



Keep them Wild  
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George Square, Glasgow  
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Arts & Leisure in Southern New Mexico

OCTOBER 2021  
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**Lake Roberts Motel owners have continuously remodeled since purchase**, which had a major overhaul in 2012 on almost every inch of the original structures. There are 6 "cabin style suites" that are more than adorable, the rooms are spotless, decorated with love in a southwestern theme. This place is becoming not just a place to stay, but a destination to repeat customers. There is also a cabin rental in addition to owners retreat and store. A "Woodhenge" fire pit area is equipped with roasting forks, a cooking grate, and a generous supply of firewood, topped off with Tiki torches surrounding the pit to create a special ambiance. Sellers have many beautiful memories here and are seeking to pass the torch to new owners with their fresh ideas and energy! There is hardly a place with such wonderful surroundings, abundant wildlife and beautiful night skies with 4 gentle seasons. **MLS# 37199. \$489,000.**

**Cute home in the heart of Lordsburg.** New HVAC and newer metal roof. The home is in good shape with plenty of room for upgrades. **MLS# 38298. \$78,000.**

**Invest in Historic Downtown Silver City!** Long-term tenants are established in this property. Great location within walking distance to downtown and Western NM University. Live in the large upstairs apartment and create your Airbnb downstairs! Tons of potential! Also, there is a tenant living in the travel trailer on the side of the property who acts as a Handyman and pays \$100/month. The coin operated laundry also produces \$50+ per month. Hard to beat this location if you have dreams of Historic Downtown Silver City!! **MLS#38258. \$279,000.**

**In the heart of Silver City!** Home features a cozy den with fireplace and bay window. Large Living room with ceramic tile. Recent upgrades include new electrical service, new sewer lateral, new carpeting in the bedrooms and den. Private backyard patio. Large backyard with alley access with room for recreational vehicle parking or construction of a garage. Large laundry room. Attached 1 stall carport. **MLS# 38359. \$210,000**

**This mountain getaway offers spectacular views on five acres of land.** Just minutes from Lake Roberts, Sapillo Creek and Gila Hot Springs. This newer maintained home offers peaceful mountain living with a covered deck to enjoy all the wildlife and native landscape on the property. Home is all electric (no propane to maintain), pellet stove heating as well. Large garage with drive thru doors on each side. Stunning wood cabinetry in the kitchen. Laminated floors and tiles throughout. **MLS#38368. \$299,000.**

**Awesome view lot overlooking the Mimbres Valley.** Close to recreation in the Gila National Forest, Bear Canyon Reservoir and Lake Roberts. Underground utilities available including water. Site built or true modular homes allowed, 1300 minimum square footage. Want more acreage? Four additional 3/4 acre lots available on the south side. Septic needed. **MLS#38404. \$15,000**

**Completely affordable housing if you need something rather large.** Located in the outskirts of Santa Clara, this 1988 singlewide has been added onto to include a sunroom/office and living space in addition to another studio like addition with its own bathroom and own outside access to be used as possible rental. There is a LOMA (letter of map amendment) that designates it is not in a FEMA flood zone as well as a deactivated title. There is also additional storage outside. **MLS#38468. \$110,000**

**Clean and maintained duplex, 1 Bd 1 ba in each unit.** Close to hospital and shopping. **MLS# 38505 & 38506. \$175,000.**

**Easy access to this home on 7+ acres just South of Silver City, NM!** Open design for Kitchen/Dining/Living room with additional family room with wood stove downstairs. Lots of living space! 3 Bedrooms upstairs, one with it's own bath, plus large Master Suite with full bath downstairs. Wonderful views of the Burro Mountains and Jack's Peak from the wrap-around deck. 2 car detached garage/workshop, chicken coop and small horse barn. **Make us an offer we can't refuse! MLS#38485. \$358,000.**

**Extremely well-maintained 3 bedroom, 2 bath home in Tyrone.** Features include newer roof, heater, water heater and dishwasher. Attached one car garage has storage and house is ready for any kind of loan. **MLS#38494. \$147,500.**

**HORSE PROPERTY OVERLOOKING THE MIMBRES RIVER VALLEY!** 51.49 acres with spectacular views. Large barn/storage/workshop & corrals. Small seasonal dirt tank for wildlife. Adobe casita 1 bedroom 1 bath home would be perfect to live in while you build a custom home or enjoy tiny home living. Living room features a wood stove. Kitchen has a antique wood cook stove. Bathroom has a clawfoot tub with shower. Large utility room with washer and dryer hookups. Covered front porch. All metal 2 stall carport with storage. 6 miles to endless recreation and hunting in the Gila National Forest. Short drive to Bear Canyon Reservoir, Lake Roberts & City of the Rocks & Faywood Hot Springs. Enjoy the nearby Esperanza Winery and restaurants in Mimbres. 45 minute drive to Silver City. **MLS#38519. \$299,000.** Also listed as residential under **MLS#38476.**

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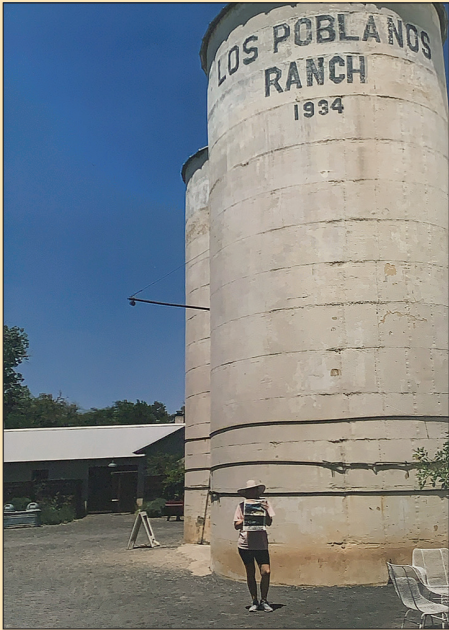
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## ABOUT THE COVER:

“Ancestral Corn II” by Julianna Kirwin is created with woodcut and hand-cut stencils. Kirwin’s prints and more are part of a juried exhibit at Light, Art, Space gallery in Silver City. It’s all part of the activities happening in the town over the Oct. 8-11 weekend including the Red Dot Weekend at the Galleries, the Southwest Print Fiesta and the Gila Wild and Scenic Conference.

Kirwin’s original prints are based in New Mexico’s landscape and culture. Her work is “place-based” using the rich medium of printmaking to create a visual language whose lines and shapes represent heritage and identity.

“I love the carved line, the smell of the ink, the press of the paper against the plate and then the surprise of the texture and color released onto the paper or cloth,” she said.



## POSTCARDS FROM THE EDGE

Cocoa, Florida resident Jaclyn Swass holds her June 2021 edition of Desert Exposure outside Los Poblanos Historic Inn during a fantastic romantic vacation with her boyfriend enjoying the beautiful sights and friendly folks.

If you have guests from out of town who are having a blast and reading Desert Exposure, shoot them with your camera and send us the photo with a little information. Or, if you are traveling, don’t forget to share, do the selfie thing and yourself holding a copy of Desert Exposure it to editor@desertexposure.com or stick it in the mail to: Desert Exposure, 1740-A Calle de Mercado, Las Cruces, NM 88005.

Desert #64 Dumbfounder by Dave Thomas

“Desert Dumbfounder” by Dave Thomas is a simple substitution cipher; one letter stands for another. Solution is by trial and error. Solution will appear in next month’s *Desert Exposure*. Send full solution, or just the Secret Words, to nmsrdave@swcp.com, and be recognized!  
TIPS: [www.nmsr.org/secretword.htm](http://www.nmsr.org/secretword.htm) and [www.nmsr.org/cypher-how2.jpg](http://www.nmsr.org/cypher-how2.jpg)

"YMCK NP MK J OGJCD SGMYFVO – JDD OGJCD NPFGP BFDVMWF!  
OIFGF JGF WJKT WMGF WCDFF OIJO KFFE JOOFKOCMK." – WFD CPPJ  
LGFFK MU OIF LCDJ VIJSOFG MU XJVZ VMNKO GT IMGPFWFK

Use the answer key below to track your clues, and reveal Secret Words!

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Previous Solution: "A LONG ARM QUILTING MACHINE CAN BE A LOT OF FUN. THESE MACHINES LOAD THE PARTS OF A QUILT INTO A METAL FRAME SO YOU CAN SEW THE THREE LAYERS AT ONCE." – MIA KALISH  
\*Secret Words: "PATCHWORK DESIGN"

Congrats to #63 solvers: George Egert\*, Will Adams\*, Claudette Gallegos\*, Mike Arms\*, Shorty Vaiza\*, and Skip Howard\*!

RAISINGDAD • JIM AND HENRY DUCHENE

# Saying Goodbye:

## 'So nice of you to visit'

Every now and then one of my readers will ask about my mother.

The reason I don't write about her more often is because my beautiful wife can always tell when I've been crying. When I cried at my mother's funeral, she asked if it was because of my haircut.

I write about my father by default. When my mother died, my wife and I – mainly my wife – made the decision to invite my elderly, pre-Alzheimer's father to move in with us. His good years were mainly behind him. He went from being someone who could fix anything to someone who could break anything at any time at the worst possible moment. I'm not particularly handy, so it's been a chore.

My youngest sister took care of my mother the last years of her life, and I'm grateful to her. Bathing my mother and changing her diaper, well, let's just say I'm not half the man my sister is. My father, for the most part, can take care of himself, but my mother spent her last years bed-ridden with a UTI that refused to go away. No amount of antibiotics could get rid of it. I bought

her some probiotics called Garden Of Life/Urinary Tract made especially for that. Fifty BILLION live cultures. I feel sorry for the guy who did the counting.

Not only that, but my poor mother's hearing was bad, her vision was worse and walking was no longer a good idea. She had to be helped in and out of bed. Like I do now with my father, I took her lunch on Saturdays, but it had to be something soft because she had also lost all of her teeth.

One of the last times I visited my mother she was in bed. Her lips moved, but no words came out. I remember her hands the most. They were soft and cool in mine. Delicate bones covered with skin so thin you could see through it. Then, her battery running out, she drifted off to sleep. When I stepped into the living room, my sister was there.

"Are you OK?" she asked. I don't think I was.

The next week, my mother was more lively. When I walked into her room, she was talking with one of her sisters. My aunt, of course, wasn't there. She had died years ago. It was just that damn UTI causing my mother to hallucinate. My sister would

tell me that sometimes our mother would be up all night talking to friends and relatives who weren't there, most of them dead.

"Look who's here," my mother said.

I wasn't sure if I should say hello to someone who wasn't there. Instead, I decided to talk directly to my mother.

"How's your sister been?" I asked her. "I haven't seen her since...well..."

Well, since she died. "Oh, fine, fine," my mother said. "I was telling her you finally got married."

By that time, I had been married for 21 years. To my mother, it just happened. How I could have been recently married and already have had three kids and one grandchild is a math only the UTI understood. Somewhere down the road of our conversation, it was obvious she thought I was someone else. I wasn't sure who, but when she told me that she loved me I knew it must have been someone close.

"You know," she confided in me, "my husband's been getting up early. He takes a shower and leaves the house looking nice. I

think he has a girlfriend."

"Maybe he's just going to work," I said, not wanting to contradict her.

"Maybe, maybe," my mother agreed, but wasn't convinced. Taking a sudden right turn, she said, "You know, Henry moved to California."

My older brother had moved over 50 years ago.

"He always wanted to live there," I told her.

"Yes, he did," she said, and then quickly turned left. "I fell and hit my head," she told me.

"Are you OK?" I asked, a bit concerned. My sister hadn't said anything, and she looked fine to me.

"I'm OK," she assured me. "I cut my head. There was a lot of blood."

"When did you fall?" I asked her.

"Forty years ago," she told me. "My head still hurts."

"I'm sorry to hear that, mom." Taking a detour, she said, "Did I tell you? Henry died."

I wasn't sure if she was talking about my father or my brother; they both have the same name.

"He died?"

"Yes. He died last week."

Trying to put some logic to what she was telling me, I figured it was my brother she was talking about, since my father

was busy sneaking off with an imaginary girlfriend.

I couldn't wait to give my brother the news. Boy, was he going to be surprised.

"How did he die?" I was curious to know.

"He got sick," she said.

After a little more conversation, she told me, "So nice of you to visit."

That was her way of letting me know she was tired. Saying goodbye, I left, gently kissing her forehead on my way out. It was also soft and cool.

My mother always loved talking with people, so I was happy she was having friends and relatives visit, even if they weren't really there. In the solitude she was living in, at least she wasn't lonely.

I called my brother later that day and gave him the bad news.

"What did I die of?" he wanted to know.

"You got sick," I told him.

"I hope it was quick," he said.

"I was hoping it was something painful and lingering," I joked, then got serious. "You should call her," I told him. "She'll be happy to know you're alive."

*Special thanks to my Twitter followers. 7000+ and growing. @JimDuchene*



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## Letters to the Editor

### Race for Space good for the world

Editor: Thank you for putting into words so eloquently what I have felt in my heart about the "race for space" (August 2021 Desert Exposure). Yes, there are starving people in the world, and the temptation is often to think that spending outrageous sums of money on putting men (and women) into space is a waste of precious resources. But people need dreams, even those who might not have enough to eat at this moment in time.

I guess I'm prejudiced because I've always been in love with space programs and was privileged to work for several years in the Space Sciences Division at NASA/Ames Research Center. But when I see people complain about what these 2 men have tried to do because the money "could have been spent elsewhere," it rankles my nerves. Thank you for letting me know that I'm not the only one who sees value in these projects. I'm absolutely thrilled to have Spaceport so close to home!

Carol J. Moore  
Las Cruces

### Change in Zeitgeist

Editor: I was in 4th grade on September 11, 2001; I lived in Binghamton, NY (more accurately I lived in a small town called Port Crane, but Binghamton was where all the shops were.) I appreciate your article (September 2021 Desert Exposure) remembering those lost on that day, though my heart aches for the thousands of New Mexicans, and hundreds of thousands of Americans, who died of Coronavirus when they didn't need to. Though it is not an attack, it is a complete failure that didn't need occur. As I was in NY during 9/11, I also still lived in NY (the state not the city) during Sars-Covid-1. Canada worked its butt off trying to contain that virus. But I guess the fear of a bloody death is a lot more visceral than dying drowning on your own lungs. Not to be insensitive to the victims, because they should have never died in the first place. More to express frustration not only did it not have to get this bad, we have evidence of a country halting a Sars-coronavirus

LETTERS  
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EVERYDAY OBSERVATIONS • ABE VILLARREAL

# New Beginnings

The smaller the town, the bigger the spirit

It's that time of the year that we traditionally think about new beginnings. Kids are back in school. Bus drivers have returned to their old routes. Moms are packing lunches. Sports teams are on the field for morning practice.

Maybe the beginnings aren't so new. Maybe we are going back to what we always have known. Going back to the things that make us feel like us.

On a Friday evening, I drove out to the tiny town of Elfrida, Arizona to watch a football game. Less than 500 residents live in this middle-of-nowhere farming community but what they lack in size is made up with spirit. The Valley Union High School Blue Devils trounced their competition that night, winning 28-8.

It's no exaggeration to say that it seemed that half the town was there to support the 8-man team and it must have been good for the competitors to know that everyone around cheered them on with chants and cowbells. We all need a little cheering on these days.

The schoolmates' faces were painted in blue and white. Each guy seemed to have a girl at his side. Cowboy hats and boots were all around. The smell of summer dirt, the kind you can only smell in the open Southwest, filled the air.

Every few minutes the lady announcer reminded us that the local FFA was fundraising in the Burger Shack, a tiny booth where hamburgers, nachos, and all the other sports-watching fare was sold. The kind of food you have to eat when seating on bleachers next to strangers.

I had never been to the football stadium before but it was easy to spot a few miles from entering town. The bright lights gave it away and almost every car and truck you could imagine was parked in one lot.

The lady at the ticket counter was one of those movie characters who greeted you like she always knew you and even though I was only buying one ticket she made sure to chat with me about the mosquitos that just wouldn't go away.

In some ways, experiencing

an 8-man football competition in a town that is miles from the next small town is a lot more special than sitting in a stadium with tens of thousands of cheering fans at a professional game. You don't have to worry about overpriced food and the guy flipping the patties is probably your neighbor or teacher. You know he'll make the burger just the way you like it.

They only take cash but if you're short a dollar, they'll let you in because they know you are the kind of guy that will come back when that dollar shows up. The FFA girls working the counter know they aren't going to make too much profit and that's OK. They value every sale that comes their way.

The moms and dads, grandpas and grandmas are there to cheer you on no matter what. A fumble or a missed field goal – they are no big deal. You tried your best and they raised you to enjoy the game because of what it teaches you on and off the field.

Next time I go to Elfrida I'll spend more time in town, visiting the small shops and eating at the

café where they serve up a popular fish fry on Fridays and even something called a Danger Dog.

I'm sure I'll bump into the same people I saw at the game because in a town like Elfrida, everyone supports each other no matter the cause, the meal or the kind of competition.

Abe Villarreal writes about the people, culture, and traditions of America. He can be reached at [abevillarreal@hotmail.com](mailto:abevillarreal@hotmail.com).



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## LETTERS

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before it turns into a nationwide pandemic in recent memory.

Your son might never know the change in zeitgeist that occurred after 9/11, but he sure will know the change after Trump was elected in 2016 and the change that occurs because of a pandemic that has lasted 17 months, with no end in sight. They will see the change that occurs in 8 years when humanity finishes using its remaining carbon budget and earth rocket towards hot-house earth as fast as possible.

Again, I appreciate the time you took to honor the victims of an attack. It seems far away now, even as someone who was a New Yorker when it happened. And I hope the thousands that have died from a pandemic get honored just as much and we can all recognize it was a tragedy that needn't occur.

**Zach Miller**  
Las Cruces

## A Silver City woman fights homelessness

Editor: Dr. Twana Sparks bought a vacant building in Silver City in 2020 and made it available for SPIN or Supporting People in Need.

Sparks talked to the Silver City Rotary Club in July about

how this building at 7th and Gold streets is helping to provide shelter to people who need it on a seasonal basis.

With the help of Christina Wolford, SPIN executive director, and her team of social workers, the building was renovated and converted to allow it to accommodate up to 60 people for overnight shelter and now also for more permanent housing.

The SPIN staff help to ensure that people staying at the facility can access support services and can apply for government benefits, such as Medicaid, Medicare or SNAP. In addition, Brian Warnack of SPIN works to find or create jobs for some of the residents through his Routine Assisted Maintenance Program (RAMP).

Sparks pointed out that one person is unlikely to help the entire world, but she quoted a Nigerian proverb shared by Rotarian Nkechi Nwachuku which says that "if every man sweeps his house, all the world will be swept."

Sparks told the audience that people who want to contribute to this work can give of their time, talent or money. Those wishing to help address this important issue can contact 575-956-6131, or [spinhousingnm@gmail.com](mailto:spinhousingnm@gmail.com).

**Lucy Falley**  
Silver City

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- 1/2 C Chicken Stock
- 1 Tbsp Lemon Juice
- Parsley, chopped for finishing
- 1. Generously season the chicken with dipper and salt.
- 2. Heat olive oil in skillet over medium-high heat. Cook chicken, turning to brown on all sides. About 10 minutes.
- 3. Deglaze pan with white wine. Add chicken stock and lemon juice.
- 4. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and cook for 20-25 minutes, rearranging drumsticks every 5-10 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley and serve hot.

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GUEST COLUMN • WENDY HAMILTON

# Take a Bite Out of Your Climate Footprint

## Food should never be wasted

We need food to survive but the food we waste could be short-sheeting our survival. If you have been asking, how you can personally help in making an impact on resolving climate change, your food habits may offer you that opportunity. Reducing residential food waste is one part of the puzzle where we can all have an immediate and consequential effect. Project Drawdown's 2020 Review cited food waste reduction as the number one solution for combating climate change.

Typically, food waste happens before we even know it. We buy, cook, save and eventually discard food we haven't eaten for one reason or another. Wasted food is a growing problem in our society. Households commonly dispose of excess food by throwing it in their trash cans

or sending it down the garbage disposal. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that more food reaches landfills than any other material in our municipal solid waste, making up over 24 percent of landfill content.

Individual U.S. households throw away an average of \$1,800 of wasted food each year. Over one-third of all available food goes uneaten through spoilage or waste. When food is tossed out, so too are opportunities for improved food security, economic growth and environmental prosperity. Meanwhile, one in seven Americans (and in New Mexico that includes one in five children) don't get enough to eat. Food waste that goes into landfills rots and generates an additional 6 to 8 percent of the methane that contributes to climate change.

Household food waste reductions include many small steps that can save money, lead to healthier lives and provide child-friendly involvement. What follows is a list of starter ideas. Explore the Internet for even more suggestions. Find those actions that work best for your household, whether you eat out a lot, prepare home cooked meals, order from meal ready businesses or just grab and go. There are ideas for reducing food waste for any style of meal arrangements. The consequences of everyone's participation will benefit all of us. Actions include:

- Keeping a white board on your pantry or food cabinet door of your current food supplies with the month/year they were purchased. This way you know what's available.
- Talking to family members about the reasons why food goes to waste in your home can correct unnecessary purchases or menu choices.
- Creating and posting a weekly or monthly menu that includes meals your household prefers to eat.
- Looking into regularly supporting local egg and honey farmers, bakeries, vegetable and fruit cooperatives and seasonal stands and incorporating these items

into your meal preparation plans.

