumping mouse, Jemez Mountains salamander, and Mexican spotted owl — not to mention Rio Grande chubs and cutthroat trout, which Trout Unlimited is striving to prevent from being listed.

Perhaps the most important effect of these work days was the sense of common purpose they engendered among participants, a total of 58 volunteers. That's a lot of perspectives and opinions on public land stewardship. Nevertheless, during work and over lunch, conversations generated healthy rapport around volunteers' lives and histories. Conservationists asked ranchers about growing up on ranches, or shared stories about doing

so themselves. Ranchers asked for fishing tips, and recounted stories of catching trout while tending their families' herds.

Certainly a gap might still remain between those who desire a fat trout on the line and others hoping for a fat check at the sale barn. But if Bridging Culture in Cattle Country shows anything, it's that the gap can be narrowed if we put our collective minds or, as the case may be, our backs to it. Who knows, we might just get enough of what we want. That's what public lands should be about.

Bridging Culture in Cattle Country was conducted with the generous support of the U.S. Forest Service and was funded by the National Forest Foundation, which was created to bring people together to restore and enhance National Forests and Grasslands.



BIRD IS THE WORD

By Bryce Flannagan

Wild Turkey: America's Comeback King

The leftovers are cold in the fridge, the relatives have gone home, and somewhere across America, a wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) perches

on a ponderosa pine branch, completely oblivious to the holiday just past. While 46 million of its domesticated cousins met their fate on dinner tables last week, this bird represents one of conservation's greatest triumphs and one of humanity's most troubling contradictions.

The Snood Tells All

Look closely at a tom (male turkey) and you'll notice something bizarre: a fleshy, elongated protuberance dangling from his forehead like a deflated party balloon. This is the snood, and it's unlike anything else in nature. When relaxed, it hangs pale and unassuming at 2-3 centimeters. But when a tom begins his courtship strut—tail fanned, wings dragging—the snood engorges

with blood, elongates several inches, and turns brilliant red, hanging well below his beak like a crimson exclamation point.

Research shows female turkeys genuinely prefer long-snooded males, and during confrontations between toms, birds with longer snoods receive deference from rivals. The snood can engorge, contract, change colors from red to blue to white depending on mood, and serves as a signal of health and vitality—a bizarre organic indicator.

The caruncles covering a turkey's head and neck—those bumpy, fleshy growths—serve a similar purpose, cycling through colors to communicate excitement, aggression, or courtship readiness.

From Six Birds to Six Million

The numbers tell an astonishing tale. By the early 1900s, unregulated hunting and habitat loss had reduced Wild Turkey populations to perhaps 30,000 birds scattered across isolated pockets. In New Mexico, they'd been nearly extirpated from their native range. Then came one of conservation's greatest triumphs: through habitat restoration and strategic reintroduction programs, Wild Turkeys rebounded to over 6 million birds nationwide.

In New Mexico, Merriam's turkeys—our subspecies with distinctive white-tipped tail feathers—now thrive from the Gila National Forest to the

WILD TURKEY cont'd on next page >>

WILD TURKEY cont'd from page 22

Sangre de Cristos. These wild birds possess remarkable cognitive abilities, recognizing individual humans, remembering food sources across vast territories, and communicating through at least 28 distinct vocalizations. They're survivors, adaptable, and utterly unlike their factory-farmed counterparts in almost every meaningful way.

The Other Turkey: A Different Story

While wild populations soared, domesticated turkeys traveled a darker path. The same week Americans celebrated Thanksgiving, nearly 2.1 million turkeys were killed due to highly pathogenic avian influenza since late August, adding to the almost 20 million turkeys killed from Feb. 2022 to June 2025 due to bird flu. Since 2022, the virus has affected over 183 million birds across commercial and backyard flocks.

These staggering numbers aren't just about a virus—they're about the conditions that allow it to spread. Turkeys

are especially susceptible to infectious disease compared to broiler chickens, living significantly longer between hatching and slaughter, meaning they have a longer window to be exposed to bird flu.

The average stocking density for hens is 2.5 square feet, and male birds typically get 4 square feet—about the size of a laptop for each bird weighing 35-40 pounds. These birds are forced to endure painful mutilations to prevent feather pecking, cannibalism, and other aggressive behaviors due to crowding and stress. Meanwhile, turkeys receive more antibiotics proportional to their body weight than any other kind of livestock in the U.S.

The breeding itself has become grotesque. Modern commercial turkeys grow so rapidly—from a few ounces to 42 pounds in just 19 weeks—their legs can barely support them, their hearts fail, and they've become too large to mate naturally, requiring artificial insemination for reproduction. They can live 12 years in the wild; in facto-

ry farms, most see only 4-5 months before slaughter.

What We Choose to See

Benjamin Franklin never actually proposed the Wild Turkey as our national symbol—that's a myth—but he did call it respectable, and he wasn't wrong. The wild bird's comeback shows what's possible when we invest in conservation. The factory-farmed bird's conditions show what's possible when we don't.

As bird flu continues its relentless spread through crowded facilities—requiring the culling of millions more turkeys in conditions animal welfare experts liken to leaving dogs in hot cars with the heat on full blast—we face a choice about which story we want to write next.

