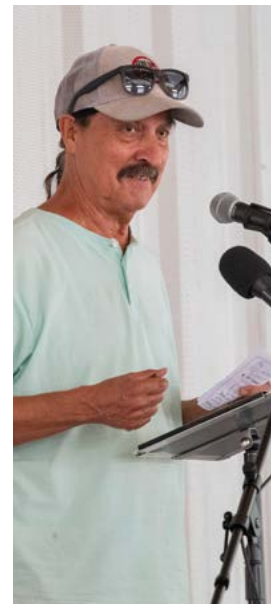
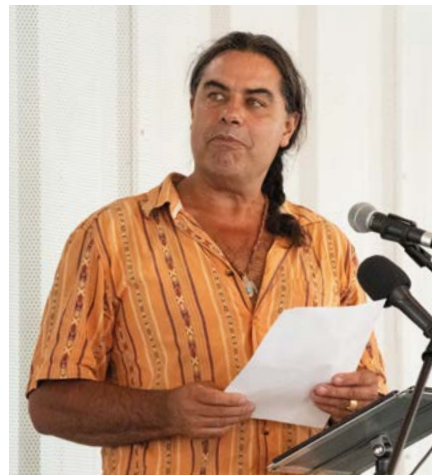


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A TRIBUTE TO MALCOLM EBRIGHT

GREEN FIRE TIMES

News & Views from the Resilient Southwest



LAND GRANTS AND LAWSUITS IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO

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PUBLISHER: GREEN EARTH PUBLISHING, LLC
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: SETH ROFFMAN
EDITOR@GREENFIRETIMES.COM
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: JAIME CHÁVEZ
ADMIN. ASST. / EXEC. CONSULTANT: THÉRÈSE WILLIAMS
DESIGN: WITCREATIVE
COPY EDITOR: STEPHEN KLINGER

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: MALCOLM EBRIGHT, LOUIS G. GALLEGOS, CHANA PAÍZ GARCÍA, MARÍA DOLORES GONZÁLES, ORLANDO ROMERO, RICK HENDRICKS, ALEJANDRO LÓPEZ, EDDER DIAZ-MARTÍNEZ, KAY MATTHEWS, MARÍA MONDRAGÓN-VALDEZ, QUITA ORTÍZ, JOSÉ A. RIVERA, SETH ROFFMAN, HILARIO ROMERO, ORLANDO ROMERO, ADRIAN I. SANDOVAL, CAMILLA TRUJILLO, LEVI ROMERO

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS: STEFAN JENNINGS BATISTA, CHANA PAIZ GARCÍA, ALEJANDRO LÓPEZ, QUITA ORTÍZ, KATE PERDONI, SETH ROFFMAN, ARNOLD VALDEZ

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COVER: PHOTOS SURROUNDING MALCOLM EBRIGHT: SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO SPOKE AT OR ATTENDED MALCOLM EBRIGHT'S MEMORIAL IN SANTA FE. TOP (L-R): MOLLY RUÍZ, RANDY JIRON (ISLETA PUEBLO), ISA RUÍZ, MESA RUÍZ; CENTER: RICK HENDRICKS, VIRGIL VIGIL, HILARIO ROMERO, JOSÉ A. RIVIERA; BOTTOM: LEVI ROMERO, ENRIQUE LAMADRID, FAMILY AND FRIENDS. PHOTOS (EXCEPT MALCOLM) © SETH ROFFMAN

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Some people write off GFT as just an “environmental publication.” If you are a regular reader, you know that the environment is but one thread of a unique tapestry that highlights time-honored regional traditions of sustainability, while promoting culturally based economic development. You will also find articles on education, renewable energy, Indigenous solutions, growing a regional food system, and a lot more. You will find thought-provoking ideas, as well as passionate opinions. The wealth of article submissions we receive demonstrates the need for the unique platform that GFT provides.

Green Fire Times is owned by the nonprofit Southwest Learning Centers, Inc. (Est. 1973). Because of the ever-increasing financial challenges of maintaining a quality print/online magazine, it is uncertain how much longer GFT can survive. It is important for GFT to maintain the free print copies—still widely distributed from Albuquerque to Taos, including to some rural areas—because many people from rural and tribal communities contribute ideas, articles and images and really enjoy being able to share a hard copy. The print copies also provide exposure to people who wouldn't otherwise find GFT.

In order for GFT to build on its accomplishments and stay alive, we really need to upgrade our operations. We have reached out to potential funders and foundations, as well as advertisers. Mostly, we receive small donations from devoted readers. We have been operating on a shoestring for a long time—and it's not sustainable. As you're aware, this is an especially critical time for independent, nonprofit, community-centered journalism. If GFT matters to you and you value the work we do, a tax-deductible contribution or placing an ad in an upcoming issue would make a meaningful difference in helping us continue to publish and serve our community. A donation may be made through this QR code or via PayPal on www.GreenFireTimes.com. Or, send a check to Southwest Learning Centers (with a notation “for GFT”) to P.O. Box 8627, Santa Fe, N.M. 87504-8627. Thank you.



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A Tribute to Malcolm Ebright



INSPIRED BY MALCOLM EBRIGHT

BY SETH ROFFMAN

A Thoughtful Historian and Advocate for Land Grant Communities

Malcolm Ebright moved to northern New Mexico in 1970. Partly in response to the infamous Tierra Amarilla courthouse raid, when activists stormed the courthouse to attempt to free prisoners detained in a land grant-related case, he was hired by the state Planning Office to conduct a study on New Mexico's land grant history.

Tracing land grant history required careful study of original Spanish and Mexican period documents and lawsuits. It was a turning point for the California-born attorney, who published his initial findings in 1971 but continued his meticulous research for decades. "I became aware that you couldn't understand Hispanic land grants without studying the neighboring Indian grants," he said in a 2023 interview for the *New Mexico Historical Review*. He used New Mexico's legal record to document history, but also to make the case for the rights of the heirs of land grant communities to use lost lands for traditional purposes.

In prior years, Ebright maintained an active legal practice, concentrating on land and water litigation. He then directed the nonprofit Center for Land Grant Studies ([HTTPS://WWW.MALCOLMEBRIGHT.COM/](https://www.malcolmebright.com/)), which focuses on land grants, as well as genealogical materials connected with rural New Mexico communities. He noted that testimony recorded over several centuries in lawsuits over land and water is one of the richest sources of historical information about the customs and values of communities. But his work was more than academic—he loved the cultures of New Mexico and immersed himself in the communities he studied.

Ebright came to be considered among the foremost authorities on land grants in the Southwest. He authored or co-authored many books and articles. The week before his death, he completed his first foray into historical fiction, *Comanche Boys in the Governor's Palace: A Story of Captivity and Peacemaking*. The book, yet to be published, has been in development with New Mexico Press.

Ebright lived in the village of Guadalupita for more than 50 years. After a lifetime dedicated to the protection of the land and waters of northern New Mexico, and as an advocate on behalf of Native and traditional communities, he died on June 12 at the age of 93. He is survived by five children and many grandchildren. A celebration of his life was held at the Santa Fe Farmers' Market pavilion, where friends and family shared stories. Some are recounted in this issue of *Green Fire Times*.

We also decided that, in honor of Malcolm Ebright, we would use this issue of GFT as a platform for his associates and others inspired by his work to provide insight into the complex, contentious topics Ebright focused on. Many involve struggles over land and water that determined much of New Mexico's history and shaped present-day laws and attitudes. ■

REMEMBERING MALCOLM EBRIGHT

BY HILARIO ROMERO

Malcolm Ebright was a champion for the land and water rights of the Indigenous, Spanish and Mexican land grants in New Mexico during his tenure as a lawyer, historian and founder of the Center for Land Grant Studies (in 1978).

During the summer just prior to the moon landing, I was hired as an apprentice to Richard Salazar, head archivist at the State Records Center and Archives. State Historian, Dr. Myra Ellen Jenkins, was meeting with a gentleman carrying a briefcase. He was wearing wire-framed glasses, and his long hair was tied back in a *chongo*.

I was in the Rare Room, where the archive's patrons would have access to all the rare New Mexico and Southwest history books stored in bookshelves along the walls bordering two long tables. I was 18, going on 19 years old, also with long hair tied back in a chongo. I was nearing the end of my studies for a bachelor's degree in History, Spanish and Education at New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU). I worked that entire summer as an archival trainee. When the meeting ended, Richard Salazar asked me to get a document request form for Malcolm Ebright. When I returned with the form, he introduced Malcolm to me, and then I went back to the vault downstairs where I was inventorying archives.

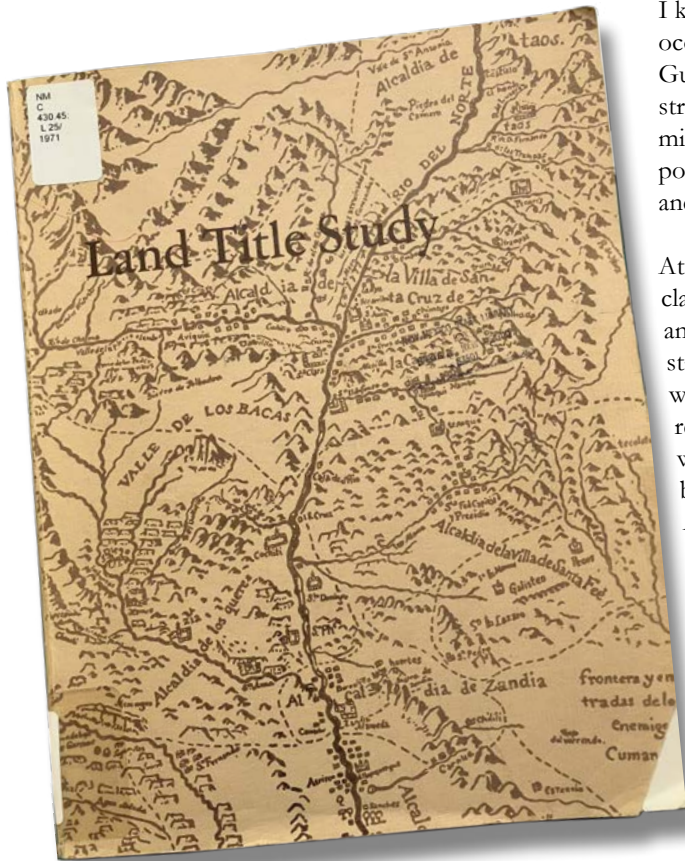
For the following two summers, from May to September, I assisted patrons, including Malcolm and his law partner, Ben Phillips, who were working on a Land Title Study for the New Mexico State Planning Office through a grant from the Four Corners Regional Commission and the U.S. Department of Housing and Administration. Although they were in their early 30s, with law experience, history was a new challenge for them. My studies included New Mexico, Southwest and Mexican history, and they accepted me as a journeyman historian. Malcolm treated me like a colleague.

The Land Title Study became the go-to scholarly historical and legal book for all land grant historians, land grant lawyers and students of New Mexico history.

When Dr. Jenkins or Richard Salazar were not available, I would retrieve guides, articles, books and documents they needed for the first chapter of their study, which they initially referred to as "Historical Background for Land Grant Studies." I was amazed by Malcolm's knowledge of land law in the U.S. Serious and focused, he wasted no time. Once that research was done, I didn't run into him until several years later when I was visiting friends in Guadalupita who were having a celebration. He mentioned he had finished the Land Title Study in 1971 and it was available for purchase from the State Planning Office. By that time, I was a poor graduate student at New Mexico Highlands, so I borrowed a copy from the university library.

The Land Title Study became the go-to scholarly historical and legal book for all land grant historians, land grant lawyers, students of New Mexico history and others interested in land grant history. It included land transfers in New Mexico and the Southwest, identification and documentation of land title problems, proposals for corrections of land title problems, formulation of goals and criteria for evaluation of proposals, evaluation

and selection of proposals, including documents, maps, chronologies, schedules of New Mexico land claims confirmed by Congress, schedules of New Mexico grants confirmed by the Court of Private Land Claims, and a disposition chart of grant claims by that court.



When I was co-directing and teaching at the Ethnic Studies Research Center at NMHU in 1974–75 with Anselmo Arellano, Malcolm was working for La Cooperativa del Pueblo, a community organization in Tierra Amarilla that was doing research on the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant. He contacted our center for information on the grant’s history. From that research, he published a book, *The Tierra Amarilla Grant: A History of Chicanery*, in 1980. He credited New Mexico land grant archivists, historians and writers, as well as the photographer, proofreader and artist who did the drawing. Among the names he cited were Richard Salazar, Michael Rock, Frances Leon Quintana, John Van Ness, Victor Westfall, Charles Briggs, Anselmo Arellano, Dr. Julian Josué Vigil, Bill Martino and Sandy Tate. He also credited the Community Press in Santa Fe for printing it. I remember Malcolm as a hard-working lawyer and historian who always gave credit to whoever helped him. ■



Hilario Romero is a former New Mexico state historian, archivist, college administrator and professor of New Mexico and Southwest history.

MY WRITING PARTNER MALCOLM

BY RICK HENDRICKS

I knew Malcolm Ebright by reputation before we met in person. The occasion was a conference on the 150th anniversary of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that took place in Las Cruces in 1998. Malcolm struck an unmistakable figure from the first time I saw him, a look familiar to anyone who knew him in those days and for many years after: ponytail, fedora, vest, jeans. Malcolm stayed in my home with my family, and we shared what would be the first of many meals together.

At the time I was working for Ysleta del Sur Pueblo on their land grant claim. I was assigned the task of researching and writing a historical analysis of the concept of the Pueblo League, which had provided the stable land base for New Mexico’s Pueblo Indians. I requested and was given permission to have Malcolm work with me to produce the report. This research, which was published by Ysleta del Sur in 2001, was our first collaboration. It also planted the seed that grew into the book we coauthored with Richard Hughes, *Four Square Leagues: Pueblo Indian Land in New Mexico* (2014).

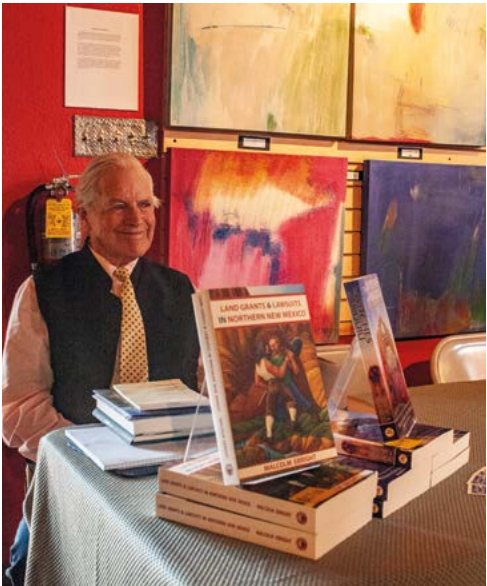
Beginning in 1999 we went to work for Richard, the attorney for the Pueblo of Santa Ana. Malcolm and I had the very great privilege of working with original Spanish documents the pueblo had carefully preserved since the early 18th century. These documents laid out in considerable detail the fascinating history of Santa Ana’s land tenancy through the years. Malcolm and I were already working on a series of case studies of the application of the concept of grants of four square leagues to the pueblos. Richard had a particular interest in the so-called Cruzate grants and had developed thorough knowledge of these documents. Therefore, Malcolm and I asked Richard to join us as our coauthor on the manuscript.

We gave more than a dozen talks together on the books we wrote.

By any measure our most successful collaboration was *The Witches of Abiquiú, 1756-1766: The Governor, the Priest, the Genízaros, and the Devil* (2006). Some years before, Benito Córdova had given Malcolm the documents that formed the basis of the book. Just as I had reached out to Malcolm to help with the Ysleta del Sur land grant and Pueblo League research, Malcolm sought my help translating the convoluted prose of fray Francisco Toledo, the Franciscan serving in Abiquiú during the witchcraft outbreak in the 1760s. Gradually, we became true writing partners.

In those early days, I was living in Las Cruces, and Malcolm lived mostly in Guadalupita. We communicated via telephone, mail, and sending electronic files. Rarely, we would meet at the library at UNM Law School. In addition to our collaborative book projects, we also consulted with several northern New Mexico acequia associations and with Picuris Pueblo. Typically, Malcolm would send me Spanish documents with sections for which he wanted translations marked in a red marker. In addition, I prepared translations and edited Spanish text for Malcolm’s own reports, articles and books.

I became the New Mexico state historian in 2010 and relocated to Santa Fe, which made it possible for us to meet in person almost every week. Malcolm came into the state Records Center and Archives every Thursday. There was a seldom-used room that was referred to as the Ebright Room, essentially his private work area. One day we were working there, and a tall, willowy young woman approached us and asked whether we were the ones who were working on Gov. Tomás Vélez Cachupín. Malcolm and I had developed a profound appreciation of this mid-18th-century Spanish governor of New Mexico and were indeed researching his career. It turned out that Teresa Escudero was a



Presentation-book signing in 2014 at Collected Works Bookstore in Santa Fe for a new edition of Land Grants and Lawsuits. Malcolm Ebright (center) with coauthors Rick Hendricks and Richard Hughes. Photos © Seth Roffman

Those who only knew the scholar would have been amazed to know the young lawyer living in the counterculture era of northern New Mexico.

relative of the governor and a native of his hometown in northern Spain. We all became fast friends and eventually published an article on Vélez Capuchín, relying in part on research Teresa did for us in Spain.

Malcolm acquired a property in Santa Fe and began spending more time in town and less time in Guadalupita. This made it possible for us to have dinner together frequently. We ate almost religiously at Ying Yang downtown and always shared two dishes and two egg rolls. Malcom ordered something heavily vegetable, and it was understood that I would order something with chicken or seafood. It was in this setting that our relationship evolved from a strictly work-oriented one that was frankly transactional to a true friendship. At first, we shared the general contours of our lives up to that point but over time we exchanged many, many illuminating details.

As the years rolled on, we gave more than a dozen talks together on the books we wrote. In recent years, as Malcolm's eyesight faltered, he became increasingly interested in podcasts—listening to them and participating in them. He really enjoyed being interviewed about our

The Pablo Abeita book was for us like being struck by lightning for a second time.

most recent books: *Pueblo Indian Sovereignty: Land and Water in New Mexico and Texas* (2019), and *Pablo Abeita:*

The Life and Times of a Native Statesman of Isleta Pueblo, 1871-1940 (2023). We worked out our respective roles when we were interviewed. Malcolm summarized the main arguments of the book, and I provided a dramatic reading of selected passages. I think we truly enjoyed ourselves. Our last collaborative activity was a podcast about Pablo Abeita, with me playing the part of Pablo.

The Pablo Abeita book was for us like being struck by lightning for a second time, the first being working with the Santa Ana documents. In Isleta, Randy Jiron befriended us, welcoming us into his home and village. He also made it possible for us to get the necessary permission and family blessings to research, write and publish this biography, to date the only book-length biography of a New Mexico Pueblo leader. Working on this book meant frequent trips to Isleta Pueblo. On the drives down and back, we renewed our sharing of personal details. On one memorable drive, Malcolm allowed how he had not been a nice person when he was younger. I certainly never expected to hear such a self-assessment. The book I wanted Malcolm to write was his autobiography—the inside story of a fascinating life well lived. Those who only knew the scholar would have been amazed to know the young lawyer living in the counterculture-era of northern New Mexico.

Malcolm and I began work on the book that became his last book, the soon-to-be-published *Comanche Boys*. I had begun my new job and knew I would not see the project through to conclusion. Fortunately for Malcolm, he found a new and most capable writing partner in Suzanne Stamatov. He asked me to read the final version of the manuscript, but before I stopped by to pick it up, Malcolm was gone, and our long collaboration had come to an end. The work, however, will live on. ■



Rick Hendricks, Ph.D., is the New Mexico state records administrator. He was state historian from 2010–2019. He received his Ph.D. at the University of New Mexico and taught courses in colonial Latin America and Mexican history at New Mexico State University. Hendricks has written extensively on the history of the American Southwest and Mexico, and has written, co-written and coedited more than 20 books.

A Recommendation from José A. Rivera

In November 2018, Malcolm Ebright applied for a research fellowship at the Autry Museum of the American West. University of New Mexico Professor Emeritus José A. Rivera, in his letter of recommendation, wrote:

Dear Research Fellowship Committee Members:

Please accept this letter of recommendation for Malcolm Ebright. He is currently applying for a research fellowship at the Autry Museum of the American West. I have read the section on research fellowships posted at the Autry Museum and believe that Ebright fits the criteria for a successful application and an eventual research product of high merit. The criteria require a topic about a historical event or people based on factual information. In his case, Ebright intends to investigate the life and significance of former Isleta Pueblo Governor Pablo Abeita (1871-1940).

Research into this topic will require delving into archival materials that few others have uncovered and investigated. As a historian and attorney, Ebright is the foremost authority on New Mexico history as it pertains to Pueblo Indian grants, having published a book on that subject with collaborators Rick Hendricks and Richard Hughes, *Four Square Leagues—Pueblo Indian Land in New Mexico* (UNM Press 2014). One of the major chapters in the book covers the background and history of how the Pueblo Lands Board came into existence with passage of the Pueblo Lands Act in 1924. Here, Ebright and co-authors note that Pablo Abeita was the only Pueblo delegate allowed to testify at one of the hearings in Washington when bills were under discussion in the Senate. According to Marc Simmons, New Mexico's historian, Pablo Abeita was one of the most influential Pueblo Indians in New Mexico in his day and was the only Indian who had met all U.S. presidents from Grover Cleveland through Franklin Roosevelt. He achieved fame as a cultural broker between his people of Isleta Pueblo and the United States government.

It appears that Ebright's interest in Pablo Abeita rose to the surface while writing about the Pueblo Lands Board and how Abeita and other leaders of the Indian Pueblo Council were able to secure title to their lands with passage of the Pueblo Lands Act of 1924. In a follow up to *Four Square Leagues*, Ebright and Hendricks again included Pablo Abeita's legacy in a book on Pueblo Indian lands in New Mexico, this time crediting him

with being the most powerful representative of land and other resource rights during the 1930s and 1940s.



José A. Rivera holding an acequia history and culture-focused copy of Green Fire Times

With a research fellowship, Ebright will be able to devote considerably more time to look further into the significance of Abeita as “the most effective spokesman for Isleta Pueblo rights in the twentieth century.” This claim likely needs to be substantiated with evidence in the historical record spanning Abeita's adulthood period up until 1940. This is where Ebright excels beyond others in the field. He has spent a lifetime scouring the major archives located in New Mexico. I believe that he already has access to the Pablo Abeita papers, Collection of Frank Jiron at Isleta Pueblo. The manuscript collections (Lummis papers; Appeal by Pueblo Indians 1922) at the Autry Museum will add to his sources. Whatever other records or documents exist about the life of Pablo Abeita, he will find them.

I have known Malcolm Ebright for more than 20 years and have heard him speak at many events, including at the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives in Santa Fe. He makes frequent visits to this location, where he conducts much of his research, and once a project is completed, he gives talks about his findings. He is organized and articulate about his topic, his sources of information and key findings. Often, his talks are videotaped. Both through his writing and his presentations, students and scholars alike have been inspired by his work. He always leaves a paper trail of his sources, such as in his footnotes, that others can use to develop new lines of research. I can personally attest to the influence Ebright has had on my work in regard to land and water issues of New Mexico. I recommend that he receive a research fellowship. The quality and ultimate value of his work once he completes his project, in my mind, are absolutely guaranteed.