- Serving smaller helpings on smaller plates and teaching your children it's OK to ask for more. Serving smaller portions is among the most effective strategies for reducing food waste.
- Planning ahead when eating out by bringing reusable containers to take leftovers home.
- Adding a "leftovers" night or "Fridge Friday Raids" into your weekly meal menu is a good way to use up all the ingredients in your refrigerator.
- Learning the true meaning of packaging dates. Find out what they really mean. Americans throw out a lot more food than they expect they will, likely driven in part by ambiguous date labels on packages.
- Storing leftovers in airtight containers and freezing them immediately if they won't be eaten within one or two days. Be sure to label them with a name and date making them easier to eventually eat up.
- Supporting food banks monthly by donating your pantry's non-perishable items that you didn't use that month.
- Composting certain food waste is a great way to divert foods from landfills. Learn what's considered compostable and what's not. Explore backyard composting's effects on

climate change compared to landfills at [epa.gov/recycle/composting-home](http://epa.gov/recycle/composting-home) and [drawdown.org/solutions/composting](http://drawdown.org/solutions/composting).

Reducing residential food waste is something we all have control over today. In addition, the Las Cruces Climate Action Plan has begun work to reduce commercial food waste through composting and developing a municipal solid waste gasification system at the local landfill site. The vision is to collect methane that could be used to power vehicles, heat buildings or generate steam electricity for the community. Also explore what other organizations at home and abroad are doing to reduce their food waste methane contributions.

Wendy Hamilton, Ed.D, NMSU Emeritus Professor can be reached at [whamilton@nmsu.edu](mailto:whamilton@nmsu.edu). Hamilton's science background has led to her interests in anthropogenic factors causing global warming. Having traveled extensively she has seen many examples of positive community climate stewardship.



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# American Rescue Plan Act

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Under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), New Mexico will receive \$2.5 billion dollars for relief and recovery. Decision makers must prioritize equity when distributing the ARPA funds, and if they do, it could be transformational for New Mexico. We need to draw upon the richness of our cultural traditions and values to stay connected to our past, construct a path

to the future, and create innovative solutions in the present.

Through ARPA, we have an opportunity to invest in our communities and make a difference for generations to come, but we can't be passive about it. To get the results we want, we need to be clear about our expectations and communicate them to our elected officials.

Decisions will be made at every level of government: state, county, and municipal. If we want to see ARPA funds make significant change in New Mexico, the process must be transparent and have community input.

An excellent way to prioritize equity is to involve nonprofits that work with marginalized communities.

When the pandemic hit New Mexico, nonprofits did not hesitate to respond. Despite loss of revenue and volunteers, nonprofits adapted and delivered. They provided food, emergency shelter, and other vital services. As trusted voices in communities, nonprofits were able to share crucial information regarding the latest developments and guidelines.

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GUEST COLUMN • LAURIE FORD

# Keep them Wild, Keep them Alive

## Wild horses on public land need compassion

When advocates realized that 4-month-old Dreamcatcher had been separated from her mother during the July Onaqui wild horse roundup they begged the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to reunite the pair but, despite knowing the exact location of the lactating mare who had been released back on the range only days prior, the BLM declined. Perhaps Dreamcatcher was one of the luckier foals as she escaped the wild horse roundup.

The Onaqui roundup, approved in February, was based upon an outdated Environmental Assessment and the single testimony of a district manager, who had only held the position for three months, claiming the horses were overpopulated and “some” and “several” had lost, and then gained back, weight over recent months. He went on to predict, under oath, that their body conditions would continue to decline due to lack of forage and that if left on the range “it is likely that BLM employees, in accordance with BLM Policy will need to euthanize the animals as an act of mercy.” Despite the ensuing rains and vegetative growth, the roundup proceeded.

Simultaneously, the agency authorized domestic livestock grazing within the Onaqui Herd Management Area that would have, according to their own formula, supported the equivalent of 1,633 horses. In addition, 32,000 acres previously closed off to the horses, was immediately opened to livestock grazing.

At the conclusion of the gather, the agency publicly admitted their narrative had been false – the horses were healthy and there was ample forage and water to support them throughout the year. The devastation of one of America’s most unique and famous herds – whose members lives have been documented for years from the celebration of their births to the mourning of their deaths – had been decimated.

And as the remaining captured horses of this beloved herd were hauled off to holding a call came from Washington to “sharply



Wild horse populations are endangered by BLM policies removing them from their designated habitats. (Photos by Laurie Ford)

increase” the numbers of wild horses to be rounded up by 50 percent, swelling the yearly total to 18,000 – the largest number in decades.

On Aug. 1, when close to 9,000 horses and burros were still scheduled to be removed, 6,000 were added to the roster under the guise of “emergency” gathers allowing the BLM to avoid NEPA analysis, public input and potential court appeals. BLM contractors were now tasked with removing nearly 15,000 horses before September 30.

Countless foals like Dreamcatcher, pushed by low flying helicopters for miles, lost their mothers in the stampede, were trampled to death or had to be destroyed at the final trap site due to “lameness” often resulting from the erosion of their soft hooves. In addition, large numbers of adult horses have been killed due to broken or fractured limbs and horrendous lacerations that the BLM labels as “chronic or preexisting conditions”.

And the deaths do not stop after the initial gather, it is only the fatality data that ceases to exist once the horses are loaded for transport to holding facilities. Here, horses, who only hours ago had lost their freedom, are allocated 700 square feet per animal. Any horses showing signs of an infirmity or defect continue to be destroyed. Elderly horses that have survived for decades running free are killed to save them from, as the agency itself admits, an “equally bleak future” in these same holding

facilities meant to be short term but where many horses and burros remain for years. While some facilities are only closed to the public until the captured horses get acclimated, others never provide access at any time. So, for months, and in some instances indefinitely, these horses go off the radar until a fraction reappear at a BLM adoption or online auction event. Many are never seen again.

The 2021 removal of the Onaqui wild horses, along with the estimated 17,700 other horses and burros, from their designat-

ed habitat which, by law is to be devoted principally to their welfare, has exposed almost every flaw that has historically existed

within the BLM.  
Info: [wildhorseeducation.org](http://wildhorseeducation.org);  
[americanwildhorsecampaign.org](http://americanwildhorsecampaign.org);  
[thecloudfoundation.org](http://thecloudfoundation.org);  
[blm.gov/programs/wild-horse-and-burro](http://blm.gov/programs/wild-horse-and-burro).

Laurie Ford moved to New Mexico 14 years ago. Photography and horses have always been her passion. For the past five years she has been travelling around the west, camping in wild horse areas to observe and photograph the animals in their natural environment.



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## ON THE SHELF

## 'Death in a Desert Garden'

Silver City writer offers up murder mystery with a botanical garden theme

Silver City resident Marty Eberhardt has a new book, a botanically themed mystery entitled "Death in a Desert Garden."

In the book, main character Bea Rivers' euphoria over her new job at Shandley Gardens is shattered by the death of the Gardens' founder, Liz Shandley.

When the police determine that she was murdered, Bea is drawn into the investigation, while trying desperately to maintain the life of a committed single parent dating a struggling writer.

Every one of the members of the small staff and board are murder suspects. Through the sizzling and beautiful days of a

Sonoran Desert summer, someone keeps dropping odd botanical clues. As Bea's family's safety is threatened, she discovers just how tangled the relationships at the Gardens really are.

The book can be pre-ordered at [bookshop.org](http://bookshop.org) and Amazon, and will be available Oct. 5.

Eberhardt is a former botan-

ical garden executive director. She splits her time between Silver City and San Diego, according to her website.

"Death in a Desert Garden" is her first novel. She has published several poems and prose pieces in "The Wilderness House Literary Review," "The Dragon Poet Review," "The San Diego

Writers INK 2017 Anthology," "The Twisted Vine Literary Review," four volumes of "The Guided Pen" and "The Silver City Quarterly Review." She is an enthusiastic resident of Silver City, where she enjoys the flora as well as the fauna, including plenty of wonderful people.

Visit [martyeberhardt.com](http://martyeberhardt.com).

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SCOTTISH DISPATCH • VIVIAN SAVITT

# George Square, Glasgow

## From Silver City to Scotland

Great public squares detonate energy. That's exactly how to describe George Square in Glasgow – Scotland's largest city and my resting place for an undesignated period as I meander around the country. Even on an off-day George Square can rock, serving as the go-to place for voicing controversial topics. Foremost among those right now is whether there will be a second vote for Scottish independence – and the global climate emergency. (The United Nations conference addressing climate change, COP 26, will be hosted in Glasgow in early November.)

I arrive at George Square on a Saturday, when the downtown area is overflowing with folks, mainly shoppers – the jammed walkways offering a block party atmosphere for Covid droplets.

Glaswegians, however, appear to be serious mask wearers and heed a poster that I read on the bus: "Masks are not a Choice. They are the Law."

Inside the expansive square, the picture is not as threatening: I have a wooden bench to myself – an audience of one – to view an array of fabulous architecture, statuary and an international people panorama. I find sitting here to be super, passive recreation and a fine way to spend time. It is



Silver City resident and Desert Exposure columnist Vivian Savitt is on the street in Glasgow providing a Scottish Dispatch. (Courtesy photo)

hard to visualize that this square was once a cow pasture.

Tourists speaking languages I can only guess at, roll suitcases through the square's vast inner space. There is a certain rhythm to the passer-by meanderings, and only a few stop to frame a photo on their I-phones. Many wait for a pigeon to alight on the head of the tallest monument – an 80-foot high Doric column commemorating Sir Walter Scott – at the square's center.

In the midst of all the human

action, a wildlife element also exists. Leashed dogs – there are lots of bulldogs in this city and I've yet to see a single black Scottish terrier – come and go as do those ubiquitous pigeons. Due to the proximity of salt water, several species of gulls are often spotted mingling with the pigeons. None seem fidgety.

Gull biologists report the birds are attracted to easily accessible, abounding amounts of fast-food litter and leftovers. So, they are leaving their seaside habitat to engage in urban feasting.

At the square's perimeter and outer edges carry-outs, restaurants and coffee shops flourish, all attracting residents and tourists to interact, dine al fresco and stretch their legs. Remains from their dining intervals are quickly picked over by the avian browsers. Admittedly though, I find it exciting to sip coffee while overhead, a gull calls trenchantly as if seashore is in sight. I makes me feel like a seafarer out of "Moby Dick."

As I continue to observe the scene on the square, noise from an overhead helicopter causes the birds to abandon feeding in one great curved swoosh skyward – then head for safe haven at the base of the statues. There, at the feet of great Scottish historical figures – from Sir Walter Scott to Robert Burns and the engineer James Watt – the birds feel protected.

Interestingly, I note the gazes on the statues look outward and away from the square. This includes two fine equestrian statues of Queen Victoria and her Albert. I wonder whether contemporary social norms are too overwhelming for them to face. Perhaps the queen and her prince also ponder the recent fate of so many equestrian statues throughout the U.S.

As for myself, I won't remain stationary like the statues, but plan to look inward and outward as I process what I see on my Scottish journey. Overall, I hope to report — not as a tourist — but in a way the Scots would deem as "a canny lass."



George Square in Glasgow, Scotland is one of the great public squares of the world. (Photo by Vivian Savitt)



Bright gardens in Glasgow surround the square including this one with some happily growing hydrangeas. (Photo by Vivian Savitt)

Silver City writer Vivian Savitt has been part of the Desert Exposure team for many years. She has had regular pieces appearing in the paper including the

Southwest Gardner and then Maneuvering Elderdom columns. Now Savitt has hit the European road and is sharing her view as a New Mexican abroad.

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ANCIENT WINDS • JOAN E. PRICE

# Traces of Humans in Clay and Stone

## Footprints lead artists, archaeologists into the past

An archaeological crew at the southern end of the Alamogordo landfill was baking under the dry heat in the few weeks before the moisture-laden monsoon in the Tularosa Basin arrived.

“It was going to hit 106 degrees and we hit a solidified layer some 1.2 meters below the surface deep under the shift-

ing sand dunes into an ancient lakebed,” said Lay Powell, an artist and novice crew member. “I kept pulling sand away looking for artifacts or even ruins. It was weird – I thought I better use a brush.

“I was thinking there might be animal tracks or maybe like a deer and then there was a digit, like a finger. I brushed a second

digit next to it, then a third digit. My heart started to beat so fast ... What really came to mind when I looked across to the east, I could almost see MacNeish’s cave. That is how rapidly I connected to Pendejo Cave, I automatically thought of Paleoindian peoples 10,000 years ago. “

“Scotty” MacNeish, one of the most famous and controversial archaeologists ever in the Tularosa Basin, searched for the earliest evidence of human occupation. Thirty years ago, MacNeish “held up a hardened clay fragment from the side of a cooking pit in a cave (30,000 years old) with a fingerprint” to reporter Phil McCombs for the Washington Post, an invaluable treasure in his life of encountering the primal experiences so rare in today’s urbanized world.

Knots for nets for carrying large containers or capturing lake fish, turtles and birds were found by the hundreds by MacNeish. His cave was a production site overlooking the lakes.

“Her palm print... baked into the clay of the paleolithic fire pit,” writes McCombs at a cave site overlooking the southern Tularosa Basin.

Now, footprints emerged. Ultimately, two more prints of the same person going south and one print going north were uncovered by Four Corners Research based in Las Cruces that are dated from 7,000 to 9,000 years old, either late Paleoindian or middle Archaic eras, said David Greenwald, director of Four Corners. It was clear that the prints came after the clay surface of the lakebed began to dry out. When the feet sank near the cracks, there was a mushing up of still wet clay to ooze around the traveler, Greenwald notes.

These people traveled during cycles of expanding and contacting edges of the shallow lakes in tandem with the Pacific Ocean cycles of what we call the El Niño-La Nina. Ten thousand years later, humans recorded their precious feet and hands along with those of their animal asso-



One of four Paleoindian human footprints discovered by archaeologists at the Alamogordo Waste Disposal Site. (Photo courtesy of Four Corners Research)

ciates on petroglyphs at Three Rivers Petroglyph Site, only few miles northeast of the sand dunes. Human prints interact with birds, bear and felines to an astonishing amount, realistic or out-of-the ordinary looking to us. Tracks were dominant symbols of the perceptions of reality of prehistoric life in the Basin.

The everchanging dunes at White Sands National Park cover and uncover an even greater story of Paleoindian lifetimes. Biologist David Bustos, with over 15 years of experience at WSNP, has attracted numerous scientists to measure not only the ephemeral dunes transforming under wind and water dynamics but ancient footprints solidified in the once muddy mix of the shallow playa lakes.

Human footprints small enough to fit neatly inside the deep prints of a now extinct giant ground sloth tell Bustos and others that humans used sloth prints as steppingstones in their interaction with the sloth. Sometimes the humans were on top, sometimes the sloths were on top. They were circling each other – this opens up a whole new class of behavior data for the Paleoindian sites that can be studied at the national park of ancient glistening sands. Now, the national park is designing an Ice Age Trail with informational plaques to share their extensive finds with the public.

The sodden earth of 7,000 to 9,000 years ago that eventually dried out in the Tularosa Basin recorded prints of the hardened feet of human passage on trails carrying people with skilled abilities to make and thrust ancient lithic tools for killing animals, tools to harvest reeds for weaving water-tight baskets, crafting stones for grinding numerous types of seeds, tools to cut thick hides or wood of appropriate diameter for shelters.

Each new tool was a technological invention with all the lifestyles adjustments that evolved from it, says Lisa Sparks, a lithics expert, archaeologist and teacher. The women are now

thought to have the same skills as the men in communities that spanned the basin from summer to winter. In the small family groups, a tool like an obsidian blade sharp enough to perform surgery was a family heirloom, a possession that was highly valued and cared for, though perhaps traded as well.

The communities of so long ago did not have much to throw away. Everything was hand made of organic materials that return into landscapes of memory. Rare beautifully crafted basketry, painted pottery worth thousands of dollars today, stone tools such as obsidian that are so sharp they can be and were used for internal surgeries can be found and have often disappeared into private collections.

Joe Lowendowski wears two hats that are strangely intertwined. He used to manage solid waste fill sites for municipalities. He also designs and mounts exhibits for the local Tularosa Basin Historical Museum. Now a consultant for the Alamogordo landfill, Lowendowski knows that today’s throwaway plastics will be the focus of tomorrow’s archaeology-plastic will last for hundreds of years.

The city of Alamogordo purchased 628 acres from the State Land Office with 18 possible locations at that time. The process of opening new land to be used for more landfill needs takes years. Lowendowski has shepherded the permitting process through the halls of the environmental protection division and state cultural resources agencies.

“The odds of discovering an ancient human footprint in a one meter grid unit among thousands of acres in the Tularosa Basin, still I think I might be dreaming. It was surreal,” Powell mused.

Under the shifting sands ever responding to the forces of wind and water dynamics is evidence of the earliest human perceptions. We can only try to follow in their tracks to share their great picture of a world of permanence and impermanence.

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The overly large feet of the figure of this prehistoric figure emphasizes the important of feet as essential memory systems. (Photo by Joan E. Price)

QUILT TALES • MIA KALISH

# Meet Geraldine

## A creative applique project in Alamogordo

If you hear hoof beats, think horses, not ... giraffes? Why not giraffes? Giraffes have found themselves in fabrics, digital art, quilt panels and kits, and quilt and apparel fabric. There are images of baby giraffes, cartoon giraffes for kids' clothing and crib quilts, beautiful patterns of giraffe's coats and images of giraffe faces singly and in pairs. So why not giraffes ... in applique?

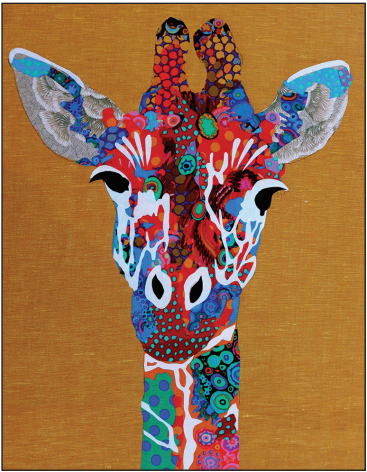
Most of the applique designs one finds on a Google search tend toward the cutesy side. But one in particular, Geraldine, by Australian designer Pam Holland, is distinctive and beautiful.

Pam is no stranger to folks in and around Alamogordo, where she has been a frequent visitor for many years and where she was instrumental in establishing the Southern New Mexico Festival of Quilts, the proceeds of which benefit Otero County's children's organizations. But Geraldine may just be a new face for many.

The pattern is available on Pam Holland's website or, one can attend the upcoming class at Pins & Needles in Alamogordo on Thursday and Friday, Oct. 14-15. Although the ever-delightful Pam cannot leave her home country of Australia due to Covid restrictions, the class will be taught by the equally delightful, long-time friend Lisa Blevins, who is fully certified by Pam to guide us on the raw applique adventure.

This will be my first foray into raw edges applique and although this will be my first effort, I expect to enjoy it so much, especially the charming result, that I will be able to make a number of these gorgeous wall hangings for my friends and relatives.

Unfinished, Geraldine is 40 inches long and 20 inches wide.



Geraldine presents a creative way to use those colorful fabric leftovers. (Courtesy Photo)

The pattern is designed for a layer cake, with 10-inch squares required for the head and ears. The remaining pieces can be cut from the layer cake or from our stashes.

For those already familiar with raw edges applique, the allure is the charm of Geraldine herself, with her long fluttery lashes and adorable whiskers. For those new to raw edge applique, a whole new world awaits.

First, this applique method is much faster to complete because the shapes are cut to the exact size and form needed. They are then all ready to go and once they are applied to the background, there is no more stopping to prepare materials. It does help to have a lightbox for tracing the patterns onto the fabric, and a pair of small scissors to cut around intricate shapes. A comfortable approach here is to cut the pieces generously and then cut to the fine details of the pattern piece afterwards. This approach is commonly used in fussy cutting, where trying to cut precisely from the original piece of fabric can be difficult and lead to poor results.

The cut shapes are held in place with pins or glue or two-sided fusible, which are then sewn in place by hand or machine. The Geraldine pattern shows how sewing each piece down can be done with multiple turns around the piece to give a particular effect. But the fun really moves into high gear here because different colored threads and decorative stitches can be used to create different dimensions or, the edges can be finished with embroidery. The options are endless and I am sure this vastness will ensure that each of my holiday gifts will each be unique.

Lastly but definitely not "leastly," the quilting itself offers another plethora of possibilities. The original Geraldine uses a solid colored background but different background and Geraldine-fabric choices can be made. One that comes to mind is to use a bold print background and then to use light-colored prints or combinations of solids for her face and wonderfully long neck.


How the background and Geraldine relate to each other will affect the quilting choices. A solid background lends itself nicely to any of a variety of straight-line designs, ranging from very narrowly spaced vertical or horizontal lines to cross-hatching and random placement. These straight-line designs add dimension and interest to an otherwise fast background.

With a patterned background, the choices may not be so simple but instead an exercise in creativity. One may choose a meandering pattern that simulates Geraldine's Savanna home. Or a design that highlights images in the background that add information about giraffes and their

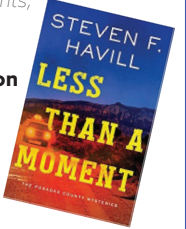
lifestyles. Or one may choose to use an invisible thread that simply adds texture, using the background print as an additional "voice." But raw edge applique is simple and quick enough that we as quilters can feel free to explore the wide range of options and opportunities open to us.