Next time you're hiking New Mexico's high country and encounter a wild tom in full display—snood crimson and elongated, caruncles brilliant, that iconic gobble echoing through the trees—stop and ask yourself which version of the story honors these remarkable birds




Photo by Wayne Dumbleton

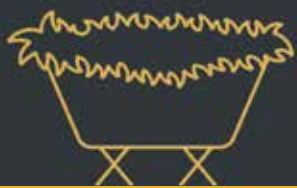
Wild Turkey Male Displaying

more: the one where they reclaim their mountains, or the one where we cram them by the thousands into windowless barns and wait for the next disease to sweep through.

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Nativity displays
Candlelight Worship service
Bonfires
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Under the Bethlehem Star

Thursday • Dec 6 • 4 - 7 PM

An Immersive Walk-Through Christmas Village Experience

Step into the wonder of the first Christmas at **Under the Bethlehem Star**, a beautifully crafted walk-through village that brings the Nativity story to life. Guests wander softly lit pathways beneath a glowing Bethlehem star, discovering scenes of hope, tradition, and celebration at every turn.


Children present a heartfelt **live-in Nativity**, reenacting the story of Christ's birth with innocence and joy. Cozy **bonfires** crackle throughout the village, offering warmth as families gather to savor the season—along with bowls of **homemade green chile stew**, a comforting New Mexican favorite.

Inside the village, young guests can explore joyful **children's craft tables**, where they can create keepsakes, ornaments, and festive art. Visitors are also invited to participate in a meaningful **letter-writing campaign for our**


seniors, sharing love, encouragement, and Christmas cheer with elders in our community.

The air fills with **Christmas caroling**, inviting everyone to join their voices in beloved hymns and seasonal songs.

Throughout the village are curated **Nativity displays**, each highlighting a unique artistic expression of the holy night. As evening falls, the community gathers for a reverent **candlelight worship service**, celebrating the light, hope, and love of the season.



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Free Weights, Machines, or Bands?

Resistance training comes in many forms of strengthening your muscles for athletic performance, overall health, bodybuilding, and sculpting the physique. While many forms of resistance training exist, free weights and machines are often considered the best options. Other options can be beneficial for resistance training such as resistance bands that are convenient to use at home workouts as well as gyms.

These resistance bands vary by thickness, length and material, offering beneficial options for an individual's

workout. Not only do they serve as resistance, but they are easy to take with you on the go and can be used anywhere. With free weights, the resistance is a straightforward amount of weight. Resistance bands provide dynamic tension that becomes challenging as the band is stretched into a longer position. Free weights and bands are similar and can be used to develop a productive workout. Once familiar with these bands, it's easy to develop a workout plan that is safer and easier on the joints. Not to mention no set up is needed by adding weights.

Resistance bands are usually attached to fixed objects that can be pulled, pushed, curled etc in many different directions. Utilizing these bands can help you isolate your muscle groups and have less focus on stabilizing your body as with free weights. Stress on the joints and muscles isn't always a bad thing, and is necessary to fatigue the muscles to stimulate new growth. With heavy lifting and over use of free weights, joints can become inflamed and begin to hurt especially with certain types of exercises. With bands, they provide a smoother resistance that can reduce joint stress at

LET'S GO TO THE GYM



certain movements throughout the exercise. This is very helpful for individuals with injuries and mobility issues.

The majority of individuals that use resistance bands are not seeking to build huge muscles but are wanting to get a good workout in the least amount of time. Bands are widely used by individuals in physical therapy to help with injuries because resistance is light until the band stretches in length and gets harder.

Bands can be very versatile and used by people in certain circumstances.

Bands are portable, don't take up space and are ideal for home workouts, while traveling, and on the go or for gym trainees seeking to get a quick pump. They are also ideal for large groups exercising and easy to utilize. Resistance bands or free weights that are being used will give you a wide range of exercises that you can develop in a workout and receive benefits from them. Bands allow you to design workouts according to your fitness goals without using equipment that can target all muscle groups.

If you want to try something different with your workouts, incorporate resistance bands, they can be a useful training tool that you can use anytime and anywhere.

AS ALWAYS, STAY ACTIVE
AND BE IN CONTROL OF YOUR
MIND, BODY & SOUL

Paul Passino has a Bachelors of Science degree in human performance and sport with a health, education, and coaching minor, as well as 45 hours of sports administration and over 23 years of teaching P.E., weight training, and coaching.

The Emotional Abuse of 'Ghosting': A Word from CAV

By JOELLA MONTOYA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
COMMUNITY AGAINST
VIOLENCE (CAV)

We live in a time when disappearing has become easy. A text left unanswered, a call ignored, a connection suddenly cut off — what we call “ghosting”. It happens in friendships, dating relationships, even within families and workplaces.

People often dismiss ghosting as part of modern life — uncomfortable, yes, but harmless. But for many, being ghosted leaves deep emotional bruises. The sudden silence can stir up confusion, self-blame, and anxiety. You start replaying conversations, questioning what you said or did wrong, and wondering why someone who once cared about you could vanish without a word.

At its core, ghosting is a form of emotional withdrawal — a refusal to communicate that can leave the other person in emotional limbo. While not every instance of ghosting is intentionally abusive, the pattern of using silence to punish, control, or avoid accountability can become a form of emotional abuse.

Healthy relationships — whether ro-



mantic, professional, or platonic — require open communication. When someone abruptly ends contact with no explanation, it removes your ability to seek clarity or closure. It can also mirror deeper patterns of emotional manipulation, where one person holds all the control by choosing when to engage and when to disappear.

