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PRESERVING PLACE, BUILDING THE FUTURE

# GREEN FIRE TIMES

*News & Views from the Resilient Southwest*



REBUILDING NEW MEXICO WITH ADOBE, SOLAR AND COMMUNITY SKILL

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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.

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**“Fandango in La Fonda Hotel’s La Plazuela: Famous Figures from Santa Fe’s Past and Present”** by Cathie Sullivan. Bottom left: La Conquistadora, General Don Diego de Vargas and La Doña Tules; Bottom right: Pueblo koshare clowns, a Zuni mudhead clown, a Pueblo woman and an Anglo tourist; Three central figures: Archbishop Jean-Baptiste Lamy, St. Francis of Assisi and San Ysidro (with an angel on his shoulder); Dancers behind DeVargas: authors Willa Cather and Oliver La Farge; Dancers behind Lamy and San Ysidro: the Virgin of Guadalupe and Juan Diego; Tall white figure on the left: Zuni Shalako with mudhead clown; couple arm-in-arm to the right of Juan Diego and Guadalupe: flamenco dancer María Benítez and artist Tommy Macaione; couple entering La Plazuela: Hosteen Klah (Navajo) and Mary Cabot Wheelwright; Three figures on the right, under Zozobra: early Santa Fe artists Willard Nash, Gerald Cassidy and William Penballow Henderson; person in the background at La Fonda’s check-in desk: Cathie Sullivan

# AFTER THE SMOKE: REBUILDING NORTHERN NM WITH ADOBE, SOLAR AND COMMUNITY SKILL

BY ROBIN JONES PHOTOS BY BARB O'DELL

In the spring of 2022, the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire moved quickly through the mountains of San Miguel and Mora counties, altering landscapes and daily life in lasting ways. Homes were damaged or lost, watersheds destabilized and familiar hillsides stripped bare. When summer rains followed, flooding compounded the damage. For rural communities already facing housing shortages and an aging building stock, the fire revealed how vulnerable even long-established places can be.

Recovery has unfolded unevenly, but not without direction. In northern New Mexico, rebuilding has drawn on long-standing building traditions, local materials and collective effort. Out of necessity came a practical question: How can homes be repaired or rebuilt in ways that respond to wildfire risk, reduce energy costs and make use of skills already present in the community?

*Students gain skills they can use locally, rather than training for work that exists only elsewhere.*

A partnership formed around that question. Cornerstones Community Partnerships joined with Luna Community College (LCC), the Luna Community College Foundation, the Las Vegas Citizens Committee for Historic Preservation (LVCCHP) and the Regional Development

Corporation (RDC). Together, they began exploring recovery strategies that could address immediate needs while strengthening long-term capacity—repairing buildings while also rebuilding local knowledge and skills.

## FROM EMERGENCY TO ACTION: MAKING ADOBE BRICKS

Some of the earliest recovery efforts were simple and direct. Neighbors and volunteers gathered to mix mud, form adobe bricks and stack them in the sun for residents whose homes had been damaged. In northern New Mexico, adobe is not a novelty. It remains a familiar material—earth, water and fiber combined into bricks for walls that can be repaired and renewed using techniques passed down over generations.



*Volunteers making adobe bricks*

After the fire, that knowledge became newly relevant. Cornerstones helped organize community-based brickmaking as a way to support home repairs. The work was practical and immediate, producing materials that could be put

*If people were eager to make bricks for repairs, what could happen if that energy were extended into structured training?*



*Adobes going to a new home*

to use. It also offered a way for people to contribute directly at a time when larger recovery systems often felt distant or slow.

For many participants, brickmaking carried cultural meaning as

well. Adobe ties buildings to the land they stand on, literally shaped from local soil. Making bricks in the aftermath of the fire became a quiet statement of continuity—an acknowledgment that even after disruption, familiar methods still have value.

## LEARNING BECOMES INFRASTRUCTURE: THE LUNA MODEL ADOBE HOME

That volunteer effort revealed something else: interest in learning these skills was strong. What began as a response to damage soon raised a larger question. If people were eager to make bricks for repairs, what could happen if that energy were extended into structured training?

On the Luna Community College campus in Las Vegas, that question is taking shape as a fire-resistant adobe demonstration home. Built by students and community participants through a hands-on course developed with Cornerstones, the house functions as both a real structure and a teaching tool. It is not a prototype in theory, but a working example of how traditional materials can meet present-day needs.

The home is designed with fire resilience and energy performance in mind. Adobe's thick walls provide thermal mass and, when paired with appropriate roof systems and site planning, offer improved performance in wildfire-prone areas. Attention to detailing—how walls meet roofs, how moisture is managed, how defensible space is considered—reflects lessons learned from recent fires.

Solar design is also part of the project. Passive strategies such as orientation, window placement, shading and wall mass work together to moderate indoor temperatures. The structure is designed to accommodate active solar systems as well. In a region where energy costs can strain household budgets and power disruptions are not uncommon, efficiency is less an environmental statement than a practical concern.