You can sign up for the Geraldine the Giraffe class by calling Pins & Needles at 575-437-8121. The store will have all the essentials for the class.

You can follow me on Instagram @Joe'sRoomQuilts; I will probably be posting highlights of this exciting 2-day workshop.



### THE BEAR MOUNTAIN LODGE IS HAPPY TO HOST NM RESIDENT AUTHOR STEVE HAVILL OCTOBER 20-21

- Workshop: Wed. Oct 20, 9am-4pm** (lunch break noon-1pm)  
Steve, who is the author of the Posadas County Mysteries which takes place in a fictional county in the Boot Heel of NM, will be holding an active writing workshop.  
*Participants will be actively challenged to explore issues of character, setting, plot lines and pace, as well as delving into the world of professional writing -- research and outlining, correspondence with editors and agents, learning to judge what is good writing, and what is not.*  
**Space is limited to 20 participants.**  
**Cost for the workshop and lunch is \$50 per person**
- Booksigning: Thurs. Oct 21**  
Booksigning and discussion of his latest novel *"Less Than A Moment"*  
  
Overnight accommodations available.  
Call 575-538-2538 for reservations for workshop and/or accommodations.  
Downtown Blue Dome is open Thursday, Friday and Saturday 10-4pm  
Blue Dome at the Lodge is open 9-5pm

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### ON THE SHELF

## 'Human to Human'

Poetry anthology delves into personal, big picture

Silver City poet Lynne Zotalis shares news of the international publication of "Human to Human," a poetry anthology that features 46 poems by 28 poets.

Emerging from the Global Pandemic, it is essential to remember many things, one of which is, we are all human - one people, one race, one world. This international anthology focuses on that humanity, collecting together an international group of poets exploring human connections, learning from the past, living for the present and hoping for the future.

"Human to Human" is an anthology of poetry which seeks human connection, from the individual, delving into personal relationships - friends, family, love, community - to the global, the social issues of our day, the big questions, what could be termed the zeitgeist: how society creaks and cracks but ultimately survives.

Lynne's own poems in this collection are "I Have No Defense" and "Quantified Love." Lynne Zotalis, in these two poems, gives us the duality of relationships, the pain and joy. "I Have No Defense" focuses in on a moment at the height of argument,

while "Quantified Love" is the exact opposite of the title; "love is immeasurable."

Other contributors include: Alice Eluned, Beverly Joyce, Brenda Gunn, Caitlin Mitchel-Markley, CC Pulliam, Cigeng Zhang, Don Carroll, Ellaraine Lockie, Ed Ruzicka, Emily R. Daniel, EP Jones, Gerald Dampier, Hannah Walizer, Heather MF Lyke, John Davis, John Laue, Karin Spitfire, Kelly-Jo Lomas, Kathryn Eberly, Kewayne Wadley, LynneAnne Forest, Madeline Heit Lipton, Mariangela Canzi, Neetu Malik, R.J. Keeler, Trevor Maynard and Yvonne Peters.

## SILVER CITY ART ASSOCIATION

### weekend at the galleries

Saturday October 9, 11-7 (receptions 4-7)  
Sunday, October 10th, 10-3



### SILENT AUCTION

original raven  
+ gila monster ART  
at participating galleries  
ends October 9th!

## Silver City

www.silvercityart.com

# Arts Scene

## Upcoming area art happenings

SILVER CITY

• **The Silver City Art Association Red Dot Weekend at the Galleries** is happening Oct. 9-10 this year. Located in downtown Silver City, this annual event is in its 21st year. Eighteen art galleries feature the work of more than 100 artists working in a variety of media. This will be a self-guided tour of fine-art exhibitions, art demonstrations, food trucks and musical happenings where participants can meet the artists, purchase local art, enjoy fine dining and celebrate all that is Silver City. Hours are 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday. Receptions are 4-7 p.m. Saturday. Info: [www.silvercity-art.com/weekend-at-the-galleries](http://www.silvercity-art.com/weekend-at-the-galleries).



“Silly Tree Frog” by Mariah Walker

• **Mariah Walker, Suzanne Ens, Ron Roland and Sally Tilton** will be combining forces for a pop-up sale at the **Grant County Art Guild Annex** from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9 during the **Weekend at the Galleries**. The Annex is located at 106 E. Market St., just behind the Grant County Art Guild. Light Refreshments will be served. Info: 575-993-8193,

• **At the Western New Mexico University McCray Gallery** the **Milner Women in the Arts** exhibit features the work of **Diane Marsh** which portrays universal issues deeply personal and profoundly human. The exhibit opens on at 6:30 p.m., Oct.



“Rest In Me” by Diane Marsh

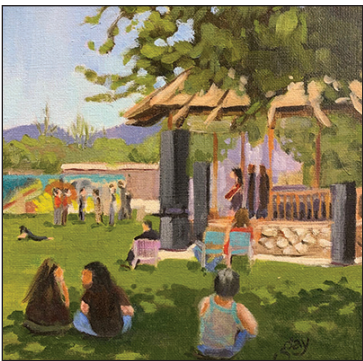
14 with a lecture at Parotti Hall and reception at the gallery at 7:30 p.m. Info: 575-538-6273.



“Aged” by Sue Szajer

• **Lois Duffy Art** is featuring two artists for **Weekend at the Galleries**. Santa Fe artist **Sue Szajer** will show her “**Limited Vocabulary Series**,” painted with two colors plus black and white and Silver City artist **Lois Duffy** will show her latest large unusual acrylic paintings. A reception will be held 4-7 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 9 at 211 N Texas St. The show will hang until Nov. 28. Info: 575-313-9631

• **The Grant County Art Guild**, located at 316 N Bullard Street, Silver City, hosts a **Plein Air** art show through Oct. 31 featuring works by eight of its most experienced Plein Air artists. The paintings feature downtown Silver City, from prominent



“Blues Festival at Silver City” by Gay Scheibl



“Main Street Memories” by Ann Nace

historic architecture to hidden nooks and crannies. The show will be held in two of the large GCAG gallery windows, as well as inside the gallery. A show reception for the Plein Air Artists will be held from 4-7 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 9 during the SCAA Weekend at the Galleries. GCAG gallery hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday-Monday, and 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday. Info: [www.gcag.org](http://www.gcag.org).

DEMING

• October at the **Deming Art Center** features the **DAC Membership**. Anyone who is a member is eligible to participate and there will be a diverse body of work on display. The show will run through Oct. 29. The center is located at 100 S. Gold St., in Deming, and is open from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Monday to Saturday. Info: 575-546-3663.

CLOUDCROFT

• **The Cloudcroft Art Society's annual Holiday Art and Crafts Show and Sale** features art by the society's local artists as framed and matted paintings in many art mediums, photography and digital photo art, greeting cards, jewelry, pottery, glass art, fiber dolls, wood and gourd carvings and more. The artists will be on hand for a meet and greet opportunity. Times and dates are 10 a.m.-3 p.m. every Saturday in October-December weather permitting. It's at the east end of Burro Street where it intersects with Swallow Place in the old Red Brick School House that also houses the Nivison Library. Info: [sznana@totacc.com](mailto:sznana@totacc.com).

LAS CRUCES



NMSU Jewelry

• The students in the **Metals Club** at New Mexico State University are hosting the **39th Annual NMSU Jewelry Sale** on 7 a.m.-7 p.m., Monday, Nov. 1. The sale will be located at the coffee shop in the NMSU Book Store on University next to the Department of Art, 1400 E. University Avenue. This is a fundraising event to support workshops, field trip activities for the students, and visiting lecturers. Info: [motoko@nmsu.edu](mailto:motoko@nmsu.edu).



Five birds woven on red background – each Maya village has its own huipil designs

• **Weaving for Justice** and the **NMSU University Museum** are hosting a scholarship fundraiser for Maya youth from Guatemala, Belize and Chiapas, Mexico. Donated textiles and other items from Latin America will be sold from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Oct. 29 and 30 in the museum courtyard (Kent Hall), 1280 University Ave. All proceeds go to the Maya Educational Foundation ([www.mayaedufound.org](http://www.mayaedufound.org)). Guests are invited to view a special exhibit of Chiapas Maya textiles on display in the museum. Info:

• The 29th annual **Empty Bowls** event will be held 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15,



Empty Bowls

at **St. Paul's United Methodist Church**, 225 W. Griggs Ave. Empty Bowls, sponsored by the Potters' Guild of Las Cruces (PGLC), is a major fundraiser for El Caldito Soup Kitchen, which is part of the Mesilla Valley Community of Hope. In addition to hundreds of handmade bowls created by PGLC for sale, the event includes soup from 30 local restaurants and an online silent auction. For this year's event, guests will enter St. Paul's on the south side of the building on May Avenue. Info: 575-525-3831.

• “**New Roses on Textured Gesso Juice**” is the presentation from 2-4 p.m. during the **New Mexico Watercolor Society Southern Chapter** meeting Sunday Oct. 10 in the Creative Arts Room at the Good Samaritan Society, 3011 Buena Vista Circle, Las Cruces. Long-time teacher and watercolorist Woody Duncan visits from Albuquerque to demonstrate new techniques using “gesso juice.” The public is welcome. Refreshments provided. Info: [nmwatercolorssociety.org](http://nmwatercolorssociety.org).



Dennis Lujan sculptures

• **The Tombaugh Gallery** presents the art work of **Dennis Lujan**. Lujan is the first artist exhibiting at the gallery in person since the beginning of the pandemic. The exhibit will feature abstract paintings based on the floaters he has in his eyes. The exhibit includes **Electric Engines**, using found objects. These often have a unique name describing what they are and what they represent. Each one contains circuit boards and copper, as the energy for the sculpture. The exhibit continues through Oct. 8. The Tombaugh Gallery is at 2000 S. Solano and is part of the Unitarian Universalist Church. Masks are required. The gallery is open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. These times might change due to Covid-19.

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Artwork by Renee Short

• **Agave Artist Gallery**, 2250 Calle De San Albino in Mesilla, features **Renee Short's** artwork during October as Artist of the Month. Short balances composition with lines and color to produce dynamic abstract mixed media creations using acrylics. Her inspiration comes from many sources - imagination and beyond. Join Short for a talk on art composition 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 16 at the gallery. Register in advance by sending an email to Renee at [haikulife3@gmail.com](mailto:haikulife3@gmail.com) stating you will attend. Gallery hours are 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday-Sunday. Info: [agaveartists@gmail.com](mailto:agaveartists@gmail.com).

• **The Doña Ana Arts Council** is features a comprehensive exhibition of **Jo-an Smith's** artwork titled **"Celebrating 89 Years and More!"** running Oct. 1-28 at the DAAC Arts and Cultural Center. DAAC will extend its hours until 8 p.m. on Friday, Oct 1. to participate in the First Friday Arts Ramble, and will also hold an artist reception for



Art by Jo-An Smith

Smith from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9. The show will include mainly paintings (watercolors, oil, and alcohol inks) with some additional enamel jewelry and drawings. **The Doña Ana Arts & Cultural Center** is at 250 W. Amador St. in Las Cruces and is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekdays, and from noon-5 p.m. second Saturday of each month. Info: [www.daarts.org](http://www.daarts.org) or 575-523-6403.

• **The Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery**, 2470-A Calle de Guadalupe, across from the historic Fountain Theatre features two local artists for the month of October: Mark Morden and Frank Rimbach. Morden is a retired architect. His works focus is on capturing light and shadow through form and structure. Rimbach earned a master of fine arts degree from New Mexico State University. He has taught at Central Texas College and at El Paso Community College. Rimbach's work can be found at MVFAG and in private collections. The gallery will have an open house



"Landscape 2" by Frank Rimbach



Painting by Mark Morden

from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 23. **First American Bank in Mesilla**, is well represented by gallery members who rotate the galleries artists' work monthly. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily with limited access. Info: 575-522-2933, [www.mesillavalleyfinearts.com](http://www.mesillavalleyfinearts.com).

• **La Calvera Catrina Dia de los Muertos Exhibition**, is a colorful and joyful show of large-scale skeleton sculptures at the **Branigan Cultural Center**, 501 N. Main St. Discover seven 8-foot-tall sculptures created by Los Angeles-based artist Ricardo Soltero and installed in the museum's Shannon Gallery. Organized by Denver Botanic Gardens, the exhibition will



La Calvera Catrina Dia de los Muertos

be on view from through Jan. 8, 2022. The Branigan Cultural Center is open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday. Info: [www.las-cruces.org/Museums](http://www.las-cruces.org/Museums) or at 575-541-2154.

• **The Las Cruces Museum of Art**, 491 N. Main St., celebrates **"From The Ground Up XXX,"** a biannual juried exhibition co-hosted by the Potters'

Guild of Las Cruces which features a variety of ceramic and pottery works created by regional artists. The exhibit is on display through Saturday, Oct. 9. The juror this year is Joshua R. Clark, assistant professor of Ceramics at New Mexico State University, who has exhibited across the United States and internationally. This year's exhibit features 56 works art. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday to Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday. Info: [www.las-cruces.org/museums](http://www.las-cruces.org/museums).



Fashion by Mari Blacker

Visit Desert Exposure's Virtual Gallery to connect to area artist's websites.  
[www.desertexposure.com/virtual-gallery](http://www.desertexposure.com/virtual-gallery)

ART GALLERIES  
SILVER CITY ART ASSOCIATION

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575-388-5725

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[loisduffy.com](http://loisduffy.com) 575-313-9631  
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# The Southwest Print Fiesta

## Hybrid event still puts steamroller to work

Back with printmaking action, the Southwest Print Fiesta is up to its old tricks. With workshops and presentations coming to Zoom, there is still plenty of in-person action as the steamroller will be loaded with 36 inch by 36 inch linoleum sheets carved out by print artists. Five artists from Silver City to El Paso have created these carved pieces to be printed by steamroller on downtown Silver City ground.

Also happening downtown that week, Oct. 8-11, is the Knowledge Print Project, printmaking exhibitions, street printing and a printers' market.

Silver City's Power and Light

Press took on the organization of the Print Fiesta last year so this is the first time they will be heading the project.

"This is the first year we are doing the programming," said Kyle Durrie with Power and Light Press. "It's really good and we are having a lot of fun. We love this event so much it feels good to get our hands on it this time. Doing the hybrid festival feels like a good way to approach the year."

Durrie said the audience base for the event is out to a 5-hour drive radius but there are participants coming from as far away as Colorado, Las Angeles and Austin, Texas.

"I love printmaking and printmakers," she said. "We get everyone together to share their work. It is fun and inspiring meeting of different artists. It has such a broad range (of printmakers); I love to learn from other printmakers how they make their work."

All the workshops will be held online via Zoom and are open to all.

"It's a little different this year" she said. "In the past the Arts Council ran it, so we are making it up as we go. We are getting some donations from local and regional donors but didn't approach sponsors this year."

The Southwest Print Fiesta goal "is to build community among printmakers throughout the southwestern United States and Mexico, to foster connections and partnerships with printmakers outside of the region and to engage with our local community in Silver City, New Mexico through the diverse and accessible language of print."

The event strives to promote and advance printmaking through public outreach, educational opportunities, collaborative projects, resource sharing, artist talks, exhibitions, print



A freshly rolled steamroller print from a previous SW Print Fiesta comes off the linoleum to be displayed. (Courtesy photo)

sales and community conversation, according to a press release.

"We believe in print as a democratic artform and we aim to serve and support printmakers of all kinds, from the traditional to the radical, formally-trained or self-taught. We offer opportuni-

ties for established artists interested in advancing their practices, as well as a platform for new, emerging voices to join in the conversation," the release said.

A schedule of events, workshop registration and more information can be found at [www.southwestprintfiesta.org](http://www.southwestprintfiesta.org).



"Heads or Tails, Un Volado en La Linea" by Marco Sanchez is part of the SW Print Fiesta and the juried show at Light Art Space Gallery.

**Lines of Force: A Retrospective of Fine Artwork by the Late John Stermer**  
Western New Mexico University  
Silver City NM  
Francis McCray Gallery of Contemporary Art



**John STERMER**

**Nov 18 - Dec 9, 2021**

Opening Thursday, Nov. 18  
Reception ~ 5:30  
Artist Talk ~ 6:30

[info@johnstermer.com](mailto:info@johnstermer.com)



"Bulldogger" Oil by John Stermer, 1920-1991. Photo by Keith Bauer.



A printmakers' market is part of the annual Silver City Print Fiesta. (Courtesy Photo)

**Thursday, Oct 7 @ 7PM**



**Le Vent du Nord**  
Rousing, foot stomping  
Quebecois francophone folk  
\$15 • Fine Arts Center Theater

**Thursday, Oct 14 @ 6:30 PM**

EDWINA & CHARLES MILNER WOMEN IN THE ARTS



**DIANE MARSH**

6:30 p.m. Lecture | Parotti Hall  
7:30 p.m. Reception | McCray Gallery  
Free & Open to the Public

**Saturday, Oct 23 @ 7PM**



**TERRANCE SIMIEN & THE ZYDECO EXPERIENCE**  
Blend of New Orleans funk-reggae-flavored-world-blues-American zydeco roots music  
\$15 • Fine Arts Center Theater

**Upcoming Cultural Events**

**11.4 Farofa** Brazilian Jazz ensemble  
7pm Light Hall Theater \$15

**11.18 John Stermer Retrospective**  
McCray Gallery — Free  
5:30pm Reception  
6:30pm Gallery Talk

**12.3 Jingle & Mingle**  
5:30pm Fountain Stage  
at Regents Square — Free

**12.17 Mariachi Christmas** \$15  
7pm Fine Arts Center Theatre

In accordance with WNMU health and safety protocols, the wearing of masks or other approved face coverings is required in all university buildings for both the vaccinated and unvaccinated.



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WRITTEN WORD

# Word Fiesta Goes Live

## Celebrating area authors

The Southwest Word Fiesta is Oct. 22-24. This year’s festival will be a hybrid one, with both live events in Silver City and Zoom appearances from authors in the area and around the world.

Southwest Word Fiesta celebrates the power and beauty of the written word, bringing together those who create with those who appreciate, with special emphasis on fostering community involvement.

Visit [swwordfiesta.org](http://swwordfiesta.org) to see

all that is happening.

The Southwest Word Fiesta, originally known as the Southwest Festival of the Written Word, was created to celebrate authors who live and work in the Southwest. Festivals feature the heritage of writing and writers in the Southwest, showing how that deep history connects to the present. The festival reveals how the diverse literary genres and interests coalesce and relate. Writers who have produced outstanding work that deserves

continued appreciation are honored. People of all ages who want to improve their writing or to make a career of putting words together are encouraged.

The Southwest Festival of the Written Word was founded in 2010 by members of the major cultural institutions in Silver City – the university, the public library and the Western Institute of Lifelong Learning. The festival takes place every other year and attracts over 800 visitors. The first festival was in 2013.

## 15 Best Places to Write in Silver City

### Southwest Word Fiesta picks the top spots

Contributors: Kris Neri, Ted Presler, JJ Amaworo Wilson

#### Tranquil Buzz Coffee House

A home away from home for writers, musicians and creatives. Full of posters, photos, sculptures, pots, books and handmade tables and shelves – an emporium of beautiful things for igniting the imagination, all topped off with first-rate coffee and cakes. A regular meeting place for The Gila River Poets.

#### Little Walnut Picnic Area

If you’re one of those writers who likes to get away from it all without leaving town, you can’t find a better spot to work than the Little Walnut Picnic Area. Picturesque picnic tables dot a tranquil Southwest landscape, while tree canopies provide shade for those long writing sessions. Trails wander in multiple directions, offering hikes for gathering your thoughts.

#### The Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery

The historic building housing The Little Toad Creek Brewery offers writers inspiration drawn from the echoes of those who must have written there decades earlier, especially in the little-used room at the rear that contains shelves of published books. So few bars contain books! The Toad serves the best burgers in town, and after writing, the Lucky Toad Lager makes the perfect celebratory drink.

#### Silver City Public Library

A gem of a library, well-lit and welcoming, with plenty of quiet corners for the dedicated scribe. If the individual booths are occupied by patrons, writers can try the history room; long wooden tables and a superb collection of tomes on Southwestern lore provide all the inspiration necessary.

#### Fort Bayard Historical Landmark

East of Silver City lies a quiet, serene spot where cypress trees beckon one down a deserted street where years earlier Buffalo soldiers marched. Later, the fort served as a hospital for tuberculosis patients. Now in this gentle place surrounded by occasional avian voices, one can contemplate one’s existence, love of nature and a touch of history.

#### Old James Stadium at WNMU

The academic world and would-be athletes take a break here surrounded by lush Bermuda grass and the occasional swish of a soaring football. Large enough to accommodate all types of relaxation, the stadium is perfect for developing a string of haiku among the “hikes!”

#### The Big Ditch Park

A walkway running parallel to a stream that bubbles quietly over the rocks; picturesque iron bridges; a sun-dappled canopy of green leaves. The Big Ditch is a natural haven just a short stroll from downtown Silver City. Bring a notebook and pen, perch on one of the shady benches and contemplate life.

#### Javalina

A storied coffeehouse in the heart of the community. Known for hosting open mics and conspiratorial groups of writers. Big windows let in the light. Original art adorns the walls. The written word is in every nook: from the stash of free newspapers to back copies of The Paris Review.

#### Silver City Waterworks Building Complex

Built in 1887 to provide acceptable water for the town, the sandstone structure and its environs offer a tranquil place in which to relax and perhaps share a conversation with the Continental Divide Trail hikers from all over the world gathering to prepare for their passage to Canada.