For survivors of trauma or abuse, ghosting can be especially painful. It can reopen old wounds and reinforce feelings of abandonment or unworthiness. What

might seem like a small act to one person can echo loudly for another.

What can we do?

We can start by naming this behavior. By recognizing that emotional harm doesn't always leave visible scars. We can practice courage in communication — saying, “This isn't working for me,” or “I need space,” instead of walking away in silence. And we can teach our young people that kindness and accountability matter, even when something is uncomfortable.

Healing from ghosting means remembering this truth: someone else's silence is not a reflection of your value. You deserve honesty. You deserve clarity. You deserve people who don't disappear when it gets hard.

At CAV, we talk a lot about all the ways harm shows up — and silence is one of them. Breaking that silence is how healing begins.

If you or someone you know is struggling after emotional or relational harm, you are not alone. Support is available 24/7 through CAV's confidential hotline at (575) 758-9888.

Joella Ann Montoya is the Executive Director of Community Against Violence, Inc. (CAV) which offers FREE confidential support and assistance for adult and child survivors of sexual and domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking; community and school violence prevention programs; re-education BIP groups for domestic violence offenders; counseling; shelter; transitional housing; and community thrift store. To talk with someone or get information on services available, call CAV's 24-hour HELpline at (575) 758-9888 or TEXTline at (575) 770-2706, or go to TaosCAV.org.



Recipe courtesy of Executive Chef
Brendalee Reiplinger, from The Lodge
at Bodega Bay, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

This holiday season, I will be serving
Prime Rib at The Lodge on Christmas
Eve and Christmas Day. It feels cele-
bratory to have a perfectly seasoned
and cooked piece of meat. One thing
to remember is how important it is to
“temper” your large prime rib. Take out
your beef 1-2 hours and bring to room
temperature before you place in the
oven and don’t be afraid to season well.
You don’t want to put a large cold piece
of beef in a hot oven as this prolongs
cooking time and can result in an
uneven cook. Serve with any vegeta-
bles, sides and salads of your choice but
don’t forget the beef au jus and horse-
radish cream.

Herb Salt— Crusted Prime Rib

PRIME RIB

Ingredients

- 1 each rib roast or 7–10 lb
- 3 tbsp cooking oil
- 6 cloves garlic, finely chopped or grated
on a microplane
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard

Herb Salt Crust

- 1/2 cup kosher salt
- 2 tbsp coarse black pepper
- 2 tbsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh thyme, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh sage, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp garlic powder
- 1 tbsp onion powder
- 1 tsp smoked paprika

Procedure

1. Pre-Season the Roast
Remove roast from fridge several hours
before cooking if possible.
Pat dry and place uncovered in the
fridge on a rack (drying = better crust).
2. Herb Salt Crust
Mix all crust ingredients in a bowl.
It should be coarse, aromatic, and
“sandy”—not a wet paste.
3. Coat the Prime Rib
Rub roast lightly with oil.

Mix Dijon mustard with grated garlic, then
rub all over the meat.
Press the herb–salt mixture firmly onto the
surface.
Don’t worry—prime rib is thick; it won’t get
too salty.

4. Roast

Low & Slow Cook
Preheat oven to 250°F
Place rib eye in a roasting pan with a rack.
Cook until internal temperature reaches:
125°F for medium rare (recommended)
This usually takes 2.5–4 hours,
depending on size.

5. Rest

Remove from the oven and cover loosely
with foil.
Rest 30–45 minutes.
Temperature will rise ~7–10°F.
Re-heat to serve
Crank oven to 500°F (260°C).
Roast 8–10 minutes until the crust is deeply
browned and fragrant.
Slice steaks and serve.

HORSE RADISH CREAM SAUCE

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup prepared horseradish
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp salt, or to taste
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce

Procedure

In a bowl, combine sour cream,
horseradish, and Dijon.
Add lemon juice, salt, and pepper.
Mix until smooth.
Taste and adjust:
More horseradish for heat
More lemon for brightness

*Brendalee (Vialpando) Reiplinger is
a Questa native who has worked her way
up the culinary ladder and is currently
executive chef at The Lodge at Bodega
Bay, located off the Sonoma Coast in CA.
Brendalee credits her hospitality
and joy of preparing food from her
upbringing in Questa.*



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BODY
MIND
SPIRIT



By BARBARA TRACY

My Favorite Things

The holiday season is here and there is so much ado about the world and this wonderful place we call home. The tensions on social media and mainstream news are a flurry of “breaking news” about this or that, and sometimes this input into our lives can cause upsets in our outlook on life. Most of us are aware that it is not always easy to avoid being caught up in the negativity spewed out by the media.

Without realizing how useful it could become, I started another journal dedicated to my favorite things. It all began one day when I was having difficulty processing news about a large, unexpected expense. As I moved through the day, I realized my thinking was taking me down

a road I knew would only move me deeper into negativity. I took a moment to sit quietly and closed my eyes. In that time, I began thinking about the things and events in life that make me happy, my favorite things. After indulging in these wonderful thoughts and memories, I opened my eyes and was pleased that my negative mental trend had shifted toward a lighthearted feeling and a trust in the process of life.