Sincerely,
JOSÉ A. RIVERA
PROFESSOR EMERITUS
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO



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REMEMBERING LAND GRANT HISTORIAN MALCOLM EBRIGHT

BY KAY MATTHEWS

Fourteen years ago, Malcolm Ebright wrote a remembrance of *La Jicarita* co-editor Mark Schiller that focused on Mark's ability to connect scholarly research on New Mexico land grants with "the frustrating practice of bringing the lessons of history to bear on real-life problems like the loss of land grant land and water disputes."

Now it's my turn to write a remembrance of our friend and colleague, Malcolm Ebright, who died last month at the age of 93. Prolific author, historian, activist and lawyer (he never liked to admit he was a lawyer), he was working on this latest book of young adult fiction up to the day he died. His non-fiction books are well known throughout land-based communities and academia: *Land Grants & Lawsuits in Northern New Mexico*; *The Witches of Abiquiu: the Governor, the Priest, the Genízaro, and the Devil* (with Rick Hendricks); *Advocates for the Oppressed: Hispanos, Indians, Genízaros, and Their Land in New Mexico*; *Four Square Leagues: Pueblo Indian Land in New Mexico* (with Rick Hendricks and Richard Hughes); *Pueblo Sovereignty: Indian Land and Water in New Mexico and Texas* (with Rick Hendricks); and *Pablo Abeita: The Life and Times of a Native Statesman of Isleta Pueblo* (with Rick Hendricks). He also authored numerous articles in the *New Mexico Historical Review* and other publications.

Malcolm, like Mark, combined his historical scholarship with a commitment to community; he and his extended family and friends formed a tight-knit settlement near Guadalupita. Here he found his calling as a historian who focused on land and water rights in the traditional communities of northern New Mexico. He founded the Center for Land Grant Studies, a non-profit organization devoted to research, education and the distribution of books and other materials about the Southwest. With funding from Río Arriba County, the New Mexico State Archive and the Chamiza Foundation, he developed a database of all New Mexico land grants. Mark and I could find him any day of the week at the New Mexico State Record Center & Archives researching for the database, his books, or any number of requests from land grant heirs trying to navigate the troubled world of land grant history.

Mark and I, as co-editors of *La Jicarita*, had both a personal and professional relationship with Malcom. Mark and Malcom worked closely on projects that included the evaluation of the General Accounting Office's (GAO) Land Grant Report, issued in 2004, that Malcom called "A Slap in the Face" in an article for *La Jicarita*. "The G.A.O. report is neither independent, unbiased, nor objective. It is, rather, a partisan brief for the government, rationalizing as the government has been trying to do so since land grants were first 'adjudicated' by the Surveyor General of New Mexico in 1854, why these adjudications were fair. In fact, they were often not fair by any standard."

Malcom wrote many other articles for *La Jicarita* that addressed other important areas of contention, including water rights and Los Alamos National Laboratory. In an article called "Distortions of History: Are We Doomed to Repeat the Past," Malcom took on the issue of priority adjudication of water rights, "a concept that did not exist historically in New Mexico under Spain and Mexico—that has caused many of the problems we face today. Laws that are not considered fair or historically accurate by the grass-roots rural communities of Northern New Mexico will be the subject of endless litigation." He also wrote a comprehensive report on the tragic eviction of Hispano homesteaders on the Pajarito Plateau to accommodate the Manhattan Project's acquisition of the land for Los Alamos National Laboratory. "The Hispanic homesteaders on the Pajarito Plateau were deprived of their property without due process of law and without receiving adequate compensation. Many of the homesteaders received no compensation at all."

Malcom was instrumental in helping establish the Guadalupe/Coyote Historical District. He was also an advocate for healing between the Hispano and Pueblo communities of

Malcolm wrote a comprehensive report on the tragic eviction of Hispano homesteaders on the Pajarito Plateau to accommodate the Manhattan Project.

He was an advocate for healing between
the Hispano and Pueblo communities
of Northern New Mexico



Rick Hendricks and Malcolm Ebright at Collected Works Bookstore, Santa Fe, 2014
© Seth Roffman

Northern New Mexico as he extended his research into Pueblo rights. “There have also been some recent success stories resulting from Pueblo/Hispano cooperation. They include the superb effort that stopped Summo Minerals’ proposed copper mine near Picuris Pueblo, and the stunning victory by Sandia Pueblo in which a federal judge ruled that the pueblo and not the Forest Service owned Sandia Peak. In the first case, a unified coalition was able to halt a development that would have had a highly negative impact on both Pueblo and Hispano communities. In the second case a pueblo that in 1748 received a land grant similar to a Spanish land grant obtained a ruling returning land to the pueblo.” I remember standing with Malcolm in front of a mining truck at the entrance to a mica mine used by Picuris Pueblo in the pueblo’s fight to retain access to this traditional site. The pueblo was victorious in that battle by filing an aboriginal land claim for the approximately 200-acre mine site.

Malcolm’s books are testimony to his amazing work ethic. I know this firsthand. When the University of New Mexico Press neglected to reprint his first book, *Land Grants and Lawsuits in Northern New Mexico*, he asked me, as an editor and publisher, to reissue the book under the imprint of the Center for Land Grant Studies. Under his careful guidance, I replicated the book, page by page (but with a new introduction), word by word, until we had a beautiful new edition of this invaluable book. I read and reviewed all the rest of his books in manuscript, edited several, and then, against my better judgment, agreed to do an index, where I had to distinguish among three-named Hispano characters who often shared two of those names with someone else. That kept me up until midnight any number of times.

I’ll miss our conversations, the parties at his house and ours, and his constant support for the work Mark and I did in *La Jicarita*. Malcolm’s work for the communities of northern New Mexico will live on forever. ■

Kay Matthews is the editor-in-chief of *La Jicarita*. [HTTPS://LAJICARITA.WORDPRESS.COM](https://LAJICARITA.WORDPRESS.COM)



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A Poetry of Remembrance

BY LEVI ROMERO

it may be

the sky
its evening color
just north on the horizon lifting
in whispers of apricot, lavender, and periwinkle

or it may be

the way the old rusted cars' rooftops
smudge into the solemn landscape's drifting light
cartwheeling across the alfalfa field
towards a full moon in coming

i am sure it is that
this evening

which makes it difficult
for us to gather our bags
and continue on

even though
we have garnished what we can
and like a grandmother's measure
take with us
no more and no less

here

*aquí en este pueblo
en este valle
en esta vecindad*

en mi querencia

it is a poetry of remembrance
and of an honoring of land and people

earth songs
love poems
born of celebration and mourning

in the place where I come from

*también de gusto se llora
como de tristeza se canta*

and under that colorful backdrop
of a spring dusk framing the village

there are sad stories
that accompany us in our comings
there are joyful stories
that walk with us in our goings

at times we see
a finality to a way of life no longer
but we carry in our hearts
a memoried time the *ancianos* speak of

through the poetry
and the song and the rhythm
of their stories

and we take their stories
and we form ours to theirs
and we lament the tongue

recalling the sound
of its home language
how we carry it with us

into this
our other world

lamenting the spirit of the heart
which will cry out to no one's hearing
and we take the forewarning of the elders
our granpitos, our gramitas, tíos y tías

and we'll remember
we'll remember
we'll remember

and we'll laugh and join
in the circle of our brethren
in that vast periphery
hollow and echoing
remembering us back home

because we are the ones left
still here, still alive

and we'll rejoice and feast
in the clumsiness of our faith
and we'll dance around the open fire
stepping out into the next tomorrow

because we are the ones still here, still alive

or maybe

it's simply the thump
of the car's trunk lid as it is shut
the one more final goodbye having been said

the family dog gone wagging its way
back under the old retired family sedan

Venus already twinkling

it may be that
this evening

a poetry of remembrance

and an honoring
of land and people

earth songs
love poems

born of celebration and mourning

it may be that
this evening

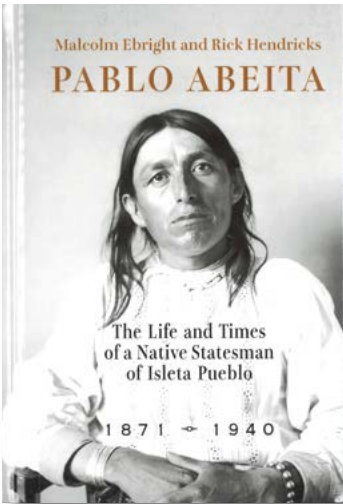


which makes it possible
for us to gather ourselves
and continue on ■

Levi Romero is from the Embudo Valley. He was the inaugural New Mexico Poet Laureate in 2020. His recent books are New Mexico Poetry Anthology 2023 and Querencia: Reflections on the New Mexico Homeland. Romero is also co-author of Sagrado: A Photopoetics Across the Chicano Homeland. He is associate professor emeritus in the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department at the University of New Mexico.

MALCOLM EBRIGHT’S BOOKS

WWW.MALCOLMEBRIGHT.COM



PABLO ABEITA: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A NATIVE STATESMAN OF ISLETA PUEBLO, 1871-1940

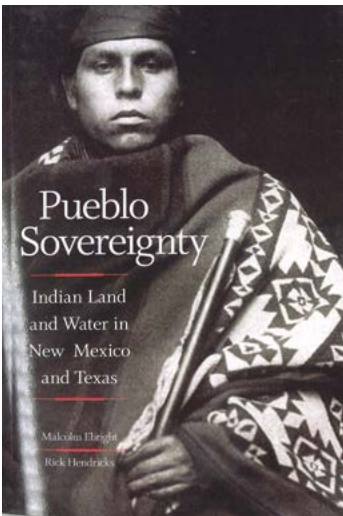
BY MALCOLM EBRIGHT, RICK HENDRICKS

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS
(CLOTH, 2023)
TRADE PAPERBACK (2024)

This is the first full-biography of Pablo Abeita, a major Pueblo leader in the Southwest during a period of dramatic change. The book traces Abeita’s life from his upbringing in Isleta Pueblo through his roles as advocate, political actor and cultural mediator.

Abeita is depicted working with Pueblo communities, progressive Indian agents and advocacy groups through policies of assimilation, the era of boarding schools, reforms of U.S. Indian policy and issues of Pueblo sovereignty. He successfully lobbied for infrastructure improvements like a bridge over the Río Grande, testified before Congress, and is said to have met or befriended many U.S. presidents, from Benjamin Harrison to Franklin D. Roosevelt.

This book has been praised for filling a gap in Southwestern and Native Studies, especially in offering an accessible yet scholarly portrait of Indigenous leadership in the early 20th century. Theodore Jojola (UNM Indigenous Design and Planning Institute) called it “a unique contribution to Native Studies... It adds needed context to an otherwise white-centric presentation of local history.” It won the 2023 Southwest Book Design Award from the New Mexico Book Association.



PUEBLO SOVEREIGNTY: INDIAN LAND AND WATER IN NEW MEXICO AND TEXAS

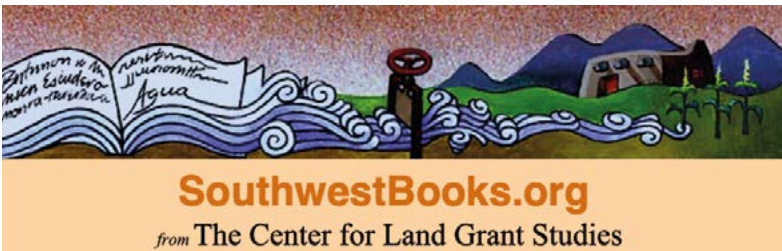
BY MALCOLM EBRIGHT, RICK HENDRICKS

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS (2019)

This is a richly researched legal-historical study of how five Pueblo communities—Pojoaque, Nambe, Tesuque, Isleta (in New Mexico), and Ysleta del Sur (in Texas)—have defended their land, water and political sovereignty over more than four centuries. Extending their work in *Four Square Leagues*, the authors trace the legal tools, institutions and individuals—Spanish colonial officials, Mexican law, United States courts, Pueblo attorneys and agents—that have at times

undermined, but also enabled Pueblo resistance to dispossession. The stories of these pueblos include periods of loss, abandonment and population decline, but also revival, legal victories and cultural persistence.

Among its honors, *Pueblo Sovereignty* won the Arizona/New Mexico Book Award in History. Reviewers have praised it as “exhaustively researched” and “balanced in its analysis and interpretation,” and “an important contribution to Native American history.”

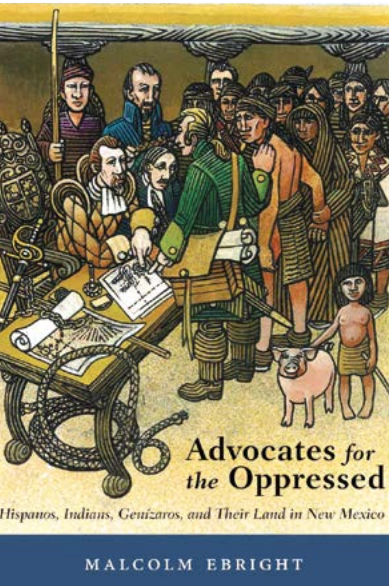


FOUR SQUARE LEAGUES: PUEBLO INDIAN LAND IN NEW MEXICO

BY MALCOLM EBRIGHT, RICK HENDRICKS, RICHARD W. HUGHES

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS (2014)

This book provides a sweeping, detailed history of Pueblo land tenure in what is now New Mexico, from the late 1600s through the modern era. The book begins by examining the formation of the “Pueblo League” under Spanish colonial rule (roughly 1700-1821) as the legal and customary basis for Pueblo landholding. It then traces how these land rights fared through Mexican and U.S. sovereignty, documenting both loss and recovery of land, encroachment by non-Pueblos, legal battles and political struggles. Through case studies of specific pueblos (such as Taos with its successful reclaiming of Blue Lake), the authors present a balanced account of resistance, resilience, failure and occasional victories. Overall, it illuminates not just New Mexico history, but broader themes of Indigenous land tenure, colonialism and legal justice over centuries.



ADVOCATES FOR THE OPPRESSED: HISPÁNOS, INDIANS, GENÍZAROS, AND THEIR LAND IN NEW MEXICO

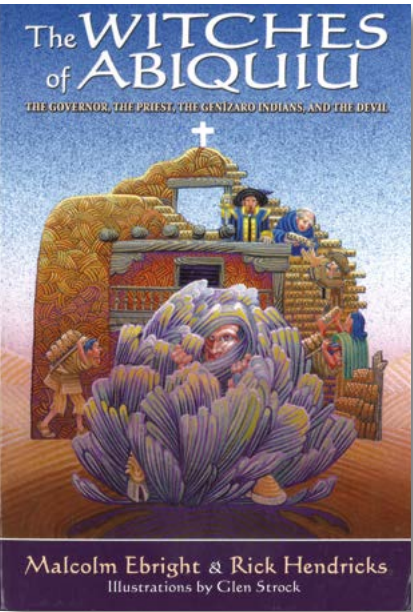
BY MALCOLM EBRIGHT

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS (CLOTH, 2014)
TRADE PAPERBACK (2015)

This is a sweeping legal and historical account. Over the course of 440 pages, Ebright weaves together stories of Hispanos, Indigenous Pueblo communities and Genízaros (nomadic or formerly captive Indigenous people assimilated into Hispanic society) and their struggles over land and water rights in colonial and post-colonial New Mexico.

The book focuses particularly on how “advocates”—legal officials, protectors and local elites—made a difference in litigation, land grant disputes, and contested boundaries, sometimes enabling marginalized groups to reclaim lands or protect traditional land use. It revives lesser-known cases like the Ojo Caliente grant, grazing grants for Pueblo lands, Galisteo Basin grants, and the role of Governor Tomás Vélaz Cachupín, among others.

Reviews have praised *Advocates for the Oppressed* as “meticulously researched and well-written,” lauding Ebright’s archival depth and his skill in recovering forgotten histories.



THE WITCHES OF ABIQUIIU: THE GOVERNOR, THE PRIEST, THE GENÍZARÓ INDIANS, AND THE DEVIL

BY MALCOLM EBRIGHT, RICK HENDRICKS
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS (2006)

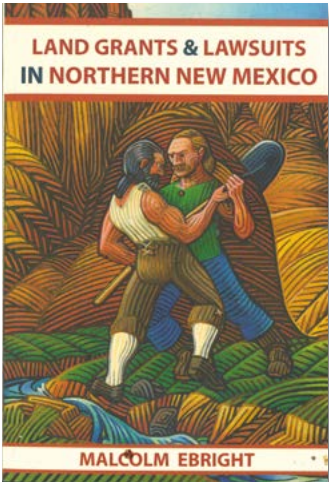
This is a deeply researched historical account of a witchcraft outbreak in Abiquiú, New Mexico, between about 1756–1766, involving the Genízaros and colonial authorities.

Set in the wake of the Pueblo Revolt, the book examines how the Abiquiú Genízaros—caught between Spanish colonial expectations, Native Pueblo resistance to Christianization, and raids by nomadic groups—became the focal point of accusations of witchcraft, sorcery, devil-worship and spiritual conflict. Ebright and Hendricks trace the roles of the Franciscan priest Fray Juan José Toledo, Gov. Tomás

Vélez Cachupín and the Spanish colonial government as they respond to allegations, trials, exorcisms and ultimately suppression of the witchcraft charges in order to maintain peace, protect religious practices of Pueblo and Genízaro alike, and secure the Abiquiú land grant.

The book includes illustrations, maps, documentary appendices and a list of those accused.

In 2007, *The Witches of Abiquiú* received the Gaspar Pérez de Villagrán Award for an outstanding publication in New Mexico or Southwest borderlands history. Historian Marc Simmons praised it for its “masterful detective work,” calling it an authoritative narrative that is “as provocative as it is well-grounded.” Reviews (e.g. in the *Hispanic American Historical Review*) emphasize its significance given the scarcity of scholarship on 18th-century New Mexico witchcraft, colonialism and cultural clash.



**LAND GRANTS & LAWSUITS
IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO**

BY **MALCOLM EBRIGHT**

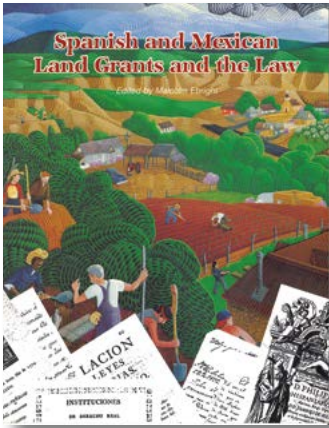
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS (1994)
THIRD EDITION REPUBLISHED BY THE CENTER
FOR LAND GRANT STUDIES (2008)

This book is a landmark work exploring how Spanish and Mexican land grant communities in northern New Mexico have fared, legally and socially, following U.S. takeover after 1846.

Through 11 essays including case studies of grants such as San Joaquin, Embudo, Las Trampas, Las Vegas, Ramon Vigil, and Jacona, Ebright examines how U.S. legal institutions—surveyor general offices, the Court

of Private Land Claims, partition suits—often failed to honor communal land traditions, customary law and treaty promises. He documents fraud, forgery and legal technicalities used to dispossess communities, but also highlights instances of resistance and courage.

The book has been praised for its clear, accessible yet rigorous scholarship. A review in *Western Legal History* commended how Ebright provides “systematic assembly of evidence supporting his conclusion of inequitable adjudication” while linking 19th-century dispossessions to modern land and water disputes. Author Stanley Crawford called it “essential for anyone wishing to understand the historical and legal strata underlying land and water disputes still raging today across the landscape of northern New Mexico.”



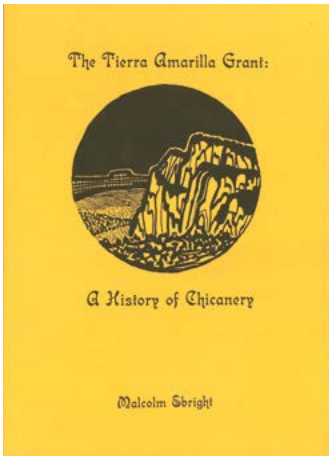
**SPANISH AND MEXICAN LAND GRANTS
AND THE LAW**

EDITED BY **MALCOLM EBRIGHT**
SUNFLOWER UNIVERSITY PRESS (1989)

This is a collection of eight essays, totaling 104 pages. The volume gathers scholarship from historians and legal experts analyzing how land grants under Spanish and Mexican rule have been understood, litigated and preserved (or lost) within U.S. legal frameworks. The essays cover a broad geographical and legal range: from Castile’s common lands in 16th-century Spain to *ejidos* in New Mexico; from California ranchos to the tragedy of the Mora Land Grant; including litigation over the Anton Chico and Juan Bautista Valdez grants.

Rich with historical maps, photographs and reproduced archival documents, the book emphasizes not just legal codes but how custom, practice and community expectations shaped land holding.

The book is frequently cited in land-grant scholarship as a foundational resource. It is praised for clarity, its collection of case studies, illustrations and for helping non-lawyers and legal scholars alike understand the complex interplay of Spanish/Mexican grant law and U.S. judicial processes.



**THE TIERRA AMARILLA GRANT:
A HISTORY OF CHICANERY**

BY **MALCOLM EBRIGHT**;
FORWARD BY **FRANK WATERS**
CENTER FOR LAND GRANT STUDIES, C. 1980

At 66 pages, this is a compact but powerful history that documents how the Tierra Amarilla land grant—originally a communal grant made by the Mexican government in 1832—was converted through legal manipulations into private land, stripping settlers of their rights to common pastures, timber, grazing and other shared resources.

Ebright’s work includes a transcription and translation of the original grant documents, a list of the first settlers in the seven communities that comprise Tierra Amarilla. It shows how legal technicalities, mistranslations, and *ex parte* procedures enabled figures such as Thomas B. Catron to acquire large swathes of what had been common land, disenfranchising original heirs and community members.

This book is regarded as foundational in land-grant scholarship for exposing judicial abuses and historical injustice in northern New Mexico.



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Borderlands or Land of Borders

A Review of the Uplands of the San Luís Valley

BY MARÍA MONDRAGÓN-VALDEZ

The San Luís Valley of the south-central border of Colorado and New Mexico is an elongated basin and range. Approximately 50 miles wide and 122 miles long, the Sangre de Cristo Mountains encircle the east and the San Juan Mountains formed in the west. This elevated region is part of the southern Rocky Mountains, rising from a low point of 7,500 feet, peaking above 14,000 feet. Blanca Massif, built of igneous and metaphoric rock, is wedged at the northern edge of the valley.