#### Miller Library, WNMU

Go to the top floor, slip into a booth in the Quiet Zone and gaze out the window. The spectacular view overlooks the town’s arteries and the Gila’s distant hills. And if that isn’t enough, take a moment to wander between the bookshelves: You’ll find everything you need from sci-fi to cybernetics to psychology – all fuel for the inquiring mind.

#### Birdswell’s Vintage Vibes

So retro! So Silver City! The locally unique drinks, including

boba teas and old-fashioned milkshakes, along with a good choice of journals, make Birdswell’s Vintage Vibes an engaging place to write. After a particularly strong writing session, you might even find a reward for yourself among their special selection of antiques and art and craft items.

#### Meadow Creek

The pick of the numerous trails to be found just outside the city limits, Meadow Creek is a 15-minute drive from Pinos Altos. Rocky outcrops and towering pines provide a perfect antidote to our ephemeral worries. Writers will find plenty of shade here, too, and lichen-spotted boulders and tree stumps serve as natural chairs.

#### Bear Mountain Lodge

Described as “... a tranquil oasis on the edge of the New Mexico wilderness ...,” the Lodge, built in 1928, once served as a resting spot for members of the Nature Conservancy. Now, it’s a top-of-the-line lodging, a place one can relax with pen or pencil in hand, surrounded by drought-adapted plants. If writer’s block strikes, try a hike or go bird watching.

#### Silver City Museum garden

Open a low gate. Walk a few paces down a path. Veer right and step into the past. Five huge trees provide copious shade while metal benches invite you to stay awhile. Peruse the outdoor display of Silver City’s past and present, and marvel at the objects artfully scattered: a stone wheel, rocks, and sculptures of rusting iron.

#### The Hub

The Hub, outside of Diane’s Bakery, offers sturdy tables, ideal for spreading out writing notes. While there are yummy baked goods, pizza and tacos nearby to fuel your body, a glorious abundance of sunshine and flowers will surely engage your muse.

*Southwest Word Fiesta will take place Oct. 22-24, 2021. All events are free and open to the public. For more information, visit [swwordfiesta.org](http://swwordfiesta.org).*

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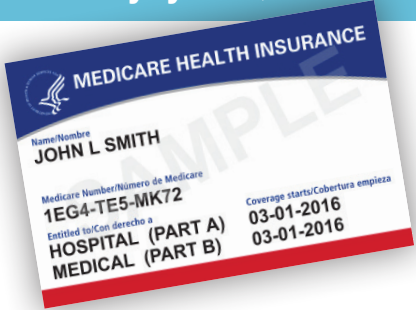
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# 2021 Writing Contest

Here we go again. The Desert Exposure writing contest hits the books in high fashion with thoughtful and lovely work as always. The 2021 contest submissions bore a marked difference from all previous versions. Entries this year reflected both peace and stress generated by a year of isolation and pandemic. Stories and poems from across the southern reaches of New Mexico not only spoke about the area but also much about memories, the power of the simple things in life and the poignancy of rare, precious human connections.

Contest winners are determined by points which are accrued according to how the judges rank each piece. This year's grand prize win-

ner "Lencha and Speedy" puts Silver City's Tom Hester firmly back in the top seat with all the judges putting this story at No. 1 or 2.

Honorable mentions in the prose division are "Desert Sage" by Heather Frankland and "The Fall of Winter" by Efrem Carrasco. In the poetry "I am From," by Pat Conway and "Greasewood" by Stan Walter came out on top with our judges.

As always these are hard to judge, the things that grip us as judges in life are subjective and that which speaks to one, might irritate another. The writers who submit have sent us pieces of themselves to share and it's humbling and an honor to have the opportunity to read each piece and reflect upon it.



TOM HESTER

## Lencha and Speedy

Two days home from the hospital, my coughs muted but my chest still ablaze, feeling as though I had just lost a marathon, I crept to my front window to locate the racket's source. Speedy Montoya was dragging a fifty-five gallon steel barrel along his drive toward the street. CCRAKkkk WHOOM CCCrakkkk.

The Montoyas live directly across from me on one of those dead-ended Silver City streets that threaten to dump drivers into an arroyo. My shack backs up to the arroyo, close enough to funnel skunks into my back yard. Buck, the official house dog, enjoys skunk visits, and, as a result, smells like bargain tomato juice.

The Montoyas' tiny frame house sits on the far back rim of their lot, which is rank with a jungle of horsebush, buckwheat, and yuccas. Annually Lencha Montoya raises a forest of geraniums in rusty Folger cans standing in a scarlet line along their entry sidewalk. Speedy has created a cage of used poultry netting in one corner of his lot where tomatoes and chiles can peacefully ripen without assault from our herd of deer that amble and nibble from one house to the next. Spring and fall Speedy gets his cousin Gummy Ortiz to haul over his tractor and brush whacker. Twenty minutes pass and Gummy has reduced every pretense of greenery to stalks and clouds of dirt.

On the day of my interrupted recovery, Speedy wrestled his barrel to a stand of three oaks that years before had escaped Gummy's relentless machine. Speedy was obviously aiming to capture what little shade exists in his yard. About as wide as he was tall, a powerful man despite his age, Speedy tipped the barrel against an oak, placing its base on the street's crumbling asphalt.

I returned to bed and slept the rest of the afternoon, dreaming of the taste of a peach. The next day I saw that Speedy had hoisted the barrel atop two flat boulders and that it wasn't just a barrel but was what he later told me



is a Mexican barbecue, a steel drum halved and then hinged.

Possibly a good week later, when I was leaving the house to walk Buck, Speedy was jumping on a shovel, trying to crack the crust of his yard, about ten feet from where the barbecue tilted on its rocky base. Someone had stacked cut pine branches and split logs between the grill and Speedy's proposed hole.

"What's going on?" I shouted to him.

"Making for a Coahuila lonche," he said. He leaned on the shovel handle. A big square of wire lattice, intended for plaster walls but now obviously destined to grill meats, lay across some rocks substituting as the cook's prep table. Speedy was assembling a kitchen.

About the first week when I moved in, I learned that Speedy was determined to make clear his roots. He was the only Coahuilan I've ever known, but he sure didn't want to be confused with a man from Chihuahua, Sonora or Nuevo Leon. It was fine with him that Florencia, who we called Lencha, was from the Valley in Texas. She was a Starr County native, but she was also a woman. That made a difference to Speedy. Women didn't necessarily have to be from Coahuila.

"You feeling better?" Speedy asked. He tossed the spade into the ditch he was making, and in the rolling sailor way of walking that he had, he headed toward me and Buck. Buck obviously remembered what good meals he ate under Montoya care while I was in the hospital. He leaped up and drooled on Speedy's shoulder as an affectionate greeting.

I told him I was feeling stronger. The July sun burned through

my tee

Speedy squinted at me. "Kinda lonely these days?" It was a statement and a question at the same moment. I thought I had gotten over Sylvia's leaving, but at Speedy's statement I felt a gripping at my chest.

"Yeah," I admitted.

"Well, she was a nice girl," Speedy said. "But sometimes..." Speedy stopped. He didn't know how to complete the idea, and neither did I.

"What's with the hole?" I said, to change the subject.

"That's to cook the heads."

"Heads?" I said. I can't tell you the image that popped into my brain.

"Cow heads. Junior is coming home and he told us that he's bringing heads."

Junior is Espiridion Montoya, Junior. I had met him in 2016, when I first moved in. He works in a Nebraska meat processing plant. As the least member of the butcher department at a local supermarket and hearing of Junior's visit, I suddenly felt a brotherhood with a fellow meat-cutter.

"I thought that ever since mad cow disease you couldn't cook cows' heads." I tugged at Buck's leash so he would stop snuffling at the barbecue barrel.

Speedy grinned and his stainless steel front tooth glinted in the sun. "It's who you know, Esteve." He turned to look at the pit in progress and the beginnings of his kitchen. "It got too lonely, Esteve. No work. All shut down. So I told Lencha that we need to do something. So when Junior calls and says the plant's going to close for a couple of weeks and he's bringing the kids, Lencha and I know what we want to do."

Several days later I looked out and saw a picnic table shaded by a tarp sagging on two plastic pipes, stuck into the ground at angle and crossed at the top teepee style. Speedy stood behind the barrel and clouds of white smoke billowed through the oaks. I couldn't smell but I could imagine. I grabbed two aluminum lawn chairs with webbing bleached pale on my back porch and took them across the street.

Sweat ran down Speedy's round face, and he jerked off his crushed cowboy hat and wiped his forehead with his right arm, holding the long spatula aloft.

"Hey, Esteve," Speedy said in greeting. I unfolded the chairs and Speedy shoved a cheap paper plate into my hands. A mound of shredded meat, rich brown and oozing a sauce, lay under two fresh corn tortillas.

"Hay más tortillas," Speedy said.

I headed for the picnic table. Lencha had put some bowls inside a tray of ice. Sliced green onions. Jalapenos. Cucumbers. Pico de gallo. Cilantro. I made two tacos, meat and vegetables spilling over the top of my left hand as I shook on some Cholula hot sauce. I ate both tacos, one after the other, as I stood in the sun and watched Speedy. He was a custodian at the middle school, but I could tell by his knife work and the way he moved the meat on the plaster lattice that he had done this before. A lot before.

When the batch of meat was cooked, Speedy came over to me. I told him the tacos were the first things I had tasted in a month. The complexity of the flavors reminded me of happiness. The tacos were like a meal after a daylong pack in the wilderness. But where did he find the meat, for it was certainly not beef.

"It's Gummy's elk that he shot last fall. Every year Gummy goes hunting up north. He's a big hunter, Gummy. He brings home all this meat he has paid some butcher to wrap. Steaks. Roasts. Everything. Theresa, Gummy's wife, puts it all in the freezer. Then, next year, he goes hunting again. While he's walking through the woods, Theresa goes to the freezer and throws away last year's elk to get ready for the new one. Theresa, she refuses to cook elk."

While Speedy was accounting for his free meat, a low, black Malibu pulled to the curb, going the wrong way on the street. The bass of the Malibu's stereo thumped out a go-go beat. The driver was Speedy's friend he had called to share elk tacos.

While I was telling the girlfriend of the friend my pandemic story, my masked neighbors from three doors down edged toward the table. I had waved at Charlie and Marcos plenty of times while walking Buck but I didn't know their names. That late afternoon, the sun slanting across the ragged horsebush, the flowers glowing like leaks of yellow light dancing atop the spiky plants, gave the moment a theatrical quality, as though Speedy had designed it all, which in fact he had. As through some magical process, the neighborhood gathered by one's and two's.

Lencha appeared with more taco contents, including sliced little potatoes sauteed to a crisp and the summer's first tomatoes. She looked radiant. Taller than Speedy, with skin that shown in the dusk, Lencha sang out our names as her smile landed on each of us. All responded by shouting "Lencha," for her presence validated our presence.

Kids showed up to chase through the yard and their laughter wove like golden threads running through the gray murmur among the adults, now about 20 persons keeping conversational distance, some standing in the street, some next to the table, all with those flimsy paper plates, the tacos about to slide to ruin.

Someone had brought store-bought potato salad. I think there were cookies. Yes, I'm sure of it. Not the big frisbie things from a coffee shop but homemade style, a bit burned on the bottom. An early member of the crowd had produced what looked to be several gallons of wine; the name on the bottles said "Roja" and it was, a wine not to remember but a match for the paper cups that came with the bottles. Marcos walked to his house and when he came back he lugged an ice chest full of ice and bottles of Tecate.

I suddenly realized I could smell the pine smoke. My life had retrieved a lost dimension. I don't know how Speedy kept the flaring wood from charring

**LENCHA AND SPEEDY**  
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LENCHA AND SPEEDY

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the marinated meat to leather strips, but he did. When he needed a break, Speedy called to me. “Esteve. You went to cooking school. Take over here.” He handed me a long-handled fork as he was disappearing. I promptly allowed the fire to consume the meat that Speedy had begun to sear. The next batch fared better after I found cool spots on the awkward grill. I promised myself that I would buy the Montoyas a proper, smooth grate.

When night settled in, the party broke up. The Malibu, thumping away, pulled from the curb like a prowling cat, and Marcos and Charlie, an empty ice chest between them, walked the dark street toward home. I helped

Lencha carry the bowls and tortilla servers to her kitchen.

“So, Esteve, have you heard from Sylvia?” Lencha said.

“Not since I got out of the hospital,” I said.

“You know, Esteve, that she and I talked a lot before she left.”

I fiddled with the bowls, rinsing a couple in the sink.

“You want to know what we talked of?”

I didn’t turn to face Lencha, but she could see me nod.

“Sylvia told me of her great disappointment. When you lost that chef’s job because the virus closed everything, she said that you had just given up. Yes. Those were the words she said. ‘Esteve has given up.’”

I turned toward Lencha. Her face had wrinkles of sadness that pulled at her luminous eyes. She twisted a dish towel.

“But Lencha, you know that wasn’t true,” I said. I admitted that I hadn’t talked about my career with Sylvia, except to complain about the meat department hassle, but she had her own job worries. I was trying to protect her.

“Well, Esteve, when you really care for a person, you and that person protect each other together, not alone. Sylvia, she felt abandonada. I think you should call her, Esteve. That’s what I think.”

I told Lencha that I might do as she suggested. When Sylvia left, it was after a big argument. Now, later, it had been more than two months since we had talked, and the last conversation was stiff, almost grim, mostly about mailing some papers that she had left in a drawer. Even my story about Buck’s latest skunk escapade had failed to remove the chill from the call.

The following weekend the crowd at the Coahuila barbecue was a little smaller, but a woman played her harmonica and the notes of an Irish melody on the evening air stirred a loneliness and a longing in me. Speedy showed four or five guests how he was going to cook the steer

heads. He had put a sheet of plywood over the pit and he pulled it back and pointed to the large, round stones that covered the bottom. When Junior arrived, Speedy would build a fire in the pit on Friday morning and we were to have a meal of the gods the following day.

Junior and his family did arrive. He had brought a big tent because the Montoya’s house would not hold the entire brood. As promised Speedy prepared the barbecue by igniting a bonfire in his pit. After embers replaced the flames, Speedy dropped in two foil wrapped bundles bigger than basketballs, layered on moist burlap bags and shoveled the pile of dirt back into the hole.

“Looks like a lot of work for barbecue,” I told Speedy. “Some guys just light the propane nozzle.”

Speedy and Junior stared at me. My remark lay beneath deserving a reply.

It may have been the succulent Coahuila barbecue and Lencha’s flan heavy with cream. It may have been the stunning panoply of masked guests milling about. It may have been the Western teacher, an African American woman, whom Lencha and Marcos helped to scramble onto the picnic table, reciting more poetic lines than I had ever before heard from someone’s memory. Our minds were dizzy during those days of protest after the murder of George Floyd and the woman standing on the table unfolded words to reveal what we must not forget. I especially recall one reverberating line from Langston Hughes, “My soul has grown deep like the rivers.”

I was standing in the dusk, whispering Hughes’ words, when I bumped the elbow of the man in the street next to me. “Sorry,” I said. “It’s OK,” he said, which was generous because my jostle had knocked a half-eaten taco off his plate. We both looked down at the wasted morsel smeared on the asphalt. “I was paying too close atten-

tion to the poem,” I said. “Easy enough to do. Miya could distract anyone.” “Oh, you know her?” I said. “Well, yeah,” he said, in a knowing way.

“I’m Steve. I live over there,” I pointed with my head toward my shack.

“Roman,” he responded. “Miya’s office mate at the university heard about Speedy’s barbecue. What, with my thing about food, Miya said we just had to try it out. Here we are. Trying it out. And Miya’s doing her thing while I pay attention to mine.” Roman’s eyes again looked down at the taco remains.

“Thing about food?” I remember saying. It set Roman off. If his girlfriend had a headful of protest poetry, he had lined up a regular discourse on the role of eating together as the ultimate expression of community.

When Roman paused to catch his breath, I said, “Whoa. You’re preaching to the choir, there. I spent a year at culinary school because I wanted to ...”

Roman interrupted me. “... You wanted to do what Speedy and Lencha are doing.”

“More or less,” I admitted.

Roman snorted. It was a sound that said, “Fool. More or less? MORE OR LESS?”

“You’re right. Exactly what Lencha and Speedy are doing,” I said, surveying scattered groups of diners, chatting and laughing, trying to catch falling fragments of tortilla, wiping their lips, waving a taco to prove a point or to cap a story. “And you, Roman?”

“Right now I’m just an out of work short order cook. But that don’t matter. Sooner or later, Coahuila barbecue is in my future.”

“So you’ve been talking to Speedy?”

“Oh, yeah. The man’s got a story all right. But you know, his stuff works.” Roman too fell silent and watched the crowd and Speedy at the grill, laughing and sipping a Corona as he flipped the zucchini strips a guest had brought.

“So, Steve,” Roman said, returning after a time of thought,

“what are you doing with your chef’s training?”

I told him about the supermarket and the routine work of putting out pre-cut slabs of meat. I told him about the petty jealousies and the incompetencies of the meat department team, snarling at and snitching on one another.

Hearing my list of gripes, Roman lifted his paper plate and said, “Let’s go and drown our sorrows in some more Coahuila barbecue tacos.” He waved at Miya, now off the picnic table, and I followed him to meet her. Lencha’s and Speedy’s two Nebraska grandsons were whooping nearby, apparently for no reason other than sheer joy.

It may have been the barbecue and the flan or the poems shouted into the evening or Roman’s seriousness and levity or all those things. I returned home that night, resolving to call Sylvia the next day, to say that I was sorry that I had been a self-centered jerk.


As life turned out, I let the next day and then the next slip by without acting on my resolution. Junior had returned to Nebraska. My work schedule distracted me and I failed to notice that neither Speedy nor Lencha was puttering about their yard as I walked Buck. The tarp over the picnic table flapped like a hurt gull during a brief wind storm and meticulous Speedy did not fold it for storage.

The weekend passed without a Coahuila barbecue. On Monday I was returning from work and found two ambulances parked next to the oaks. I ran to the Montoya’s front door just in time to see Speedy being wheeled down the porch steps on a gurney. Lencha, gaunt and crooked, leaned against the door frame.

The fireman with a clipboard asked me if I could take Lencha to the hospital. Of course I agreed and on the way Lencha said that she thought Speedy

LENCHA AND SPEEDY

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LENCHA AND SPEEDY

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had contracted the virus, probably from Junior. The news made the air thick, hard to breathe.

“And you?” I asked. Fear had seized me.

“I’m not well,” she admitted. At the hospital Lencha reported to the nurse that she, like Speedy, had difficulty breathing and felt a heavy, heavy fatigue. The day ended with both Montoyas in Gila Regional. I called Junior and suggested that he

might want to return.

Within a day, before his son could arrive, Speedy died. I walked Buck for a long time and could scarcely bare to look at the silent, dark little house that filled my front window. When Junior, alone, moved into his parents’ house, I sometimes visited him, to share grief and to assuage mutual anxiety. On each morning for more than a week, we believed Lencha was going to come home. Each evening brought a sobering retreat

from hope. Then crises, reported to Junior by phone from the intensive care nurse’s station, rose and fell. At the end, after days on a respirator, the vivid, sparkling Lencha died.

Sylvia sobbed when I told her the news. For the first time I heard Sylvia describe Lencha as the grandmother she never had.

“Lencha told me that you both had talked and that you said that I had given up.”

Sylvia said nothing. “Well,” I said, “I’ve been thinking you were

right. At least then. But I think you and I should have another try. Lencha thought that as well.”

We talked for hours that night. We talked for hours during the coming days. I told Sylvia of my time with Junior, of putting away his parents’ belongings and of saying aloud the memories his parents had bequeathed.

It was fall before Sylvia returned. It was fall before Junior could cut through the legal tangles of having no will, to dispose of one little house and one dint-

ed and scraped Ford 150.

One bright October Sunday, as crystalline as such days can be in Silver City, Sylvia and I rolled a dolly across the street, passing the for-sale sign, and I balanced the Mexican barbecue on the dolly with Sylvia walking beside. We lifted and rolled and dragged that steel drum to the yard behind my shack. That’s where it is today until such time as I can claim the elk steaks from Theresa and Gummy for some memorial Coahuila barbecues.

HEATHER FRANKLAND

# Desert Sage

Sitting at the red light by Albertsons in Las Cruces, NM, I have my windows rolled down like my neighbors. Everyone plays their version of good music – thinking that we can influence our surroundings, bend them to our will. This traffic light doesn’t seem to be the place for an epiphany: Women walk their children into the store, metal shopping carts rattle on the pavement, the Albertsons’ employees roast green chile outside in the last licks of sun, and one bum in ripped flannel searches the ground for pennies and still-burning cigarette butts.

Yet in front of my car, the Organ Mountains beckon – their stone changes with the sunset, it ripples into purple, pink – all warm hues until it will eventually settle back into cold stone. What happens when I no longer see this landscape? I stick my tongue to the roof of my mouth, “You live here; you are here looking at the Organ Mountain,” I say, “It is sunset; you are here now.” But five minutes later, my mind is racing into the past, the future, and the steady stream of worries, of not fulfilling obligations, of being lost without a purpose, of feeling regret, hope, and hopelessness at lightning speed intervals.

\*

As a child with confused spiri-

tuality, I would sit in the back of my babysitter and neighbor’s car, “If there is a god, if I am meant to be special, make my hand start to fist again,” I would say in my head to my outstretched hand, palm up, and then my hand (without intention) started to fist.