The project has benefited from broad community support. The Las Vegas Community Foundation, Regional Development Corporation, Thornburg Foundation, Santa Fe Community Foundation, and Southwest Capital Bank are among those



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<p>IN PARTNERSHIP WITH</p> <p><b>Luna Community College</b></p> <p>366 Luna Drive Las Vegas, NM 87701</p>
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<p><b>R1</b></p>

Architectural rendering of model adobe home

*In the aftermath of the fire, making adobe bricks became an acknowledgment that even after disruption, familiar methods still have value.*

involved in supporting the effort through coordination and engagement. Luna's leadership has emphasized how these partnerships connect education to real opportunities. As Interim President Carol Linder has noted, collaborations like these help students gain skills they can use locally, rather than training for work that exists only elsewhere.

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AS PART OF RECOVERY**

As rebuilding progressed, another challenge became clear. Even when materials and plans are available, there is often a shortage of people trained to do the work. This is especially true for traditional building methods, where knowledge can be concentrated among a small number of practitioners.

The model adobe home addresses that gap by functioning as a training site. Students learn adobe construction, traditional plastering and jobsite practices in a real-world setting. They gain experience working to contemporary safety and building standards while understanding how older homes were constructed and how they can be repaired rather than replaced. For many participants, the



Building adobe walls

learning is personal. One student described the experience this way: "I live in one of the oldest adobes in our village and it's in various states of reverting back to being clay. I was really excited this class was happening because we were actually building the stuff. Ernesto [an instructor] knows the formula—how much to add here and there. Learning by doing is one of the most rewarding ways to learn something. It's a lot of work, but it's not something you can get from a textbook."

That kind of learning has practical implications. Participants gain skills that can be used to maintain their own homes, assist neighbors, or pursue work in construction, rehabilitation and preservation. Over time, this strengthens local capacity to care for existing housing stock particularly older adobe buildings that are common across the region.

*Recovery strategies that repair buildings while also rebuilding local knowledge and skills*

**LOOKING AHEAD**

The Hermit's Peak Fire left visible damage and long-term challenges. Recovery is ongoing, uneven and complex. Yet the work underway in Las Vegas and surrounding communities suggests that rebuilding does not have to be limited to replacement. It can also be an opportunity to adapt—using familiar materials in thoughtful ways, improving energy performance, and passing skills forward.

Volunteer brickmaking showed how quickly communities can mobilize when the work is tangible. The Luna model adobe home shows what happens when

*Strategies such as orientation, window placement, shading and wall mass work together to moderate indoor temperatures.*

that effort becomes part of an educational framework—something that can be repeated, refined and shared. Fire-conscious design and solar efficiency are no longer abstract ideas; they are embedded in walls rising on a college campus.

In northern New Mexico, adobe remains a practical material shaped by local knowledge. After 2022, its relevance has only sharpened. The work now underway reflects a simple reality: Rebuilding is as much about people and skills as it is about structures, and the two are most durable when they grow together. ■

*Robin Jones is deputy director of Cornerstones Community Partnerships.*



Adobe Plastering Workshop at Luna Community College in Las Vegas, NM during the NM Historic Preservation Conference, October 2025

## NM STREAMLINES TAX CREDIT FOR PRESERVING CULTURAL PROPERTIES

A recent rule change will make it easier for New Mexicans to seek tax credits on historic structures. The update, which went into effect on Jan. 1, revises New Mexico Administrative Code section 4.10.9, governing the Credit to State Income Tax for Approved Restoration, Rehabilitation or Preservation of Registered Cultural Properties.

The New Mexico Historic Preservation Division (NMHPD) manages, oversees and coordinates historic preservation activities across the state, educates the public about historic preservation, and protects thousands of historic and archaeological sites. “We’re grateful for these changes to the New Mexico Administrative Code, which clarify the process behind issuing these tax credits for applicants and staff administering the program,” said State Historic Preservation Officer Michelle Ensey.

Matt Saionz, historian for the NMHPD, noted that the change was made for three reasons. First, the update changes the submission deadline from 14 days prior to a Cultural Properties Review Committee (CPRC) meeting, giving them more time to review the appropriate information. Secondly, the update adds a formal appeal process for denied applications, clarifying the course of action for individuals and organizations who receive a denial. Finally, the changes clarify the role of HPD staff in preparing applications for CPRC consideration and streamlining the approval process for staff and applicants.

The updated language may be viewed at <https://www.srca.nm.gov/parts/title04/04.010.0009.html>. More information about applying for a tax credit for an eligible historic structure is available at [nmhistoricpreservation.org/programs/tax-credits.html](http://nmhistoricpreservation.org/programs/tax-credits.html).

## From Vacancy to Possibility: Reclaiming Homes, Training Futures in New Mexico

BY ROBIN JONES

Across New Mexico’s rural towns, vacant and abandoned homes are a familiar sight. In communities like Las Vegas and Mora, once-lived-in houses sit quietly deteriorating—windows boarded, roofs failing, adobe walls slowly eroding. Many of these structures remain fundamentally sound, yet they stand empty while teachers, healthcare workers, service employees and young families struggle to find housing they can afford. This mismatch—habitable homes without residents, residents without housing—reveals more than a supply problem. It reflects a deeper imbalance in how communities steward both people and place.