The valley is defined by water. The region's greatest ecological asset is the Río Grande. Historically known as the *Río Bravo del Norte*, the Río Grande originates from the San Juan Mountains. The fourth-longest waterway in the United States, the “great river” traverses 1,900 miles from the uplands through New Mexico and Texas, emptying into the Gulf of México. When the Spanish colonized New Mexico they named the river and located the headwaters, designating the uplands the *Río Arriba* (upper river). Flowing by gravity to the valley floor, the Río Grande exits at the south. The water could never leave the landlocked upland without a deep rift created by thinning and stretching of the earth down to the molten core. When the violent geologic work was completed, a massive rift corridor remained through which the Río Grande flows, extending from southern Colorado all the way to northern Chihuahua, México. Since the river-flow decreased in elevation as it moved southward, the lower bioregion was designated as *Río Abajo* (the lower river).

The Arrival of Humans

In the far distant past this grandiose setting must have been equally alluring and frightening to the first humans who arrived at the end of the Ice Age. Ambushing megafauna near the present-day Great Sand Dunes National Monument, Ice Age hunters processed their prey, backtracked and left. To orient themselves to such a large physical landscape, ancient humans would have learned that the sun and moon rose along the eastern peaks of the Sangre de Cristos, and the sun and moon set on the western San Juan Mountains. Another way to memorize the landscape at the ground-level was to locate identifiable natural features. Reaching a vertical height of 700 feet., the sand dunes and Blanca Massif would have been dramatic landmarks, while the Río Grande and the rift corridor, with banks on either side of the river, was a land compass to southern paths in and out of the valley.

Human presence in the Southwest was always related to climate change. When the monsoon cycle was disrupted, evaporation increased, and lakes, perennial ponds, wetlands and marshes dried. In a chain reaction, the grasslands declined, buffalo and wildlife dwindled, and evidence of humans disappeared until the fifth millennium BC. After thousands of years, temperatures moderated, moisture returned, the upland ecological habitat recovered, and so did the wildlife. Two centuries or more after the dawn of the first millennium AD, the Anasazi visited the valley as pilgrims or on a resource-gathering mission. At the west, etched symbols identified as Anasazi and later as Pueblo confirm their presence. The Navajo and the Jicarilla Apache, who are thought to be from Alaska and Canada, and the Utes, whose ancestors were Aztecs transplanted to the Great Basin; all came in waves of migration into the valley. Some lived permanently and others temporarily, like the Comanche. In spite of being culturally different due to their origins, the family bands all identified mountains and rivers in all directions as sacred boundary markers.

Colonization Along the Río Grande

In 1540, Spain surveyed its northern holdings including New Mexico. In 1598, colonization took place in the lowlands along the Río Grande. Most significant to the future of the New Mexican colonization was the custom of land granting, which was a foundation in feudal Spanish Iberia. In the Spanish frontier in Europe, *pobladores*

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed to validate American claims to half of the Republic.



South fork of the Río Culebra in September

Photo by Arnold Valdez

(settlers) lived in a gated compound with high walls with one entrance. Pobladores were granted plots known as *solar* for a home site and garden, and a larger *suerte*, or agropastoral tract. Gardens and agricultural tracts were irrigated by *acequias*, an entwined system of water delivery introduced by the Moors, who occupied Spain for seven centuries. The entire community of *vecinos* (neighbors) had access to an *ejido*, or common-land to graze communally. Land grants issued for New Mexico at the onset of settlement replicated this settlement pattern.

During the violence of colonization, the uplands transitioned into a stronghold of resistance. Once the Utes appropriated Spanish horses, warriors became equestrian raiders. In response, colonial authorities waged a losing war of attrition, since Ute, Apache and Comanche were hit-and-run warriors who used the valley's “war roads” to access land-grant colonies. One solution to limit attacks was to compromise by leaving sections of planted fields for raiders. Violence continued to plague the colony, as two decades of drought beginning in 1660 led

During the violence of colonization, the uplands transitioned into a stronghold of resistance.

to famine. Tension peaked in 1680, when Taos Pueblo warriors led others in the region in an unprecedented attack on the colony. Over 400 settlers were killed, and churches, haciendas and ranches were destroyed. Twelve years later, forced labor and tribute (the root of the problem) were abolished, and a new colony with self-reliant settlers was founded.

The Import/Export Industry

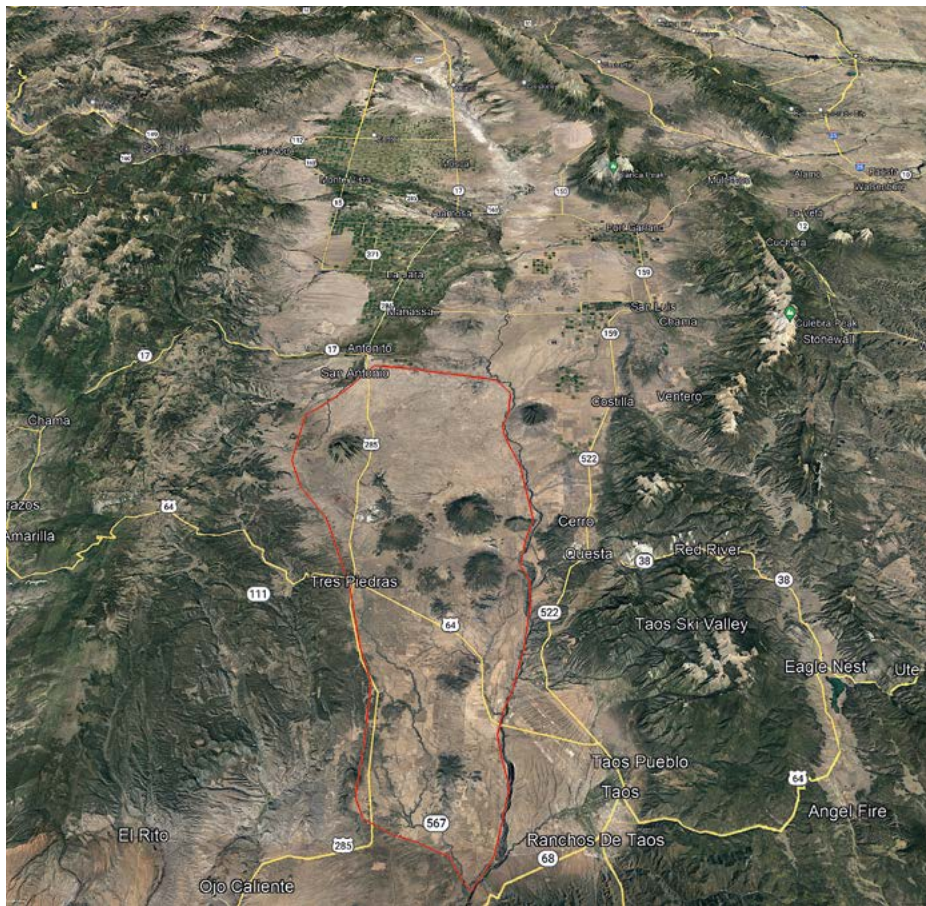
In 1821, Spain relinquished its territorial claims to the Republic of México. The republic changed the course of México by allowing trade across its international borderlines. In New Mexico, manufactured goods like cloth, sewing supplies, shoes, mirrors and metal hardware like nails were welcome commodities. Since coinage was limited, settlers bartered horses and mules, and Indigenous clans traded hides and piñón nuts. Even though foreigners were traders, they also hunted and trapped beaver. The tanned skins exported to the European top-hat market boomed into a specialty, and Mexican silver coins were exchanged in the Missouri marketplace, making the *peso* a medium of exchange. The benefits to the local populace were outweighed by the systematic decimation of the wildlife in the Sangre de Cristo and San Juan ranges. Perpetually refusing to pay taxes, bribing officials, and importing contraband (guns, ammunition, metal knives and axes)—the import/export industry left New Mexico resource-poor and impoverished.

In the interim, trappers married local women, and the most politically astute integrated into landed families to benefit from political interrelationships. Five men fit this category, the most notable being Carlos Beaubien. Interning with a high-profile Saint Louis trading house, Beaubien

Land grants given to foreign merchants/politicians were verified, while local claims were excluded.

was an educated French-Canadian ex-priest with strong ties to Missouri politicians. After profiting from trade excursions into Chihuahua, he settled and married into a prominent Taos family. Soon he was named Taos *alcalde* (magistrate/

judge/mayor), and later his duties included the north-central territory. Beaubien lived in Taos Plaza. Setting up shop as an outfitter and beaver-skin appraiser, he recreated his storefront into a gathering place for newcomers, creating suspicion and animosity among locals.



Map of San Luis Valley showing towns and highways. Courtesy U.S. Park Service

Holding court and mediating property disputes, Beaubien knew the mechanics of Spanish land-granting customs and Mexican regulations. In a little over a decade of Mexican rule, American immigrants in California controlled one-third of the mission

Land-grant tradition and custom were superimposed by a complex American legal and property survey system.

land grants. In Texas they outnumbered locals 10 to one, and the cotton growers started relocating slave laborers from the South. To control the larger geographic area encompassing New Mexico, California and Texas, five laws were passed to control land grants: residency and declaration of citizenship in two years, defense of land grants in allegiance to México, and prohibited grants near coastlines in California. Mexico City bureaucrats' shortsightedness related to frontier enforcement of regulations by governors. Ignoring any and all Mexican dictates, in 1836 Texas declared independence. Four years later, 325 armed Texans attempted a hostile takeover of New Mexico but were brutally repelled.

Most significant to the future of the New Mexican colonization was the custom of land granting.

In the context of New Mexico, the 1824 Law was significant. Foremost was the limitation of foreign land-grant petitions to 11 leagues, or 71 square miles per land-grant application. Usurping New Mexico Territory to create contemporary southern Colorado would never have occurred if the law had been justly and consistently enforced. Instead, the governor of New Mexico—who was a private trader in Missouri and had a sub-rosa relationship with Beaubien and a hidden interest in the Sangre de Cristo Grant—quickly approved both grants in separate transactions: first the 1.7-million acres in the Raton Basin (1841), and secondly, a million acres in the San Luis Basin (1843). The grants extended along both slopes of the Sangre de Cristo range, encompassing eastern sections of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. The first settlement along the Raton Basin was Rayado, built by well-armed and seasoned frontiersmen, who were Beaubien's partners and employees. In the case of the Río Culebra Basin, the first pobladores were extended agro-pastoral families under the leadership of Beaubien's appointed headmen. But settlement was never successful because Utes aggressively protected the uplands as their homeland.

End of the Mexican Era

With the occupation of New Mexico in 1846, the Mexican Era ended. With its demise, land-grant tradition and custom were superimposed upon by a complex American legal and property survey system. At the end of the bloody confrontation with México, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed to validate American claims to half of the Republic. Clauses in the treaty promised to respect citizens' religious, property and civil rights, and yet, Congress omitted protection of land grants. Animosity increased as land grants given to foreign merchants/politicians were verified, while local claims were excluded. In January 1847, Taos and surrounding villages rebelled. The result was the killing of four land grantees (including Beaubien's teenage son and co-owner of the Sangre de Cristo Grant) and others viewed as co-conspirators. Structures were burned and foreign bystanders murdered. Armed soldiers from Santa Fe arrived, killing over 200 innocent people at Taos Pueblo who had sought asylum in a church; others were executed by firing squad. After the mayhem ended, Beaubien presided over the trial as Justice of the Territorial Supreme Court. He sentenced at least 28 to death, and others were jailed with hard labor and high fines.

In 1854, the Office of the Surveyor General was organized by Congress to adjudicate Spanish/Mexican grants to determine what land was private and what was public. The office was staffed with notorious speculators who consistently approved vast grants of foreigners while deeming other grants public domain. To mediate long-standing allegations against the



Rock carvings along the Río Grande corridor in Costilla County, facing north, with Blanca Massif in the background. Photo by Arnold Valdez

Human presence in the Southwest was always related to climate change.

surveyor general, in 1891 the Court of Private Claims was established. Of the estimated 301 cases heard, 71 percent were rejected due to the use of metes-and-bounds boundaries and Spanish property measurements, lost land-grant papers and the inability to settle due to raiding. Many grantees died waiting for title approval, while claims of wealthy foreigners like Beaubien had been approved by 1860.

Beaubien knew that his land grants required a military presence to ensure settlement was permanent. To pursue this goal, he first convinced commanders to construct a temporary garrison on his land grant at Rayado. This was a strategic move, since the army possessed a sawmill, which allowed rapid construction. The garrison was relocated within a year and renamed Fort Union, and Rayado became a supply subsidiary for the army. On the Sangre de Cristo in 1852, the military built Fort Garland near Blanca Massif, but the site was difficult to supply and was abandoned in six years. As a compromise with commanders to ensure another garrison was manned, Beaubien signed a rent-free contract for 25 years, including rights to hunt, gather wood and divert water into the compound. The fort was profitable for Beaubien and his associates, as they sold commodities (corn, wheat, oats and other supplies) to the commissary.

New Mexico as a Colorado Territory

With Beaubien's political help and a legal team, in 1861 New Mexico became Colorado Territory. Massive land grants were protected, as Colorado law protected private property rights. A year before his death in 1864, Beaubien personally subdivided parcels in the Río Costilla and Río Culebra watersheds. Using a large compass and two helpers, he organized the village layout by using the French-Canadian long-lot system of land distribution. Deeds allotted a range of land, and settlers paid to purchase their holdings. In return, they received an ornate deed penned in Spanish. The central village, which was to become the county seat, was organized with a millsite, church and a *vega* or common

grazing land. Directions for expansion and spacing between homes was cited, requirements for rendering public service (opening roadways and digging ditches) was mandated, and an order issued, expecting adult men to be armed to protect the land grant from attack. Of significance was a short filing written in archaic Spanish, describing "settlers rights" to the upland and lowland to graze in common and gather wood. Later in the 1870s, a courthouse was constructed where all of the documents are kept, including deeds and property transfers. Since then, the building has never been burned or destroyed, as many others were in Colorado.

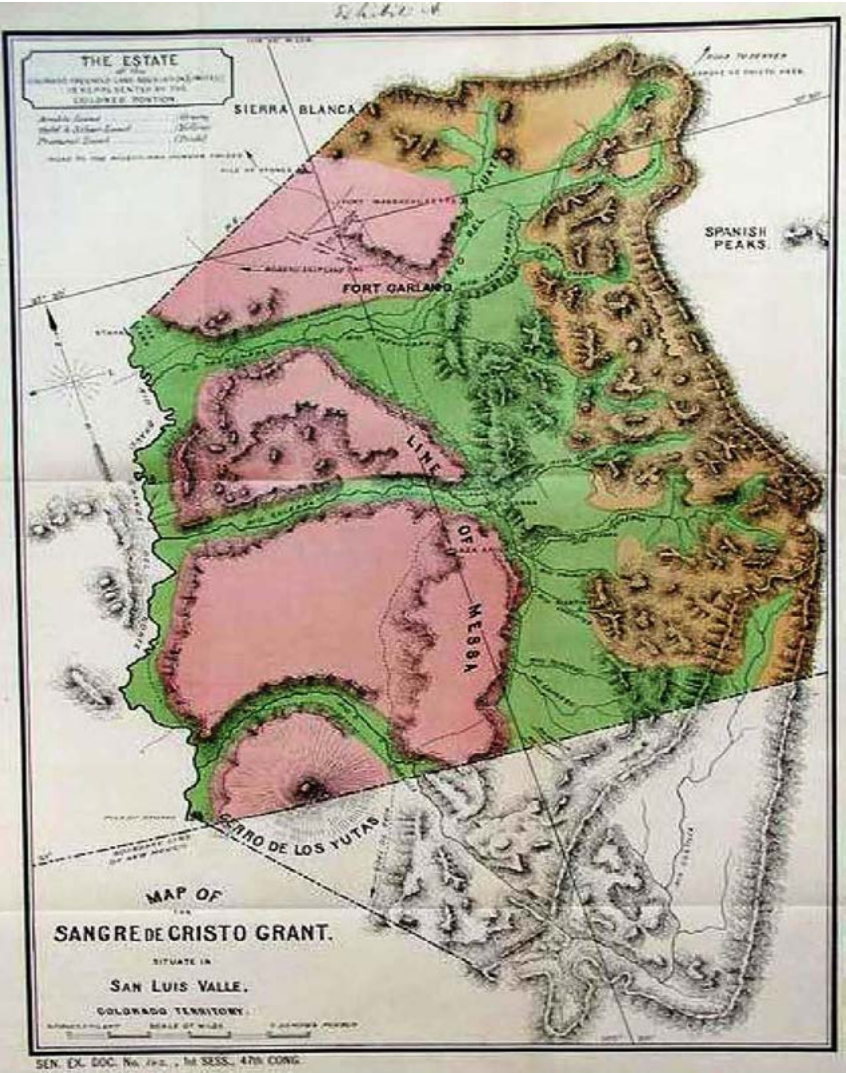
The far-reaching implications of Beaubien's ownership of the Sangre de Cristo Land Grant is undeniable, as litigation continued from the founding of the grant, which was divided, sold and resold for generations to English, German and Dutch speculators. The heirs of the original settlers' claims were validated in 2004, when the Colorado Supreme Court recognized deeds issued by Carlos Beaubien as valid rights to own property and to graze in common land and gather wood in the upland.

Ultimately, after many broken treaties and the takeover of the uplands, which Beaubien instigated to ensure permanence of the San Luis Valley, the Ute and Jicarilla Apache were removed from their homelands, initiating a diaspora. ■



María Mondragón-Valdez's family have been multi-generational residents of the Sangre de Cristo Land Grant, though some of her ancestral roots stem from the Taos and Chama valleys. Mondragón-Valdez earned a Ph.D. from the University of New Mexico Dept. of American Studies. She served on boards of the Land Rights Council and the Regional Development Planning Group. Her activism was acknowledged in 500 Years of Chicana Women's History. Mondragón-Valdez and her husband, Arnold, live on a family homestead in the Río Culebra Basin.

Photo by Kate Perdoni



SUGGESTED READING

Malcolm Ebright, *The Tierra Amarilla Grant: A History of Chicanery*. The Center for Land Grant Studies, 1980.

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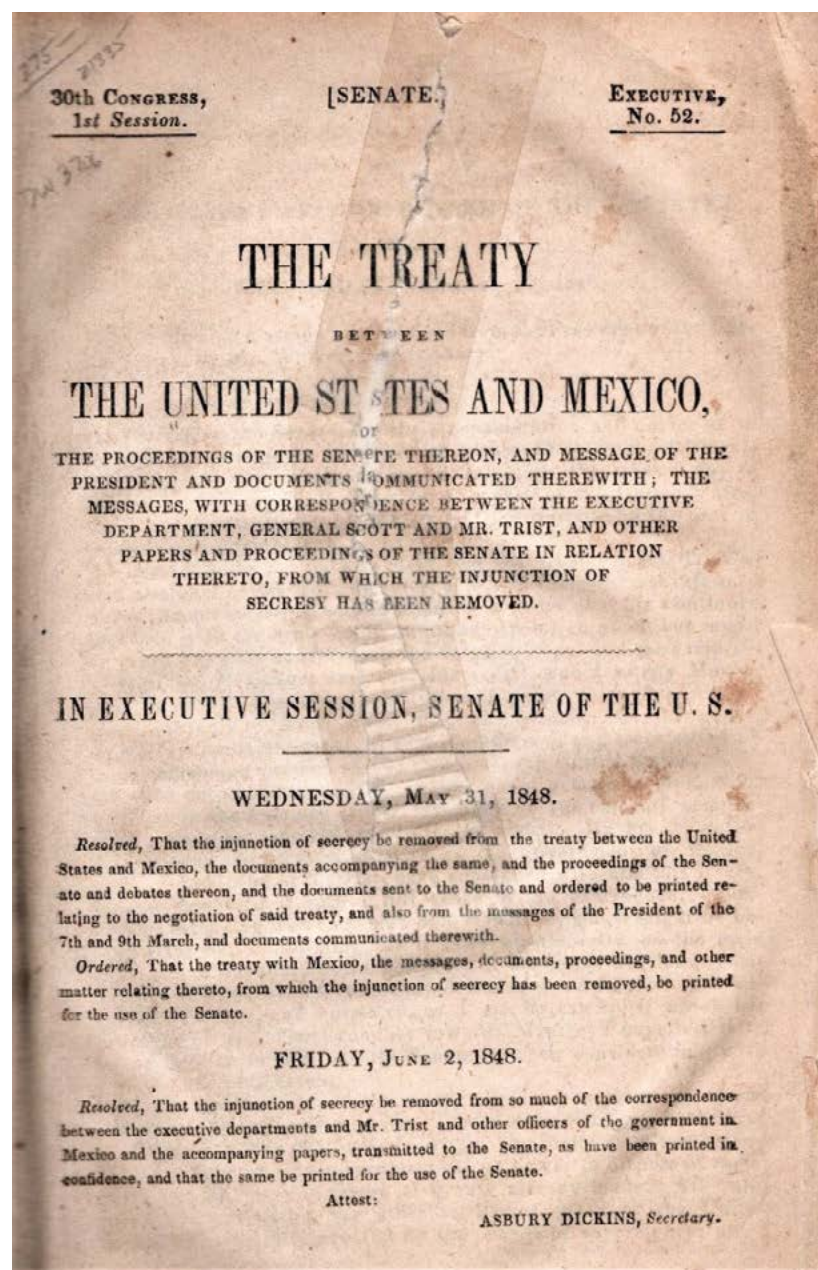
BROKEN PROMISE: SANDOVAL v. U.S. AND THE TREATY OF GUADALUPE HIDALGO

When the United States took possession of New Mexico and the greater Southwest under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, it promised to “maintain and protect” the property rights of Mexican citizens who chose to remain. That promise was not symbolic—it was a binding obligation under Articles VIII and IX of the treaty, which, under the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution (Article VI), became part of “the supreme Law of the Land.”

Yet half a century later, those guarantees were largely dismantled through the U.S. Court of Private Land Claims (1891-1904) and the Supreme Court’s 1897 ruling in *United States v. Sandoval*—a decision that drastically curtailed communal and land-grant rights in direct conflict with both the treaty and the Constitution.

THE NARROWING OF JUSTICE

Congress created the Court of Private Land Claims to confirm Spanish and Mexican grants in the newly acquired territories. While the statute claimed to honor the treaty, the court’s procedures and standards were grounded in Anglo American property law, not Mexican or Spanish traditions.



The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, also known as the Mexican Cession, was an agreement between the United States and Mexico that ended the Mexican-American War and transferred territory to the U.S.



President James K. Polk approved the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

Image: American History Central and the Library of Congress

Under Mexican law, many grants—such as the San Miguel del Bado grant—were communal, their lands used collectively by settlers for grazing, farming and timber. But the American legal framework demanded “perfect title,” clear boundaries and exclusive ownership—criteria foreign to the communal system. As a result, entire communities lost their common lands. Congress even imposed an 11-square-league cap on grants, a limitation found nowhere in the treaty or Mexican law.

The court’s strict evidentiary and procedural standards placed heirs at a disadvantage, often requiring records that had never existed or had been lost under U.S. occupation.

SANDOVAL v. UNITED STATES: A CONSTITUTIONAL BETRAYAL

In *Sandoval* (167 U.S. 278, 1897), the Supreme Court ruled that lands within the San Miguel del Bado Grant not specifically allocated to individuals were public domain and thus passed to the United States. This decision ignored the communal nature of the grant and the treaty’s explicit protection of property “of every kind.”