From this, I believed that I would do something important as an adult, that I was meant to help others, that I was meant for something beyond the room I shared with my brothers, beyond my friends who didn’t always include me, beyond my shyness that made me blush when I was around crowds and dip my voice so low that I could pretend it didn’t hurt when people spoke over me.

\*

When I arrived in this town, Las Cruces, for my graduate program visit, I came in a Grey-

hound from Albuquerque. I had flown from Chicago to Albuquerque earlier in the week to spend a couple days with my brother and his family, whom I rarely saw. My brother drove me to the station, packed a small bag of food for me (which touched me), and I waited for the bus. After a delay that felt longer than it was in that brightly-lit station, my bus pulled up, and I picked a seat close but not too close to the front.

I had planned to zero everyone out, headphones in my ears, music on repeat, to stare outside the window until feigned sleep transitioned to real sleep, but I remember talking to someone. I remember being alarmed by the complete darkness outside and worried that the bus driver wouldn’t be able to navigate, that we could end up on the side of the road – broken down. But the bus driver was obviously confident in his bus driving skills even when we passed a city called Truth or Consequences. The stars I could see outside of the window were something amazing, something worth writing home about, something worthy of a postcard. I turned on my overhead light, and despite the certainty of motion sickness, I started to write.

\*

There were stories of murdered priests, pioneer men, Na-


tive Americans. If you walked through the Organ Mountain trails without a bottle of water on a hot, summer day, you could understand the threat – how your skin could become like leather, how the desert could literally soak up the moisture in your body like it was just as

thirsty as you were and spit you out – your body as dry as a seed before it develops roots. There were messages in those strangely formed Organ Peaks, in the desert that was beautiful and fierce, in the night sky that

DESERT SAGE

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# November Deadlines

**Friday, Oct. 15 at 11AM: Space reservation, ad copy, all stories and notices for the editorial section due.**

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40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS • ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

# What's Going on in October?

Desert Exposure would like to include your special events, from any southern New Mexico community, in our listing. Please submit your event title, time, location and contact information to [editor@desertexposure.com](mailto:editor@desertexposure.com); Desert Exposure 1740-A Calle de Mercado, Las Cruces, NM 88005; or call Elva at 575-680-1978.

**FRIDAY, OCT. 1**

**Virtual Southern New Mexico "From the Ground Up" artist talk** — 4-6 p.m. in conjunction with exhibition at the Las Cruces Museum of Art. Part of National Arts and Humanities Month activities. Join some of the artists featured in the juried ceramics exhibition. Free Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83107772784>; passcode 765522. Info: 575-541-2217.

**Deming/Luna County Music Night on the Lawn** — 6-9 p.m. at Lescombes Winery, 7075 Highway 549 SE in Deming. Wine, food, craft beer and live music with Bandoer Live. Info: 575-546-1179.



"Fefu and Her Friends" at the ASNMSU Center for the Arts. (Courtesy Photo)

**Las Cruces/Mesilla Pride Movie Night "Rafiki"** — 7 p.m. at the Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Main St. in Las Cruces. [info@southernnpide.org](mailto:info@southernnpide.org).  
**"Fefu and Her Friends"** — 7:30 at the ASNMSU Center for the Arts, 1000 E. University Ave. Experimental play which brings the audience into the absurdist experience in the

second act by dividing the audience into four groups. Info: [theatre.nmsu.edu](mailto:theatre.nmsu.edu).  
**"Laughing Wild"** — 8 p.m. at the Black Box Theatre, 430 Main St. in Las Cruces. A funny study of the perils of modern life in urban America. Consists of two monologues plus a playlet bringing the two together. Info: 575-523-1223.

**SATURDAY, OCT. 2**

**Virtual Southern New Mexico The Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's** — is shifting to walk from home. Walk to End Alzheimer's will continue, but instead of hosting a large gathering, the Alzheimer's Association is inviting participants to walk from home in Las Cruces and surrounding communities. To register, get more information, and receive the latest updates on this year's SW Regional Walk to End Alzheimer's in Las Cruces, Info: [act.alz.org/walklas-cruces](http://act.alz.org/walklas-cruces) or call 575-647-3868.

**Silver City/Grant County Silver City Farmer's Market** — 9 a.m.-noon at the corner of Pope Street and College Avenue, Silver City. Info: [silvercityfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:silvercityfarmersmarket@gmail.com).  
**Silver City Maker's Market** — 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Main Street Plaza, downtown Silver City. Info: [www.thefutureforge.org/makers-market](http://www.thefutureforge.org/makers-market).

**Alamogordo/Otero County Apple Festival** — 9 a.m.-7 p.m. at Nichols Ranch, 7 miles east of La Luz, 236 Cottonwood Canyon.

Apple picking, pie, cider and a barn dance at 4 with the Justin Kemp Band. Info: [nicholsranchandorchards.com](http://nicholsranchandorchards.com).  
**Alamogordo Otero County Farmers Market** — 9:30 a.m. at the Tractor Supply Co. parking lot, 2900 N. White Sands Blvd. in Alamogordo. Info: 575-430-2081.  
**The Petty Prophets: a Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers tribute band** — 7 p.m., at the Flickinger Center for Performing Arts, 1110 N. New York Ave. Cost: \$30. Info: 575-437-2202.

**Truth or Consequences/ Sierra County Sierra County Farmer's Market** — 8:30 a.m.-noon at Ralph Edwards Park, corner of Riverside and Cedar in T or C. [colleen@sierracountyfarmersmarket.org](mailto:colleen@sierracountyfarmersmarket.org).  
**Trinity Site open house** — 8 a.m.-2 p.m. entering at the Stallion Gate to White Sands Missile Range. Info: 575-678-2121.  
**Old Time Fiddlers Dance** — 7-9 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Live music, toe-tapping and refreshments. Info: 575-744-9137.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla Farmers Arts and Crafts Market** — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.  
**Pumpkin Palooza** — 4-7 p.m. at the Frank O'Brien Papen Community Center and Park, 304 W. Bell Ave. Las Cruces. An evening of arts and crafts, music and games with a costume contest for pets and

children between 5 and 6:30 p.m. Info: 575-541-2454.  
**2021 Pride Celebration** — 5 p.m. at Plaza de Las Cruces. Parade begins at 4:30. Info: [info@southernnpide.org](mailto:info@southernnpide.org).  
**"Fefu and Her Friends"** — 7:30 at the ASNMSU Center for the Arts, 1000 E. University Ave. Experimental play which brings the audience into the absurdist experience in the second act by dividing the audience into four groups. Info: [theatre.nmsu.edu](mailto:theatre.nmsu.edu).  
**"Laughing Wild"** — 8 p.m. at the Black Box Theatre, 430 Main St. in Las Cruces. A funny study of the perils of modern life in urban America. Consists of two monologues plus a playlet bringing the two together. Info: 575-523-1223.

**Ruidoso/Lincoln County Sandy Hackett's Rat Pack Show** — 7 p.m. at the Spencer Theater for the Performing Arts, 108 Spencer Road, Alto. Big band musical and theatrical tribute to Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., and Joey Bishop. Info: [www.spencertheater.com](http://www.spencertheater.com).

**SUNDAY, OCT. 3**

**Alamogordo/Otero County Apple Festival** — 9 a.m.-7 p.m. at Nichols Ranch, 7 miles east of La Luz, 236 Cottonwood Canyon. Apple picking, pie, cider and vendors. Info: [nicholsranchandorchards.com](http://nicholsranchandorchards.com).

40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS  
continued on page 22



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The Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's is inviting participants to walk from home in Las Cruces and surrounding communities. (Courtesy Photo)



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Upcoming  
Events



# October Events

1



BARACUTANGA

8 PM

1



FUSEBOX

10 PM

2

NOCHE DE GALA

OCTOBER 2, 2021



NEW MEXICO ADVOCATES FOR THE ARTS

6 PM

8



We B fore

8 PM

9



THE FEEL

8 PM

15

CALISTA

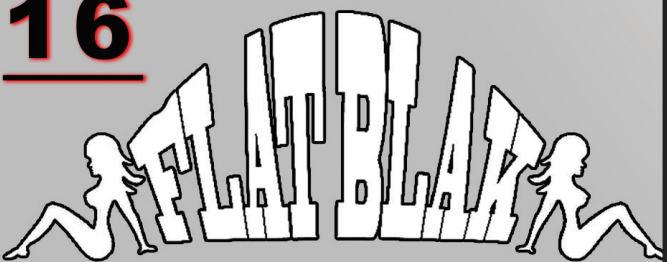


BAND



8 PM

16



FLAT BLAZ

8 PM

17



COCKTAIL CLASSIC

STATEWIDE COMPETITION & CONVENTION

12 PM

22



Sweet Nadine

8 PM

23



Dusty Low

8 PM

29



YUNG BLEU

T-RELL • KIRKO BANGZ

KRYSTALL POPPIN

6 PM

30

Halloween Bash



TRIBUTE



8 PM

40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS  
continued from page 21

**Las Cruces/Dña Ana County**  
“Fefu and Her Friends” — 2 p.m. at the ASNMSU Center for the Arts, 1000 E. University Ave. Experimental play which brings the audience into the absurdist experience in the second act by dividing the audience into four groups. Info: theatre.nmsu.edu.  
“Crawl,” film premiere — 4:45 p.m. at the Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe. “Crawl,” a shour horror film is the first movies of Las Cruces filmmaker Ryan Rox. The film is followed by a meet and greet with Rox and the cast. Info: ryanroxbooking@yahoo.com.

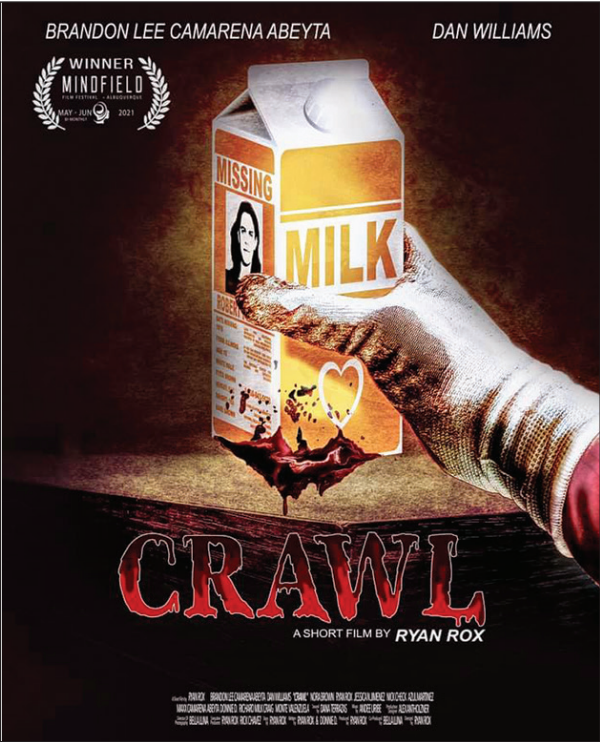
**WEDNESDAY, OCT. 6**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
Lunch and Learn – State of the Town: Why Strong Local Government is Important — noon-1 p.m. At the WNMU Global Resource Center, ABC Room, corner of 12th and Kentucky streets. Silver City manager Alex Brown explains how the city provides residents and visitors with an incredible array of services and amenities. Info: will.community-ty/#/lunchlearn.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
Farmers and Crafts Market — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.

**THURSDAY, OCT. 7**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
Le Vent Du Nord: Quebecois Franco-phone folk — 7-9 p.m. at the Fine Arts Center Theatre at Western New Mexico University. Leading force in Quebec’s progressive francophone folk movement. Info: 575-538-6273.

**Alamogordo/Otero County**  
Flowering Desert Garden Club meeting — 6 p.m. meeting location varies. Info: floweringdesertgardenclub@gmail.com.

**Truth or Consequences/ Sierra County**  
Sierra County Fair — 8 a.m.-7 p.m. at the Sierra County Fairgrounds on South Broadway in Truth or Consequences. Info: sierracountynewmexico.info.



“Crawl,” film premiere at 4:45 p.m. at the Fountain Theatre in Mesilla, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe on Sunday Oct. 3.

**Sierra County Twirlers** — 3-6 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Live music, toe-tapping mainstream dancing and refreshments. Info: 575-313-9971 or 505-804-3842.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
Thursday Night Music on the Plaza — 8 p.m. at Plaza de Las Cruces, 100 N. Main St. in Las Cruces. Cadillac Kings & Fast Lanes and the Starliners. Info: 575-541-2550.

**FRIDAY, OCT. 8**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
Gila Wild & Scenic Rivers of Opportunity Conference — 8 a.m.-7:30 p.m. in the gardens at Western New Mexico University next to Light Hall Theater. Register: wildgilariver.org. Info: nathan@nmwild.org.  
Southwest Print Fiesta — 4-8 p.m. at various locations in Silver City. Info: www.southwestprintfiesta.org.

**Truth or Consequences/ Sierra County**  
Sierra County Fair — 8 a.m.-7 p.m. at the Sierra County Fairgrounds on South Broadway in Truth or Consequences. Info: sierracountynewmexico.info.

**Ruidoso/Lincoln County**  
Chevel Shepherd in concert — 7

p.m. at the Spencer Theater for the Performing Arts, 108 Spencer Road, Alto. A recent winner of “The Voice,” the 19-year-old powerhouse and New Mexico native, sings country classics and new works with her band. Info: www.spencertheater.com.

**SATURDAY, OCT. 9**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
Gila Wild & Scenic Rivers of Opportunity Conference — 8 a.m.-7:30 p.m. in the gardens at Western New Mexico University next to Light Hall Theater. Register: wildgilariver.org. Info: nathan@nmwild.org.  
Silver City Farmer’s Market — 9 a.m.-noon at the corner of Pope Street and College Avenue, Silver City. Info: silvercityfarmersmarket@gmail.com.  
Silver City Maker’s Market — 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Main Street Plaza, downtown Silver City. Info: www.thefutureforge.org/makers-market.  
Southwest Print Fiesta — 10 a.m.-8 p.m. at various locations in Silver City. Info: www.southwestprintfiesta.org.  
Red Dot Weekend at the Galleries — 11 a.m.-7 p.m. at various locations in Silver City. Info: www.silvercityart.com.

**Alamogordo/Otero County**  
Alamogordo Otero County Farmers

**Market** — 9:30 a.m. at the Tractor Supply Co. parking lot, 2900 N. White Sands Blvd. in Alamogordo. Info: 575-430-2081.

**Truth or Consequences/ Sierra County**  
Sierra County Fair — 8 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Sierra County Fairgrounds on South Broadway in Truth or Consequences. Info: sierracountynewmexico.info.  
Old Time Fiddlers Dance — 7-9 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Live music, toe-tapping and refreshments. Info: 575-744-9137.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
Farmers and Crafts Market — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.  
Med-Illusions and Magic of Raze MD — 4 p.m. at the Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Main St. Las Cruces. Info: razestudioillusions.com.  
Indigenous People’s Day with flute music and storytelling — 7 p.m. at the Dña Ana Arts Council Arts and Cultural Center, 250 W. Amador Ave. in Las Cruces. Las Cruces musician and storyteller Randy Granger provides the music and stories, playing flutes from all over the world. Info: 575-523-6403.

**SUNDAY, OCT. 10**  
Southwest Print Fiesta — 4-8 p.m. at various locations in Silver City. Info: www.southwestprintfiesta.org.

**Red Dot Weekend at the Galleries** — 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at various locations in Silver City. Info: www.silvercityart.com.

**Truth or Consequences/ Sierra County**  
Sierra County Fair — 9 a.m.-noon at the Sierra County Fairgrounds on South Broadway in Truth or Consequences. Info: sierracountynewmexico.info.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
“New Roses on Textured Gesso Juice” New Mexico Watercolor Society — 2-4 p.m. at the Creative Arts Room at the Good Samaritan Society, 3011 Buena Vista Circle, Las Cruces. Teacher and watercolorist Woody Duncan visits from Albuquerque to demonstrate new techniques using “gesso juice.” Info: nmwatercolor-society.org.

**MONDAY, OCT. 11**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
Southwest Print Fiesta — 4-6 p.m. at various locations in Silver City. Info: www.southwestprintfiesta.org.  
Widowed and Single Persons of Grant County: “A trip to Mexico” — 10:30 a.m. at Cross Point Church, 11500 U.S. Highway 180 E. The speaker is Charlie Manger talking about his trip to Mexico. Lunch: \$12. Info: 575-537-3643.

40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS  
continued on page 23



Le Vent Du Nord: Quebecois Francophone perform folk music, 7-9 p.m. at the Fine Arts Center Theatre at Western New Mexico University on Thursday, Oct. 7.



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Silver City, NM

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40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS  
continued from page 22

**TUESDAY, OCT. 12**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
**Taylor Red Concert** — 7-9 p.m. at the Fine Arts Center Theatre at Western New Mexico University. Triplet sisters play fresh, fun country music. Info: 575-538-5862.

**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Chile Challenge 4WD event** — Bring your 4WD to Caballo Lake State Park to camp and ride the trails. Info:chilechallenge.org.

**WEDNESDAY, OCT. 13**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
**Lunch and Learn – The Women In Arts Series** — noon-1 p.m. At the WNMU Global Resource Center, ABC Room, corner of 12th and Kentucky streets. Faye McCalmont with the WNMU Office of /cultural Affairs and Artist Dian Marsh are the presenters. Info: will.community/#/lunchlearn.

**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Chile Challenge 4WD event** — Bring your 4WD to Caballo Lake State Park to camp and ride the trails. Info:chilechallenge.org.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Farmers and Crafts Market** — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.

**THURSDAY, OCT. 14**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
**Milner Women in the Arts Lecture and Exhibit** — 6:30 p.m., lecture in Parrott Hall; 7:30 p.m. exhibit opening, McCray Gallery. The paintings of Diane March have evolved over 40 years to portray universal issues which are both deeply personal and profoundly human. Info: 575-538-6273.

**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Chile Challenge 4WD event** — Bring your 4WD to Caballo Lake State Park to camp and ride the trails. Info:chilechallenge.org.  
**Sierra County Twirlers** — 3-6 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C.



Empty Bowls , 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Las Cruces on Friday, Oct. 15. (Courtesy Photo)

Live music, toe-tapping mainstream dancing and refreshments. Info: 575-313-9971 or 505-804-3842.

**FRIDAY, OCT. 15**  
**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Chile Challenge 4WD event** — Bring your 4WD to Caballo Lake State Park to camp and ride the trails. Info:chilechallenge.org.  
**Elephant Days** — 10 a.m.-10 p.m. at the Elephant Butte Event Grounds, 202 Warm Springs Boulevard at Elephant Butte. Parade, bands, beer garden, vendors and the Elephant Butte Chile Cookoff. Info: 575-744-4892.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Empty Bowls** — 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 225 W. Griggs Ave. This event is a fundraiser for El Caldito Soup Kitchen and includes the purchase of bowls created by the Potter's Guild of Las Cruces and soup from 30 area restaurants and an online silent auction. Info: 575-525-3831.

**SATURDAY, OCT. 16**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
**Silver City Farmer's Market** — 9 a.m.-noon at the corner of Pope Street and College Avenue, Silver City. Info: silvercityfarmersmarket@gmail.com.  
**Silver City Maker's Market** — 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Main Street Plaza, downtown Silver City. Info: www.thefutureforge.org/makers-market.

**Alamogordo/Otero County**  
**Alamogordo Otero County Farmers Market** — 9:30 a.m. at the Tractor Supply Co. parking lot, 2900 N. White Sands Blvd. in Alamogordo. Info: 575-430-2081.  
**Tularosa Wine & Art Festival** — noon-9 p.m. At 800 3rd St. in Tularosa. Info: tularosawinefestival.com.

**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Chile Challenge 4WD event** — Bring your 4WD to Caballo Lake State Park to camp and ride the trails. Info:chilechallenge.org.  
**Sierra County Farmer's Market** — 8:30 a.m.-noon at Ralph Edwards Park, corner of Riverside and Cedar in T or C. Info: colleen@sierracountyfarmersmarket.org.  
**Elephant Days** — 10 a.m.-10 p.m. at the Elephant Butte Event Grounds, 202 Warm Springs Boulevard at Elephant Butte. Parade, bands, beer garden, vendors and the Elephant Butte Chile Cookoff. Info: 575-744-4892.  
**Old Time Fiddlers Dance** — 7-9 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Live music, toe-tapping and refreshments. Info: 575-744-9137.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Farmers and Crafts Market** — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.  
**Pachanga** — 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at Klein Park in Las Cruces. Fire Historic Mesquite District celebration

includes raising of colors; blessing; tribute to the Whole Enchilada Fiesta; car & bike show; pinup girl, zuit suit, Pachucko & Pachuca contest; ballet folklorico dancers, carriage rides, beer garden and much more. Info: allaccessevent-mail@gmail.com.  
**Painting on Silk workshop with Judy**

**Licht** — 2-4 p.m. Pre-register at the Las Cruces Museum of Nature & Science. Part of National Arts and Humanities Month. This program is for ages 12 and up. Supplies will be provided. Info: 575-541-2217.

40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS  
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40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS

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**Ruidoso/Lincoln County**  
**The Brothers Four** — 7 p.m. at the Spencer Theater for the Performing Arts, 108 Spencer Road, Alto. Distinguished pioneers in the folk music revival with classics. Info: www.spencertheater.com.