*Rehabilitation becomes both a housing solution and a workforce development strategy.*

In northern New Mexico, a large share of these vacant properties are historic homes. Built of adobe or early masonry, they were designed for the local climate and shaped by generations of daily use. When such homes fall vacant due to inheritance challenges, aging owners or economic pressure, the loss is both practical and cultural. Each abandoned house represents a missed opportunity: for housing, for jobs and for sustaining community life.

Rather than approaching vacancy as a dead end, communities are beginning to see it as a starting point. In Las Vegas, New Mexico, two interconnected approaches have emerged from the same core challenge. One focuses on learning and documentation, engaging youth through historic property survey internships. The other centers on hands-on rehabilitation, transforming vacant homes into workforce housing while building local skills. Together, these programs form a continuum—moving from understanding the problem to actively repairing it.

### PROGRAM ONE: YOUTH INTERNSHIPS AND THE WORK OF SEEING CLEARLY

Las Vegas is a city defined by its historic fabric—railroad-era storefronts, adobe neighborhoods, civic buildings and streetscapes that reflect centuries of cultural exchange. With more than 500 historic structures, it holds one of the richest collections of historic resources in the state. Yet many of these buildings are underused or vacant, their conditions poorly documented and their potential poorly understood.

The Las Vegas Historic Property Survey Intern Program was created to address this gap by placing local youth at the center of preservation and planning work. Designed and led by Cornerstones Community Partnerships, in collaboration with the Las Vegas Citizens Committee for Historic Preservation (CCHP), Luna Community College and the City of Las Vegas, the program treats vacant buildings not as abstractions, but as real places that can be studied, mapped and understood.

The three-month internship engages high-school students interested in trades, architecture, mapping, planning and cultural heritage. Meeting on Friday afternoons and Saturdays, interns receive structured training and close mentorship from preservation professionals, educators, community leaders and city staff. Students learn to read the built environment—understanding historic building types, evaluating structural condition and integrity, and recognizing signs of deterioration and reuse potential.



*A northern NM home with the Hermit's Peak Fire in the distance, 2022. Photo © Charles Curtin*

Interns are trained in field documentation, photography, note-taking and basic GIS literacy, using mapping tools and data provided by the City of Las Vegas. Just as importantly, the curriculum emphasizes preservation ethics, safety in abandoned structures, and the relationship between historic buildings, housing stability and community well-being. Preservation is framed not as nostalgia, but as a living practice tied to housing, health and local decision-making.

Working in teams with mentors, students conduct block-by-block surveys in historic neighborhoods, documenting vacant and underutilized properties. Their work culminates in a mapped and written report that identifies buildings with potential for rehabilitation,

including future use as affordable or workforce housing. This final product serves as a practical planning tool for the city, nonprofit organizations and community developers—grounded in firsthand observation rather than assumption.

Beyond the data itself, the program builds something less tangible but equally important: local capacity. Students gain confidence, technical skills and exposure to career pathways rarely visible in rural communities. They begin to see themselves as stewards of place and contributors to their city's future, rather than observers on the sidelines.

## PROGRAM TWO: REHABILITATION AS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Documentation alone, however, does not put homes back into use. The second pathway addresses what happens next—rehabilitating vacant historic homes while training people to do the work.

North-central New Mexico faces a growing workforce housing challenge. Many essential workers earn too much to qualify for subsidized housing but cannot afford rising rents or homeownership costs. As wages lag behind housing prices, even modest increases push workers out of the communities they serve. Schools, healthcare facilities and local governments struggle to retain staff. Meanwhile, vacant historic homes continue to deteriorate, reinforcing cycles of disinvestment.

A community-based rehabilitation and training model offers a way forward. By pairing housing production with hands-on education, vacant homes become

*Returning vacant homes to use stabilizes neighborhoods, reduces blight and supports workforce retention.*

*When properly maintained, adobe offers durability, thermal mass and climate responsiveness.*

training sites and classrooms. Rehabilitation becomes both a housing solution and a workforce development strategy.

In Las Vegas and surrounding communities, Cornerstones Community Partnerships works alongside CCHP, Luna Community College, local foundations, city officials and regional partners to align preservation with housing and workforce needs. Participants—youth and adults—gain experience in assessing properties, repairing adobe walls, applying traditional plasters, improving drainage, integrating fire-resistant and energy-efficient upgrades, and navigating the full rehabilitation process from evaluation to final inspection.

Adobe construction plays a central role. When properly maintained, adobe offers durability, thermal mass and climate responsiveness. Teaching these skills reconnects participants with building traditions that have sustained New Mexico communities for generations, while preparing them for modern, code-compliant rehabilitation work.

The outcomes extend beyond individual trainees. Returning vacant homes to use stabilizes neighborhoods, reduces blight and supports workforce retention. Housing stability becomes a foundation for community health, educational continuity and economic resilience. Knowledge stays local, and communities strengthen their ability to care for their own housing stock over time.