By redefining unallotted communal land as “vacant,” the court effectively transferred property from the heirs of New Mexican citizens to the federal government—contradicting both the treaty and the Supremacy Clause. Treaties stand above statutory enactments, yet Congress and the courts substituted their own standards, eroding rights the Constitution required them to protect.

THE CONSEQUENCES AND THE CALL FOR REDRESS

The results were devastating. The Sandoval Seven Land Grants—including San Miguel del Bado, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, Don Fernando de Taos, Galisteo, San Joaquín del Río de Chama, La Petaca and Cañón de Carnué—lost millions of acres of their commons.

A 2004 Government Accountability Office report later confirmed that many heirs believe the U.S. failed to “properly protect land grants during the confirmation process.” The historical record supports them. The Sandoval decision and the Court of Private Land Claims supplanted international obligations with domestic policy, violating the very Constitution the justices swore to uphold.

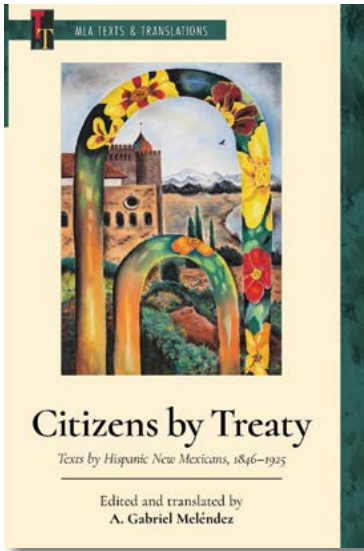
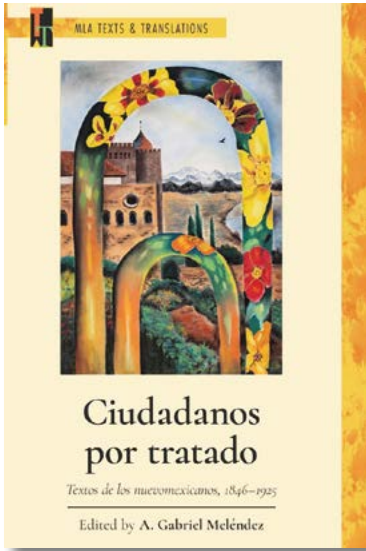
If treaties are indeed the “supreme Law of the Land,” then Sandoval stands as a constitutional contradiction—a moment when America’s word to the people of New Mexico was broken.

Today, justice demands acknowledgment and redress. Congress and the courts must revisit these rulings in light of the Treaty’s original intent, recognizing that the lands once promised to remain “inviolably respected” were taken, not by war or conquest, but by judicial reinterpretation. Honoring that promise now would not only restore trust but also reaffirm the nation’s fidelity to its own Constitution—and to the generations who have carried the memory of the Treaty of Guadalupe as both a wound and a hope. ■

Louis G. Gallegos lives on the San Miguel del Bado Land Grant near Villanueva. He is the secretary, San Miguel del Bado Land Grant-Merced.

CITIZENS BY TREATY:
TEXTS BY HISPANIC NEW MEXICANS, 1846-1925

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY A. GABRIEL MELÉNDEZ
MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, NEW YORK (2025)
AVAILABLE IN BOTH ENGLISH AND SPANISH



There have only been a handful of scholars that have had the ability to capture the essence of the struggle Nuevo Mexicanos had to endure during the American occupation of New Mexico into statehood and citizenship.

After exhaustive research in long-forgotten periodicals and rarely researched archives, A. Gabriel Meléndez's analysis as a forward to each entry is as invaluable as the entries themselves. His knowledge

of New Mexico history for the period, as well as the literary background of many of the contributors cited, is a tour de force. And he brings to life not only the period in which the essays, poems, dialogues, etc., were written, but the human condition and reflection of many of the authors.

This was a tumultuous period when Nuevo Mexicanos' loyalty, language, faith and intelligence were not only questioned but were considered a detriment to statehood and citizenship by a powerful Anglo establishment. It is a dark chapter in New Mexico history. Fortunately, scholars like Meléndez have brought to light the resistance and intelligence of Nuevo Mexicanos, who not only defended their culture and language, but also their right to citizenship in their own words, and quite articulately.

This work is highly recommended for everyone studying New Mexico history, and this period should be represented in every bookstore in New Mexico.

– ORLANDO ROMERO
AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN

FROM THE PUBLISHER:

This volume gathers works produced by Spanish-speaking people of Mexican descent who became United States citizens by virtue of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) and whose ancestors had resided in New Mexico, Arizona, California, Texas and Colorado for hundreds of years prior to the Mexican-American War. The writings in this collection, drawn from various genres, were composed at a time marked by the confluence of tradition and change. In addition to facing unprecedented challenges to their rights, livelihoods, language and religion, the writers experienced the arrival of the railroad, the telegraph, film and radio; they fought in the American Civil War, the Spanish-American War and World War I; and they saw Arizona and New Mexico gain statehood in 1912. This anthology of songs, poems, speeches and journalism shows the persistence of a vibrant culture in the face of upheaval and change.



L–R: Orlando Romero, Rebecca Romero and A. Gabriel Meléndez at the New Mexico History Museum in Santa Fe, August 2025.
Photo © Seth Roffman

CON LA PLUMA Y LA PALA,
FIGHTING FOR OUR ACEQUIAS

As New Mexicans, the only thing more epic than our clear blue skies and brilliant sunsets is our water wars. Since the state's inception, whiskey has been for drinking, and water for fighting. Historically, there has never been a 'scarcity' of those who will steal this scarce resource. But today's bully aggressor is our state government.

I represent a small, ancient acequia that traverses the Sangre de Cristo Mountain range and delivers precious water from the Río Pueblo basin to the Canadian Basin, landing in the Mora Valley. Our acequia was established in the early 1800s, even prior to the establishment of the Mora Land Grant. In Malcolm Ebright's extensive research, he wrote that our ditch, the first trans-mountain acequia, was established *with the consent* of Picuris Pueblo¹. As such, our ditch was not associated with the Picuris protest of Mora ditches in 1882 (*Pando v. García*). This water-sharing agreement, while not perfect, has been in place for over 200 years.

The water's source is the Serpent Lake, situated at the base of the majestic La Jicarita Peak. My father says that "la jicarita" is the Spanish interpretation of a Native word meaning "the vessel." What a flawless description of the natural bowl of La Jicarita.

Our acequia is small. It draws from Los Alamitos Creek, one of three branches draining from Serpent Lake. It sends a flow of water through a 24-inch culvert. The headgate is typically at half-height to prevent excessive water going through the acequia's carefully carved six-inch deep flat bed. It's truly an engineering marvel as it curves softly around the mountains, hugging the slope like a trickling halo. It was constructed by pick and shovel, sweat and perseverance, long before today's technologies.

This acequia (like all others in the basin) is unadjudicated, meaning that the water has been subject only to "general administration" and not specific measurement from the Office of the State Engineer.

Under this vague authority of "general administration," this acequia has been under attack by the Office of the State Engineer (OSE) Water Rights Division (WRD). Their weapon of choice? The Compliance Order (known as a CO). Since 2020, the WRD has relentlessly used state resources to harass, intimidate and coerce us. They have aimed their state-funded lawyers at us and made claims with little basis in reality. They accuse us of "damming" water, where the reality is not a "dam," but instead the slope-side berm of the ditch. They even installed a measurement gauge in our culvert without any notice or permission from us. To add insult to injury,



Chana García with spring acequia cleaning crew



Above: Water overflowing an acequia berm and returning to Los Alamos Creek. A small diversion enters the headgate on the far left. Below: Acequia de Cañoncito at sunset

they refuse to give us any data from this gauge. They claim, believe it or not, that the data was “burned” in the Calf Canyon/Hermit’s Peak Fire of 2022. Burned data? How can a solar-powered transmission station that was operational for years *before* the fire have “burned” data?

On Dec. 14, 2023, John T. Romero, director of the Water Rights Division, issued his Compliance Order. Let the thievery and chicanery begin! One really has to wonder if Mr. Romero understands what the “R” in WRD stands for. The CO quotes a water-measurement volume that we had never heard of before. What? It claims over-diversion of said volume. What? It demands a complete shutdown of water until double repayment is made. What?! As with all adjudicated acequias, the exact water volume has *never* been established. This CO is like being accused of a double homicide when you’ve never even jaywalked. The CO screams of unfair treatment, government overreach and lack of due process.

Through their attorneys, a “Land and Water” firm (whose name prophetically signals a “taking of land and stealing of water”), they spend unlimited funds on the attack. Who knows how many other small farmers and ancient acequias they have targeted? Your tax dollars are hard at theft. We’ve spent tens of thousands of dollars defending ourselves. We have even spent the bulk of this year attempting to negotiate with them. To no avail. It’s clear they want control of our water.

What exactly is their motivation? To send more water to Picuris Pueblo? Heck no, they literally don’t give a drip. To send more water to satisfy the *Texas v. New Mexico* water compact? Unlikely, given our small

I represent a small, ancient acequia that traverses the Sangre de Cristo Mountain range.

diversion. To get more water to the massive data centers to whom they just gave massive incentives and commitments of water? Now we might be getting warmer. To take the water rights and monetize them? Now we could be getting hot. You know the old adage: What direction does water run? Toward the money.

The Compliance Order screams of unfair treatment, government overreach and lack of due process.

I tell you this. Water is sacred. Acequia Culture is sacred. How many other states have the acequias, like New Mexico? None. Would the people of this state let the government sell Inscription Rock to Elon Musk? With the recent passing of actor/director, Robert Redford, I am reminded of an interview he gave regarding his iconic film: *The Milagro Beanfield War*. He said: “I care about the little guy against the big powers that overwhelm the little person. Particularly a culture, a situation that involves the possible squeezing out of a culture, part of our heritage by development, profit.” Truer words never spoken. In 1988, the film’s antagonist was a land developer. Today’s villain is our state government.



Water flows through an acequia just downstream from the diversion headgate.

*What direction does water run?
Toward the money.*

Each year, we clean our ditches. When we encounter vandalism, we fix it. When *parciantes* disagree, we resolve it. When nature throws a colossal fire and subsequent flooding at us, we trudge on. The work on a small farm is never easy and never ending, which is probably why the state sees us as a distracted target.

If you disagree with the OSE targeting acequias, call your state senators and representatives. Tell them what their employees are doing. If you are an acequia being attacked, FIGHT. Fight with everything. *Con la pluma y la pala*. Fight with the pen. Fight with the shovel. Fight with your boots on...your irrigation boots.

For further reading:
1Making Water Run Uphill: The Mora Acequias de la Sierra vs Picuris Pueblo: A Tale of Two Watersheds and the Mora Land Grant, Malcolm Ebright (2017)

Case Study: Acequias de La Sierra and Early Agriculture Mora Valley, Anselmo F. Arellano 1985.

Acequia Culture: Water, Land and Community in the Southwest, José A. Rivera (1998) ■

Chana Paiz García, an accountant, is secretary of La Acequia de Cañoncito and Parciantes of La Acequia del Encinal in Cleveland, N.M. Her heritage and farming roots in the Mora Valley trace back at least seven generations.

EXCERPTS FROM MAKING WATER RUN UPHILL

BY MALCOLM EBRIGHT

*The Mora Acequias de la Sierra vs. Picuris Pueblo;
A Tale of Two Watersheds and the Mora Land Grant*

by Malcolm Ebright (New Mexico Historical Review, 2017)

The most dramatic water diversion in territorial-period northern New Mexico, and to this day one of the most controversial, took place on top of Jicarilla Mountain in 1882. After three years of digging and cutting, sometimes through solid rock, a group of about 20 families sponsored by Mora parish priest Juan Bautista Guerin, diverted, coaxed and channeled water from ponds and *cirques* (glacial basins) at the crest of Jicarita Mountain from the Río Grande watershed through the Río Canadian watershed and into the Acequia de la Sierra de Holman. Still in use today, it is actually two acequias. The Sierra portion leads water from the middle branch of the Río Pueblo on the Picuris side of the watershed about six miles to the ridge dividing the two watersheds. It then drops the water into Vigil Canyon, where it flows for about two miles before it is diverted into the Holman acequia proper and “reaches the community of Holman where its *parciantes* (land-owning irrigators) irrigate their pastures, alfalfa fields and gardens.”

The Acequia de la Sierra de Holman, an engineering marvel, was constructed without the benefit of sophisticated tools and engineering know-how, accomplishing the seemingly impossible feat of making water run uphill by bringing it across the divide between the two watersheds. However, the Pueblo of Picuris challenged the project in court as an illegal diversion that diminished the flow of water in the Río del Pueblo, from which the Indians had been irrigating for centuries. The conflict among the Mora Valley irrigators, Picuris Pueblo and other irrigators along the Río del Pueblo is bundled in layers of land grant history—both Pueblo and Hispano—and wrapped in ancient and modern story and myth. The heart of the conflict contains a fascinating case of strange bedfellows and shifting alliances that still reverberates on both sides of the Jicarita Peak.

The conflict is bundled in layers of land grant history—both Pueblo and Hispano—and wrapped in ancient and modern story and myth.

This conflict shows that, in the century before the diversion of 1882, land and water were intimately connected both practically and legally. When that connection was broken, what had been one mountain shared by communities on both sides became two watersheds in competition with one another. An analysis of this litigation also reveals the growing disadvantage the people of Picuris Pueblo had in negotiating with first the Spanish, then the Mexican, and finally the American legal system. While the Picuris Indians were generally able to represent themselves directly before the governor and legislative authorities in Santa Fe during the Spanish and the Mexican Periods (1598–1846), after the creation of the New Mexico Territorial District Courts under the United States, the Indians needed a lawyer to make court appearances on their behalf (except in Juez de Paz or probate judge courts where Indians were usually at a disadvantage).

The Picuris were unable to convince a lawyer to appear for them in district court after Pueblo Governor Juan Pando, with the assistance of Indian Agent Benjamin Thomas, filed a lawsuit in July 1882 challenging the recently completed Holman and two previous Mora acequia diversions. This investigation of the history of the Acequias de la Sierra also uncovers some hidden aspects of the Mora Land Grant and shows that its origins were tied to the source of the first Acequia de la Sierra, the

Picuris Pueblo had a growing disadvantage in negotiating with first the Spanish, then the Mexican, and finally the American legal system.

Rito Astillero (or Rito Alamitos) on the Picuris Mountain. The later confusion over the location of the western boundary of the Mora Grant created a situation that benefited many Mora Grant settlers, who were a more diverse group than previously thought.

Recently, discussions have taken place between Picuris Pueblo, upstream and downstream irrigators in Dixon, and Mora Valley acequia representatives, to bring history to bear on the current situation and possibly achieve an equitable water-sharing and monitoring agreement between the two watersheds without the oversight of the New Mexico State Engineer's Office or the courts.

What had been one mountain shared by communities on both sides became two watersheds in competition with one another.



Dixon acequia commissioner Robert Templeton, on the left; Picuris Gov. Craig Quanchello, on the right. Photo from *La Jicarita* online magazine, 2019

... May the story of these acequias, built by the great-great-grandparents of present-day irrigators, continue to inspire cooperation between the two watersheds, and may the parallel histories of Picuris Pueblo and its efforts to retain its land and water, and the Mora Valley irrigators and their pride in the hydrological miracles known as the Acequias de la Sierra, be again united into one story.

THE ACEQUIA AND LAND GRANT EDUCATION PROJECT

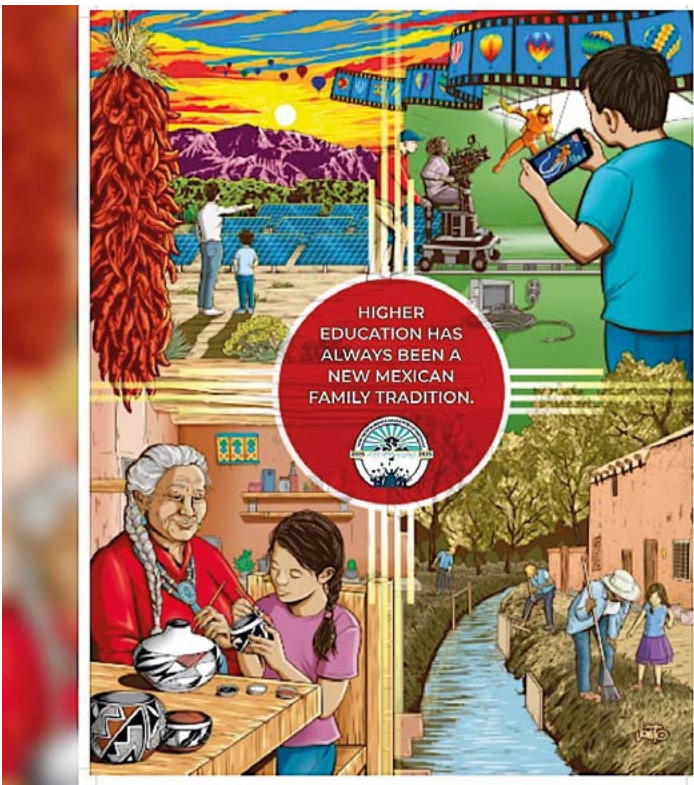
BY ADRIAN I. SANDOVAL

At Los Luceros in Alcalde, in late September, an Española Valley High School student told her friends that she learned more on that day than she does most days in the classroom. She exclaimed, “Why can’t learning be like this all of the time?!”

In 2020, state Sen. Pete Campos and state Rep. Miguel García created legislative memorials requesting a reform to New Mexico’s school system that included learning about acequias and land grants. Through their legislative leadership and support, this request quickly evolved into what is now the Acequia and Land Grant Education (ALGE) Project, thrusting the Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations (CESDP) into the unique position and privilege of becoming a conduit for land- and culturally based learning. Key to the project is centering the pools of knowledge of our communities and ensuring they are included in our state’s public schools. Put simply, the ALGE Project promotes opportunities for experiential learning within and outside of the classroom and welcomes partnerships with our communities—our elders, and the land, water and animals that are the essence of who we are. These very concepts have been tightly woven into our heritage, identity, current stewardship and the legacy we hope to leave for future generations.

Beyond the initial charge and motivation inspired by the collective wisdom of our legislators and their constituents, CESDP has been committed to reaching out to the acequia and land-grant communities of New Mexico as a way of modeling the intentions of the project and informing, orienting and further invigorating momentum around the pending work. As a result, CESDP has been welcomed into a network of people and organizations that readily embraced us with open arms and the kind of grassroots support that is uniquely a part of New Mexico. These included organizations such as the New Mexico Acequia Association, the New Mexico Land Grant Council, the Center for Social Sustainable Systems, the Center for Land-Based Culture, the Indigenous Education Network, and Sol Feliz. As real-time practitioners committed to building knowledge, creating coalitions and defending the legacy of land and water in our state, long before the initiation of our project’s initiatives, we humbly acknowledge the support they provided and continue to provide.

Our elders, and the land, water and animals have nurtured our collective existence for generations.



Within the first two years of the inception of the project, the CESDP completed a white paper to establish our position, intentions and the rationale for what we want to accomplish. We also generated a report based on our first formal convening with educators and community members focused on collaboratively

The ALGE Project promotes opportunities for experiential learning within and outside of the classroom and welcomes community partnerships.



Albuquerque High School presents ideas at the 2025 ABE N.M. Student Leadership Institute.

creating lesson plans for immediate use by teachers. Within the same report, we included a section inviting a New Mexico Indigenous perspective on our work, highlighting both our strengths and recommending areas of potential growth in order for our efforts to be inclusive. Finally, the report offered a framework for schools and communities on how to build out an acequia and land-grant curriculum, and ended with over 20 pages of resources available online for free.

Soon thereafter, the ALGE Project focused on hosting lesson-plan retreats where elders, community members, youth and educators would gather to co-create place-based lessons of interest that could be used in their local schools. Completed plans were collected and digitized in a standards-based lesson plan format to be used by teachers anywhere in our state in both English and Spanish. Just last year, we expanded this effort to include unit plans and a coloring book. We remain committed to offering these unique opportunities for collaboration, dialogue and knowledge-building between our local schools and the communities they serve.

By now, we hope our readers are wondering how they may best support the effort of learning about acequias and land grants in our public schools from Taos to Las Cruces and all points in between. To be honest, that is one of our personal goals for this



Students from Albuquerque High build consensus at the 2025 ABE N.M. Student Leadership Institute.



2025 ABE N.M. Student Leadership Institute participants explain their action plans

article. Beyond telling our story, we need your assistance to spread the word in each of your local school districts and encourage others, with the greatest of sincerity and excitement, to explore the lesson plans, curriculum and general resources that have been made available free of charge to educators and the general public on our website.

Finally, for the last two years we have been hosting an Acequia and Land Grant Preconference and various workshops for local bilingual educators as part of the Association for

The project hosts lesson-plan retreats where elders, community members, youth and educators co-create place-based lessons that can be used in local schools.

Bilingual Education of New Mexico's (ABE NM) annual statewide conference. It is here where we gather to share and celebrate the success of our latest projects and activities, build knowledge and invite local teachers to use our curricula and plan for the following year. We would love to see you in attendance at the Embassy Suites Hotel (Albuquerque) in April of 2026. Again, please visit our website or give us a call if you would like to invite us to facilitate such a gathering or to find out more information about attending our activities at ABE NM.

Our latest efforts are focused on developing a formal Pre-K to 12 acequia and land-grant curriculum in collaboration with Echeri Program Innovations and some curriculum that can be utilized in higher education in collaboration with the Center for Land-Based Culture. We hope to see our students graduating with a vibrant sense of connection, value, knowledge and agency for the land and water that has nurtured our collective existence for generations.

CESDP is humbled by its small role in regenerating New Mexico's intergenerational relationship and responsibilities to its land and water. Next time you see a local school board member, teacher, or administrator, ask them if they have heard of the Acequia and Land Grant Education Project, and share with them why it is important to you. We need all of us working together in this effort. ■



Adrian I. Sandoval is director of the Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations at New Mexico Highlands University.

THE CENTER FOR THE EDUCATION AND STUDY OF DIVERSE POPULATIONS

CESDP at New Mexico Highlands University (NMSU) has been a partner for all things education in New Mexico and beyond for the last 30 years. As an educational diversity center, it provides systemic and sustained professional learning for parents, students, teachers and administrators in the areas of building strong family, school and community partnerships, student leadership, culturally-sustaining teaching and learning, effective instructional strategies and practices, implementing high-quality bilingual education programs and supporting organizational readiness for change.