**SUNDAY, OCT. 17**  
**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Elephant Days** — 10 a.m.-10 p.m. at the Elephant Butte Event Grounds, 202 Warm Springs Boulevard at Elephant Butte. Parade, bands, beer garden, vendors and the Elephant Butte Chile Cookoff. Info: 575-744-4892.

**Alamogordo/Otero County**  
**Tularosa Wine & Art Festival** — noon-6 p.m. At 800 3rd St. in Tularosa. Info: tularosawinefestival.com.

**TUESDAY, OCT. 19**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
**\*Rotary speaker: Kelly Rodriguez, chief nursing officer at GRMC** — noon-1 p.m. in the Sunset Room of the Western New Mexico University Student Cafeteria. Guests are welcome, lunch is \$10. Marshall is Silver City Fire Department Deputy chief of Fire Prevention. Info: 915-480-4347 or 575-388-2004.

**WEDNESDAY, OCT. 20**  
**Virtual Southern New Mexico**  
**“Climate Anxiety, Grief and Hope: Moving from Angst to Action,”** — 7 p.m. a virtual talk by Jennifer Atkinson of the University of Washington, Bothell presented by the NMSU

Climate Change Education series. For information and to register: sustainability.nmsu.edu/nmsuccess.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Farmers and Crafts Market** — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.

**THURSDAY, OCT. 21**  
**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Sierra County Twirlers** — 3-6 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Live music, toe-tapping mainstream dancing and refreshments. Info: 575-313-9971 or 505-804-3842.

**FRIDAY, OCT. 22**  
**Virtual Southern New Mexico**  
**Talk with a Curator “featuring John Farley of the Huntington Museum of Art** — 1:30 p.m. Part of National Arts and Humanities Month activities. Join Farley, senior curator and exhibition designer at this West Virginia museum. Farley will provide insights about the Near Eastern Collection, a portion of which is featured in the traveling collection displayed at the Las Cruces Museum of Art starting Oct. 29. Info: 575-541-2217.

**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**TorC Film Festival** — 12:30 at El Cortez Theater, 415 Main Ave. TorC. Info: www.facebook.com/FilmTorC/.

**Deming/Luna County**  
**Music Night on the Lawn** — 6-9 p.m. at Lescombes Winery, 7075 Highway 549 SE in Deming. Wine, food,



Terrance Simien and the Zydeco Experience perform at 7-9 p.m. at the Fine Arts Center Theatre at Western New Mexico University on Saturday, Oct. 23. (Courtesy Photo)

craft beer and live music with Bandoleer Live. Info: 575-546-1179.

**Alamogordo/Otero County**  
**Fourth Friday at the Zoo** — 6-10 p.m. at the Alameda Park Zoo, 1021 N. White Sands Blvd. Live music, food and craft vendors, family activities and more. Info: jsides@ci.alamogordo.nm.us.

**SATURDAY, OCT. 23**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
**Silver City Farmer's Market** — 9 a.m.-noon at the corner of Pope Street and College Avenue, Silver City. Info: silvercityfarmersmarket@gmail.com.  
**Silver City Maker's Market** — 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Main Street Plaza, downtown Silver City. Info: www.thefutureforge.org/makers-market.  
**Wood-burning Make and Take** — 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Main Street Plaza, downtown Silver City at the Makers Market. Info: gcag.org.  
**Lunch and Learn – The Fort Bayard National Historic Landmark** — 11 a.m. to noon at the Fort Bayard Theater. When entering the grounds, stay to the right at the fork. The theater sits to the east side of the parade ground. The session will explain what HistoriCorps is and what it dose and how people in rant County can take advantage of what it has to offer. Info: will.community/#/lunchlearn.  
**Terrance Simien and the Zydeco Experience** — 7-9 p.m. at the Fine Arts Center Theatre at Western New Mexico University. Grammy award winning artist and 8th generation Louisiana Creole who has been shattering myths about what his indigenous Zydeco roots music is and is not. Info: 575-538-6273.

**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Sierra County Farmer's Market** — 8:30 a.m.-noon at Ralph Edwards Park, corner of Riverside and Cedar in T or C. Info: colleen@sierracountyfarmersmarket.org.  
**TorC Film Festival** — 12:30 at El Cortez Theater, 415 Main Ave. TorC. Info: www.facebook.com/FilmTorC/.  
**Old Time Fiddlers Dance** — 7-9 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Live music, toe-tapping and refreshments. Info: 575-744-9137.

**Alamogordo/Otero County**  
**Pumpkin Patch at Nichols Ranch** — Nichols Ranch and Orchards, 7 miles east of La Luz, 236 Cottonwood Canyon. Info: nicholsranchorchards.com.  
**Family Day at the Pumpkin Patch** — 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Grace United Methodist Church, 1206 Greenwood

Lane, Alamogordo. Info: 575-437-7640.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Farmers Arts and Crafts Market** — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.

**SUNDAY, OCT. 24**  
**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**TorC Film Festival** — 12:30 at El Cortez Theater, 415 Main Ave. TorC. Info: www.facebook.com/FilmTorC/.

**Alamogordo/Otero County**  
**Pumpkin Patch at Nichols Ranch** — Nichols Ranch and Orchards, 7 miles east of La Luz, 236 Cottonwood Canyon. Info: nicholsranchorchards.com.

**WEDNESDAY, OCT. 27**  
**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Farmers and Crafts Market** — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.

**THURSDAY, OCT. 28**  
**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Sierra County Twirlers** — 3-6 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Live music, toe-tapping mainstream dancing and refreshments. Info: 575-313-9971 or 505-804-3842.

**FRIDAY, OCT. 29**  
**Deming/Luna County**  
**Music Night on the Lawn** — 6-9 p.m. at Lescombes Winery, 7075 Highway 549 SE in Deming. Wine, food, craft beer and live music with Bandoleer Live. Info: 575-546-1179.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Weaving for Justice textile sale** — 11 a.m.-5 p.m. in the NMSU museum courtyard, Kent Hall, 1280 University Ave. all proceeds to the Maya Educational Foundation. Info: www.mayaedufound.org.

**SATURDAY, OCT. 30**  
**Silver City/Grant County**  
**Silver City Farmer's Market** — 9 a.m.-noon at the corner of Pope Street and College Avenue, Silver City. Info: silvercityfarmersmarket@gmail.com.  
**Silver City Maker's Market** — 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Main Street Plaza, downtown Silver City. Info: www.thefutureforge.org/makers-market.

**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Sierra County Farmer's Market** — 8:30 a.m.-noon at Ralph Edwards Park,

corner of Riverside and Cedar in T or C. Info: colleen@sierracountyfarmersmarket.org.  
**Old Time Fiddlers Dance** — 7-9 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Live music, toe-tapping and refreshments. Info: 575-744-9137.

**Alamogordo/Otero County**  
**Pumpkin Patch at Nichols Ranch** — Nichols Ranch and Orchards, 7 miles east of La Luz, 236 Cottonwood Canyon. Info: nicholsranchorchards.com.  
**Zoo Boo** — 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Alameda Park Zoo, 1021 N. White Sands Blvd Trick or treating, games and a costume contest.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Farmers Arts and Crafts Market** — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.  
**Weaving for Justice textile sale** — 11 a.m.-5 p.m. in the NMSU museum courtyard, Kent Hall, 1280 University Ave. all proceeds to the Maya Educational Foundation. Info: www.mayaedufound.org.

**SUNDAY, OCT. 31**  
**Alamogordo/Otero County**  
**Pumpkin Patch at Nichols Ranch** — Nichols Ranch and Orchards, 7 miles east of La Luz, 236 Cottonwood Canyon. Info: nicholsranchorchards.com.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**\*Sunday Night Music in the Park** — 7 p.m. at Young Park, 1905 E. Nevada Ave. Sam's Town and Calista. Info: 575-541-2550.

**MONDAY, NOV. 1**  
**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Annual NMSU Jewelry Sale** — 7 a.m.-7p.m. in the coffee shop in the NMSU Book Store, 1400 E. University Ave. This is a fundraiser to support workshops and activities for the students. Info: motoko@nmsu.edu.if.

**WEDNESDAY, NOV. 3**  
**Truth or Consequences/**  
**Sierra County**  
**Sierra County Twirlers** — 1:30-3:30 p.m. (beginners come at 1) at the New Mexico Old Time fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Live music, toe-tapping mainstream dancing and refreshments. Info: 575-313-9971 or 505-804-3842.

**Las Cruces/Mesilla**  
**Farmers and Crafts Market** — 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Plaza of Las Cruces and along Main Street. Info: 575-805-6055.

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# More Than Just a Field of Corn

## Every open day is a celebration at the Mesilla Valley Maze

A long-time family favorite, the Mesilla Valley Maze offers hayrides, giant slides, a bountiful pumpkin patch, and a traditional corn maze. The Mesilla Valley Maze is open to the public from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. every weekend through Oct. 31 at 3855 West Picacho in Las Cruces.

The Lyles Family created the maze years ago to provide a traditional family experience to the area, and to also show children how important agriculture is to their lives. The maze has slowly grown over the years to become an annual tradition for area children, teachers, and parents. Activities there include not only the maze but also giant slides, hayride to the pumpkin patch, mini pedal carts, playground, photo areas, ring games and live music.

“Agriculture-based education has been an important part of the operation ever since I started it,” said Anna Lyles. “Farming is our family tradition, and it’s something that every generation should understand and enjoy.”

Anna and her husband Steve manage the family’s 2,000-acre farming operation, which includes the 45-acre Mesilla Valley Maze.

Adult admission is \$15, children under 12 are \$12, and two and under are free. \$2 military discount with ID. Visit [www.mesillavalleymaze.com](http://www.mesillavalleymaze.com) or call 575-536-1919 for more information.



Katie's Country Store offers keepsakes, local goods and refreshments for those visiting the Mesilla Valley Maze during October. (Photo by Elva K. Österreich)

### ON THE SHELF

## ‘Being Home, Too’

Award-winning author’s latest book uses humor to look at Mimbres Valley

Award-winning Grant County author Catalina Claussen has a new book, “Being Home, Too.”

The book was released on Aug. 31, through Progressive Rising Phoenix Press.

It is a collection of humorous made-for-radio stories and is a much anticipated sequel to her debut short story collection “Being Home: A Southwestern Almanac (2020).”

Claussen’s stories are featured at 4:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month on KURU 89.1 FM.

“Painting a panorama of high desert living with zany characters riding out the seasons in the Mimbres Valley, Claussen captures everything from Jimmy Dean’s January polar plunge to Ratticus Finch’s Christmas hoard,” a news release stated.

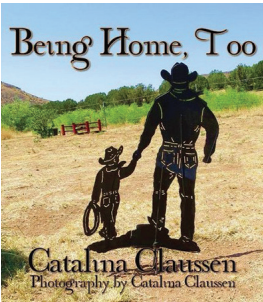
The collection is illustrated with a photographic series inspired by Claussen’s daughter, Ajalaa. In keeping with the previous book, the photos are “designed to capture the essence of each story, placing the reader in the moment and creating space for the viewer to imagine themselves as one of the characters,” according to the news release.

Claussen is a Southwestern storyteller, young adult novelist and poet whose works include young adult novels “Diamonds at Dusk (2016),” “Diamonds at Dawn (2018)” and “Holding on to Hope (2020).”

Born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and now a longtime resident of the Mimbres Valley, Claussen has gained an appreciation for the slow pace of small-

town living. Her work has been recognized by the New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards, Wish-ing Shelf Book Awards in the United Kingdom and the New Apple Book Awards for Independent Publishing.

The Being Home podcast is available at [catalinaclaussen-books.wordpress.com](http://catalinaclaussen-books.wordpress.com). Follow Catalina on Instagram @catalinaclaussen or on Facebook. Claussen’s work is available from Progressive Rising Phoenix Press: [www.progressiverisingphoenixpress.com](http://www.progressiverisingphoenixpress.com).



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BOOK REVIEW • A.T. COLE

# 'Nature's Best Hope'

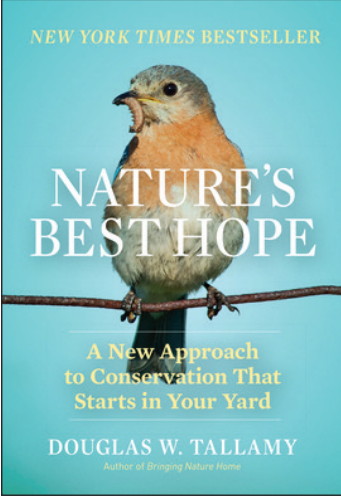
Book offers grassroot effort to stem climate change

The wildfires, droughts, floods, extreme heat, landslides, disease, ocean acidification and other catastrophic consequences of unprecedented climate destruction seen this summer has eliminated all but the severely oblivious doubters that the climate crisis has arrived. As each of us come to grips with our slice of responsibility for this global catastrophe, we are asking ourselves: "What can I do?" The current mantra is: Drive less, fly rarely, consume less meat and dairy and abandon our overly consumptive and convenient lifestyle.

Professor Douglas W. Tallamy of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife at the University of Delaware has another easily adoptable solution everyone, everywhere on any size land

can pursue – restoration. His latest book is called "Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard."

The climate crisis can be thought of more accurately as a trifecta of crises: overheated climate, species extinction and soil loss and depletion. Tallamy lives on a continent where 95 percent of his country has been logged, tilled, drained, grazed, paved or otherwise developed. The loss of species is estimated by experts to be between 1,000 and 10,000 times higher than the background or expected, natural extinction rate. World wildlife populations have plunged 68 percent since 1970. The extinction of plants is also accelerating at a startling pace. Finally, soil loss and depletion leaves



the planet with a mere 60 years of agricultural function.

His prescription: shrink or eliminate your lawn and plant native vegetation. He points out that plants and animals co-evolved – with animals adapting to the plants they evolved with

and that our focus on decorative value, prestige and cultural uniformity has led us to live in communities with large and many lawns, but without animals.

He and his granddaughter inventoried the gorgeous plant life in one of the nation's greenest cities, Portland, Oregon, to find out that "the city is a great example of how to create an attractive city with very few breeding birds, butterflies, bees or other desirable wildlife."

Of 1,176 trees, only 100 of them were indigenous to the Pacific Northwest. A full 91.5 percent of those trees were introduced from other continents or ecoregions. When it's time for birds and other animals to reproduce, the plants available in Portland simply do not make enough insect food to raise their young successfully.

Tallamy also points out an aspect of nature that he says "has been too ambiguous for the public and even many scientists to appreciate." Health of a habitat is not best understood by the type or number of species present. Rather, it's the way species interact with one another that forms the glue holding nature together. The most insidious form of extinction is not the loss of individual species, but the extinction of ecological interactions, meaning "interaction diversity" is a better predictor of ecosystem function. Introduced plants reduce both species and interaction diversity.

Insects are the animals that are best at transferring energy from plants to other animals and, in Tallamy's thinking, plants

"enable animals to eat sunlight." Depending on the species and sex, birds make anywhere from 241 to 4,260 trips a day to feed their young (bobolinks 840, sapsuckers 4260, downy woodpeckers 4,095 and hairy woodpeckers 2,325 times). Birds need insects; insects need plants. The plants we have in our yards make or break bird production. His random samplings of typical neighborhoods found that 92 percent of "plantable" area is lawn and of the 8 percent of non-lawn, 79 percent on average was introduced from other continents. Lawns dominate landscape most everywhere; turfgrass has replaced diverse native plant communities of landscaped private property. Lawns accomplish very little. They capture scant amounts of carbon, provide little nutrition and use 30 percent of water used in the East during the summer and up to and 60 percent in the West.

This review merely scratches the surface. There's a good deal more in this important, highly informative read. With these three crises bearing down on the globe, we know we must do our part at countering the trifecta of crises. We each must do much more. His bottom line? "Wherever and whenever we can, we must reassemble the co-evolved relationship between plants and animals and among animals that enable ecosystems to produce the life support systems we all need."

Thank you to a friend who game me this book.

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## Walking Past



The pedestrian bridge across the Tularosa River in the Gila National Forest was moved downstream in August due to flooding in July. The Walk in the Past Trail #616 is open, and the ranger district recommends all hikers proceed with caution when crossing the river. (Courtesy Photo)

WRITING WORKSHOP

# Mystery Author Teaching

Steven F. Havill has penned 32 novels

Area writers will have the chance to challenge their writing skills in a day-long writers' workshop on Oct. 20, hosted at the historic Bear Mountain Lodge in Silver City, and organized by Steven F. Havill, long-time published author and teacher.

Havill is the author of Posadas County Mystery series, with the latest title, "No Accident," slated for a March, 2022 release from Sourcebooks' Poisoned Pen division.

The workshop, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., includes lunch provided by Bear Mountain Lodge. With enrollment limited to 20, participants may reserve their spot by contacting Bear Mountain Lodge at 575-538-2538, or info@bearmountainlodge.com.

"We'll be working with some of the writing challenges that give both veteran and beginning writers the most difficulty," Havill said. "How to pace a story, how to develop characters who step off the page as real people, how to write believable action scenes, even basics such as judging the overall worth of a story."

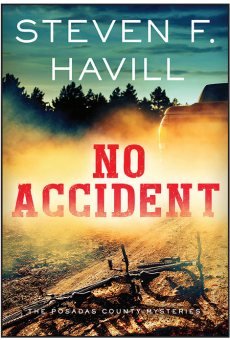
Havill said that participants should attend the workshop ready to write. "Active participation is a must," he said.

Release of "No Accident" marks the 32nd novel for New Mexico novelist Havill – and the 25th in that popular series. The author of four western novels, 26 contemporary mystery novels set in fictitious Posadas County, New Mexico, and two historical-medical novels set in the Puget Sound area during the 1890's, Steven F. Havill has been writing since 1981.

For 25 years he taught secondary school in Grants and Ruidoso, New Mexico, as well as various writing courses at NMSU and UNM branch colleges, and journalism at Trinidad State Junior College. He turned from high school teaching in 2000 to devote full-time to writing. Teaching provided valuable research into human nature, he said.

"That's 25 years of meeting and dealing with interesting characters," Havill said. "There's no better research than that for a fiction writer."

One of Havill's other hobbies has been the history of medicine, and a long-term writing project, the mainstream historical/medical novel "Race for the



Dying," was released by St. Martin's Press in 2009. The protagonist, young Dr. Thomas Parks, finds himself caught up in a medical scam that was so popular and successful that its roots continue to thrive today. The sequel to that novel, "Comes a Time for Burning," was also released in January, 2011.

"The workshop will touch on how to do research that is truly useful for the story," Havill said. "I like to call research the 'writer's tarpit.' It's too easy to become stuck in research, never getting around to actually writing the story."

Havill has been named a Guest of Honor for the LeftCoast-Crime 2011 convention, hosted in March 2011 in Santa Fe, and has been a regular presenter and faculty member of the Hillerman Writing Conferences. He has also presented at Silver City's Festival of the Written Word.


He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of New Mexico, where he met his wife of 52 years, Kathleen Murphey Havill.

In addition to teaching and

writing, Havill has spent a number of years in the newspaper business as reporter, photographer, and editor, working at newspapers in both New Mexico and New York. In addition, for more than 15 years, he worked as an editorial associate with several Writer's Digest correspondence writing workshops.

In the fall of 2003, he returned to school as a full-time student, enrolling in Trinidad State Junior College's gunsmithing program in Trinidad, Colorado. He

received an associate's degree in gunsmithing in 2006. Havill and his wife now live near Datil. He can be reached at stevenhavill5@gmail.com.



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# Med-Illusions

Raze MD of Raze Studio Illusions & Magic is bringing a full magic show twice in the same day to Las Cruces at 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9 at the Rio Grande Theatre downtown. The show encompasses everything from card tricks to sawing nurses in half, making them disappear and subjecting himself to dangerous escapes. Visit rayestudioillusions.com for more information.



(Photos by Elva K. Österreich)



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Red or Green? is Desert Exposure's guide to dining in southwest New Mexico. We are in the process of updating and modifying these listings. We are asking restaurants to pay a small fee for listing their information. Restaurant advertisers already on contract with Desert Exposure receive a free listing. For other establishments, listings with essential information will be \$36 a year and expanded listings, up to 10 lines, will be \$48 a year. To buy a listing in Red or Green?,

contact Pam Rossi at pam@lascrucesbulletin.com or 575-635-6614. We emphasize non-national-chain restaurants with sit-down, table service. With each listing, we include a brief categorization of the type of cuisine plus what meals are served: B=Breakfast; L=Lunch; D=Dinner. Unless otherwise noted, restaurants are open seven days a week. Call for exact hours, which change frequently. All phone numbers are area code 575 except

as specified. Though every effort has been made to make these listings complete and up to date, errors and omissions are inevitable and restaurants may make changes after this issue goes to press. That's why we urge you to help us make Red or Green? even better. Drop a note to Red or Green? c/o Desert Exposure, 1740-A Calle de Mercado, Las Cruces, NM 88005, or email editor@desertexposure.com. Bon appétit!