## A MODEL ROOTED IN PLACE, BUILT FOR REPLICATION

What unites these two programs—internships and rehabilitation—is partnership. Preservation organizations, educational institutions, city staff and community

advocates work together to share expertise and responsibility. Youth learn from elders and professionals. Data flows into planning systems. Training aligns with real community needs.

The model is also replicable. Many rural New Mexico towns face the same conditions: vacant



*An old house being renovated near Las Vegas, N.M. © Seth Roffman*

historic housing, limited workforce opportunities and youth outmigration. By documenting processes, developing reusable curricula and strengthening local leadership, communities can adapt these approaches to their own contexts.

Addressing vacant and abandoned homes is not quick work. It requires patience, coordination and respect for both people and buildings. But it offers something increasingly rare: solutions that honor history while meeting present needs.

In Las Vegas and beyond, vacant historic homes are no longer just remnants of the past. They are becoming sites of learning, work and renewal—proof that the path forward can begin with what is already standing. ■

## Honoring the past. Shaping what's next.



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*City of Santa Fe, Old Santa Fe Association, and Historic Santa Fe Foundation honor their annual awardees.*

May 27, 10am · History of Agua Fria Talk & Tour · Reunity Farms

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# HOW HISTORIC PRESERVATION IS FUELING RURAL RENEWAL FOR SEVEN COUNTIES IN NORTH-CENTRAL NM

BY ROBIN JONES



*La Sala de San José, Galisteo, N.M.*

New Mexico is a place of striking contrasts. It holds the third-highest poverty rate in the nation, yet it is also a premier tourist destination, generating billions of dollars in visitor spending and supporting tens of thousands of jobs. That prosperity,

*Rehabilitation projects create more jobs per dollar than new construction, while keeping materials in use and reducing environmental impacts.*

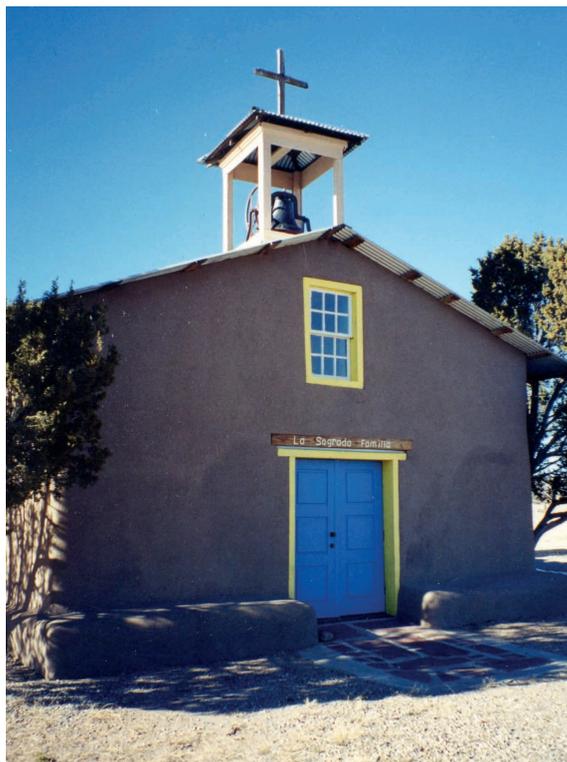
however, is unevenly distributed. Economic activity concentrates in familiar hubs—Santa Fe, Taos, Route 66, the High Road—while many rural communities in north-central New Mexico continue to face persistent challenges: limited economic development, aging infrastructure, workforce shortages and a shrinking supply of affordable housing.

For more than 40 years, Cornerstones Community Partnerships has worked alongside these rural communities, gaining a clear view of both their strengths and the structural barriers they face. That long-standing, place-based experience now informs a major new initiative: the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant Program. Through this program, Cornerstones will regrant federal funds to support preservation-based revitalization projects across seven rural counties—Colfax, Mora, Río Arriba, San Miguel, Taos, Torrance, and Santa Fe County outside the city of Santa Fe.

The program is designed to be both practical and transformative. Eligible applicants—including individual property and business owners, municipalities, tribal governments and nonprofit organizations—may apply for planning grants of up to \$50,000 or construction grants of up to \$200,000. By directing resources to underserved areas, the program aims to preserve historic places while catalyzing local economic activity and long-term community resilience.

At its core, the Paul Bruhn program recognizes a simple but powerful idea: Historic preservation is not only about safeguarding the past. In rural New Mexico, it is a proven strategy for economic development, housing stabilization and community revitalization.

*In New Mexico, the demand is especially acute for preservation trades—adobe making, plastering, masonry, carpentry and window restoration.*



*Above: Restored tackroom, Pecos, N.M.*

*Below: The restored Capilla de La Sagrada Familia Pajarito. Photo by Laura Folsom*

## PLACES THAT MATTER

North-central New Mexico's historic buildings tell stories of adaptation and endurance. They range from modest one-room adobe homes to Spanish Pueblo Revival, Italianate and Mission Revival structures. Churches, mills, theaters, storefronts and plazas remain central landmarks in many small towns—often serving as the last shared gathering spaces left.