Acequia and Land Grant Education (ALGE):
<https://cesdp.nmhu.edu/index.php/alge-project/>

Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations (CESDP):
<https://cesdp.nmhu.edu/>

Contact: 505-891-6904, AISANDOVAL@NMHUEDU

RESOURCES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

January 11, 2026 Application Deadline

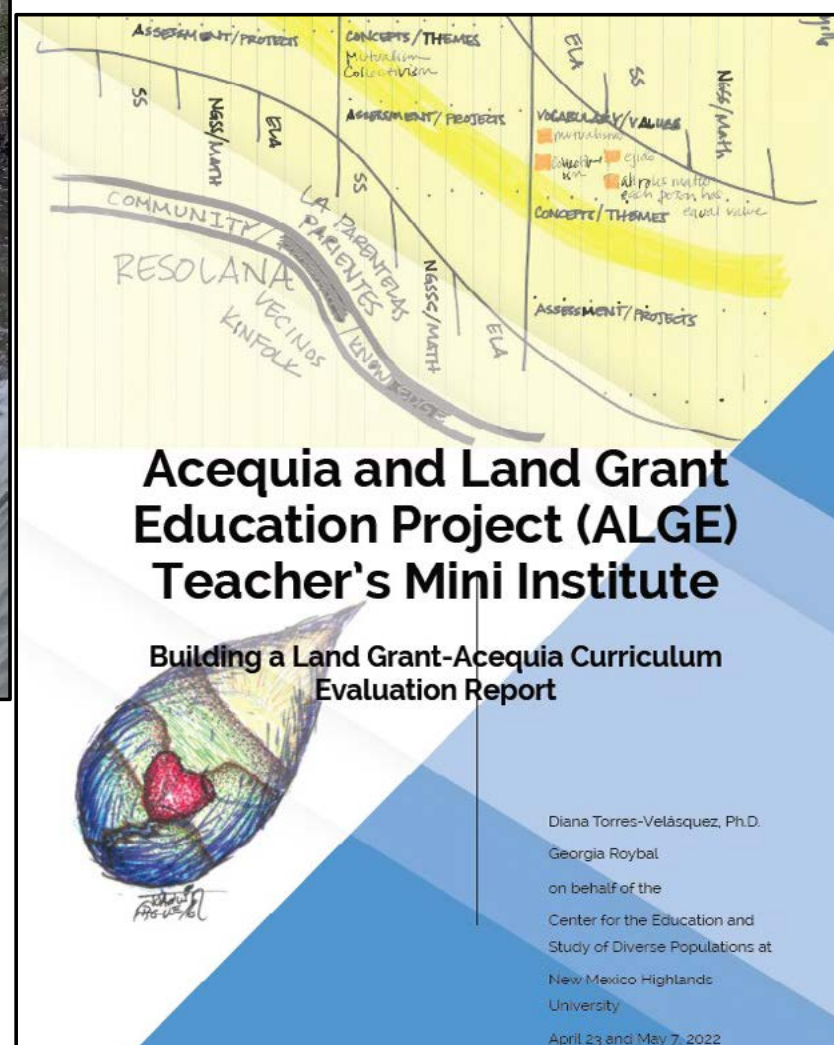
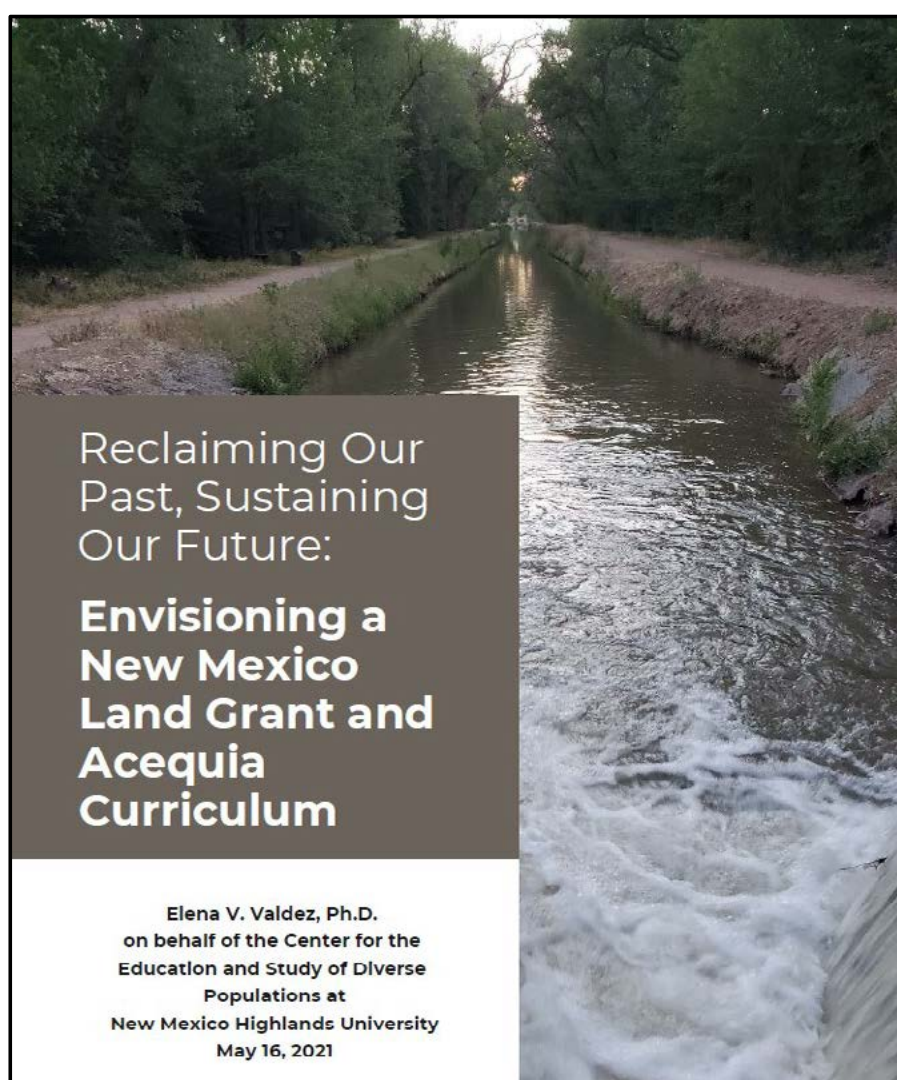
High school seniors and current college students from across Northern New Mexico can apply for awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$20,000 to support their college journey. Applications are open for the LANL Foundation's 2026 four-year scholarships. The scholarships are open to students pursuing bachelor's degrees in any subject at any accredited college or university. In 2025, the foundation awarded \$1.1 million to 185 students.

With just one application, students can be considered for 30-plus scholarship opportunities; find support that fits their unique goals, background and experiences; access professional mentors in their fields of interest; explore internship opportunities at the LANL Foundation and partner organizations; and join a supportive community that helps scholars thrive in higher education and beyond. The deadline to apply is Jan. 11, 2026 for students who meet the eligibility requirement of a 3.25 GPA, have two letters of recommendation and complete short essays. More information can be found at lanlscholars.org.



At an October event commemorating the Puesto del Embudo de Nuestro Señor San Antonio 300th land grant anniversary (1725–2025), mayordomos and commissioners were honored at the Embudo Valley Library, including Rómulo Griego, who accepted a certificate from N.M. Acequia Association executive director Paula García. Sylvia Ernestina Vergara (at the podium) organized the event. Photo © Seth Roffman

Acequia and Land Grant Education (ALGE) Project



<https://cesdp.nmhu.edu/>

Phone: 505-891-6904

NM LEGIS LEADERS HOPE TO BOOST LAND GRANT AND ACEQUIA FUNDING

BY SETH ROFFMAN

A news conference held in October by the state Legislature's interim Land Grant Committee promoted the creation of a permanent state funding source for acequias and land grants during the 2026 legislative session. State Sen. Leo Jaramillo (D-Española) said the fund would be a way of "empowering rural New Mexicans to protect our land, protect our water and our way of life for generations to come. It would also ensure a thorough vetting process to get shovel-ready projects across the finish line."

The committee members were joined by acequia and land grant leaders from across New Mexico. Paula García, executive director of the New Mexico Acequia Association, said, "New Mexico's acequias and land grants have sustained our communities and contribute to the unique beauty that makes our Land of Enchantment such a special place. We're proud to be part of New Mexico's history, but we're also thinking about our future—and these proposals would be a game-changer, ensuring our communities have the resources we need to continue sustaining ourselves and contributing to our state's rich culture." García said the proposed legislation would be the "largest investment in our communities in our centuries-long history."

"The acequias and land grants epitomize what the United States of America yearns for and has as its constitutional promise. And that is that you work collectively for a common good."
— U.S. Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández

Land grant communities with common land established under Spanish and Mexican rule have been recognized as local governments. There are over 27 land-grant *mercedes* throughout New Mexico. They provide community services, protect natural resources and preserve culture. They support parks, housing projects, drinking water and wastewater systems, fire departments, community centers and museums. "Land-grant communities lack reliable funding to build out necessary infrastructure," said Arturo Archuleta, program manager of the New Mexico Land Grant Council. "Often, the land grants are the only government that can provide some of these services."

The approximately 36 active land grants that remain manage about 300,000 acres. Many are in northern New Mexico, including the Juan Bautista Valdez, Abiquiú, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, Tierra Amarilla and Truchas land grants in Río Arriba County, the Cundiyo land grant in Santa Fe County and Las Trampas, Santa Barbara, Cristobal de la Serna, San Antonio del Río Colorado, Arroyo Hondo Arriba and Don Fernando de Taos land grants in Taos County.

U.S. Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (D-NM), who represents the state's 3rd Congressional District, said, "The acequias and land grants epitomize what the United States of America yearns for and has as its constitutional promise. And that is that you work collectively for a common good, including by caring for the water systems together."

"When the state of New Mexico passes legislation like this, that builds upon the recognition of acequias and the mercedes as the governmental entities that they

A similar bill passed the House last year, but Senate lawmakers ran out of time.

are. They can then go and seek matching funding from the federal government," said Fernández. "I want to thank Arturo Archuleta, who came all the way to Washington to testify in support of my bill, the Small Cemetery Conveyance Act. This bill would help transfer back to the mercedes the cherished places where communities have laid their loved ones to rest in peace for eternity. Too many of those cemeteries are now on federal lands. It should not be required that these communities buy their cemetery lands back. Land grants remind us that our communities are not defined by labels and boundaries; they are made up of families and the hopes and dreams of countless generations."

A series of natural disasters left many of the historic communities struggling. Land Grant Committee Chair Rep. Linda Serrato, (D-Santa Fe) said "We've seen, over the past decade, more and more natural disasters, and more and more need to repair the infrastructure that exists. Emergency debris removal costs millions of dollars and funding is unreliable." García said that about 200 of the 700 acequia systems that sustain agricultural communities across the state are in "some phase of disaster recovery, so the needs are tremendous." Referring to this summer's monsoon season, she said, "These aren't like the floods we used to get. They're very sudden, with very localized damage. All the water comes down really fast, and our acequias weren't built for those flows."

Interim committees, like the bipartisan Land Grant Committee, meet throughout the months between legislative sessions in communities across New Mexico. They conduct deep dives into complex issues, evaluate proposed legislation, and provide recommendations for consideration by the broader legislature.

The committee officially endorsed three pieces of legislation that are part of the Land Grant-Merced and Acequia Infrastructure Fund bill. About \$19 million annually would be directed to acequias and land grants via the state's severance tax bond capacity. The funding would help maintain the acequias themselves. The land-grant funding would help provide wastewater management, housing development and community centers. Another proposal would improve the distribution process within the Land Grant-Merced Assistance Fund and make it a permanent fund, which retains allocated money for use the next year, rather than reverting it back to the state's general fund. Another piece of endorsed legislation would increase the state's yearly transfer to acequias and community ditches from \$2.5 million to \$5 million annually.



"I am grateful for the bipartisan work of this committee and the rural communities who came together for solutions that will sustain our historic land grants and acequias," said Land Grant Committee Chair Rep. Linda Serrato (D-Santa Fe). Photo © Seth Roffman

2025 ANNUAL CONGRESO DE LAS ACEQUIAS

December 5–6, NM Highlands University,
Las Vegas, N.M.

Since 1999, the New Mexico Acequia Association’s annual *Congreso de las Acequias* has brought together the acequia community to celebrate culture, share stories and determine the organization’s priorities for the coming year. This year, the statewide gathering of acequia leaders, *parciantes* and supporters will be held in the Student Union Building of New Mexico Highlands University on Dec. 5 and 6. On Friday, NMAA will host several workshops and exhibits. Saturday is the main event.

This year’s theme, “Agua y Justicia,” is a recognition of the profound importance of water to justice and equity in acequia communities. For over 30 years, acequia leaders have fought to protect acequias and agricultural and food traditions. This grassroots movement includes:

- **Protecting water rights** from mounting pressure from development and industry to move water out of agriculture. The NMAA’s work has grown to defend the interconnected waters of watersheds, rivers and aquifers.
- **Defending clean water** by ensuring that New Mexico has robust policies to prevent pollution of waterways that support agriculture, ecosystems and aquifer recharge.
- **Advocating for restoration** of acequia infrastructure and watersheds to allow the continuation of historic water rights. Water justice for acequias includes funding for acequia infrastructure and disaster recovery.
- **Building an educational system** where youth in rural communities can benefit from place-based education and culturally relevant curriculum that includes acequias.

For more information, call 505-955-9644 or visit www.lasacequias.org.



Photos from the 2024 Congreso de las Acequias
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SANTA CRUZ DE LA CAÑADA AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE ESPAÑOLA VALLEY

BY CAMILLA TRUJILLO

PART I – LA VILLA DE SANTA FE

“Dibujar mil estrellas en una sola página, Uña perfecta del niño, Las mil arrugas que se ponen a bailar cuando se ríe la abuelita, hablar con las manos, avíspsa escondida en la manzana caída...”
— Jim Sagel, *Unos Nacen Con Estrella*

To know the baffling beauty of northern New Mexico is to fall in love. Why, you ask, would 68 families, 235 individuals, make the difficult journey north, from Ciudad México to La Villa de Santa Fe; and then onward to La Villa Nueva de Santa Cruz de la Cañada? One man with a vision created the opportunity for these families, talented artisans but landless in a metropolitan city, to travel at his behest, with the promise of total support from the Spanish Crown. This, in addition to legal grants of land, which would raise them up to the more fortunate social position of Hidalgo. At that time, 1693, Nuevo México was no longer a mysterious presence on the edge of a map but a fully explored region of the northernmost Spanish realm, *la Frontera*. Extending the invitation was none other than Don Diego DeVargas, the governor of Nuevo México.

These initial families and the granting of these lands by DeVargas established the robust roots of New Mexico’s land grant tradition.

De Vargas, an energetic, intelligent, charismatic and visionary man of the 17th century, kept detailed journals. From those journals we can appreciate his ability to attend to the tasks at hand with a graceful duty to the Crown and a loving dedication to the Church, both of which maintained law and order in colonial-era Nuevo México. Beginning in 1692 with a visit to Pueblo leaders, DeVargas would develop a strategy to repopulate northern New Mexico with those pre-1680 families who wished to return from Guadalupe del Paso to La Villa de Santa Fe and points north. Albuquerque had not yet been established, and Taos would remain a military interest only, until around 1710. To supplement the families returning to Santa Cruz, DeVargas requested the Viceroy of México make a shout-out for potential *pobladores*. They would be transported to la frontera de Nuevo México at the expense of the royal treasury and receive individual as well as communal grants of land. These initial families and the granting of these lands by DeVargas established the robust roots of New Mexico’s land grant tradition.

Who were these people, the ancestors of today’s heirs to the Santa Cruz de la Cañada Land Grant? DeVargas’s vision was particular: Married couples only; no single men; artisans preferred. In September 1693, blacksmiths, stonemasons, shoemakers, coppersmiths, tailors, painters and other guildsmen and their wives and children embarked on the 1,500-mile odyssey. Among these artisan families, my own ancestors journeyed northward. Nicolas Ortíz was a weaver. He and his wife, Doña Mariana Coronado, joined up in 1693. They had six children, one of them named Nicolas, who proudly took the very old Spanish name of Nicolas Ortíz Niño Ladron de Guevara (long story), and had a son named Nicolas Bernardo, who in 1730, married Gertrudis, the daughter of Juan Paez Hurtado. Nicolas and Gertrudis had a son, Gaspar, who married Francisca Joséfa Martin Serrano in 1765 at the Santa Clara Pueblo Mission Church. They settled in Nambé and had a son, José Manuel Ortíz, who became the grandfather of my great-grandmother, Camila Rivera Romero, mother of Toñita, my dear grandmother.

From Ciudad México to La Villa de Santa Fe

The excursion from Ciudad México to La Villa de Santa Fe took nine months instead of four. Eight women were pregnant when they left, one died giving birth along the way; her son survived. Wagons broke down; one man died when the wagon he was repairing fell on top of him. Burials take time. The last 550 miles of the northern part of El Camino Real, also known as the Chihuahua Trail, carried the voyagers through Chihuahua, then El Paso, through la Jornada del Muerto, past Socorro, through the

At that time, 1693, Nuevo México was a fully explored region of the northernmost Spanish realm, la Frontera.

western side of the Manzano and Sandia mountains, through Santo Domingo and Cochiti pueblos, up La Bajada, through La Ciénega, then Agua Fria.

They entered the fortified plaza at Santa Fe through Water Street, more or less. Since it was June 1694, the fields maintained on the south side of the Río Santa Fe by the Indian residents of Barrio de Analco would have been recently planted, irrigation water delivered by various *acequias* that surrounded and crossed the plaza. On the north side of El Río de Santa Fe would have been the Villa proper, comprised of: The Palace of the Governors, with two *torreons*—one to house the military chapel dedicated to Nuestra Señora de la Luz, the other for the storage of gunpowder; the remains of an old church built in 1622 by Fray Benavides, near the present-day Basilica de San Francisco; and an ancient road that went past the old church and ran all the way to Pecos through what is now Canyon Road.



This is the only known portrait of Diego de Vargas that was commissioned during his lifetime. It is by Julio Barrera. Courtesy, Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), No. 011409.

East of the old church and ancient road was a *ciénega*, or marsh, known as Barrio del Torreón, in the area of Peyton Wright Gallery; a smaller river, *El Chorito*, fed by a natural spring that flowed from what is now a parking lot, ran parallel to el Río de Santa Fe; bridges that crossed the waterways to and from Barrio de Analco and the remains of a small chapel, La Hermita de San Miguel, built in 1610. What we know as San Francisco Street, on the south side of the plaza, were then adobe houses, flat-roofed and contiguous; on the west side, where the bank is today, were additional houses. Lincoln Street was a *vereda*, a pathway to more gardens and orchards that extended past what is now the post office. Washington Street was a 21-foot-wide road that exited the plaza, continuing north to Santa Cruz as El Camino Real. Sena Plaza was known as Las Casas Reales, where many of those returning from El Paso reclaimed their pre-1680 homes, including my ancestors, Francisca Robledo Gómez and her husband, Ignacio Roybal.

I like to imagine that, in the large uncluttered plaza, multiple traditional *bornos*, freshly mud plastered,

would have been busy producing delicious baked bread for the weary travelers, as well as roasted meats, *calabaza dulce*, and *bizcochitos*. Apples saved from the previous fall's harvest would have been handed out to the children, and fresh water from El Chorito shared and enjoyed. An outdoor Mass would have been celebrated, in thanksgiving. Eighty-eight children and 129 adults completed the trek.

For the next 10 months the artisan pobladores would remain in La Villa de Santa Fe. Clothing would be mended, the tailors and shoemakers kept busy, as well as the weavers. DeVargas would make good on a vow, should the expedition prove successful. With the help of the stone and brick masons, as well as the painters, he would raise the first chapel north of the plaza at what is now Rosario Cemetery. Families returning from El Paso with pre-1680 claims to lands around Santa Cruz de la Cañada, the Martin Serrano family at Chimayó, the Moragas at Pueblo Quemado



Above: This 1768 map shows the limits of settlement in the New Mexico colony. Due to the dominance of Apache, Ute, Navajo and Comanche, the colony did not expand far beyond the Río Grande corridor. Courtesy, U.S. Department of the Interior.

SANTA CRUZ DE LA CAÑADA LAND GRANT MISSION STATEMENT

- Provide living heirs, their families and neighbors with an organized mechanism for exercising their communal, economic and traditional sovereignty.
- Support and enable a means for expressing their economic and ecological self-determination and political will, as promised to our ancestors through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
- Continue the deeply rooted indigenous land-based way of life embedded in our land, acequias, spirituality, rituals and community.

Washington Street (in Santa Fe) was a 21-foot-wide road that exited the plaza, continuing north to Santa Cruz as El Camino Real.

(Cordova), as well as the Duranes, Archuletas, Madrids, Salazares, Montoyas and Herreras, would run reconnaissance before returning full-time to Santa Cruz. Perhaps there would still be livestock grazing out in the llano. Maybe the peach trees were still producing. Hopefully, the humble church that had been built on the south side of the Río Santa Cruz was still functional. There was much preparation to be made; no one was afraid of work.

Credits:
José Antonio Esquibel, *Early Settlers of Santa Cruz de la Cañada 1695-1715*, Sierra Azul Monograph No.1, 2015

Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *Old Santa Fe, The Story of New Mexico's Ancient Capitol*, 1925, Reproduced by Sunstone Press, 2007

Fray Angelico Chávez, *Origins of New Mexico Families*, Sponsored by the University of Albuquerque in collaboration with Calvin Horn Publisher, Inc. 1973

Jim Sagel, *Unos Nacen Con Estrella*, Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe, 2018 ■

Camilla Trujillo is the current tesorera (treasurer) for the Santa Cruz de la Cañada Merced Land Grant. She is also the author of the Images of America book, Española, and producer of Toñita's Best Balms.



Camilla Trujillo, Don Bustos and Emilio at a Balloon Glow at Los Luceros Historic Site, north of Alcalde, New Mexico

2025 Spanish Market Santa Fe

The 2025 Traditional Spanish Market took place in July on the Santa Fe Plaza. It featured handmade art from hundreds of Hispanic artists, live music, demonstrations and regional foods. The annual event is organized by the nonprofit Atrisco Heritage Foundation to educate, promote and preserve Spanish Colonial arts and culture. Visitors can find *colcha* embroidery, copper engraving, furniture and furnishings, gesso reliefs, hide painting, ironwork, *bultos* and *retablos*, pottery, straw appliqué, wood carving and more. Winter Spanish Market is scheduled for Dec. 6 and 7 at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center. [HTTPS://TRADITIONALSANISHMARKET.ORG](https://traditionalspanishmarket.org)

CONTEMPORARY HISPANIC MARKET

In conjunction with the traditional market in July, the Contemporary Hispanic Market (“Making New Traditions”) takes place on Lincoln Avenue, adjacent to the plaza. New Mexico-flavored pieces using techniques that may not have been available to the artists’ ancestors are featured, including paintings, jewelry, sculpture, ceramics, textiles, photography, printmaking and more. [HTTPS://WWW.CONTEMPORARYHISPANICMARKET.ORG](https://www.contemporaryhispanicmarket.org)



VOCES DEL PUEBLO

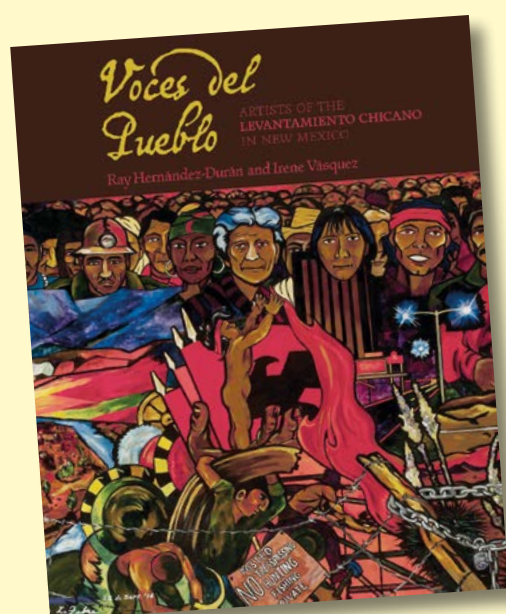
National Hispanic Cultural Center Visual Art Museum, Albuquerque
Through Feb. 8, 2026

The National Hispanic Cultural Center is currently displaying an exhibition that explores the work of New Mexico's first generation of Chicana and Chicano artists: *Voces del Pueblo: Artists of the Levantamiento Chicano in New Mexico*. "Voces del Pueblo explores an important moment in New Mexico history," said NHCC Visual Arts Program Manager Jadira Gurulé. "The artworks showcase the roots of the Chicano movement in New Mexico, situating our state within the broader cultural movement."