Since that time, I have written down in



my journal those memories that bring a smile to my face and make my heart sing. Some are small and some are large. Some make me cry with gratitude and some make me laugh with a light heart. Here are a few entries– varying from sounds, tastes, experiences, people, places and things– that I have written. - “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” by IZ, Belinda Point in Ft. Bragg, California, peach pie, a snowy day tucked in by the fireplace. I think you

get the idea. As you discover one favorite thing, it usually leads to another. It is fun, it is rewarding, and it is very helpful if you're feeling low.

Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens – Bright copper kettles and warm woolen mittens – Brown paper packages tied up with strings – These are a few of my favorite things.

Cream-colored ponies and crisp apple strudels – Doorbells and sleigh bells, and schnitzel with noodles. - Wild geese that fly with the moon on their wings – These are a few of my favorite things.

Girls in white dresses with blue satin sashes – Snowflakes that stay on my nose and eyelashes – Silver white winters that melt into spring – These are a few of my favorite things.

When the dog bites – When the bee stings – When I'm feeling sad – I simply remember my favorite things – And then I don't feel so bad. by Rogers and Hammerstein

Wishing you all a lighthearted, love-filled holiday and many of your favorite things.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Herbed Pork Chop w/Gravy Brown Rice Mediterranean Veggies Wheat Roll Banana Pudding	2 Posole w/Green Chile & Chicken Spanish Rice Zuchinni & Diced Tomatos Tortilla Peaches	3 Beef Tips over Egg Noodles Carrots Tossed Salad w/Ranch Wheat Roll Orange	4 Soft Beef Taco Chateau Blend Veggies Pinto Beans Fruit Cocktail	5 Pork Stir Fry w/ Peppers & Onions Asian Veggies Veggie Egg Roll Fortune Cookie Mandarin Oranges
8 Baked Chicken w/Gravy Wild Rice w/Mushrooms Brussels Sprouts Wheat Roll Pear	9 Green Chile Pork Stew Tossed Salad w/Italian Dressing Zuchinni & Diced Tomatoes Tortilla Grapes	10 Green Chile Chicken Enchiladas Pinto Beans California Blend Veggies Fruit Cocktail	11 Garden Salad w/Turkey, Ham, Boiled Egg & Garbanzo Beans Ranch Dressing Crackers Pineapple Chunks	12 Papas w/ Ground Beef & Green Chile Vegetable Medley Tortilla Jello w/Mixed Fruit
15 Chopped Steak w/Brown Gravy Potato Wedges Asparagus Tossed Salad Wheat Roll Sliced Apples	16 CHRISTMAS DINNER SERVED at 12:00 @ Bataan Hall. HD Meals will be Delivered	17 Arroz con Pollo w/Carrots Roasted Broccoli Tossed Salad Tropical Fruit Salad	18 Chicken Soft Tacos Salsa Pinto beans Capri Veggies Apriots	19 Sweet & Sour Pork Brown Rice Asian Veggies Mandarin Oranges
22 Sloppy Joes Capri Vegetables Garden Salad Applesauce	23 Tuna Salad Sandwich Broccoli Salad Red Beets Grapes	24 CLOSED	25 CLOSED	26 Chicken Parmesan over Linguini Italian Blend Veggies Garden Salad Apricots
29 Pepper Steak w/ Brown Gravy Rice Pilaf Asparagus Winter Blend Veggies Tropical Fruit	30 Egg Salad Sandwich Baby Carrots Spinach Salad Vanilla Yogurt w/Mixed Berries	31 Polish Sausage w/Peppers & Onions Parsley Potatoes Wheat Roll Salad Vanilla Yogurt		All Meals Served With 8oz. 2% Milk as available

SENIOR
MENU:
DECEMBER
2025

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 are encouraged.

Contact Numbers
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Questa/Amalia: (575) 586-0508
PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MENU IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE



LIVE LOVE LAUGH

by Ellen Wood
a.k.a. Maruška

Five Ways to Beat the Winter Blues

The nights are long and dark, the sun doesn't shine as much, money is often tight and family squabbles can erupt during the winter holiday season. No wonder we get the blues! Here are seven ways to chase away the blues and bring more joy and sunshine into your life.

Observe your thoughts

Cell biologist and author of the bestselling *Biology of Belief*, Dr. Bruce Lipton has done extensive research into how the mind influences our health and happiness, so watching your thoughts is a good place to start. The best time is when you brush your teeth in the morning. You use muscle memory to brush your teeth, not your conscious

mind – so while you brush, watch your thoughts. Don't judge – just notice.

Exercise

Studies show that physical exercise not only benefits your body, it also improves your brain function and memory. Take a brisk walk in nature every day, but do it mindfully.

Stay in the present moment

Focus totally on the here and now. If your mind goes to what happened yesterday or what might happen tomorrow, gently bring it back to an awareness of what is going on right here, right now. Pray and Pray – it's soothing.

Love yourself just as you are

Write on an index card: ILYJAYA YAM and put it into the bathroom as a reminder. Then every morning look in the mirror and say "I Love You Just As You Are. You Are Magnificent." If you find it difficult to love yourself just as you are, fake it 'til you feel it and little by little the love will come.

Do something good for somebody

There are many ways to do something good for somebody - as little as a smile - and as large as volunteering to help at the children's ward of the hospi-



tal. And while you're doing something good for somebody, don't forget yourself. Pamper yourself. Tell the family you're unavailable for one hour and go take a long bubble bath. What? You're a man and you don't take bubble baths? Well, then go to your man cave and tinker around for an hour.