Update of open restaurants and services being offered.  
\* = Open; C/S = Curb Side; DEL = Delivery; D/T = Drive Through;  
P = Patio; T/O = Take Out

**GRANT COUNTY**  
**Silver City**  
**ADOBE SPRINGS CAFÉ**, 619 N. Bullard St., 538-3665. Breakfast items, burgers, sandwiches: Sunday B L, all week B L D.  
**BIRDWELL'S VINTAGE VIBES**, 808 N. Bullard St. 956-6467.  
**CACTUS JACK'S**, 1307 N. Pope St. 538-5042. Gluten-free, healthy groceries, grill fast foods and beverages. Monday to Friday B L D, Saturday and Sunday L.  
**CAFÉ OSO AZUL AT BEAR MOUNTAIN LODGE**, 60 Bear Mountain Ranch Road, 538-2538. B L, special D by reservation only.  
**CHINESE PALACE**, 1010 Highway 180E, 538-9300. Chinese: Monday to Friday L D.  
**CORNER KITCHEN**, 300 S Bullard St., 590-2603.  
**COURTYARD CAFÉ**, 1313 E 32nd St., Gila Regional Medical Center, 538-4094. American: B L.  
**DIANE'S BAKERY & DELI**, The Hub, Suite A, 601 N. Bullard St., 534-9229. Artisan breads, pastries, sandwiches, deli: Monday to Saturday B L early D, Sunday L.  
**DON JUAN'S BURRITOS**, 418 Silver Heights Blvd., 538-5440. Mexican: B L.  
**EINSTEIN BROS BAGELS**, 1000 W. College Ave., 538-6555.  
**DRIFTER PANCAKE HOUSE**, 711 Silver Heights Blvd., 538-2916. Breakfast, American: B L, breakfast served throughout.  
**FORREST'S PIZZA**. 601 N. Bullard

St., Unit J. 388-1225. Tuesday to Friday L D, slices until 7 p.m.  
**FRY HOUSE**, 601 N. Bullard St. Suite C. 388-1964. Seven days L, Sunday L, D.  
**GIL-A BEANS COFFEE SHOP**, 1304 N. Bennett St., 538-2239. Monday to Saturday 8 a.m.-noon.  
**GOLDEN STAR**, 1602 Silver Heights Blvd., 388-2323. Chinese: L D  
**GRINDER MILL**, 403 W. Colege Ave., 538-3366. Mexican: B L D.  
**JALISCO CAFÉ**, 103 S. Bullard St., 388-2060. Mexican. Monday to Saturday L D Sunday B.  
**JAVALINA COFFEE HOUSE**, 117 Market St., 388-1350. Coffeehouse.  
**KOUNTRY KITCHEN**, 1700 Mountain View Road, 388-4512. Mexican: Tuesday to Saturday B L D.  
**LA COCINA RESTAURANT**, 201 W. College Ave., 388-8687. Mexican: L D.  
**LA FAMILIA MEXICAN RESTAURANT**, 503 N. Hudson St., 388-4600. Mexican: Tuesday to Sunday B L D.  
**LA MEXICANA RESTAURANT**, 1105 Tom Foy Blvd., 534-0142. Mexican and American: B L.  
**LITTLE TOAD CREEK BREWERY & DISTILLERY**, 200 N. Bullard St., 956-6144. Burgers, wings, salads, fish, pasta, craft beers and cocktails: Monday to Sunday L D.  
**MI CASITA**, 2340 Bosworth Drive, 538-5533. New Mexican cuisine: Monday to Thursday L, Friday L D.  
**MINT CHIP CREAMERY**, 2340 601 N. Bullard St. in the Hub 575-597-8272.

**PRETTY SWEET EMPORIUM**, 312 N. Bullard St., 322-2422. Dessert, ice cream: Monday to Saturday.  
**Q'S SOUTHERN BISTRO**, 101 E. College Ave., 534-4401. American, steaks, barbecue, brewpub: Tuesday to Saturday L D.  
**REVEL**, 304 N. Bullard St., 388-4920. Elevated comfort food. Weekdays LD, weekends BD, closed Wednesdays.  
**SILVER BOWLING CENTER CAFÉ**, 2020 Memory Lane, 538-3612. American, Mexican, hamburgers: Daily L D.  
**SUNRISE ESPRESSO**, 1530 N. Hudson St., 388-2027. Coffee shop: Monday to Saturday B L, early D.  
**TASTE OF VEGAS**, 303 E. 13th St., 534-9404. Daily L.  
**TRANQUILBUZZ COFFEE HOUSE** 300 N. Arizona St. 575-654-2057.  
**WRANGLER'S BAR & GRILL**, 2005 Hwy. 180E, 538-4387. Steak, burgers, appetizers, salads: L D.  
**W&Z ASIAN BISTRO AND SUSHI BAR** 1740 US HWY 180 575-956-6219

**Bayard**  
**EL BURRITO CALIENTE** 106 Hurley Ave., 575-537-3967  
**FIDENCIO'S TACO SHOP** 1108 Tom Foy Blvd.  
**M & A BAYARD CAFÉ** 1101 N. Central Ave., 575-537-2251  
**SPANISH CAFÉ** 106 Central Ave., 575-537-2640

**Cliff**  
**TAMMY'S CAFÉ** 8414 Highway 180, 575-535-4800.  
**DUCK CREEK CAFE**, U.S. Highway 180, Cliff, 535-4500. Visit Duck Creek Café on Facebook.RVs/Big Rigs welcome, Wednesday to Saturday LD, Sunday LD. "Bring home cooking to your table"

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**THE PATIO** 100 Cortez Ave., 575-537-4938

**Mimbres**  
**RESTAURANT DEL SOL** 2674 Highway 35, San Lorenzo, 575-536-3140.

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**DOÑA ANA COUNTY**  
**Las Cruces & Mesilla**  
**ABRAHAM'S BANK TOWER RESTAURANT**, 500 S. Main St. 434, 523-5911. American: Monday to Friday B L.  
**ANDELE'S DOG HOUSE**, 1983 Calle del Norte, 526-1271. Mexican plus hot dogs, burgers, quesadillas: B L D.  
**ANDELE RESTAURANTE**, 1950 Calle del Norte, 526-9631. Mexican: Monday B L, Tuesday to Sunday B L D.  
**AQUA REEF**, 141 N. Roadrunner Parkway, 522-7333. Asian, sushi: LD.  
**THE BEAN**, 2011 Avenida de Mesilla, 527-5155. Coffeehouse.  
**A BITE OF BELGIUM**, 741 N. Alameda St. No. 16, 527-2483, www.abiteofbelgium.com. Belgium and American food: Daily B L.  
**BOBA CAFÉ**, 1900 S. Espina St., Ste. 8, 647-5900. Sandwiches, salads, casual fare, espresso: Monday to Saturday L D.  
**BRAVO'S CAFÉ**, 3205 S. Main St., 526-8604. Mexican: Tuesday to Sunday B L.  
**BURGER NOOK**, 1204 E. Madrid Ave., 523-9806. Outstanding green-chile cheeseburgers. Tuesday to Saturday L D.  
**BURRITOS VICTORIA**, 1295 El Paseo Road, 541-5534. Burritos: B L D. Now serving beer.  
**CAFÉ DON FELIX**, 2290 Calle de Parian, 652-3007. Mexican, street tacos, mini-burgers: Wednesday to Saturday L D, Sunday brunch only 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
**CHACHI'S RESTAURANT**, 2460 S. Locust St.-A, 522-7322. Mexican: B L D., 505 Joe Gutierrez St., Doña Ana.  
**CHILITOS**, 2405 S. Valley Drive, 526-4184. Mexican: Monday to Saturday B L D.  
**CHILITOS**, 3850 Foothills Road Ste. 10, 532-0141. Mexican: B L D.  
**DAY'S HAMBURGERS**, 245 N. Main St., 523-8665. Burgers: Monday to Saturday L D.  
**PECAN GRILL & BREWERY**, 500 S. Telshor Blvd., 521-1099. Pecan-smoked meats, sandwiches, steaks, seafood, craft beers: L D.  
**DELICIAS DEL MAR**, 1401 El Paseo Road, 524-2396. Mexican, seafood: B L D.  
**DICK'S CAFÉ**, 2305 S. Valley Drive, 524-1360. Mexican, burgers: Sunday B L, Monday to Saturday B L D  
**DION'S PIZZA**, 3950 E. Lohman Ave. 521-3434. 1060 El Paseo Rd · 623-2321. Pizza: L D.  
**DOUBLE EAGLE**, 2355 Calle de

Guadalupe, 523-6700. Southwestern, steaks, seafood: L D, Sun. champagne brunch buffet.  
**EL SOMBRERO PATIO CAFÉ**, 363 S. Espina St., 524-9911. Mexican: L D.  
**ENRIQUE'S MEXICAN FOOD**, 830 W. Picacho Ave., 647-0240. Mexican: B L D.  
**FARLEY'S**, 3499 Foothills Road, 522-0466. Pizza, burgers, American, Mexican: L D.  
**FIDENCIO'S**, 800 S. Telshor Blvd., 532-5624. Mexican: B L D.  
**THE GAME BAR & GRILL**, 2605 S. Espina St., 524-GAME. Sports bar and grill: L D.  
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DESERT SAGE

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reminded me that I was an ant rather than a monster or a god.

\*

The first birthday I had in this new place, I went by myself to Dripping Springs, seeking answers. I told my roommates that I wanted to go by myself; I wanted a vision; I wanted to know my purpose in life. This was going to be the moment, walking in those Organ Mountains to Dripping Springs, where I would find an answer; it would lie down in my lap easily and say – look no further, take me home, I am yours. One of my roommates wished me a good walk, and I expected to come home – transformed.

My car creaked up to the mountains; stray rocks tried to smash stars in its wind shield. When I pulled in the parking lot, there were already a few cars there. Were their owners also seeking enlightenment? I had hoped to be alone. I stretched my body, grabbed my water, and put my hat on to start.

An old man from El Paso walked the trail with a cane, making it seem an easier trail than I expected. He said that he walked the Franklin Mountains, too, but now he was walking this one with his friends. The land seemed washed out like 1980s jeans – the sun fierce and dominant and hungry, making us acid-washed versions of ourselves. And as I walked and as I expected enlightenment to come bounding towards me like a lost puppy, I started to get bored. Why hadn't I brought music with me or a notebook or a camera? Maybe I should have brought

a friend? Finally I arrived at the manmade waterfall called Dripping Springs where you could see pieces of green vegetation poking their heads from the rocks. The water was low though I still stepped across the stones cautiously, fearing that I would fall in.

\*

This area used to be a ranch then later a sanatorium for people with tuberculosis at the turn of the century. They believed that the dry area would cure the illness. Did they escape this disease that used to be a romantic illness when it was called consumption – being consumed from the inside-outside – Keats dying young from it, dots of blood on his white handkerchief?

I came across the building that used to be one of the houses. It seemed an old ruin that should be hundreds of years old – only bones; people had stripped part of it away before it was protected, so that they could re-use its materials. I peered in the window, hoping for ghosts, and all I saw was dust and empty cobwebs – not even a black widow to write home about.

A woman with a dog asked me to take her picture, and somehow we ended up chatting the rest of the way together. She was trying and yet not trying to hide her dog since dogs weren't allowed on this trail. I may have mentioned to her that it was my birthday, that I was seeking enlightenment, I don't remember. When we said goodbye, she probably breathed a sigh of relief and then walked further for her own enlightenment. I got in my little Midwestern car

and headed back home feeling like I missed something, that the mountains hadn't brought me to the message I was eager to hear. I still didn't have the clarity I craved, the purpose for my life that would direct me like a compass on the cloudiest of nights, when the North star might as well be fabrication.

\*

My skin suffered from the sun and missed the Midwestern summer thunderstorms, but I also loved the Southwest, that bitter, dramatic love that makes you complain about small things to your friends, "He never changes his shoes; he arrives late (always), and there is not much to do but go out and drink late at night."

"Is this a healthy relationship?" Your friends ask.

"No, but does it matter?"

But no matter how much I tried to grow my roots in this soil, the roots always stayed close to the surface. "It makes it easy to move," I said, "to fit those roots into a pot and take to my next destination."

\*

My first year here, I called friends and family from the Midwest, "Tell me what I should do," I'd say, "What should I do with my life" as if they had a secret knowledge of my life's journey.

I yearned for a response that would make sense to me, that would make my anxiety and depression calm and lap gentle waves, that would make my lost self feel secure, ready, and whole. This quest seemed extra important since two years before I had had a bad bike accident in Peace Corps, semi-conscious

and pulled off the Pan American Highway in Peru by villagers – my bike bent and broken; my glasses recovered whole. I had been incredibly lucky, and a teacher in one of the villages told me as much – telling me that, "God, isn't done with you yet." So, while less spiritual than I was as a child, I still felt consumed by this quest for purpose. I would pace outside near our neighbors' pomegranate tree where we had an endless supply of fruit and complain that I didn't deserve to enjoy where I lived until I knew what my direction/purpose was.

Meanwhile, my indoor cat experimented with the outside landscape, running through neighbors' lawns, catching lizards, and figuring out how he could angle his small body under the shed where there was an almost endless supply of baby rabbits. The pavement was warm, and my roommates talked in the kitchen; there were ducks in the backyard and an old clothesline strung between two trees. My cell phone would turn hot, pressed to my cheek, and after I hung up I'd notice that goat-head spurs attached themselves to the bottom of my thin shoes, making even our front yard feel inhospitable.

\*

Tapping my tongue to the roof of my mouth, I put myself back at the stoplight at Albertsons where I see those Organ Mountains change into the sunset col-

ors that can never be captured by the camera and can barely be captured by the human eye. I coast home with my tongue glued to the roof of my mouth, the night melting the Organ Mountains from my sight. They would be there in the morning, and the next, and the next, with me or without me, they would continue to be.

For so long, I have complained about this place, my legs constantly twitching for the next place. Now that I have less than a couple months left before I go to a next place, I want to absorb all the sunlight my body can contain – forging wrinkles like remembered trails. I still wish I had a clear answer for my purpose/direction in these constellation-heavy skies like a undiscovered constellation that tells my story. However, when I leave that book open, the sun eats the binding away, gifting me loose pages. The pages contain dirt, wind, and the dust that shut-downs highways; they contain the scent of mesquite and sage after a rain. I will never be able to put them in the same order again, but I am working at remaining present without bullying the desert to give me meaning; I am working at staying here under the skies so wide they could crush or consume me; I am working at letting all of me experience all of this before only a memory connects me to this landscape that I now love.

PAT CONWAY

# I Am From

I am from the land of ristras, fiestas, and siestas, the land where “Christmas” can also mean red and green chile enchiladas with rice and beans.

I am from the land of mi casa es su casa where they really mean it because

when you sit at their kitchen table

you never leave unfed even if all

they can give you is a bean burrito.

I am from the land of manana because what's the rush,

the work will be there tomorrow;

tonight we should laugh and remember

all the weddings and quinceaneras,

all the primos, tias, and tios.

I am from the land of El Dia de Los Muertos when

ghostly ancestors come back to visit, where skeletons grin beside the dulces and the flowers and especially the Tres Equis, where death is a celebration of remembrance and envy that they are gone while we remain behind to dance and weep.

I am from the land of shadowed lanes like cathedral aisles

beneath pecan trees ready for harvest,

where dry earth is made green by brown water floating and gurgling down the acequia madre out into the fields where white cotton gleams in the sun and vineyards glow with purple grapes.

I am from the land of Moorish fountains and arches,

adobe walls dappled with shade from cottonwoods, where the mountains change from blue to purple to mauve and orange in the setting sun, where the air smells like creosote when the rains come, a land of slowness and heat, where music is full of passion and sorrow.

I am from the land where dark eyes and white smiles

evoke memories of other days and other lands, where history sits in the plaza with the abuelas while children run up and down the steps of the bandstand where mariachis play on Sundays, and at Christmas luminaries light the way to peace.



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ART FOR CANCER RELIEF • TRESA VANWINKLE

# Inspired by Experience

## Project calls for artists to help

Artists of New Mexico, Artists of the United States, I need your help.

I was 14 years old, sitting in my 8th-grade government class, believing Nixon was a great president when Watergate hit the mainstream media. I couldn't believe the president of the USA would be so underhanded! My zealous civics instructor was exhilarated by the scandal, so we were forced to watch, listen and report on every detail on a daily basis. Net result, I totally lost faith in our system of government.

Fast forward 15 years, I am married and have two beautiful pre-school daughters. The presidential election was upon us and I did something I vowed I would

never do. I registered to vote and voted for the first time. I did not choose the candidate I believed would be a good leader for our country. I voted for the man who didn't make me afraid for my children's future. The other candidate won and after four years I could breathe again.

Fast forward 33 years. It's been nearly two years since the pandemic was declared, wreaking havoc in the evidence-based, all-knowing medical community. The world of politics has been a three-ring nightmare. Race relations, police brutality, looting and needless deaths have been top news stories. Stress across our nation is at an all-time high.

My children, in their early 40s, have been terrified for their lives

and livelihoods. Thankfully, they have landed on their feet for the moment. But I am worried about my grandchildren, age 16, 15, 14 and 12. For they are at that tender age where they still believe the grown-ups have all the answers. Like I once did in that 8th grade civics class. But the world situation now is 100 times worse.

The syndicated media of the state, the nation and the world have shown our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren way too much of the darkness the world has to offer. Those of us who feel this deeply have been praying for guidance. A few weeks ago I got mine.

The theme of the project is "It's Time to Re-Unite US".

I am asking the Artists of the United States to unite and create beautiful, transformational works of art to show our young people (and oldsters like me too) that although there are a lot of gray and even a few black clouds . . . there is still light!

CAPPED, Inc., a 21-year old nonprofit founded in Alamogordo, has expanded our vision to include stress-reduction programs and services for everyone. To fund this initiative, we have been creating 2' x 2-foot-by-3-foot hardwood canvases cut into the shape of the continental USA. So far, we have 40 — but it could be 50 if enough artists volunteer to share their light!

**The dual purpose of the project**

"Re-Unite US" artists will produce transformational artwork on USA-shaped canvases. These beautiful one-of-a-kind masterpieces will focus on "what is right with America." Each piece will help remind us that although



Larry VanWinkle assembles a wooden canvas to be decorated for the CAPPED fundraiser clock project. (Photos by Tresa VanWinkle)



CAPPED clock project wooden canvasses will be back-lit and get a clock face once they are completed.




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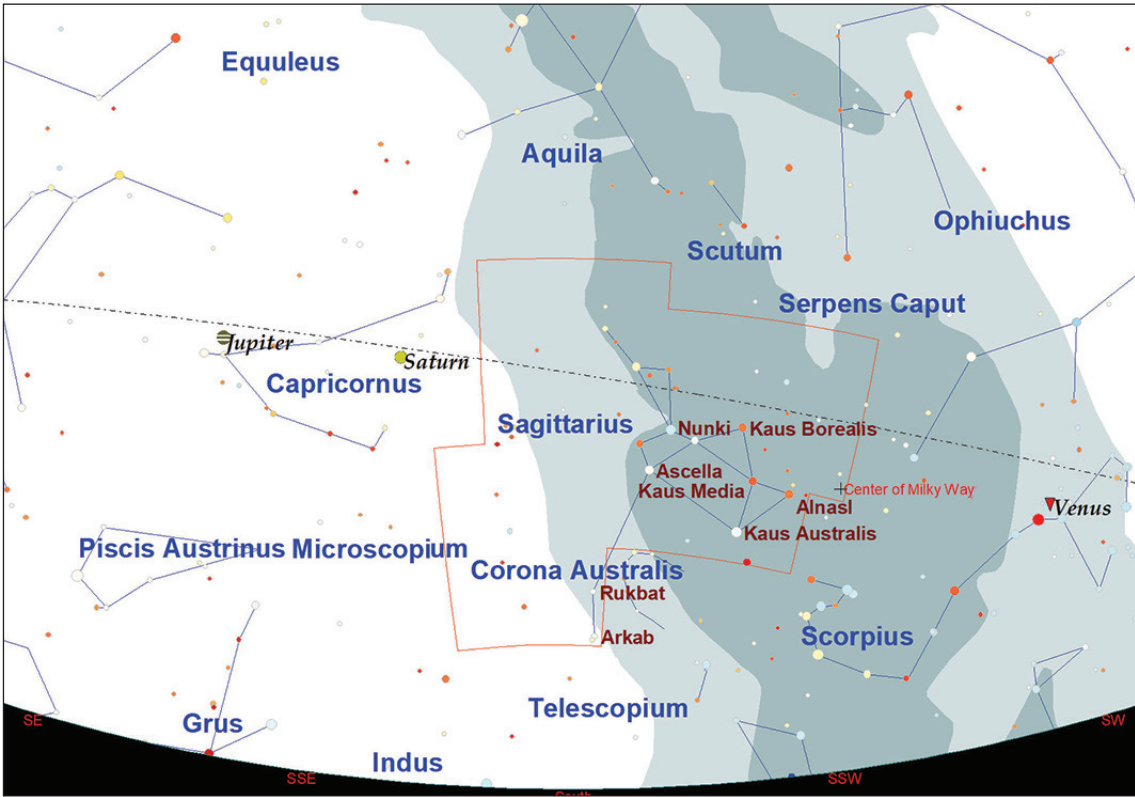
This Project made possible in part by the New Mexico Arts, a Division of Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Larry VanWinkle holds a wooden canvas ready to be claimed by an artist to decorate for the CAPPED fundraiser clock project.

# Sagittarius, the Archer

Another centaur stands guard, invents archery



Sagittarius dominates the southern sky during these October evenings. It is easily identified by looking for the “Teapot” asterism that appears to be pouring out the Milky Way. The center of our galaxy is located at the far western end of this constellation. It also has many deep sky objects, since most of this constellation has the Milky Way running through it.