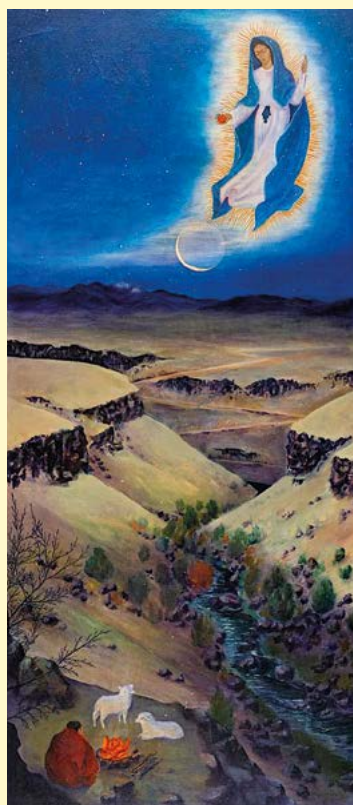
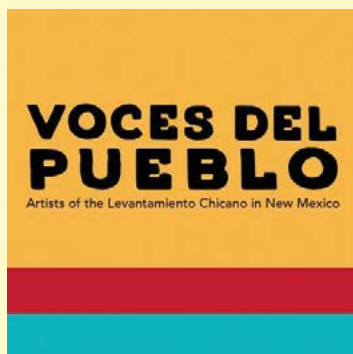
The exhibition, seven years in the making, features the work of six New Mexican artists—Ignacio Jaramillo, Juanita J. Lavadie, Francisco LeFebvre, Noel Márquez, Roberta Márquez and Adelita Medina—who were students at New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas in the early 1970s. At NMHU, these young men and women painted murals, produced art and were part of the nascent Chicano civil rights movement that was unfolding nationally, according to a news release.

Drawing from a variety of traditions, the artworks capture a distinctly New Mexican experience that has received little attention in Chicano art history. The exhibition was guest-curated by Dr. Ray Hernández-Durán, professor of Spanish Colonial Art and Architecture in the University of New Mexico's Department of Art; and Dr. Irene Vásquez, Ph.D., director of UNM's Chicana and Chicano Studies Department, who is also director of the Southwest Hispanic Research Institute. Their monumental project consists of four elements: an exhibition, an exhibition catalog, a program of events and an archive. The exhibition catalog, which includes five scholarly essays and full color reproductions of the artworks in the show, will be published in December by the University of New Mexico Press. The archive, which will be a continuing project as new materials on the Chicano movement in New Mexico are identified and collected, will be housed at the Center for Southwest Research in Zimmerman Library.

Visit nhccnm.org/exhibitions to learn more and buy tickets.



**VOCES DEL PUEBLO
ARTISTS OF THE
LEVANTAMIENTO CHICANO
IN NEW MEXICO
(CONTEXTOS SERIES)**
BY RAY HERNÁNDEZ-DURÁN,
IRENE VÁSQUEZ
UNM PRESS (DEC. 2025)
PAPERBACK



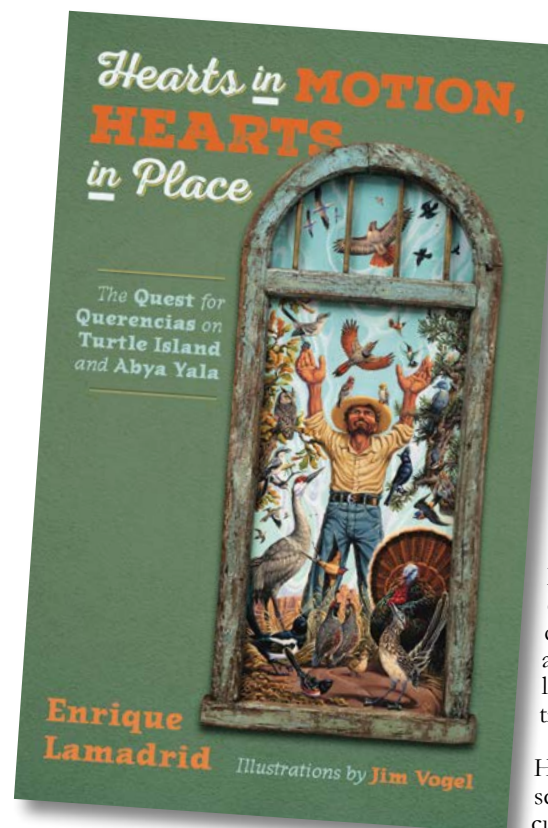
Juanita J. Lavadie, 'Nuestra Señora Guadalupe Norteña' (ca. 1980), acrylic on canvas. Photo by Stefan Jennings Batista

BOOK REVIEW BY ALEJANDRO LÓPEZ

HEARTS IN MOTION, HEARTS IN PLACE THE QUEST FOR QUERENCIAS ON TURTLE ISLAND AND ABYA YALA

BY ENRIQUE R. LAMADRID,
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JIM VOGEL

CASA URRACA PRESS, ABIQUIÚ, NEW MEXICO (2025)



Hearts in Motion, Hearts in Place, The Quest for Querencias on Turtle Island and Abya Yala, by Dr. Enrique Lamadrid casts a wide net over the northern and southern hemispheres of the Americas, which he refers to as Turtle Island and Abya Yala, respectively. In a swift *recorrido* through these and other fabled lands such as arid North Africa, rugged Spain and frosty Scandinavia, he transports us like a swift eagle in flight, not just to these latitudes, but into the fascinating worlds of the rich biological and mythic life that they harbor. However, Nuevo México, Lamadrid's birthplace, homeland and the place he knows and loves best, is where his attention lingers the most.

He invites the reader to consciously embrace geography, culture and lore with a depth of *querencia* or love of place,

precisely at this historical moment corresponding to the sixth species mass extinction, coupled with a human-made ecological crisis of unparalleled proportions. *Hearts in Motion, Hearts in Place* gently nudges the reader into a place of greater knowledge, sensitivity and reverence for the natural world by introducing us to the cultural habitats of totem animals such as the bull, horse, burro and lamb; plus, birds of every color and hue that figure prominently in the folklore, cosmologies and religions of myriad peoples across the world.

But the poetic keystone *aves* of the six directions, those inhabiting Nuevo México, are most important to Lamadrid—the magpie and turkey (*nadir*), eagles and vultures (*zenith*), piñón jay and white-wing dove (East-West), hummingbirds and cranes (North-South), which he lauds to the high heavens. As educator and linguist, he honors crow as the greatest avian teacher and phainopepla; the mimic who communicates directly with multiple species. He treats us to a treasure trove of avian scientific knowledge worthy of groundbreaking ethologist Conrad Lorenz. If Aldo Leopold had written a more poetic sequel to his famed *Sand County Almanac*, anchored as well in keen observation and adorned with concepts from the indigenous languages of Turtle Island and Abya Yala, with literary passages in Spanish, it would certainly have come close to what Lamadrid has penned in this precious little volume.

Whoever holds this book in their hands, which nearly and most appropriately comes across as a prayerbook extolling the creation rather than any creator, will be quick to note just how special it is. Each and every aspect of the book, from its intimate size to its attractive typeface, but especially its bedazzling front cover illustration of a menagerie of birds all a flutter around an ecstatic nuevo mexicano paisano by Embudo-based master painter, Jim Vogel, is nothing short of brilliant and endearing—a real *tributo* to the idea of *querencia* itself.

Enrique R. Lamadrid



Producing a Mural in Española and Discovering Ultimate Hidden Truth

BY ALEJANDRO LÓPEZ

The ultimate hidden truth of the world is that it is something that we make, and could just as easily, make differently. People have to go into their public square and start rebuilding society as we would like to see it. — David Graeber, anthropologist (1961-2020)

As a result of having painted a dozen or so murals of varying complexity in the Española Valley in just as many years, I have learned that for me, the production of a mural is a two-fold proposition. One of my aims is to produce a work of art of compelling beauty, meaning and strength through planning, design and execution. If a mural is to project a continuous current of spiritually, intellectually and emotionally uplifting energy, it must first succeed in enhancing the spaces around it in a meaningful way. The gradual unfolding of a large-scale outdoor mural in full view of the public over several weeks if not months, can be a vigorous and effective exercise in community-building and leadership development.

The labor-intensive process of creating a public mural, often under less than desirable weather conditions and during chaotic human and vehicular comings and goings, requires that the artist, like a good leader, go against the current of what is easiest and most comfortable in order to give to their community something of enduring value. The artist must somehow summon enough strength to sustain day after day the painstaking process of bringing a demanding work to fruition.

The production of a quality mural challenges a community. Only with the community's acceptance, cooperation and support is a muralist able to birth a work of art packed with enough soul to be able to nourish the community's collective psyche. It is commonly thought that the muralist works alone, relying heavily on drawings and photographs, brushes, pigments and wall surfaces, when actually, muralists work just as much and perhaps more with the medium of people and community.

The resulting mural can embody a potent representation of the values that a community holds most sacred, together with its deepest aspirations. Whether deliberate or not, a mural can draw its strength and form its body from the invisible tapestry of meaningful human interactions and exchanges that may take place when it is being painted. Like a spring, a well or fountain, murals can quench a human's thirst—yes, for color and beauty, but more importantly, for potent symbols and useful metaphors. And murals can offer a glimmer of hope and meaning.

During the creation of a recent mural in Española, New Mexico, such exchanges often included words of encouragement and appreciation, as well as various acts of kindness, ranging from gifts of food and water to financial support. Such interactions leave the community richer, more invested and prone to embrace the next project that aims to enhance the area's quality of life.

It is this fountain of human goodwill, together with the gradual emergence of the mural itself that I longed to capture through my camera lens as my assistant and I began painting a mural along two flanks of the Pathways Shelter and Bridge to Health New Mexico facility. The complex, which also includes Goodwill Industries, is located on the corner of Riverside Drive and the *camino* that comes down from the village of Chimayó into the heart of Santo Niño. Ground zero for this initiative is in a wounded community, torn apart by poverty, substance abuse, homelessness, petty crime and excessive traffic. I began laying a foundation for the project two summers ago, when I visited the shelter for the first time



Alejandro López (green shirt) and assistant at work on a mural at the Pathways Shelter in Española, New Mexico

and discovered that its inhabitants might benefit, however slightly, from a visually inspiring scene created by a human hand within an otherwise cold, sterile and industrially defined urban scape. I made little progress the first summer in procuring a go-ahead from authorities but fared much better the second summer, after the Alliance for California Traditional Arts provided the community of Española with a grant aimed at strengthening the region's health and cultural traditions.

Murals can offer a glimmer of hope and meaning.

It is a worthy cause, particularly if one considers that Española is a community caught in the throes of seismic change, prompted, in part, by massive, external forces unleashed upon this relatively remote, ancient and heavily ethnic region. The cultural shock from which many individuals still suffer began in 1945 with the detonation of the atom bomb at the Trinity Test Site in Alamogordo after having just been built a stone's throw away in nearby Los Alamos on the Pajarito Plateau. This tiny city now reflects a national economy that aggressively attempts to incorporate the region and its resources into the prevailing paradigm of endless growth.

The Alliance for California Traditional Arts is a nonprofit organization overseen by founder/ director Amy Kitchener. It was designed to provide technical and financial support to culture-bearers who practice valuable, difficult-to-execute and sometimes waning traditional arts. The carving of massive totem poles by Haida wood carver TJ Sgwaayaans Young, the staging by artist Pedro Adorno-Irizarry of full-blown festivities on the streets of Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, where participants are outfitted with humorous, oversized papier maché masks of their own making, and my own progressive muralization of the city of Española are three examples.

When two large front glass windows were broken on the east facade of the Pathways Shelter building, a second lucky break in the project occurred. Rather than replacing the windows for a second time, the management decided to seal the gaping holes with a wall that harbored smaller windows, just at the top. Two summers' worth of trying to cut through red tape instantly came to an end when the space was officially designated as "reserved for murals."

Just as quickly, two members of the management team, Jake Stockwell, director of Pathways Shelter, and Tana Beverwyk Abouda, director of Bridge to Health, selected two images that, when spliced together, comprise a single, long composition. The panorama turned out to be perfect for wrapping around a highly visible portion of the building's exterior.

We had stepped into a site-specific drama that had been unfolding for many months or years.

One of the images is an Española Valley garden steeped in beauty and bounty, depicting the whole of the human family living in harmony, both with itself and with the Earth. This paradisiacal landscape is being planted and cultivated by several

individuals. The second image features a Mother Earth-like, feminine presence enveloped in the blossoms of a flowering Tree of Life. Standing beside her is a decisive, powerful young man holding a microphone in one hand while gesturing emphatically with the other to encourage and direct a group of people to remake the world as they would like to see it.

The occasion is the annual spring cleaning of the acequias or irrigation ditches of northern New Mexico that for centuries have turned small high-desert valleys into oases. This image shows people entrenched in an acequia from which they are removing last year's sediment with shovels so that life-giving waters that come off high mountains in the spring can be directed to the orchards and fields below.

Muralists work with the medium of people and community.

Other individuals are walking along elevated banks of the acequia on their way to complete the same task upstream. It is a scene in which the common folk of our region are reclaiming “the paradise lost” of the once ubiquitous traditional, labor-intensive, northern New Mexican *ranchito* or farm, where countless generations of native Nuevo Mexicanos grew up and formed their identities as a people. Indeed, for Nuevo Mexicanos, it is not the gritty streets of urban centers that nourish our bodies and souls; it is the ranchitos, with their profusion of biological life, closeness to the earth and engaging work that afforded warmth, protection and security from the buffeting winds of change.

Upon approval of the images, what initially appeared to be a most formidable undertaking, due to the size of the mural, suddenly turned into a kind of aerial transport, capable of taking me on unforgettable journeys and adventures.



At an initial meeting with my assistant at a local restaurant, as we were reviewing several relevant, earth-based photos, a succession of diners started to line up to ask if they could view the images. I was left speechless when our waiter, Florencio, asked if he could purchase one of them to put up in his room at Eagle Village, a stepping-stone facility for people transitioning from homelessness to “homefulness” and hopefulness. I pulled out a composition that he liked and gave it to him. Florencio had grown up working the lettuce fields of Colorado, where workers had had to use short-handled hoes for weeding. He very much needed earth-rooted imagery in his life to nourish his spirit.

Days later, while painting during one of the hottest days of the summer, I was nearly moved to tears when a man jumped out of his car and brought over a bag containing several bottles of sparkling and spring water and laid them at my feet. It was none other than Florencio.

I had chosen Chad, a 30-year-old, down-on-his-luck person of Laguna, Santa Clara and Navajo lineage, to help me, due to his steadiness and sincerity. Initially intimidated by the unknown territory into which he was stepping, his fears were allayed when another young Pueblo man, who was wandering the streets, noticed that Chad and I were doing something interesting and came over to take a look. Chad had been working on a large drawing of a radiant sunflower. When Ralph complimented it, saying that its power and grace naturally sprang from Chad’s Indigenous sensibilities, Chad’s confidence shot up. Additional comments from passing motorists reinforced his belief that he was doing something valuable for the community.

It became evident that certain individuals came along with the territory where we had chosen to work. Unsuspect- edly, we had stepped into a site-specific drama that had been unfolding for many months or even years. We were but



the most recent arrivals who would have to either adapt to this culture or throw in the towel and leave. The actors included well-to-do exercise buffs who used the state-of-the-art dance and exercise facilities at Bridge to Health—as well as homeless



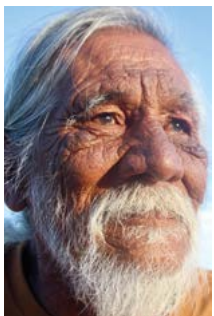
Photos © Alejandro López



individuals who came and went, at times seeking the shade provided by the building as a place to rest, nap or eat.

On one occasion, a middle-aged woman shot up in the early morning hours right before my eyes. Her personality instantly changed, and she went off on a rant that only she could make sense of. On another occasion, I paused from my routine when I noticed a man lying on the cement porch entrance of a fast-food establishment where personnel were setting up for the day, oblivious to the person laid-out on their doorstep. Lest he perish from the sun's intensity, I called 911. Within minutes, he was treated for dehydration and taken to a more secure location.

As Chad and I were blocking out the major components of the mural, an unhoused elder named "Papa" was so intrigued by the work we were doing that he wanted to direct the project. He scolded me for allowing myself to be guided by a tiny rendering in which I could appreciate the overall layout of the project but not its details, which he deemed just as important. However, he grew joyous upon discovering that one of the mural's recurring themes was the sun. The mural starts with a sunrise at one end and ends with a sunset at the other. Even while he lacked a roof over his head and was living on the extreme edge of society, I came to realize that Papa was among the most placid, agreeable and unencumbered souls I have ever met. Even as he was approaching 80, he was still willing to get involved in a form of civic action and rigorous dialogue.



Others who appeared on the scene, as if on cue, were Simon Jaramillo, an employee at Goodwill, who one day brought me pastries, and on another, shared engaging stories from the farm life he still leads in nearby Velarde. The appearance of others, like Natasha, an employee at Bridge to Health, and her infant son, Nicco, brought joy to the scene, and my niece, KwaniEva, stoked my enthusiasm with her willingness to help paint. And then along came Freddie, a young, talented mural artist wanting to help, although he was still recovering from a bullet wound after a scuffle with a neighbor.

It is those who have no home, as well as those whose sanity is on the line, who weigh the heaviest on my consciousness and keep me up at night. In such moments, I ask myself whether or not it is possible



Photos © Alejandro López

to piece together, mend and restore to wholeness those who have been broken under the sheer weight of a colossal civilization (the U.S. and the West in general) as it begins to totter due to a loss of direction.

ESPAÑOLA AT 100

Complex and Resilient

Española is a complex, resilient place. Patricia Trujillo, deputy secretary of the New Mexico Higher Education Department, said in a statement, "Loving Española means embracing ambiguity—the beauty, the struggles, the pain and the joy—all together in community. We hold land-based knowledge across centuries about how to sustain cultures in harsh conditions. It's a beautiful place filled with loving people, but it has never been easy living here. As *hijitos/as* of the Valley, we experience what author José Antonio Burciaga described as the 'Chicano experience of living within, between and sometimes outside of [many] cultures—the damnation and salvation, and the celebration of it all.'"

In September, Española celebrated its centennial. The city of 10,000 people, located at the confluence of the Río Grande and Chama rivers, is a gathering place where Pueblo, Spanish, Mexican and Anglo traditions meet. The original seat of government for the province of New Mexico under the Spanish crown originated at San Gabriel, near Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, on the northern outskirts of Española. The Valley is the birthplace to Nuevo Mexicano culture. It's home to artists, musicians and farmers who keep their heritage alive. During Hispanic Heritage Month, Northern New Mexico College celebrated *la cultura de norte con comunidad, comida, musica y lowriders*.



The arrival to the "pubic square" of the likes of Florencio bearing water, of Simon, KwaniEva, Chad and Freddie, wanting to help, while echoing the workers depicted in the mural who are "rebuilding society as we would like to see it," is answer enough for me. ■

This year, Chicano muralist Alejandro López of Santa Cruz, N.M., was selected as a Taproot Fellow by the Alliance for California Traditional Arts, along with 25 other individuals across the county. The recognition came after several years of López working on murals in Española. The Alliance made the grant with the express purpose of strengthening the community's quality of life and its traditional cultures. López learned his craft from socially conscious artist Lily Yeb, in addition to studying the murals of Diego Rivera in México City. His focus has been the multi-generational ranchero or land-based lifestyle of his Spanish-speaking Nuevo Mexicano people.

DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS, ER VISITS RISE IN NORTHERN NM

In September, an *Albuquerque Journal* investigation found that as of 2023, Río Arriba County's overdose death rate was more than double the statewide average and that overdose deaths in the county have continued to rise. Compared to the first half of 2024, spikes in fatal overdoses were 48 percent, mostly among adults between the ages of 55 and 64. Río Arriba's overdose deaths are among the highest in the nation. On Oct. 14, a newly expanded addiction medicine clinic at Presbyterian Española Hospital reopened.

Most of the fatalities have involved fentanyl, which can now be found in harder-to-dose-safely powder form, in addition to the ubiquitous blue pills. The NMDOH Adulterant Checking Program, established in 2023, detected higher concentrations of the synthetic opioid in illicit drugs in the first half of 2025. Typical samples contain 1 percent fentanyl, but recent samples contained concentrations as high as 20 percent.

In August, in response to a request from local leaders and tribal officials, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announced an emergency declaration authorizing New Mexico National Guard troops to be temporarily deployed to support local law enforcement officers in Río Arriba County in the decades-long battle against generational drug addiction and drug-driven crime. The declaration also allocated \$882,617 to law enforcement agencies in the county. The move was hailed by Española officials, who said that drug-related arrests, theft and violence have gotten out of control over the last two years. The troops would assist Española's police department with "community engagement, administrative efficiency and officer safety," according to Police Chief Mizel García. That would free up the city's police to focus on law enforcement. Guard members are not authorized to make arrests.

Former state Attorney Gen. Hector Balderas, current president of Northern New Mexico College, in a Sept. 18 *Albuquerque Journal* column, said, "Española's youth poverty crisis deepens the risks of crime and substance abuse for our next generation. That is why Northern is training holistic nurses who can heal body and spirit, preparing trauma-trained teachers who can guide children through the effects of violence and addiction, and fostering filmmakers who can tell the stories of our communities with authenticity and power. We are building a workforce that heals, teaches and creates." Balderas called on alumni, business leaders and families to "support a scholarship, mentor a student, partner with us to reclaim our heritage and our community."

According to NMDOH data, in the first quarter of 2025, Taos County had a 340 percent rise in overdose deaths and a 206 percent rise in related ER visits, compared to the first half of 2024. People between the ages of 25 and 34 were most impacted. The nonprofit Taos Alive Coalition has distributed thousands of boxes of Narcan, an opioid-overdose reversal nasal spray. The Río Grande Alcoholism Treatment Program in Taos has a free Narcan vending machine. In Santa Fe County, fatal overdoses, mostly by people between the ages of 35 and 44, spiked 104 percent. Fatal overdoses statewide in the first quarter of 2025 were lower than the same months of 2024 by more than 100 deaths.