Across the seven-county region, more than 375 properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, with many more eligible for listing. Yet a significant number of these structures are at risk. Cement stucco applied decades ago traps moisture in adobe walls, accelerating deterioration. Deferred maintenance compounds over time. Older property owners may no longer have the physical ability or financial means to undertake repairs or navigate complex preservation requirements. Younger residents, priced out of historic districts, often lack opportunities to become stewards of these buildings.

External pressures intensify these challenges. Wildfires, floods and prolonged drought—now familiar realities—have damaged or destroyed historic structures and destabilized entire neighborhoods. Economic displacement following disaster recovery can leave family properties abandoned. Vacant buildings, in turn, become vulnerable to vandalism, theft and eventual demolition. Housing market pressures further complicate the picture, as rising property values and limited assistance force difficult decisions that sometimes result in the loss of irreplaceable places.

## FROM PLANNING TO PRESERVATION

The Paul Bruhn program addresses these risks through two complementary grant tracks.



*Adobe grain mill in Mora County, built in the 1870s, was part of a large shipping center for livestock and agricultural products.*

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*Traditional construction trades are experiencing a nationwide labor shortage, with 80 percent of firms reporting difficulty filling craft positions.*



*Capilla de la Sagrado Familia Pajarito sits in the shadow of Black Mesa between the pueblos of San Ildefonso and Santa Clara. Photo by Barbara Zook*

Planning grants support architectural, engineering and preservation planning that meets the Secretary of the Interior's standards. They may also fund National Register nominations, opening the door to future preservation incentives and protections.

Construction grants support the physical work of saving historic buildings. Eligible activities include roof repair, structural stabilization, masonry and mortar repointing, storefront rehabilitation, signage restoration, HVAC installation, and traditional adobe repair and replastering. Some design and planning costs may be included, allowing projects to move efficiently from concept to completion.

Subgrant projects fall into two broad categories. Some focus on public-serving buildings—museums, theaters, cultural sites and historic landmarks that support tourism and local business activity. Others target historic districts or private properties with the potential to provide affordable housing, a critical need in rural communities where options are limited and aging housing stock dominates.

Cornerstones will prioritize projects with strong stewardship records, active local partnerships and demonstrated community support. All subgrantees will agree to preservation easements or similar protections, ensuring that public investment yields lasting benefits.

#### **ECONOMIC RIPPLE EFFECTS**

Historic preservation's economic impact is well documented. Rehabilitation projects create more jobs per dollar than new construction, while keeping materials in use and reducing environmental impacts. In New Mexico, where heritage tourism generates roughly \$737 million annually, supports 96,000 jobs, and drives \$1.8 billion in lodging revenue, historic buildings are foundational economic assets.

They are also cultural anchors. Shaped by Native American, Spanish, Mexican and Anglo traditions, New Mexico's historic places define the state's identity and attract visitors from around the world. When restored, they often spark a ripple effect—encouraging nearby property owners to invest, drawing small businesses back into downtowns and reviving civic pride.

In towns with few shared spaces, the rehabilitation of a single building can reshape daily life. A restored hall becomes a venue for meetings and celebrations. A rehabilitated storefront invites local entrepreneurship. A preserved home becomes stable housing for a



*Above: La Sala de San José, in Galisteo, is now used for community activities.*

*Below: Pecos, N.M. tackroom before restoration*

family rooted in place. These projects foster connection, creativity and trust between residents and local governments—an especially valuable outcome in an era when many interactions have moved online.

### BUILDING SKILLS, BUILDING FUTURES

The program also responds to a growing workforce crisis. Traditional construction trades are experiencing a nationwide labor shortage, with 80 percent of construction firms reporting difficulty filling craft positions. In New Mexico, the demand is especially acute for preservation trades—adobe making, plastering, masonry, carpentry and window restoration. By supporting hands-on preservation work, the Paul Bruhn program helps create training opportunities tied directly to real projects. These pathways are particularly important for residents underserved by traditional higher education, offering practical skills, local employment and a chance to participate in the care of culturally significant places.

### A LONG VIEW

For more than three decades, Cornerstones has demonstrated that preservation works best when it is rooted in trust, training, and long-term partnership. The Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant represents a pivotal moment to scale that approach—transforming experience into a dedicated funding stream for rural communities.

Anticipated outcomes include the preservation of six-to-eight historic properties, the creation and retention of local jobs, and measurable increases in building occupancy and economic use. More importantly, the program offers a replicable model: one that shows how restoring historic places can restore opportunity, resilience and connection in the rural landscapes that define New Mexico.