Merry Christmas!

Ellen Wood of Questa, known artistically as Maruska, is an award-winning author celebrated for her transformative book series, The Secret Method for Growing Younger. Her latest release, Five Tibetan Rites – The Right Way, continues her mission to inspire youthfulness. All titles are available at www.howtogrowyounger.com. To contact Ellen, email her at ellen@howtogrowyounger.com.



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JR (Malaquias) says:

“The noise coming from your car is not Santa’s sleigh bells.



Free brake inspection with oil change this December.”

We can take a look and save you some jingle. Feliz Navidad!



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Natividad DeHerrera
d. November 4, 2025

Natividad DeHerrera, January 5, 1930 – November 4, 2025.

With profound sorrow and heartfelt gratitude, we announce the passing of our beloved Mother, Mamacita, Mami, Nana, Grandma at the age of 95. She was called to her heavenly home on November 4, 2025, leaving behind a legacy of love, unwavering strength, and devotion to her loved ones and to her Savior Jesus Christ.

Born in Amalia to Serafin Gonzales and Maria de la Luz Padilla, she grew up in a time of great change and met every challenge with resilience and grace. She married Levi DeHerrera and together they built a home and filled it with love, warmth, and generosity. Throughout her long life, she was a devoted wife, a loving mother, a caring grandmother, and a true friend to many.

Natividad was the heart and soul of our family.

She was known for her gift of musicality and pitch-perfect talent, where she found great joy, abundant wisdom, kind heartedness, and ability to make everyone feel special. She was never without a word of encouragement or a comforting hug, and her faith guided her and her family through both joyful and difficult times.

She was an amazing cook, and her food will remain a cherished part of our family traditions.

She was preceded in death by her husband Levi and infant son. She is survived by her children, Jimmy (Yolanda); Steve (Joanne); Noreen, Eric (Bernadine); Viola (Gilbert) and Zelin. 12 grandchildren, 42 great-grandchildren, 15 great-great grandchildren, and a wide circle of extended family and friends who will miss her dearly. Her memory will live on in the hearts of all who were fortunate enough to know her.

We will gather to celebrate her extraordinary life and the immeasurable impact she had on all of us. Though she is no longer with us in body, her spirit will continue to guide and inspire future generations. May she rest in peace, reunited with loved ones who have gone before.

Our beloved mother's legacy is one of love, wisdom, and compassion. She will be forever missed

and will remain a pillar of integrity and excellence.

Rosary was recited at Sagrado Corazon Catholic Church on Monday, Nov. 17th at 6 p.m. Funeral mass was held Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 9 a.m. Interment followed at the Garcia, Colorado cemetery.



Yolanda Catherine Archuleta
d. Nov. 14, 2025

Yolanda Catherine Archuleta, born in 1965, died on Nov. 14, 2025. Her life was marked by kindness, tenacity and an unyielding spirit that left a lasting impression on all who knew her.

Archuleta was more than a mother; she was a steady, protective presence who embodied both warmth and strength. She called her sons, Kenneth and Steven Archuleta, every day, a reflection of her unwavering love. Her dedication to family extended to her granddaughters, Jennie Marie, Nataliya and Emily, whom she nurtured with devotion. She was also a source of support and resilience for her siblings

— Diana Duran, Michael Martinez, Manny Martinez (Wendy) and Marbella Leon — celebrating their joys and offering comfort in difficult times.

Her commitment to her community was evident in her generosity and her instinct to give. Known for her cooking, she never let anyone leave her home hungry. She especially loved holidays, decorating and hosting gatherings that brought family and friends together.

Archuleta also enjoyed adventure. She often took to the open road on her motorcycle, savoring the freedom of riding. She loved movies, especially crime thrillers, spooky stories and heartfelt Lifetime films.

Though she endured many hardships, she did not hold grudges. She faced challenges with toughness and grace, cherishing her family deeply. She was raised by Romulo and Juanita Martinez, whose influence shaped her nurturing, protective nature.

Her life taught others the value of showing up, loving deeply and finding joy in simple moments. Numerous nieces, nephews and friends will carry her memory and the kindness she shared.

A rosary is scheduled for Dec. 9, 2025, at 6 p.m. at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Questa. A Mass is scheduled for Dec. 10, 2025, at 10 a.m., followed by burial at San Pedro Cemetery.



By J. ORTEGA

Top Ten Christmas Movies

For this special edition of Streaming Wars, I hope the holidays have found you in good spirits and ready to welcome a new year with family and friends. Now let's get to it.

When compiling my top ten favorite Christmas movies many things went into account like how rewatchable the film is. Many movies focusing on the Christmas season have been released, but few that you would instantly want to watch again and again. That's the first thing that makes a great Christmas

movie: how much you look forward to watching it again even though you may have seen it countless times.

Next is longevity: can the movie stand the test of time, allowing new generations to be able to watch and appreciate it? This is important because there are a lot of Christmas movies that have come out since the beginning of Hollywood but have fallen by the wayside. The true test of a classic is its never-ending shelf life.

The last thing that I looked for was

the message of each film and how it relates to some of the common themes of the holiday season where family and selflessness can take center stage over empty material and commercialism that has engulfed the Christmas season in modern America.

Anyway, let's get the list started.