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO COLLEGE INTERNS EXPLORE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

*Paid internships let students gain experience
in their chosen field*

Northern New Mexico College's (NNMC) Career Services Department has launched an internship program designed to provide career-ready opportunities for first-generation college students from underserved communities. The internships arranged by the Española-based college are designed to bridge the gap between classroom learning and workforce readiness. During the program's first year, Career Services has placed 50 students in paid internships across a range of high-demand fields.

"Many of our students who come from underserved areas lack access to professional networks, career guidance and hands-on work experience. Our internships help them gain real-world skills, industry exposure and build professional confidence," said Sara McCormick, NNMC Career Services specialist. "Additionally, these internships allow students to have career opportunities in their communities rather than feeling forced to leave for bigger towns and cities. This strengthens our local economies by keeping skilled workers in our area and supports small businesses and organizations with homegrown talent."

The foundation for the internship program was a \$367,000 three-year grant funded through New Mexico's Workforce Training, Apprenticeship and Internship Support initiative, administered by the state's Higher Education Department (NMHED). The initiative is designed to expand access to high-quality, non-credit workforce training programs, apprenticeships and internships that lead to industry-recognized credentials in high-need sectors. In addition to 20 paid internships per year, the grant is paying salaries for instructors in welding, computer literacy, electrical lineman, carpentry and HVAC to prepare students for internship opportunities.

Additional internships were funded through a partnership with Future Focused Education's (FFE) paid internship program, which provides targeted, high-quality work experiences, particularly for students from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The Career Services Department also received a \$25,000 grant from the Regional Development Corporation (RDC), which was used to create 15 additional regional internships.

"Paid Internships like these give our students a chance to step into roles where their voices, backgrounds and talents matter. They gain experience in real workplaces, contribute to their communities and start to see themselves as part of the region's future," said Alan Kapulski, part-time Career Services assistant. "It's one of the most direct ways we can support equity and opportunity in Northern New Mexico."

Career Services built the program from scratch, developing intern and employer applications, cultivating each placement and making sure employers were aware of their responsibilities, including providing a mentor for each student.

One goal of the program is to match students with internships that align with their career goals. Over the past year, those have included placements in STEM, Film & Digital Media Arts, Business, Environmental Science, and Allied Health.

Cuidando Nuestros Viejitos (Caring for our Elders)

BY MARÍA DOLORES GONZÁLES

I was reared in a culture and community in which our elders were treated with love and respect. It was not uncommon to have our grandparents living with us, or us living with them.

My mother, Carlota Gonzáles, died in 1989 after having been diagnosed with ovarian cancer 11 months earlier. During those months, my sister Erlinda and I cared for her on a daily basis. It wasn't easy, as we both had jobs and families. Yet, there wasn't any question in our minds about our responsibility. We learned what was expected of us as daughters by observing my mother and her sisters care for our grandmother when she too had cancer.

Daily during this process, both of us encountered emotions we tried to ignore. We went through the denial stage. We thought Mom would be with us forever. She was a model of strength and courage and helped us accept the reality we shared in this special journey. We survived our loss, but little did we know that our biggest challenge was now upon us: caring for Canuto, our 80-year-old father. Nine months after Mom's death, our father came to live with me and my husband, Ricardo. Our two sons were already on their own.

We adapted to our new living situation. It was like having the responsibility of caring for a child. But we were fortunate. My father, an 81-year-old, 5-foot, 10-inch, heavy-set man, was still cognizant, mobile, and had no issues with bodily functions. One tendency he had was a desire to be involved in family decisions. At times, he wanted to be in control, so we had to find ways to appease him. Every day my heart filled with both joy and pain. What should I do now? I wasn't going to fail. I would make it work. Today, I have no regrets. The experience of taking care of the *viejito* (elder) in my life taught me the following:

Cuidando a nuestros viejitos takes a lot of energy and sacrifice.

To be patient as he learned to relinquish his role as patriarch. My father, instead of taking care of his daughters, would now have to accept being cared for by them, and he would have to relinquish the responsibility of decision-making. We family members continued to share with him events, problems or successes in our lives, and we asked him for advice, as we always had. We treated him *con respeto*, and we expected the same from him.

We worked together as a family, as united as possible. We started with a family meeting, discussing how to achieve our caretaking task. My husband and my sister Erlinda, who also lived in Albuquerque, were in agreement. It would take a lot of energy, commitment and concessions on everyone's part. Erlinda offered to be available whenever we needed time off. Ricardo and I took advantage of this. Wednesday evenings became date night; we'd go country-western dancing or bowling. And short weekend trips became fixed into our schedules.

To understand and support my father's value system. My father had been a rancher, and later in life, a state employee. His job with



My parents (Canuto and Carlota Gonzáles), 1949 in Guadalajara, Mx.



Canuto & Carlota 1988

the Motor Vehicle Department required him to deliver new license plates at the beginning of the year to every county in New Mexico. He loved driving, and after leaving this job, he took up selling beans and chile throughout the state. Because he had lived most of his life in rural New Mexico, he developed a value system based on helping others. During his trips, he cultivated many friendships. If people didn't have money to pay, he wouldn't charge them and told them to pay whenever or however they could. But now Canuto was 80 years-old and could no longer drive. Ricardo drove him to Dove Creek, Colorado to buy beans. I drove him to Dixon Farms to buy apples, and our older son, Damián, drove him to Hatch to pick up a load of chile. We then drove him around to sell his merchandise or to deliver it to the shelters to which he had promised donations.

Assign him small tasks. There were days when he would firmly say to me, "*No, no quiero levantarme y no voy al Centro de los Viejitos.*" (No! I don't want to get up! And I'm not going to the senior center). Rather than argue, I reminded him that if he didn't get up and get dressed to go to the senior center, the dog wouldn't have any food. He had grown attached to Angel, our large black Labrador and enjoyed being in charge of her dinner. This preoccupation began when he started going to the senior center and would come home with a story about how much food was being wasted. "*Están gastando mucha comida, la echan a la basura.*" (They're wasting a lot of food, throwing it in the garbage.) I found him a one-gallon, red-metal bucket with a lid and a handle. Every morning, when I dropped him off, he would grab his bucket like a school boy and make his way into the center, pushing his walker.

Another task given to Canuto, until his cataract got the best of his eyesight, was to clean the pinto beans. Every time he found a small mud-clod or a rock or weed, he'd hold it up and say, "*Vez, es importante limpiar los frijoles; no 'stán limpios.*" (See, it's important to clean them; they're not clean.)

Then there was the piñón. As children, my sisters and I considered our father the champion of champions when it came to roasting piñón. Once they were roasted, he transferred them to a large bowl, and continued stirring them. "*Todavía están calientitos,*" (Remember, they're hot and they're still cooking,

How did we live up to the expectations placed on us by our culture, by the values taught to us by our parents and grandparents by tradition?



In 1948, the U.S. government, in partnership with México, hired my father to prepare ranchers and communities to have their cattle vaccinated.



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Canuto and his daughters at Bullfight in Guadalajara, 1949-50.



Canuto & María Dolores 1993

he'd smile with a twinkle in his eye. The whole house had a glorious aroma, and we all sat around enjoying our piñón.

Keeping viejitos busy with small tasks helps get them through those days when time becomes a whole new concept. Hence, my father ruminated on the past, read and invented mind games or sat on the porch counting cars driving by, fantasizing where they were going or coming from. Nighttime was the hardest for him. I suspect his sleeplessness was because he was afraid to die alone.

Provide exercise and activities. Before he lived with us, he swam every morning. We decided to take him to Ojo Caliente, his favorite soaking place. His eyes lit up and he smiled. Getting him out of the pools required extra helping hands from the groundkeepers. They got him out, one on each side, pulling him up by his swimming trunks. He hollered at us: "*Qué brutos, me 'stán partiendo como una sandía!*" ("You fools, you're splitting me in half like a watermelon!")

Acknowledge his strengths and skills. My father belonged to a generation of storytellers. On Sunday morning, Ricardo took on the task of showering him while sharing their stories. From the kitchen, I could hear their voices, talking up a storm and laughing. Their friendship was deeper than a father-in-law/son-in-law relationship.

Cuidando a nuestros viejitos (caring for our elders) takes a lot of energy and sacrifice. How did we, the baby-boom generation, live up to the expectations placed on us by our culture, by the values taught to us by our parents and grandparents? How did we make room in our busy lives to accommodate their needs? To be there when they are ill, when they are scared, when they no longer know whether they are in this reality or a reality invented in their minds? When they make demands we are unable to meet. When they require love and attention and all we can feel is frustration. There are no easy answers.

It would be easier to call a nursing home or assisted living and make the necessary arrangements. However, for those of us who would like to carry on tradition, hopefully, a way to accomplish what can be a monumental feat will appear.

values taught to us by our parents and grandparents? How did we make room in our busy lives to accommodate their needs? To be there when they are ill, when they are scared, when they no longer know whether they are in this reality or a reality invented in their minds? When they make demands we are unable to meet. When they require love and attention and all we can feel is frustration. There are no easy answers.

Because he had lived most of his life in rural New Mexico, he developed a value system based on helping others.

The payback will not be monetary, nor will it bring a Good Samaritan plaque. It will be painful and sometimes sad, but the knowledge, joy and love received from *cuidando nuestros viejitos* is truly a precious gift.

My father, Canuto Gonzáles Jr., passed away at the age of 85. He lived with my family for three years and one year with Gloria Gonzáles, with the help of Cecilia Gonzáles-Tucker.



Taking care of my father was a huge endeavor. I couldn't have accomplished the task without the help Ricardo and our sons gave me. In those moments when I most needed support and empathy, they were there for me. They held me up, took over when I was busy, listened when I was frustrated, and held me when I cried. They made me smile by clowning around or telling jokes. My father left us all a great gift—his love and his stories. I'm forever grateful. ■

María Dolores Gonzáles was born and raised in Los Llanos, New Mexico. She received her Ph.D. in Sociolinguistics from UNM and directed its Spanish Heritage Language Program for 13 years. In 2016, she established the Bilingual Strategies Language Institute. During Covid, Gonzáles wrote a memoir, Atop of the Windmill You Can See Forever. She continues to teach private classes for Spanish heritage speakers and second-language learners. <https://www.bilingualstrategies.com>

NEW MEXICO'S FIRST COMMUNITY SOLAR PROJECT ENERGIZED

The five-megawatt Cuidando Los Ninos Community Solar Project in Belen, the first of many New Mexico Community Solar projects, came online on Sept. 30. "This is not just about renewable energy," said Dylan Connelly, project developer at Affordable Solar. "It is about equity, access and giving back to the communities we serve." Affordable Solar developed the 32-acre site in partnership with Gridworks, a company focused on solar and energy-storage solutions.

A minimum of 30 percent of the generated energy is earmarked for low-income communities. New Mexico's Community Solar Act, passed in 2021, is intended to create small-scale solar farms, to which residents and small businesses can subscribe, instead of installing rooftop panels. Being enrolled in the program doesn't change anything when it comes to receiving power. Subscribers receive monthly credits based on the amount of solar energy their portion of the facility produces.

The 47 approved projects will generate 35 megawatts. Thirty of the projects will be connected to Public Service Company of New Mexico's (PNM) grid. El Paso Electric will have six and Southwestern Public Service Co. will have 11. Affordable Solar was awarded seven—the maximum number of projects per developer.

Solstice Power Technologies CEO and co-founder Sandhya Murali said, "Over the 12 to 18 months, the vast majority of these projects will get energized, and tens of thousands of people will start seeing savings on their bill within the next year." Solstice is working with companies like Affordable Solar to sign up customers.

NM CLIMATE INVESTMENT CENTER LAUNCHES ENERGY-EFFICIENCY LOAN PROGRAM FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND NONPROFITS

The New Mexico Climate Investment Center (NMCIC), which was officially established as a nonprofit in May, has launched a loan program for small businesses and nonprofits serving New Mexico. The program will provide affordable financing in the form of individual loans of up to \$250,000 to help fund energy-efficiency, clean energy, electrification and other emissions-reducing projects. NMCIC is New Mexico's first "green bank," an investment fund created to accelerate the state's transition to clean energy and climate resilience.

Its mission is to reduce energy burdens and greenhouse gas emissions while fostering economic prosperity and equity for communities across New Mexico. In addition to the Small Loan Program, NMCIC offers bridge financing, permanent, construction and C-PACE loans for projects that reduce GHG emissions, increase energy or water efficiency, lower energy costs and benefit low-income and disadvantaged communities. NMCIC's goal is to have at least 40 percent of its dollars deployed into tribal and rural areas. Businesses can take advantage of this year's remaining incentives and rebates to get the best deal possible.

"By improving energy efficiency and investing in electrification, organizations can reinvest savings into their missions while also contributing to New Mexico's climate goals and community resilience," NMCIC CEO Beth Beloff said in a statement.

For more information and to apply for financing, visit <https://nmclimateinvestmentcenter.org/>.

GREEN LATINOS NEW MEXICO WORKSHOPS

Urban Greening Changes Lives and Landscapes in Albuquerque

BY EDDER DÍAZ-MARTÍNEZ

Albuquerque isn't the first city that comes to mind when people think of "urban greening." Many of us live where trees are few and pavement dominates. But a quiet revolution is underway. With the support of national funders and officials from the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County, our organization, GreenLatinos New Mexico, is partnering with community organizations to improve our neighborhoods and environment by increasing access to green spaces, shade and healthy, fresh food.

Building climate resilience through water wisdom

techniques, strategies and planning methodologies rooted in community, equity and climate resilience. In October, GreenLatinos, Bezos Earth Fund's Greening America's Cities, the Coalition of Sustainable Communities New Mexico and United Sustainability Directors Network, brought water reuse experts and landscape architects together with stakeholders for a workshop on rainwater catchment and graywater reuse.



Rainwater catchment and graywater reuse workshop

Utilizing the power of cross-sector partnerships, GreenLatinos worked alongside residents, youth leaders, public officials and grassroots organizations to install critical water-saving infrastructure. From laundry-to-landscape incentives to *acequia* culture to modern catchment systems, this workshop deepened our collective capacity to treat water with respect, while supporting urban food systems, shade trees and cooling infrastructure in neighborhoods where it's needed most.

We are investing in community-driven design and implementation of gardens and farms.

Green spaces and urban farms are not just pretty—they sustain our *comunidad*. Trees, gardens and green spaces reduce urban heat, improve air quality, capture stormwater—and they lower stress levels. These projects also reconnect us with *nuestra cultura*, making it possible for us to re-learn traditional knowledge. And, they feed our communities.



Left: New Mexico Community Capital Resiliency gathering
Right: Los Jardines Institute workshop on rainwater catchment and graywater reuse.



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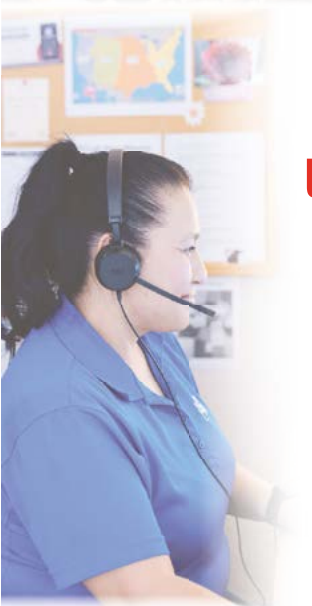
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We're building a stronger, more resilient Santa Fe through services like 211, Ride United, and Tax Help NM.

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uwncnm.org



Center for Social Sustainable Systems (CESSOS)
Primera Agua
(flood gates opening)
celebration



A volunteer tending to the Southwest Organizing Project's community garden



Volunteers preparing soil for The Semilla Project at the Loma Linda Community Garden



is becoming a proving ground for how urban greening can simultaneously center justice, culture and climate resilience. At GreenLatinos, we believe that every tree planted, every barrel of rainwater captured, and every youth engaged, is an act of hope and a step toward collective liberation. ■

Edder Diaz-Martínez is the communication director of GreenLatinos. WWW.GREENLATINOS.ORG

Rooted in Place: Remedios in Northern New Mexico

BY QUITA ORTÍZ

The lands upon which we live are full of healers: *cota*, *trementina*, *yerba de la negrita*, *oregano de la sierra* and many more. Before pharmacies, before packaged supplements, there were *remedios*—homemade preparations of plants, fats and resins that soothed, mended and kept households well. In northern New Mexico, this living tradition of healing continues to unfold, ancient in its roots and emergent in its renewal: place-based plant medicine, tending and community care.

I'm committed to helping weave plant wisdom back into our collective consciousness and daily lives. As a *yerbera* (community herbalist), I see myself as not only a caretaker of plants, but also of ancestral memory—a participant in an unbroken tradition of local healing grounded in reciprocity with the land.

My story begins long before I began to formally practice herbalism. Growing up around rural badlands and irrigated valleys in Nambé, I was raised with herbal medicine and “food as medicine” principles. Many *norteños* still recall gathering herbs with their elders, rendering lard for *pomadas* (ointments), or storing tinctures in repurposed liquor bottles. I learned through that same spirit. I remember my mom steeping big pots of herbal decoctions. I remember my dad making me chew on *oshá* root when I got sick. I remember my parents treating my brother's allergies with herbal extracts (tinctures). My dad would make a *coyate* compress to treat our dog's wound. My parents would take me out to pick *chimajá* in the arroyos. My dad would pick berries from our juniper trees to make an infusion if one of us kids had urinary woes. I paid attention to these practices, and these little moments in time instilled within me a fierce reverence for plants.

To those of us who take note, the plants themselves serve as our weather records.

BIOREGIONAL HERBALISM

Over 20 years ago, my husband and I began growing our own herbs, and later we began experimenting with simple preparations in the kitchen such as tinctures and salves. Since then, we've gradually immersed ourselves in plant study, and over time, what was once an indulgent hobby has evolved into a more deliberate craft. Weaving in study, trial and error, and my personal commitment to local ecology and water conservation, in 2016 we established Feather Catcher Apothecary, bringing seasonal batches of remedios to the community.

In northern New Mexico, this living tradition of healing continues to unfold.

One of the core values of my work as an herbalist and gardener is bioregional herbalism, or place-based herbalism. This is the principle

that plant medicines grown or harvested in the same landscape as the people using them carry an intimate resonance: They have lived the same climate, soil, seasonality and stressors—and they have passed through local hands that cultivate and gather them. This means that part of their medicinal profile, which we consume, is the resilience they embody. Just as a Catholic drinks the symbolic blood of Christ at Mass, remedios that are grown, harvested and prepared locally feed our spirits with resilience and resolve.

The industrialized, globally traded herb industry doesn't embody the same principles as traditional community herbalism. When we choose local plants rather than monocultured herbs shipped halfway around the world to support the billion-dollar supplement industry, we center ecological awareness: The plants that thrive here, that sustain pollinators, survive drought or cold, become our allies. Their chemistry mirrors resilience; their medicine teaches endurance. So I believe the most potent plant medicine is that which arises from the same geography that sustains us.



Top to bottom: Quita planting xerces seedlings, Xerces Upland Kit, Quita harvesting sunflower petals sagebrush distillation, prairie sage, harvesting elderberries, ivan chai



I've been actively working to build a bioregional herbal apothecary

Working with native and naturalized species keeps traditional herbalism rooted in ecological integrity. When we source herbs locally—rather than importing exotic plants (a practice that may have negative impacts on Indigenous communities and ecologies in other parts of the world)—we strengthen the local economy, as well as our connection to the land.

For many years now, I've been actively working to build a bioregional herbal apothecary that connects people to plants that have always grown here. By focusing on cultivating a native landscape—plants adapted to thrive in our arid climate with little or no irrigation—I'm not only conserving water but supporting pollinators and honoring the land-based traditions of my culture and community.

In the same spirit, my husband and I also wild-harvest from the nearby mountains and deserts. We forage and gather respectfully and in small amounts to avoid overharvesting. For example, some say *oshá* has been over-harvested, while others claim there's plenty if you know where to look. The truth probably lies somewhere in the middle, so we always err on the side of conservation and choose wisely which plants to wild harvest, how much, and how to work with them (teas, tincture, essences, hydrosol, etc.).

Working with native and naturalized species keeps traditional herbalism rooted in ecological integrity.

This philosophy shapes every step: from seed to tincture, from landscape design to product formulation. This place-based approach also strengthens the cultural fabric that ties people to land and water. Our healing plants are indicators of ecological status. Plants that thrive in a particular season tell us their own stories. Their abundance or absence often reflects how much precipitation we've received—how strong the monsoons were or how long the winter snow lingered. To those of us who take note, the plants themselves serve as our weather records: When *limoncillo* blossoms are thick and plentiful, or when the *chimaja* emerges early, we know what kind of year it's been for snow, rain and cold.

Spending time in these lands since childhood, I've developed an intimate connection to my homeland and have built relationships with the plants that live here. My mission includes helping people *know* the plants, *feel* their potency and *honor* them in practice. This work is part of my long-term vision to create a reclaimed native landscape that provides critical habitat for pollinators, while serving the community as a source for traditional herbs and ecological inspiration. I hold a hopeful vision: fostering a community in which plant medicines are understood and accessible, where herbalism is woven into everyday health.

INVITATION & CALL FOR CONNECTION

As we intersect these ancient traditions with modern medicine, my work remains rooted in place, practice and partnership—among people, plants and land. *Curanderismo* and folk herbalism have long flourished side by side with the Catholic faith, Indigenous traditions and agricultural life. In stepping onto the path of community herbalism, what I ultimately desire is a relational shift: from seeing plants as static “resources” to understanding them as allies, teachers and companions. From isolation to interconnection. From health as individual consumption to health as something shared, ecological and relational. The work is slow, the path sometimes winding, but each planting, distillation, extraction and care-giving step moves us further into a more reciprocal and grounded way of life. ■

Quita Ortiz is an herbalist, writer, photographer and freelance creative. She and her husband reside in Pojoaque, where together they integrate traditional herbalism, alchemy and ritual-based practices. Learn more at feathercatcherapothecary.com

Photos by Quita Ortiz

WHAT'S GOING ON

ALBUQUERQUE / Online

NOV. 3–7

NM INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCE CONFERENCE

Albuquerque Convention Center

Workshops and networking with the state's infrastructure sector ecosystem. Join hundreds of local and state leaders for inspiring sessions, hands-on learning and a shared vision for NM's future. WWW.NMIFC.COM

NOV. 6, 6 PM

PLÁTICAS PÚBLICAS – VOCES DEL PUEBLO ARTWORKS

Albuquerque Museum, 2000 Mountain Rd.

Panel discussion with Chicana/o muralists about the process of creating murals, moderated by Voces del Pueblo co-curator Irene Vásquez. NHCCNM.ORG/EVENTS

NOV. 8, 1–3 PM

FRIENDS OF VALLE DE ORO: BACKYARD REFUGE

Casa San Ysidro, 973 Old Church Rd., Corrales

Vibrant urban refuge fosters deep community connection and environmental stewardship through innovative design and programs. Free. 505-243-7255, ALBMUSEUM@CABQ.GOV.