In a state where history is not confined to museums but lived in homes, plazas and main streets, investing in preservation is an investment in the future. ■

*Robin Jones is deputy director of Cornerstones Community Partnerships.*

*Photos courtesy Cornerstones Community Partnerships*



## CORNERSTONES Community Partnerships

Paul Bruhn Historic  
Revitalization Grant Program

### APPLICANT OVERVIEW

#### Program Purpose

This program supports the rehabilitation of historic buildings in rural New Mexico. Funds are intended to strengthen communities by preserving historic places that support housing, economic activity, cultural use and public benefit. Eligible counties include: Colfax, Mora, San Miguel, Taos, Río Arriba, Torrance and Santa Fe County (outside the city of Santa Fe)

#### Key Dates (Anticipated)

- **Applications Open:** May 1, 2026
- **Application Deadline:** July 10
- **Awards Announced:** Late September
- **Project Period:** 2026–2029

#### Who Is Eligible to Apply

Nonprofit organizations; Local governments and municipalities; Tribes and tribal organizations; Preservation and community-based organizations

#### Eligible Properties & Projects

Historic buildings listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; Rehabilitation projects that follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; Projects that provide a public or community benefit, such as: affordable or workforce housing; Community facilities; Cultural or educational spaces; Local economic revitalization

#### Ineligible Uses

New construction; Routine maintenance or minor cosmetic work; Projects that remove or damage historic character; Private, for-profit projects; Projects completed prior to award; Religious use only (without clear public benefit)

#### Required Commitments

Placement of a historic preservation easement on the property; Ability to operate under cost-reimbursement funding; Compliance with federal requirements, including: National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106); Environmental review (NEPA); HPF and National Park Service guidelines

#### How Applications Are Evaluated

Applications are competitively scored based on: Historic significance of the property; Urgency of need and level of deterioration; Community impact and public benefit; Project readiness and realistic scope; Organizational capacity and partnerships; Long-term sustainability of the project

#### More Information

Full guidelines, application materials and timelines are available at:

[WWW.CORNERSTONESNM.ORG](http://WWW.CORNERSTONESNM.ORG)



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# Avanyu General Contracting, LLC

*A San Ildefonso Pueblo-based company specializing in historic preservation*

BY SETH ROFFMAN



*Liana Sanchez and Mateo Peixinho*

Avanyu General Contracting, LLC (AGC) is a Native American woman-owned construction company that was established in 2004. AGC specializes in historic adobe preservation in New Mexico, Colorado, Texas and California, as well as on tribal lands. The company offers a full range of services, from design to completion, and has increasingly taken on larger commercial projects. CEO Liana Sanchez manages Avanyu's principal office in the Pueblo of San Ildefonso, as well as a satellite office in Española. She is also actively involved in the company's daily operations.

Mateo Peixinho has worked in all phases of construction for 38 years. He has had extensive experience with commercial projects for tribal and non-tribal entities. Through his oversight of AGC projects and collaboration with clients, Peixinho has facilitated community development initiatives

such as creating local options for students and employment opportunities for local community members. In recent years, Avanyu has employed up to 30 people including full-time masons and carpenters and several part-time employees.

J. Eric Calvert is Avanyu's lead preservationist. He oversees historic preservation standards and guidelines requirements. Calvert came to Avanyu as an experienced plasterer during the *Oweh'neh Bupingeh* Rehabilitation Project at the Pueblo of Ohkay Owingeh. While helping preserve his pueblo's core, he gained extensive training and mentorship in all aspects of historic adobe preservation, and then continued to study and work with adobe preservation under Pat Taylor of Mesilla, N.M. Calvert has developed into a hands-on crew leader and foreman. He currently supervises a crew of five to 10 masons and plasterers, and has completed projects for Avanyu in New Mexico, Texas and California.



*Restoration of the Casita Desiderio y Pablita Ortega, an 18th-century residence on the National Register of Historic Places, Plaza del Cerro, Chimayó, N.M.*

Avanyu's "adobe guru," Mike Duran, who has been with the company since 2012, has worked with adobe since he was 8 years old. He started by cleaning adobes at the San Juan Pueblo adobe plant in the late '70s and early '80s. Duran and his brother produced adobes commercially from 1984 to 1992.

AGC's owners consider themselves social entrepreneurs. "We come from a community that continues to be impacted with much trauma," said Sanchez. "Sometimes we need to provide a bit more understanding and support." Providing "life improving" opportunities to the local communities it serves is part of Avanyu's core mission statement. "Mateo and I are really honored to be able to employ our community members and have the ability to accommodate their needs when it comes to participation in their traditional customs and obligations," Sanchez said.

*Avanyu prides itself on leading the way in sustainable adobe construction and community-driven initiatives.*

Avanyu's main goal is to make adobe homes affordable for Pueblo and non-Pueblo families of northern New Mexico. "I'm so proud that we have brought this trade back to our pueblo to honor our ancestors' knowledge and sustainable building practice," Sanchez said. That includes reviving an age-old tradition of bringing families and communities together to help construct family homes. Avanyu hosts adobe-making

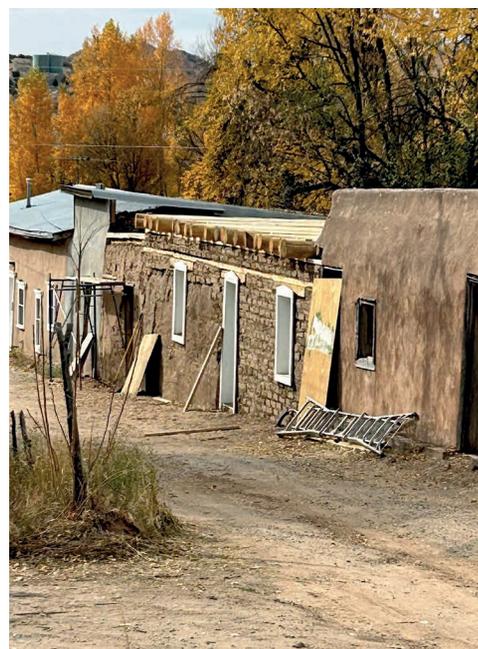
*Providing employment and training opportunities to local communities is part of AGC's mission statement.*



and laying gatherings "so families can contribute their love through labor" in a house's construction.