Number 10: Elf (2003) Streaming on HBOMax

Elf is the newest film on the list premiering in 2003 but has been able to hold up for the last 22 years. Yes, some

people may find Will Ferrell's brand of comedy off putting or annoying but here in Elf, he was hilarious and charming as a human who was adopted by the elves at the North Pole.

Number 9: The Santa Clause (1994) Streaming on Disney+

Sheer creativity is what earned this ranking. In all my years of watching Christmas movies and shows, The Santa Clause deserves more respect for being a creative outlier by answering the question: is the Job of Santa Clause for one





man only or is it a job passed on from person to person throughout the years?

Number 8: Home Alone Lost in New York (1992) Streaming on Disney+

The hijinks continue in this highly entertaining sequel for Kevin McAlister and the Sticky Bandits. Also, the New York Setting is amazing around Christmastime.

Number 7: Home Alone (1990) Streaming on Disney+

You can't beat the original Home Alone, where we see a young Macaulay Culkin become a global star. Then you also have to credit Daniel Stern and Joe

Pesci for their inept bad guy performances and all the torture they endure at the hand of a crafty 8-year-old.

Number 6: Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer (1964) Streaming on AppleTV

The origin story of Rudolph the Red Nosed reindeer is still as charming as it was when I was a child. A great movie to watch with your parents and grandparents.

Number 5: Doctor Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas (1966) Streaming on Hulu

The narration and voice work by Boris Karloff alone is worth the place on the list. Karloff will keep you entertained

and invested throughout the whole story, which is only 26 minutes long.

Number 4: A Charlie Brown Christmas (1965) Streaming on AppleTV

The Peanuts Gang celebrates Christmas in their own way where they have that memorable moment of taking in a shabby tree and making it something special with their ingenuity.

Number 3: National Lampoons Christmas Vacation Streaming on HBOMax

Slapstick can be overdone and make a film unlikeable but here it makes the movie so much more endearing and fun as the Griswold's celebrate Christmas

with their wacky family that includes the moronic Cousin Eddie and scene stealer Aunt Bethany.

Number 2: A Christmas Story (1983) Streaming on HBOMax

What can I say- this movie is such a nostalgic throw back to when you were a kid and you had your heart set on the perfect Christmas present but everyone around you can't take the hint! Ralphie is such a relatable character in this endearing classic.

Number 1: It's a Wonderful Life (1946) Streaming on Amazon Prime Video

The unquestioned number 1 Christmas movie of all time. It's about family- it's about faith- it's about friends- it's about Christmas. In some ways we are all George Bailey at some point in our lives where the pressures of the world seem to be crushing us and we feel helpless, but we don't quit, and we persevere even when times are tough and the game is rigged. All with a little help from our friends and family and guardian angels. Thank you, Jimmy Stewart, for such a great performance.



SAVE THE DATE!

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18 - 11 am - 1 pm

KCEC Amalia II Solar & Battery Facility Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

If Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) invites you to celebrate a major milestone in our clean-energy future. Join us for the official ribbon cutting of our newest project, a partnership with the Rio Costilla Cooperative Livestock Association, Luminace and Guzman Energy.

Amalia I began commercial operations in May 2012, delivering 1.25 MW of solar generation to the KCEC system. The new Amalia II facility will generate 8.75 MW of solar power and include 8.75 MW of battery storage. With this addition, KCEC's local solar resources will increase to approximately 51 MW. Amalia II is KCEC's second-largest solar installation, significantly expanding local renewable generation, strengthening system reliability, and advancing the cooperative's clean-energy goals.

Details, directions & invitation to follow.
Contact msantistevan@kitcarson.com for more information



At Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, we believe in honoring the past while investing in the future.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR • DECEMBER 2025

DECEMBER QUESTA DEL RIO NEWS ANNUAL DOUBLE YOUR DOLLARS FINDRAISING MONTH!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EVERYONE BORN IN DECEMBER!

DEC 1: MON 8 AM - 4 PM
FOOD AND CLOTHING GIVEAWAY
Location: @Freedom Center Church 2558 Hwy 522

7 - 9 PM
FREE MUSIC LESSONS Mariachi Ages 10-Adults. Instructor Rachel Leon @ CerroVFW Contact (575) 779-0565 email vozdeoro2017@gmail.com See ad on page 7

DEC 2: TUE 5:30 PM
Village of Questa Tree Lighting
Location: Perovich Park @Intersection of HWY 522 and NM 38

DEC 3: WED 12 - 1 PM
Bridging the Digital Gap: Tech Support with Monica McClelland. Email gbb-coordinator@questaedf.com with questions @Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd, Questa See ad on page 5

7 - 9 PM
FREE MUSIC LESSONS Mariachi Ages 10-Adults. Instructor Rachel Leon @ CerroVFW Contact (575) 779-0565 email vozdeoro2017@gmail.com See ad on page 7

DEC 4: THU 5:30 PM
Food Drive Items Due to Questa Independent School District

DEC 6: SAT 10 AM - 4 PM
Arts & Crafts Fundraiser for Sacred Heart Church @Questa Parish Center 2453 State Highway 522, Questa

2 - 4 PM
Grace & Gathering Tea Room: Sip. Savor. Together. \$35 per person. Space Limited. (575) 613-8010 to reserve your place today. Living Word Ministries @12 Llano Road See ad on page 19