Above our southern horizon, an archer stands ready to fire his arrow westward toward the “Heart of The Scorpion”, the star Antares, in Scorpius, the Scorpion. But this archer is not a human, but a Centaur, a half-man and half-horse. This constellation is composed of at least 10 bright stars, making it easy to find almost a third of the way up in the southern sky.

Sagittarius is one of two centaurs in the sky, with the other being Centaurus. Sagittarius is often identified with Chiron, a wise centaur who taught Achilles, Jason and Perseus, according to Greek mythology. But the ancient Greeks more often identified Chiron with Centaurus, while Sagittarius is more likely Croto, who lived among the Muses. He is well-known for having invented archery.

Croto was the son of the god Pan and the nymph Eupheme. She lived on Mount Helicon in central Greece. She was the nurse to the Muses and brought

up her son among them, with Croto assisting his mother in her duties. He was not only a skilled hunter, but greatly appreciated the Muses’ performances. To show his appreciation, he clapped his hands together, inventing applause. The Muses asked Zeus to put Croto in the sky as Sagittarius.

Sagittarius is a large constellation, 15th largest area-wise in the sky. It is easily located in the southern sky by looking for the “Teapot” asterism (an unofficial grouping of star) near the constellation’s center. These bright magnitude two and three stars look like a teapot with a handle on the east side, a lid on top and a spout on the west side with the Milky Way pouring from it. The Teapot is unmistakable in the sky

Most of the Teapot’s stars are named, with the brightest being on the southwest corner of the pot, Kaus Australis (Epsilon Sagittarii). This magnitude 1.8 star is 144 light-years from the sun. It is a blue-white star of

spectral class B9, almost seven times larger than our sun. It has reached old age, burning hydrogen in a sphere around its now exhausted core. The name Kaus Australis comes from the Arabic for southern bow. A sun-sized companion orbits it at a dis-

tance of 106 times the distance between the Earth and the sun, well beyond Pluto.

Near the western border of Sagittarius is the center of our Milky Way galaxy. By studying the motions and locations of the other stars in our galaxy, astronomers were able to find the center’s approximate location. Dense gas and dust clouds block our view of the very center, but observations point to a

supermassive black hole at this location.

The first indication of something unusual here were made by pioneering radio-astronomer Karl Jansky who observed a strong radio source in this area, latter dubbed Sagittarius A. Larger and more sophisticated radio telescopes have shown that there are actually multiple

STARRY DOME  
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Calendar of Events – October 2021 (MDT)

- 06 5:05 a.m. New Moon
- 07 10 p.m. Mars on opposite side of the Sun from the Earth.
- 09 10 a.m. Mercury passes between the Earth and Sun.
- 10 8 p.m. Saturn stands still.
- 12 9:25 p.m. First Quarter Moon
- 17 7 p.m. Mercury stands still.
- 18 5 a.m. Jupiter stands still.
- 20 8:56 a.m. Full Moon
- 25 Midnight Mercury greatest distance west of the Sun (18 degrees)
- 28 2:05 p.m. Last Quarter Moon
- 29 3 p.m. Venus greatest distance east of the Sun (47 degrees)

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# The Search for Identity

## Are you a boy or a girl?

I'm sitting here trying to type on a big round exercise ball. I read somewhere that sitting on a ball rather than a chair is good for your back. It is supposed to keep your back exercised as you continually try to keep your balance. I thought blowing it up was enough exercise to last a while. But anyway, here I am rocking back and forth trying to type without falling over.

So, I spent two days this week observing at our local Child Development Center. Interestingly,

for a small town, our CDC is considered one of the best ones in the country. Child therapists from all over come here to visit. So, on Tuesday I went in to observe a classroom and then following that with observing play therapy through a one-way mirror.

My first classroom was for three and four-year-old children. I was supposed to engage with the children practicing child therapy techniques such as "tracking," "encouraging," "reflecting of feelings," "giving

choices," and engaging in "discussion." These techniques, when used well, can really build connections and relationships with the children.

So there I am sitting on one of those tiny little chairs they have for the kiddos, and immediately, once I am down at their level, they begin to engage me. Of course, wouldn't you know, their first question was, "are you a boy or a girl." I told them that I was a girl, even though I am a pretty big girl with a low voice. My voice isn't usually so low and gravelly, but it has only been a week and a half since I had my nasal surgery for a deviated septum. Anyway, they seemed to accept my answer and we were able to get into some pretty good conversations. I thought it was fun and really enjoyed myself. Sometimes, when I was down on the floor, I got used as a human jungle gym. I was terrified that one of the kids, in their exuberance, would pull my wig off. But, fortunately, that didn't happen. Later that day, I watched two sessions of play therapy. I found that to be extremely interesting, and I went away from that having immense respect for child therapists.

The second day, I spent the morning with another class of children, but slightly younger. In this class, nobody directly asked me if I was a boy or a girl, but later, one of the therapist interns told me that the kids really liked me and that they had discussed me, and they all decided that I was a girl. I was pleased to hear that. During quiet time, while the teacher was reading a story, five little kiddos found space to sit on my lap. Well, my legs were sticking out in front of me, and I have long legs. So, two kids sat on my thighs, two more sat on my shins, and one last little girl, upon looking over the situations, plopped down on my feet. It was fun, and we all enjoyed the story about the noises animals make, and, of course, we all made the various animal sounds. And again, I didn't lose my wig—phew.

Damn, sitting on this ball is tricky.

So, upon reflecting on all of that, I think a trans person has to be pretty secure about who they are if they want to work with children. I really don't make a lot of effort "to pass." I'm sort of on this "wanting to be me" kick. So, I was wearing jeans and a sweater

for my time with the kids. Also, sneakers, and very little make-up, and my nails had month-old polish that had almost worn off. On the other hand, I almost never get misgendered, but it does happen on occasion, but usually because they knew me when I was a man. Actually, I have been in conversations where I have misgendered myself, so I really never worry about it.

I'm discovering that if I let the ball roll up against my ankles, I can hold it still—sort of.

I have been feeling lately that I need to start seeing a therapist again. I have found myself getting "triggered" in my "Child and Adolescent Development" class. It has nothing to do with being trans. I kind of assess my transness every now and then, and I always come away from it feeling really glad that I get to be me. The way I assess myself is that I try to picture myself being a man, or even dressing like a man, or even dressing androgynous, and every time, I find the idea completely alien to my senses. I mean, I can't even picture it. I do so like being me. I sometimes

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flowers bigger  
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**STARRY DOME**  
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radio sources that are partially overlapping. On February 13, 1974, radio observations taken at National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Green Bank, West Virginia, showed that one of these sources was bright and very compact. This bright source was dubbed Sagittarius A\* (Sgr A\* for short, pronounced Sagittarius A star).

Starting in 2002, astronomers made infrared observations of a star, dubbed S2, orbiting Sgr A\*. The orbit S2 followed would only occur if Sgr A\* was a black hole with a mass about 4.3 million solar masses concentrated in an area just 4.1 billion miles across (about the size of our solar system).

For such a massive black hole, Sgr A\* is not as luminous as similar black holes in other galaxies.

This luminosity comes not from the black hole itself, but the disc of material around it that is being pulled in by the black hole's gravity. Around Sgr A\*, the dust and gas falling toward the black hole is diverted by an intense magnetic field. This keeps the material from falling into the disc and creating the brilliance seen in other galaxies. Without this diversion, Sagittarius would have an additional "star," shining at a 10th the brightness of the full moon that would mark the center of our galaxy.

**The Planets for October 2021**

Mars is too near the sun to be seen this month, but Venus graces our evening sky. It moves from central Libra, across northern Scorpius into eastern Ophiuchus. The Goddess of Love shines at magnitude -4.3 with a disc that is 21.6 seconds-of-arc across and 56 percent illuminated at mid-month. Venus is 17 degrees above the southwestern horizon as it gets dark, setting around 8:50 p.m.

Saturn is 36 degrees above the south-southeastern horizon as it gets dark. It is moving westward at the beginning of the month, but on Oct. 10 it stops and turns back eastward in western Capricornus. At midmonth, Saturn's rings are 38.9 seconds-of-arc across, tilted down 19.5 degrees with northern face showing while its disc is 17.2 seconds-

of-arc across. It shines at magnitude +0.5, setting around 1:15 a.m.

Shining at magnitude -2.8, Jupiter is in eastern Capricornus. It mimics Saturn's motions, reaching its stationary point eight days after Saturn. At midmonth, The King of the Gods' disc is 46.2 seconds-of-arc across. It is 33 degrees above the southeastern horizon as it gets dark, setting around 3:30 a.m.

Mercury pops out of the morning twilight at midmonth, reaching its greatest distance from the sun on Oct. 25, shining at magnitude -0.6. It then reverses course and starts sinking back into the sun's glow. At its greatest distance of 18 degrees from the Sun, the Messenger of the Gods' disc will be 57 percent illuminated and 6.8 seconds-of-arc across. It will be 11 degrees above the eastern horizon as it gets dark, rising just before 6 a.m. Mercury moves from east-central Virgo to central Virgo where it turns around and heads back eastward to east-central Virgo. Keep an eye open for Mercury in the pre-dawn hour and "keep watching the sky."

*astronomer  
for more than  
45 years, Bert  
Stevens is  
co-director of  
Desert Moon  
Observatory in  
Las Cruces.*



TALKING HORSES • SCOTT THOMSON

# Olympic Thoughts

## Lessons shared from global events

Since the beginning of my long journey with horses, I've looked forward to the equestrian events in the summer Olympics. The beauty and athleticism of the horses and the skills of the riders has always inspired me to work harder on my own riding and to ask a bit more of my horses. I swear sometimes my horses know I've been glued to the TV watching the various events because I show up at the barn with lots of new things to work on, and I'm not sure they're that enthusiastic about what's coming.

This summer's Olympics were unique and challenging in so many respects, especially due to Covid and the precautions that had to be taken to keep all the athletes as safe as possible. Despite the surging number of cases in Japan, extreme heat and humidity, and strong public opinion in the host country against even holding the games under these circumstances, they somehow managed to pull things off.

These are a few of the things that stood out for me.

While the humans involved were wearing masks, getting

tested, washing their hands, etc. to try to avoid exposure to Covid, the horses were fighting a serious health issue as well. Back in early spring there was an outbreak of Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) in Spain and Portugal that spread rapidly to other parts of Europe. Most of the horses competing in the Olympics are stalled for training and development in Europe, and most travel to these major events from the same location on the same planes. EHV is a highly contagious disease that can cause anything from mild to moderate respiratory illness to life-threatening neurological disease.

Just like in the early days of Covid, there is no specific treatment for EHV, and the protocols for minimizing the risk of infection are very much the same – nasal swabs, isolation for infected horses, equine social distancing, minimizing stress, maintaining diet, rest and supportive care when necessary. So, as if it wasn't hard enough to get horses to the other side of the world for this competition, they too had to deal with constant

monitoring and testing to make sure this disease was not spread to other horses.

I was impressed with the continuing efforts to make the equestrian events safer for horses and humans. All the riders in every event wore helmets, really the first time I can remember seeing that. The riders in the cross-country competition wore the latest in inflatable safety vests, and more than one was happy they did when an unexpected fall did not turn into a career ending event. Jumps and obstacles have been redesigned in ways that leave them as appropriate challenges but also

ones that can literally collapse from contact to reduce the risk of major injury. Every horse was vet checked after every run, and many were pulled when small injuries that could get worse were detected.

I love these competitions because they're the only ones where men and women compete against each other, and because

**HORSES**  
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### SEARCHING

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wish I had hair, but wearing a wig is a small price to pay.

Oh yeah, back to being "triggered," if I can keep my balance long enough.

What I mean by being "triggered" is that unresolved, undealt with childhood traumas keep coming up. I don't always remember what they are, it is just sometimes in class when we are discussing families and parenting, I find myself starting to cry. Like I said before, I think that once we get gender dissonance out of the way, we can discover we have a lot of other issues that still need to be dealt with. Growing up trans, can, for some of us, cause us to live in a pretty untenable, unloving environment. I don't think we can spend years of repressing and hiding our transness without it leaving some scars, and then, if you heap physical and mental abuse on top of that, it is amazing that we even survive. But, survive I did, but I do have a lot of garbage going on in my head. In play therapy, we call that "shark music"—a good name for it.

Well, I do think this ball will strengthen my back, only because it is getting downright uncomfortable to keep trying to balance myself.

So anyway, I don't think I am cut out for working with young children, but I do like teenagers. The other day, I was over at a friend's house, and it was filled with about a half dozen

or so long-haired geeky teenagers. They were playing a card game called "Magic." I told them it looked like a giant version of fish. "Do you have a transcended swordmaster? No? Well then, go fish."

Anyway, two of the boys were discussing whether they were going to be straight or gay. They weren't sure, so they said they would just wait and see. I thought that was really cool. I think the younger generation has far fewer hang-ups about sex and gender and all that than my generation. So, it seems, I get along with this age group pretty well. I think they see me as outside of the mainstream enough that they can trust me and relate to me. Of course, I feel at home with them, so maybe that is the direction I may go when I get my counseling license.

Okay, my ankles are getting sore trying to keep this ball from rolling out from under me. Also, my back is getting tired, so maybe it is working, after all.

*Susan Golightly stays active riding her bicycles. She earned both a BA and an MA from Western New Mexico University. Both times she was valedictorian, the first time as a man and the second time as a woman. She has lived all over the country and has had more than her share of life changing experiences.*



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HIGH PLACES • GABRIELE TEICH

# Glenwood, Catwalk

## Making more than one splash in the Gila

When you’ve lived in the desert for a while, your relationship to rain changes. Coming from Germany, I always dreaded rain as a kid. Not able to go outside or putting on all sorts of uncomfortable clothes – and rubber boots to boot.

Moving here to the Southwest as an adult seemed like heaven in comparison. Not only did I move here for love, but I also got sunshine. All year round. All the time. Still love it!

That’s when I first discovered my magic gift: I can make it rain. All I have to do is wash my windows and you can be sure we will get a downpour very soon. I have bragged with this magic touch for years, who wouldn’t? And many times people con-

firmed that they, too, had that same gift, be it through car or window washing or heavily irrigating the garden.

But last week – after a few too many days with clouds and showers – I found out I could make the rain stop as well. Here’s how: Put a dusty plant from the inside out to get cleaned up. In my case, it was a huge aloe vera I had to carry with the help of my husband. As soon as it sat outside for its shower, the sun came out and it hasn’t rained a drop since then.

But as the temperatures dropped slightly, we also went on hikes again, to Glenwood with friends, as has been our tradition for a couple of years now. This year was the first “adults only” trip and we found

ourselves reminiscing of fun events of years past. But even without the not-so-little-any-more little ones we had a great time – including a very hard caramel crust on a cognac cake in honor of my friend’s birthday. We butchered it as good as we could.

And there’s water hikes there. In late August, it’s still hot enough to not only hike the Catwalk on top but get down and wet in the canyon, too. We generally go in water shoes (hiking boots take two days to dry) which always brings up lively discussions of which kind of water shoes work and which don’t. Teva shoes are fine, but don’t protect your toes from hitting rocks – a major issue when crossing the stream a couple of times. Keens protect your toes, but if a small rock gets inside, it’s much harder to get it out. And then there’s the issue of slipperiness of the soles. They differ not only by brand



Lara Teich shows the others how to balance on the rocks in style.

### CATWALK

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Molly McClure and Elaine Eaton soaking and chatting in the creek. (Photos by Gabriele Teich)

### HORSES

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age isn’t really a factor the way it is in most sports. In fact, you generally don’t see horses and riders of these ages competing at these levels in any of the other equestrian sports. The oldest competitor in any sport at the Olympics was a 66-year-old rider, and many of the horses were in their mid to late teens. The silver medalist in dressage was a 52-year-old woman, Isabelle Werth, now the most decorated rider in Olympic history, riding a 17-year-old mare! That just doesn’t happen in any other sport. The individual winner in the 3-day eventing competition was a woman for the first time in Olympic history.

I was reminded just how dangerous this sport is. The Irish eventing team was given permission to wear a ribbon in memory of the top young rider coming up in their country that had been killed in a training accident. A woman competing in eventing was coming back from a fall where she had died five times in

the ambulance on the way to the hospital and that left her blind in one eye. Many riders were competing while still recovering from serious injuries. As one person put it, no matter your level of experience or the quality of your horse, when you put your foot in the stirrup, you’re immediately competing in an extreme sport, even if it’s just a trail ride on your old reliable partner.

As we saw with many athletes in the Olympics, some horses proved they’re not machines and can break without warning. A 14-year-old gelding competing in eventing had to be euthanized after a severe tendon injury just 5 jumps short of the finish line. This is the fourth horse that has died on a cross country course in 2021. Always sad.

I always hope I will see some situations where the horses prove they’re still just horses, and there were many of them in these Olympics. Not that I like seeing years of work and partnership end in failure, but I want more people to see that horses are not computers and they just don’t always perform because


we want them to. Many horses refused at jumps or spooked at things only they could see. Some horses just flat out refused to compete, caring not at all for how much they were worth, how far they’d come, how much they’d been trained or the fact they were at the Olympics. Thankfully, most riders at this level accept that about horses. I wish more riders did.

If you love equestrian sport at this level, we only have to wait three years for the next one as these were really the 2020 Olympics being held in 2021. So, it’s on to 2024 in Paris, one of the birthplaces of classical riding. Should be a great one for any lover of horses!

Scott Thomson lives in Silver City and teaches natural horsemanship and foundation training.

You can contact him at [hsthomson@msn.com](mailto:hsthomson@msn.com) or 575-388-1830.



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STRANGE TALES • MINERVA BAUMANN

# Rare Fossil

## Ancient elephant ancestor on display at NMSU

What was once thousands of pieces of bones and tusk has taken shape at New Mexico State University in the form of an eight-foot fossil skull of an elephant-like animal known as a gomphothere. The rare specimen of the ancient creature found near Las Cruces was recently hung from the vaulted ceiling in Foster Hall, 1305 Frenger St. on the NMSU campus.

“It is one of fewer than a half-dozen of skulls of this species ever found, all of which were found in Bolivia nearly a century ago. It is the best preserved among all,” said Peter Houde, biology professor and curator of NMSU’s Vertebrate Museum, which is located in Foster Hall. “It is also important that the specimen is available for the public to see here in Las Cruces, where it was found, and because it is a vehicle through which we can teach biological concepts.”

The Vertebrate Museum houses 26,000 specimens of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians and serves as a center for research and education for both scientists and students.

“Peter reassembled this skull from thousands of fragments, on his own time,” said Brad Shuster, professor and biology department head in the NMSU College of Arts and Sciences. “It was a true labor of love.”

In addition to preserving the bones, a support frame had to be welded together before the enormous skull could be ready for display.

“It was a giant three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle,” Houde said. “It required detailed knowledge of anatomy and referral to other specimens of elephants and mammoths for comparison.



In August 2010, mining pit workers Jesus Trevizo, left, and Reuben B. Sanchez, center, joined then NMSU graduate student Drew Gentry in assisting in the excavation of a fossil skull of a gomphothere, discovered in a quarry near Mesquite. (Courtesy photo)

There were additional preservation and structural technicalities to address.”

The skull’s journey to NMSU began in August 2010, when Houde received a call from NMSU alumnus Eddie Binns, who discovered the skull at his quarry near Mesquite. Houde spent three weeks carefully uncovering the skull from a mining pit with the help of then undergraduate student Drew Gentry, who has since graduated from NMSU, received his Ph.D. in paleontology and is now a research associate at the University of Alabama.

The gomphothere found at Binns’ quarry would have resembled a modern elephant, with stubby legs and straight but spiraling tusks, but these animals are distinct from elephants by the shape of their low-crowned molars, which are adapted for consuming a mixed diet of grasses, leaves and fruits.

“There are very few complete specimens of cuvieronius gomphothere skulls anywhere, so it

is an important contribution to our understanding of these ancestral relatives of elephants,” Shuster said. “Additionally, finds of this quality are often swept up and taken to regional or national collections and museums. What makes this specimen special is that not only was it found in the area, but was excavated, reassembled and now displayed locally.”

Binns, who graduated from NMSU in 1957 with a degree in civil engineering, donated the skull to NMSU so it could be available for people in the area to see. Houde said another well-known NMSU alumnus, Michael “Mike” Johnson, reached out to cover the costs of reconstruction and welding as well as mounting the skull for display.

The gomphothere skull joins a whale skeleton on exhibit in the south entrance of Foster Hall.

*Minerva Baumann is media relations officer for the Mexico State University Communications Department.*

### CATWALK

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but also by model. And how would you try that out in the store?

This might sound whiney but really isn’t. We always have a great time in Glenwood. There are more hikes in the area, just ask at the Ranger Station south of town. Hot springs, mountain hikes and other canyons, but the Catwalk is always on our list. Be prepared to get wet.

In town is now a cute little art gallery/visitor center worth your while. Local artists show and sell their work there.

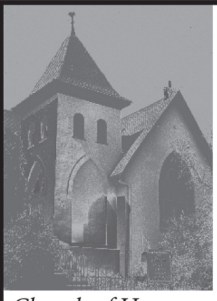
Last but not least the Alma Grill offers a great breakfast (we’ve never been there for lunch, but I am sure it’s good, too) to start your day of exploring.

Enjoy!

Of German origin, Gabriele Teich has called Las Cruces her home for more than 20 years — and loved every minute of it, hiking the mountains in the immediate surrounding area and all over this beautiful state.



Molly McClure and Elaine Eaton make their way down to the water. (Photo by Gabriele Teich)



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