THROUGH NOV. 9

OFRENDA EXHIBITION

Gutiérrez Hubbell House, 6029 Isleta Blvd. SW

Día de los Muertos alters created by schools, organizations and individuals in memory of or support for loved ones. Free. GUTIERREZ-HUBBELLHOUSE.ORG

NOV. 11, 6 PM

ENRIQUE LAMADRID READING

Bookworks, 4022 Río Grande Blvd. NW

Lamadrid will read from and discuss his new book *Hearts in Motion, Hearts in Place: The Quest for Querencias on Turtle Island and Abya Yala*. 505-344-8139, BKWRKS.COM

NOV. 12, 10 AM–12 PM

NM SPANISH LANGUAGE ARCHIVAL RECOVERY PROJECT: SIMPOSIO Y PLÁTICA

Center for SW Research, Waters Rm., Zimmerman Library, UNM

Gabriel Meléndez, Nasario García, María Dolores Gonzáles, Alejandro López, Aurora Martínez Kane. Sponsored by UNM Latin American & Iberian Institute. 505-277-6451

NOV. 13, 5–7 PM

SOLAR DRINKS

Juno, 1501 1st Street NW

Networking event sponsored by the Renewable Energy Industries Association of NM. [HTTPS://REIA-NM.ORG](https://REIA-NM.ORG)

NOV. 17–21

NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN BOARDING SCHOOL HEALING COALITION

Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort, Santa Ana, N.M.

The NABS team will be video-documenting federal Indian boarding schools survivors' experiences. Interviews will be preserved in the Library of Congress and Smithsonian. 651-650-4445, [HTTPS://BOARDINGSCHOOLHEALING.ORG/ORAL-HISTORY-PROJECT/](https://BOARDINGSCHOOLHEALING.ORG/ORAL-HISTORY-PROJECT/)

NOV. 20, 6–7 PM

CHICANA FEMINISM AND ART IN NEW MEXICO

NHCC Visual Art Museum, 1701 4th St. SW

Conversation, lecture and Q&A with Bernadine Hernández, assoc. professor, Dept. of English at UNM. Free. Registration: [HTTPS://MY.NMCULTURE.ORG/47932/47938](https://MY.NMCULTURE.ORG/47932/47938)

NOV. 29, 1–3 PM

HERITAGE SPINNING AND WEAVING

Casa San Ysidro, 973 Old Church Rd., Corrales, NM

Workshop features a demonstration and hands-on activity on how to create a Spanish colonial *colcha* sampler with a tapestry needle and wool yarn. [HTTPS://ARTSANDCULTURE.CABQ.GOV/11209/11338](https://ARTSANDCULTURE.CABQ.GOV/11209/11338)

DEC. 1–4

NATIONAL FARM TO CAFETERIA CONFERENCE

Albuquerque Convention Center

Hosted by the National Farm to School Network with support from NM partners.

The premier event for anyone passionate about bringing local food to institutional settings and driving positive change in the food system. WWW.FARMTOSCHOOL.ORG/CONFERENCE

THROUGH DEC. 7

RESTORING OUR HEARTPLACES

Indian Pueblo Cultural Center

Curated by Dr. Ted Jojola and Dr. Lynn Paxson, the exhibition highlights the evolution of contemporary Pueblo architecture and its ancestral influences. [HTTPS://INDIANPUEBLO.ORG/](https://INDIANPUEBLO.ORG/)

THROUGH FEB. 8, 2026

VOCES DEL PUEBLO

NHCC Visual Art Museum, 1701 4th St. SW

"Artists of the Levantamiento Chicano in New Mexico." Six artists (Ignacio Jaramillo, Juanita J. Lavadie, Francisco LeFebre, Noel Márquez, Roberta Márquez, Adelita Medina) showcase the roots of the Chicano movement. Discussions, musical performances. NHCCNM.ORG/EXHIBITIONS

FEB. 26–27, 2026

EDUPRISING CONFERENCE

ABQ Pyramid North

6th Annual conference. Students, educators and community explore innovative approaches to capstones, graduate profiles, work-based learning, youth mental health and more. Future Focused Education. Registration: \$325. [HTTPS://LINKD.IN/EU34JHBH](https://LINKD.IN/EU34JHBH)

APRIL 9, 2026

ELECTRIFY NEW MEXICO 2026

Sid Cutter Pavilion, Balloon Fiesta Park

The premier renewable energy conference in NM. Presented by the Renewable Energy Industries Association of NM. [HTTPS://REIA-NM.ORG](https://REIA-NM.ORG)

THROUGH JUNE 7, 2026

"WHAT WE BRING TO THE TABLE"

National Hispanic Cultural Center

Group show to mark NHCC's 25th anniversary featuring work by 18 NHCC staffers, including curators, designers, coordinators, campus safety and security, custodial teams and business department. 505-246-2261, NHCCNM.ORG

TUES.–SUN. 9 AM–5 PM

"ONLY IN ALBUQUERQUE"

Albuquerque Museum, 2000 Mountain Rd. NW

Permanent exhibit told through four galleries: Spirited, Courageous, Resourceful and Innovative. Hundreds of the city's beloved artifacts are featured. \$3–\$6., Free Sun., 9 am–1 pm. [HTTPS://WWW.CABQ.GOV/ARTSCULTURE/ALBUQUERQUE-MUSEUM](https://WWW.CABQ.GOV/ARTSCULTURE/ALBUQUERQUE-MUSEUM)

TUES.–SUN. 9 AM–4 PM

INDIAN PUEBLO CULTURAL CENTER

2401 12th St. NW

"Gateway to the 19 Pueblos of N.M." Museum galleries, exhibits and restaurant. Cultural dance program Sat., Sun. 11 am, 2 pm. \$12/\$10/children under 5 free. 505-843-7270, INDIANPUEBLO.ORG

TUES.–SAT. 10 AM–4 ON

MAXWELL MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY

500 University Blvd. NE

"People of the Southwest" permanent exhibition celebrates the cultural history of the SW, especially the close relationship people have had with the land. Free admission. 505-277-4405, [HTTPS://MAXWELLMUSEUM.UNM.EDU](https://MAXWELLMUSEUM.UNM.EDU)

RESILIENT FUTURES INITIATIVE

Dangerous heat, pollution and natural disasters affect all New Mexicans, especially frontline communities. This initiative, facilitated by the City of ABQ's (CABQ) Sustainability Office, is an effort to future-proof communities in Central NM. RESILIENTFUTURESNM.ORG

SANTA FE / Online

NOV. 5–7

REGENERATE CONFERENCE

SF Community Convention Center

"Cultivating Adaptability." Quivira Coalition, Holistic Management Int'l. and the American Grassfed Assn. convene ranchers, farmers, conservationists, land managers, scientists and thought leaders. [HTTPS://REGENERATECONFERENCE.COM](https://REGENERATECONFERENCE.COM)

NOV. 7–9

8TH ANNUAL FRED HARVEY HISTORY WEEKEND

NM History Museum, La Fonda on the Plaza / Online

Lectures and dinner. Stories of food, hospitality and cultural heritage. Tickets from \$25/\$60. SCHWEITZERMEREDITH@GMAIL.COM

NOV. 7–SEPT. 7, 2016
TEWA NANGEH/TEWA COUNTRY

Georgia O’Keeffe Museum
Exhibition highlighting 12 Tewa Pueblo artists in dialogue with art created by Georgia O’Keeffe. 505-946-1000, GOKM.ORG

NOV. 8, 5:30–10:30 PM
HUNGRY MOUTH FESTIVAL

Scottish Rite Temple
Auction/Dinner/Dancing. \$200. (\$100 tax-deductible). 505-982-6611, WWW.STESHELTER.ORG

NOV. 8, 5:30–7:30 PM
EL SAILON: WHEN EARTH MEETS AI

Boxcar, 133 W. Water St.
Learn how AI actually works and how it generates insights that can change the way we understand our environment and complex planetary processes. Free. [HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.COM/E/EL-SAILON-TICKETS-1747040969569?AFF=ODDTDTCREATOR](https://WWW.EVENTBRITE.COM/E/EL-SAILON-TICKETS-1747040969569?AFF=ODDTDTCREATOR)

NOV. 12–14
2025 COLORADO RIVER FORUM

NM State Capitol
State legislators from the seven Colorado River Basin states, as well as two Mexican states, will address the pressing issues and opportunities of this region. ERUIZ@CSG.ORG

NOV. 14–16
RECYCLE SANTA FE ART FESTIVAL

SF Community Convention Center
Art market, trash fashion show, art exhibits. INFO@RECYCLESANTAFE.ORG

NOV. 15, 2–4 PM
ASPEN SONG KIDS (TAOS PUEBLO)

Main Library Community Rm., 145 Washington Ave.
A celebration of heritage through storytelling, art, round-dancing and presentation of their book, *Sacred Spiral*. 505-955-6781

NOV. 20, 7 PM
LARA MANZANARES ALBUM RELEASE PARTY

Unit B by Chocolate Maven, 821 W. San Mateo St.
With special guest Jono Manson. Tickets: \$27 adv./\$50 premium seating with signed CD. 505-886-1251, [HTTPS://WWW.AMPCONCERTS.ORG/TAG/LARA%20MANZANARES](https://WWW.AMPCONCERTS.ORG/TAG/LARA%20MANZANARES)

NOV. 22, 9 AM–5 PM; NOV. 23, 9 AM–4 PM
PATHWAYS WINTER MARKET

Buffalo Thunder Resort & Casino, Pojoaque, N.M.
“Largest two-day holiday art market in N.M.” Artists, Live performances, food, demos. Hosted by the Poeh Cultural Center. WWW.POEHCENTER.ORG

NOV. 23, 4:30 PM
GATHERING VOICES: STORIES OF HEALING, CREATIVITY AND BELONGING

Collected Works Books and via Zoom
Dr. Erica Elliott (*From Doctor to Healer*), Tania Katan (*Creative Trespassing*), John Macker (*Alchemy of Headwinds*), Nasario Garcia (*Martineztown, 1945*) COLLECTEDWORKSBOOKSTORE.COM/EVENTS

NOV. 29, 10 AM–6 PM; NOV. 30, 9 AM–4 PM
WINTER INDIAN MARKET

SF Community Convention Center
Art, culture and community. Over 160 juried Native artists. Pottery, jewelry, textiles, paintings and more. SWAIA.ORG

DEC. 6, 9 AM–5 PM; DEC. 7, 9 AM–4 PM
WINTER SPANISH MARKET

SF Community Convention Center
A wide array of traditional art forms reflecting unique history and craftsmanship passed down through generations. [HTTPS://TRADITIONALSSPANISHMARKET.ORG/SCHEDULE-OF-EVENTS-WINTER/](https://TRADITIONALSSPANISHMARKET.ORG/SCHEDULE-OF-EVENTS-WINTER/)

THROUGH JAN. 12, 2026
12TH SITE SANTA FE INTERNATIONAL

Site SF and locations across the city
“Once Within a Time.” Seventy-one international artists alongside over 20 “figures of interest,” real and fictional, historical and contemporary artists with strong ties to Santa Fe and the surrounding region. SITESANTAFE.ORG

THROUGH SEPT. 2026

MAKOWA: THE WORLDS ABOVE US

Museum of Indian Arts & Cultures
Exhibition exploring Indigenous relationships with the sky and how stories and sciences speak to one another. WWW.INDIANARTSANDCULTURE.ORG

SUNDAYS
RAILYARD ARTISAN MARKET

SF Farmers’ Market Pavilion
Gifts, souvenirs and mementos from local artisans and creative small businesses. SANTAFEFARMERSMARKET.COM

MON.–FRI.
POEH CULTURAL CENTER AND MUSEUM
78 CITIES OF GOLD RD., PUEBLO OF POJOAQUE

Di Wae Powa: They Came Back: Historical Pueblo pottery. The Why, group show of Native artists. Nab Poeh Meng: core installation highlighting Pueblo artists and history. \$7–\$10. 505-455-5041

MON.–SAT., 8 AM–4 PM
RANDALL DAVEY AUDUBON CENTER & SANCTUARY

1800 Upper Canyon Rd.
Free guided walks to see birds, Sat., 8:30–10 am. RSVP for Randall Davey House tours. 505-983-4609, RANDALLDAVEY.AUDUBON.ORG

TUES., SAT., 8 AM–1 PM
SANTA FE FARMERS’ MARKET
Market Pavilion, 1607 Paseo de Peralta
Farmers and producers from northern NM. 505-983-4098, SANTAFEFARMERSMARKET.COM

WEDS–FRI. THROUGH DECEMBER
NUEVO MEXICANO HERITAGE ARTS MUSEUM

750 Camino Lejo, Museum Hill
100 Years of Collecting/100 Years of Connecting, historical and contemporary artworks and articles representing daily life in New Mexico. Free admission. 505-982-2226, [HTTPS://NMHERITAGEARTS.ORG](https://NMHERITAGEARTS.ORG)

WEDS–SAT., 10 AM–6 PM; FRI.–SAT., 10 AM–6:30 PM
SANTA FE CHILDREN’S MUSEUM

Interactive exhibits, play areas, weekly programs. Masks required for ages 2 and older. \$10/\$8/\$7/\$3/one & under free. 505-989-8359, SANTAFECHILDRENSMUSEUM.ORG

WEDS–SUN.
EL RANCHO DE LAS GOLONDRINAS

334 Los Pinos Rd., La Ciénega
Living History Museum dedicated to the heritage and culture of 18th- and 19th-century New Mexico. 505-471-2261, GOLONDRINAS.ORG

SATURDAYS
SANTA FE ARTISTS MARKET
Santa Fe Railyard
Outdoor arts & crafts booths. SANTAFEARTISTSMARKET.COM

EL RANCHO DE LAS GOLONDRINAS
La Ciénega, N.M.
Living history museum. GOLONDRINAS.ORG

IAIA MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY NATIVE ARTS
108 Cathedral Place
Closed Tuesdays. \$5–\$10; under 16, Native and Indigenous peoples free. 888-922-4242, IAIA.EDU/MOCNA

MILAGRO SCHOOL OF HERBAL MEDICINE
Classes and training intensives with experienced herbalists can be a life-changing healing experience. Botany, medicine-making, plant-spirits. 505-820-6321, INFO@MILAGROHERBS.COM

MUSEUM OF INDIAN ARTS & CULTURE
710 Camino Lejo (Museum Hill)
Maatakuyma: Essential Elements: Art, Environment and Indigenous Futures, Makowa: The Worlds Above Us; Here, Now and Always. \$7–\$12. 10 am–5 pm. Closed Mondays. 505-476-1269, WWW.INDIANARTSANDCULTURE.ORG

MUSEUM OF INTERNATIONAL FOLK ART
706 Cam. Lejo, Museum Hill
“Truths Be Told: Artists Activate Traditions.” Groundbreaking exhibition opens Dec. 5, through Jan. 20, 2027, highlights how traditional art forms—from quilt-making, ceramics and regalia to basketry and video—are being reimagined as powerful tools for civic

dialogue, resistance and healing. \$3–\$12. NM residents free, first Sunday of the month. [HTTPS://WWW.INTERNATIONALFOLKART.ORG](https://www.internationalfolkart.org)

NATIVE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

SF Business Incubator, 3900 Paseo del Sol

Monthly gatherings for Native American entrepreneurs, artists and business owners to connect, share resources and build pathways to success. Presented by UNM Rainforest Innovations and the City of SF Economic Development Dept.

NEW MEXICO HISTORY MUSEUM

113 Lincoln Ave.

The Lamy Branch of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad model train; Palace Seen and Unseen: A Convergence of History and Archaeology, photos and artifacts; Telling NM: Stories from Then and Now. Closed Mondays. 505-476-5200, [NMHISTORYMUSEUM.ORG](http://nmhistorymuseum.org)

SANTA FE HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Seeking land, donated or for sale, to build affordable housing. Low-income homeowners help build homes and make mortgage payments to the nonprofit HFH. Property owners can qualify for 50 percent Affordable Housing tax credit through the NM Mortgage Finance Authority. 505-986-5880, ext. 109

STATE MUSEUMS

Museum of International Folk Art (10 am–5 pm), Museum of Indian Arts and Culture (10 am–4 pm), N.M. History Museum (10 am–4:30 pm), N.M. Museum of Art (Tues.–Sun., 10 am–4 pm). [NEWMEXICOCULTURE.ORG/VISIT](http://newmexicoculture.org/visit)

WHEELWRIGHT MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

704 Cam. Lejo, Museum Hill

Memo to the Mother: Bob Haozous’s Messages to Mother Earth. 10 am–4 pm Tues.–Sat. \$10.

YOUTHBUILD / YOUTHWORKS!

Paid training for Youth 16–24. Construction, Culinary, GED. 505-989-1855, [WWW.SANTAFEYOUTHWORKS.ORG/SANTA-FE-YOUTHBUILD/](http://www.santafeyouthworks.org/santa-fe-youthbuild/)

TAOS / Online

NOV. 12–15

THE ART OF PLACE

Planning with Culture, Land and Legacy. 2025 American Planning Assn. State Conference Planners, practitioners and partners from across the Southwest explore how we shape communities at the intersection of culture, wildland-urban interfaces and land use. [HTTPS://NEWMEXICO.PLANNING.ORG](https://newmexico.planning.org)

LA HACIENDA DE LOS MARTÍNEZ

708 Hacienda Way

Northern NM-style Spanish colonial “great house” built in 1804 by Severino Martínez. Open daily. [TAOSHISTORICMUSEUMS.ORG](http://taohistoricmuseums.org)

MILLICENT ROGERS MUSEUM

1504 Millicent Rogers Rd.

Tuab-Tab/Taos Pueblo: Home, highlighting the pueblo’s culture and artistic achievements. Open daily. [HTTPS://WWW.MILLICENTROGERS.ORG/](https://www.millicentrogers.org/)

HERE & THERE / Online

NOV. 4–6

ECONOMIC FUTURES SUMMIT

San Francisco, California

First-of-its-kind, Indigenous-led gathering to galvanize sustainability solutions and create new pathways for evolving the economy and confronting the climate and nature crises. [HTTPS://ECONOMICFUTURES2025.COM](https://economicfutures2025.com)

NOV. 4–7

GREENBUILD INT’L. CONFERENCE & EXPO

Los Angeles Convention Center, Calif.

Green building event for sustainability professionals. Over 100 education sessions. [HTTPS://INFORMACONNECT.COM/GREENBUILD/](https://informaconnect.com/greenbuild/)

NOV. 8, 10 AM–SUNSET

THE GREAT GARLIC REVIVAL

Sostenga Farm, NNMCM, 1028 N. Railroad Ave., Española, NM

Workshop presented by Sostenga Center, GreenRoots Institute, Rodale Institute, Seeds in Common Northern NM College. Food, farming and family. Learn how to plant garlic. Youth programs.

NOV. 8, 11 AM–2 PM

12TH ANNUAL AG DAY

Pan American Center So. Parking Lot, Las Cruces, NM

Agriculture, food & football come together before the NM State Aggies’ Homecoming game. Hosted by the NMDA and NMSU College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. Food sampling, educational booths, exhibits. [HTTPS://NMDEPTAG.NMSU.EDU/AG-DAY.HTML#GSC.TAB=0](https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/ag-day.html#gsc.tab=0)

NOV. 13–14

INTL. URANIUM FILM FESTIVAL TOUR

Navajo Nation Museum, Window Rock, Ariz.

Original films feature storytelling that explores the uranium fuel chain. Meet affected community members and organizations working to protect lands, water and people. Info: 505-879-3666, www.uraniumfilmfestival.org

NOV. 18–19

NM ENERGY INITIATIVE SYMPOSIUM

Fidel Center, NM Tech, Socorro, NM

Energy professionals, policymakers, educators, researchers, students and community members will exchange ideas on advancing the state’s Energy Transition Strategy and the Climate Action Plan. [HTTPS://NEWMEXICOCONSORTIUM.ORG/NM-ENERGY-INITIATIVE-SYMPOSIUM/](https://newmexicoconsortium.org/nm-energy-initiative-symposium/)

NOV. 22, 9 AM–4 PM; NOV. 23, 9 AM–3 PM

NM FOOD SHOW & GIFT MARKET

NM Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum, 4100 Dripping Springs Rd., Las Cruces, NM
60 Vendors offering locally produced products. Co-hosted with the NM Dept. of Agriculture. Admission: \$10 per vehicle.

NOV. 23, 7:30 PM

LARA MANZANARES ALBUM RELEASE PARTY

Historic Old San Ysidro Church, Corrales, NM

With special guest Jono Manson. Tickets: \$22 adv./\$44 premium seating with signed CD. 505-886-1251, [HTTPS://WWW.AMPCONCERTS.ORG/TAG/LARA%20MANZANARES](https://www.amppconcerts.org/tag/lara%20manzanares)

THROUGH JAN. 4, 2026

COLLECTING IN A CHANGING WORLD

Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff

Exhibition showcases new acquisitions that tell the evolving story of art, culture and science across the Colorado Plateau. [HTTPS://MUSNAZ.ORG](https://musnaz.org)

FEB. 23–24, 2026

FOOD WASTE SUMMIT

Rancho Mirage, Calif.

Tackling food waste for a sustainable future. Engage with experts, share ideas and network with peers. Early-bird tickets through Oct. 31. [INFO@FOODWASTESUMMIT.COM](mailto:info@foodwastesummit.com), [WWW.FOODWASTESUMMIT.COM](http://www.foodwastesummit.com)

THURS–SUN, 10 AM–4 PM

BOSQUE REDONDO MEMORIAL

Fort Sumner Historic Site, Fort Sumner, N.M.

The exhibit, 30 years in the making, tells the story of ‘The Long Walk’ and the Bosque Redondo. \$7, children 16 and younger, free. NM residents with ID free first Sun. each month. [NMHISTORICSITES.ORG/BOSQUE-REDONDO](http://nmhistoricsites.org/bosque-redondo)

EARTH KNACK SURVIVAL AND OUTDOOR LIVING SKILLS

Crestone, Colo. and elsewhere

Fiber arts, blacksmithing, hide tanning, Rocky Mtn. Survival, Edible, medicinal plants, internships and more. [HTTPS://WWW.EARTHKNACK.COM](https://www.earthknack.com)

GALLUP NEW DEAL ART VIRTUAL MUSEUM

[GALLUPNEWDEALART.ORG](http://gallupnewdealart.org)

The culmination of a nine-year project provides images of the works as well as scholarly information. Hand-carved wood furniture, Spanish-Colonial-style tinwork, prints, murals, western American paintings, Native art.

SUSTAINABLE BUILDING TAX CREDITS

NM residents can apply for tax credits to make homes and businesses more energy efficient. There are extra incentives for upgrades that reduce energy use and lower utility costs in affordable housing or homes occupied by low-income residents. <https://wwwapps.emnrd.nm.gov/ecmd/ecpsubmissions/>

POEH CULTURAL CENTER presents

pathways

WINTER MARKET

BUFFALO THUNDER RESORT & CASINO

NOV
22 & 23
2025

www.poehcenter.org

NM'S LARGEST 2-DAY HOLIDAY ART MARKET
ARTISTS • LIVE PERFORMANCES • FOOD • DEMOS