4 - 7 PM
Under the Bethlehem Star: Living Word Ministries in Questa will hold an immersive Christmas experience. @12 Llano Road, Questa See ad on page 23

DEC 8: MON 7 - 9 PM
FREE MUSIC LESSONS Mariachi Ages 10-Adults. Instructor Rachel Leon @ CerroVFW Contact (575) 779-0565 email vozdeoro2017@gmail.com See ad on page 7

DEC 10: WED 7 - 9 PM
FREE MUSIC LESSONS Mariachi Ages 10-Adults. Instructor Rachel Leon @ CerroVFW Contact (575) 779-0565 email vozdeoro2017@gmail.com See ad on page 7

DEC 11: THU 5:30 - 7 PM
Implementing AI to make more money in your small business with Rob Swan. Email gbb-coordinator@questaedf.com with questions @Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd, Questa See ad on page 5

DEC 12: FRI 11 AM - 3 PM
Art Kits for Kids distribution, with Questa Library. @Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd, Questa See article on page 13

1 - 3 PM
Twirl Event: Family-friendly, hands-on activities that often involve science and technology, such as building robots or creating circuits @Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd, Questa

DEC 13: SAT 10 AM - 4 PM
Alumbra Holiday Fair. @QuestaVFW Local artisans will sell handmade arts and crafts, offering opportunities for holiday gift shopping. See ad on page 17

2 - 4 PM
Grace & Gathering Tea Room: Sip. Savor. Together. \$35 per person. Space Limited. (575) 613-8010 to reserve your place today. Living Word Ministries @12 Llano Road See ad on page 19

2 - 4 PM
Voces de Nuestro Pais Story-Sharing Event. This month's featured guests will be Louise Gallegos and David Cisneros. gift shopping. Learn More at QuestaStories.org. @Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd, Questa See article on page 12, Ad on 19

5 - 7:30 PM
Community Cocoa & Cheer. @ Perovich Park a bonfire for s'mores, cider and cocoa, and live music by the local mariachi group. See ad on page 17



DINING GUIDE

Featured on Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives

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El Prado - Northside Taos
900 Paseo del Pueblo Norte

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CLOSED MONDAY

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR • DECEMBER 2025

DEC 16: TUE 8:30 AM

QBEN Roundtable with Lynn Skall Business Growth and Expansion Opportunities. Email gbb-coordinator@questaedf.com with questions @The Grill at the Monte Carlo 2435 NM-522, Questa See ad on page 5

NOON

Christmas Dinner @Battan Hall Business Growth and Expansion See Senior Menu on page 26

DEC 18: THU BY APPT

1:1 Confidential Business Consulting with Anwar Kaelin. Email gbb-coordinator@questaedf.com with questions @Questa Public Library 6 1/2 Municipal Park Rd, Questa See ad on page 5

11 AM - 1 PM

KCEC Amalia II Solar & Battery Facility Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. Details and Directions email msantistevan@kitcarson.com. See ad on page 29

DEC 19: FRI 6 - 8 PM

Women of Impact Holiday Party @ Rosie's Smokehouse, Dress to Impress.

DEC 20: SAT 5 PM

Red River Christmas Parade. @ Red River Main Street. See article on page 11

DEC 20-21: SAT-SUN 10 AM - 4 PM

Red River Christmas Market in the Mountains featuring local vendors and last-minute holiday shopping @Red River Convention Center. See article on page 11

DEC 24: WED MIDNIGHT

Midnight Mass. @St. Anthony's Catholic Church. 16 St Anthonys Rd, Questa See article on page 1

DEC 25: TUE

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

DEC 27: SAT 4 - 8 PM

Questa del Rio News Holiday Bake Sale @Red River Der Markt Food Store, Red River Get a Treat and support your local news source! We look forward to seeing you! or donate online at QuestaNews.com

DEC 31: TUE

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Weekly Events

SUNDAY

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

3 - 6 PM

Open Mic at Noisy Water Winery, 518 E. Main St, Red River. A night of music, poetry, and laughter at Noisy Water Winery's Open Mic Night! Join us. Info: visit redriver.org/events/open-mic, or call (575) 754-9957

MONDAY

10 AM - NO CLASS DEC 29

Free/By Donation Community Seated Yoga Practice with Gaea, in person only. 2331 State Hwy 522 Questa, NM. More info visit yogasalaquesta.org

5 PM - NO CLASS DEC 22 & 29

Free/By Donation Community Yoga, gentle practice with Rae, in person only. 2331 State Hwy 522 Questa, NM. For more info visit yogasalaquesta.org

7 PM

Kickboxing, with Reto in person only, sliding scale \$5-15 All classes free for teens. 2331 State Hwy 522, Questa, NM. More info visit yogasalaquesta.org

TUESDAY

8:30 AM

Introductory Contemporary Dance with Monica, in person only, \$10-\$15. 2331 State Hwy 522, Questa, NM. More info visit yogasalaquesta.org

WEDNESDAY

9 AM -- NO CLASS DEC 24 & 31

Gentle Morning Yoga w/ Gaea, in person only, \$10. 2331 State Hwy 522 Questa, NM. For more info visit yogasalaquesta.org

3:15 - 4 PM

Tiny Groovers w/ Monica. Ages 0-5 Movement & Music Class for toddlers & their parents/guardians in person only, FREE/BY DONATION 2331 State Hwy 522, Questa, NM. More info visit yogasalaquesta.org

4:30 PM

Kids' Dance Adventure - with Monica, in person only, FREE/BY DONATION 2331 State Hwy 522, Questa, NM. More info visit yogasalaquesta.org

5:30 - 7 PM

Chess Club, Practice Puzzles, Occasional lectures & casual play. All ages and levels. Starting Sept 3, Questa Public Library. 1/2 Municipal Park Road (575) 586-2023

7 PM - NO CLASS DEC 24 & 31

Kickboxing, with Reto in person only, sliding scale \$5-15 All classes FREE for teens. 2331 State Hwy 522, Questa, NM. More info visit yogasalaquesta.org

THURSDAY

6 PM

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

FRIDAY

9 AM

Kundalini Yoga with Julian, in person only, \$10-15. 2331 State Hwy 522 Questa, NM. For more info visit yogasalaquesta.org

5:30 PM - NO CLASS DEC 26 & JAN 2

Stretch & Balance, Gental Yoga w/ Gaea. In person only, \$10. 2331 Hwy 522 Questa, NM. For more info visit yogasalaquesta.org

SATURDAY

10 AM

Free Community Tai Chi, with Reto, in person only, 2331 State Hwy 522 Questa, NM. For more info visit yogasalaquesta.org

CHURCH & TEMPLE DIRECTORY



River Community Church exists to glorify God and make disciples by sacrificially serving families in the Village of Questa, NM in a way that produces a culture of community.

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Cerro - Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe

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Amalia - Santo Niño - 1st & 3rd Saturdays 4 p.m.

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2558 Hwy 522, Questa

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(575) 770-1714

Visit us online: freedomquesta.com

LIVING WORD MINISTRIES

Pastors Peter and Gayle Martinez

12 Llano Road, Questa

Service: Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Nursery and Kids' Church at 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

www.lwmsite.org (575) 586-1587

RIVER COMMUNITY CHURCH

Pastor Jesse Hardy, 65 S Kiowa Rd, Questa, NM

87556 List of events and services at

rccquesta.org/community

THEOSOPHY

Northern New Mexico Alice Bailey Study Group.

Sunday and Wednesday 10 a.m. - noon on Zoom.

For more info, contact Francis

at oeahoo17@gmail.com

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Sunday Bible Class Sunday 9:30 a.m.

followed by worship at 10:15 a.m.

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info@earthjourney.org or (575) 770-1682

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Sunday 7:30 a.m. class and meditation in-person

north of Questa or on Zoom. For more info:

gabrielle.herbertson@gmail.com

AMALIA

SANTO NIÑO MISSION CHURCH

1st & 3rd Saturdays 4 p.m. April - September

12 Santo Nino Rd, El Prado, NM 87529

ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.

Potluck & Fellowship 3rd Sunday of the month

Highway 196, Amalia, Pastors: Lorenzo & Arleen

Lucero (575) 770-5716

RED RIVER

FAITH MOUNTAIN FELLOWSHIP

100 Copper King Trail, Corner of River St & Copper

King Trail - Sunday 10:30 a.m.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF RED RIVER

103 High Cost Trail

Sundays 8:15 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Pastor Joe Phillips (575) 754-2882

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North end of Silver Bell Trail, Red River

Saturday 6 p.m. (Confession prior to Mass or by

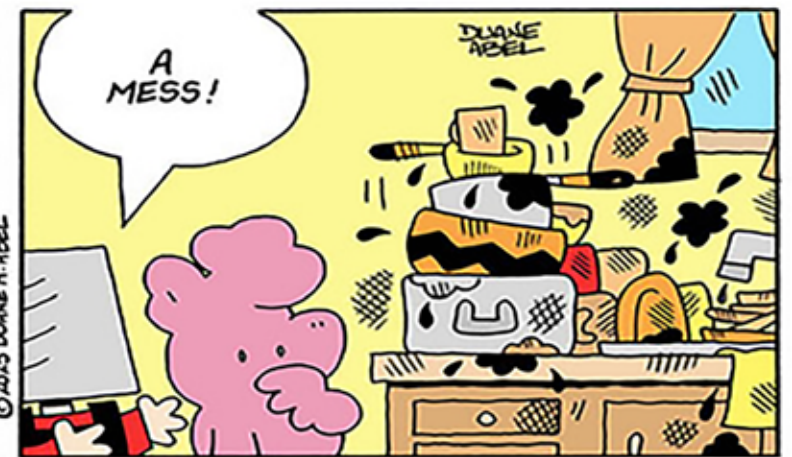
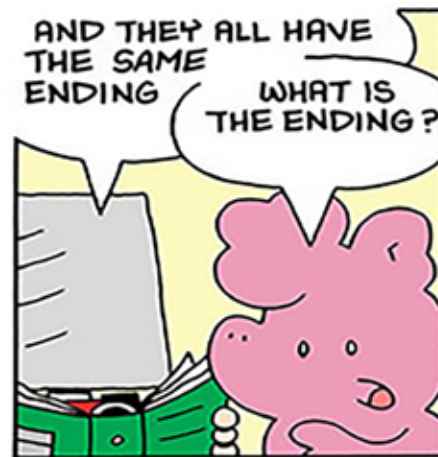
appt.) Father Pettigrew (575) 586-0470



DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING FOR OUR CALENDAR?

List your event online for free on the online calendar

at questanews.com/questa-events, email events@questanews.com



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