Commercial adobe production in New Mexico has not been flourishing in recent years. The only production yard in northern New Mexico closed a few years ago. In Albuquerque, the last commercial yard has begun to shutter its operation. That will leave

only a handful of mom-and-pop yards that lack the capacity to produce adobes for large projects. However, demand for adobe bricks is increasing, and Avanyu is positioning itself to become a major supplier.



AGC has also been collaborating with local contractors, with Cornerstones Community Partnerships and with local communities to host adobe-making and adobe-construction workshops, and has worked with Focus Forward Internship programs to host summer interns.

Over the past 21 years, AGC has completed more than 95 projects within the northern and southern pueblos. The company has the cultural sensitivity required for projects within tribal boundaries and for those that require the Department of the Interior's historic preservation protocols. AGC has completed two

USDA-funded projects and two projects for the Veterans Administration, and has worked on several projects for the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service. As a subcontractor, the company also recently completed a project for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

*Above: Workers at AGC's adobe yard, 2025. Photo by Kate Russell*

*Below: Ortega house restoration, Chimayó, N.M.*

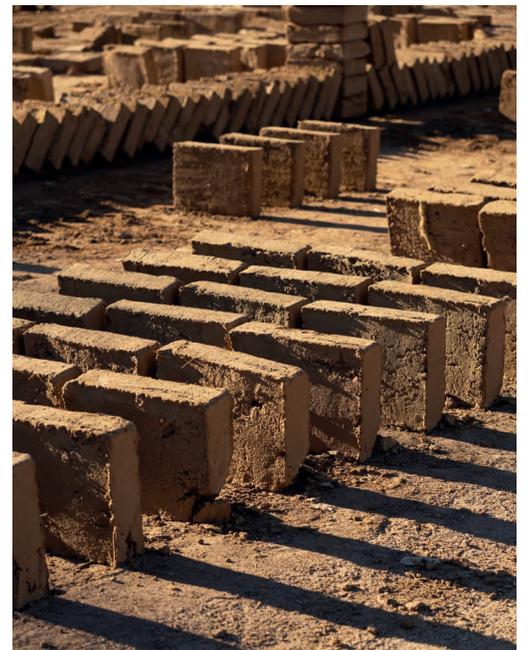
# Celebrating 100 Years!

## PRESERVING SANTA FE SINCE 1926

This year the Old Santa Fe Association will turn 100 years old! Through history education, community service and historic preservation advocacy, we continue to promote the preservation of Santa Fe's unique distinction that combines culture, tradition, and environment — the priceless assets of our region.

**We are planning events this year that celebrate Santa Fe's cultural and architectural heritage. Please join us. We are excited to welcome new members and reconnect with old friends.**

Visit [www.oldsantafe.org](http://www.oldsantafe.org) to get involved!



*Left: Chimayó project interior; R: Adobe bricks drying at AGC's adobe yard, 2025. Photo by Kate Russell; Newly completed historic restoration in Chimayó.*



Currently, Avanyu General Contracting is preparing for a historic project in downtown Santa Fe, and has begun production of about 45,000 adobes, which will be utilized in a large commercial building. The use of adobes in a project of this magnitude will put a spotlight on adobe construction.

For more information, call 505-423-5395, email [INFO@AVANYULLC.COM](mailto:INFO@AVANYULLC.COM) or visit [WWW.AVANYULLC.COM](http://WWW.AVANYULLC.COM) . ■

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# A CENTURY OF PRESERVATION: THE ORIGINS OF THE OLD SANTA FE ASSOCIATION

BY EDWARD ARCHULETA

The Old Santa Fe Association was founded in 1926 by a group of local visionaries determined to protect what they recognized as the city's irreplaceable heritage. Early leaders included notable artists, architects, writers and civic figures such as John Gaw Meem, Mary Austin, Carlos Vierra, Gustave Baumann, Alice Corbin and William Penhallow Henderson—people deeply rooted in the city's cultural life and passionate about safeguarding its history.

From its earliest days, OSFA has articulated a mission that is both philosophical and practical: to preserve the traditions, architecture, environment and overall “sense of place” that has made Santa Fe unique, and to guide new growth and development in a way that minimizes loss of that character. This mission was expressed in its founding petition, published in the *Santa Fe New Mexican* on April 25, 1926, which envisioned an organization diligent in preserving “the unique charm born of age, tradition and environment” that defined Old Santa Fe.

Over the decades that followed, OSFA has evolved from a small group of concerned citizens into a central voice in local preservation policy and civic planning—shaping the way Santa Fe grows, while striving to maintain its historic authenticity.

## EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS (1926–1950S): ESTABLISHING A PRESERVATION ETHOS

### Foundational Advocacy

In the very year of its founding, OSFA took on its first major battles. The association successfully opposed a proposal to develop land around the future site of St. John's College into a seasonal colony, thereby protecting an area of historic and community value. It also advocated that Fiesta traditions, once confined to the Palace of the Governors, remain open to all citizens—an early example of OSFA's commitment to inclusivity in cultural heritage.

### Fighting Ill-Placed Development

One of OSFA's significant early victories came in 1945, when it opposed construction of a highway through downtown Santa Fe. By successfully challenging this proposal, the group helped protect historic sites such as the Santuario de Guadalupe and other key structures from potential demolition or degradation.

### Laying the Groundwork for Planning

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, OSFA not only advocated for preservation but also helped shape formal planning processes. The organization lobbied for and partially funded Santa Fe's first city Master Plan, completed in 1950 under planner Harland Bartholomew—laying a foundation for systematic, thoughtfully guided urban development.

## INSTITUTIONALIZING PRESERVATION (1950S–1970S): FROM ORDINANCES TO ORGANIZATIONS

### Historic Styles Ordinance

In 1957, OSFA members authored the Historic Styles Ordinance, a landmark regulatory framework that established architectural guidelines to ensure new and existing structures in the downtown and east side of town conformed visually to Santa Fe's traditional styles. This ordinance entrenched the distinctive Spanish-Pueblo architectural aesthetic that Santa Fe is internationally known for today and influenced future zoning codes

emphasizing the city's unique character. Since the inception of the ordinance, OSFA has maintained a permanent seat on the Historic Districts Review Board, strengthening community involvement in development decisions.

### Protecting Barrio de Analco

Throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s, OSFA played a key role in protecting the Barrio de Analco along E. DeVargas Street, a historic neighborhood of deep cultural and architectural value. Working with the National Park Service, the association helped ensure this area was listed on the National Register of Historic Places—a critical step in securing its preservation.

### Founding a Sister Organization

The preservation movement in Santa Fe gained further momentum when, in 1961, OSFA sponsored the creation of the Historic Santa Fe Foundation (HSFF), now itself a major civic preservation entity. HSFF was formed in response to threats to historic buildings—notably the proposed demolition of Simon Nusbaum House on Washington Avenue—and became a separate nonprofit focused on acquiring and protecting endangered properties.



*Simon Nusbaum House, Washington Ave.,  
before its demolition in 1961*

## ADVOCACY AND POLICY INFLUENCE (1970S–2000S)

Throughout the 1970s and beyond, OSFA's role expanded beyond preserving individual buildings to shape broader planning and community engagement processes.

### Expanding Regulatory Reach

In 1972, the organization was instrumental in extending the historical zone protections to Museum Hill and, in the 1980s, to the South Capitol and Guadalupe/Westside neighborhoods.

### Forming Coalitions

OSFA helped found the Santa Fe Federation of neighborhood organizations in 1974, fostering coordinated citizen involvement in planning issues. In the following decades, it continued hosting community forums on issues ranging from city master plans to specific redevelopment proposals, always with an eye toward preserving local character, human scale, and historical integrity.

### Holistic Urban Engagement

By the 1990s and 2000s, OSFA engaged in broader urban issues—from advocating for public transportation and city planning staff professionalization for the review board—to championing master planning processes and public debates on downtown development. Its work consistently balanced respect for history with thoughtful consideration of contemporary community needs.

## RECENT WORK AND CONTINUED IMPACT (2000S–PRESENT)

### Historic Preservation in Practice

In the 2000s and 2010s, OSFA continued its grassroots and policy efforts, including:



Above: East De Vargas St. in the Barrio de Analco, 1888.

Photo: UC Berkeley Bancroft Library

Below: Aztec dancers performing in front of the Santuario de Guadalupe (early 2000s). Photo: [MARKKANE.NET](http://MARKKANE.NET)

- Advocating for retention of historic fabric in redevelopment projects such as the State of New Mexico Villagra Building on Galisteo Street and Manderfield School on Canyon Road.
- Hosting forums on issues like renewable energy in historic districts and impact assessments for major projects.
- Opposing developments or zoning changes that threaten historic or culturally important areas.

Community engagement remains a core part of the association's work, with public programs, lectures, film screenings and book discussions that educate residents and visitors about regional history and the importance of preservation. The OSFA Book Club brings authors and historians together with the public to share perspectives on Santa Fe's past.

### Recognition and Awards

OSFA also partners with the City of Santa Fe and Historic Santa Fe Foundation to present annual Preservation Awards, recognizing individuals and projects that demonstrate exceptional commitment to safeguarding the city's heritage. For example, the Sara Melton Award celebrates community leaders whose advocacy, transparency and service strengthen local preservation efforts.

### Centennial and Legacy

In 2026, OSFA celebrates its 100th anniversary, a testament to its enduring dedication and adaptability across a century of change in Santa Fe. To commemorate this milestone, the association is preparing special publications and events that reflect on its history, influence and vision for the future of preservation in the city.

### OSFA'S BROADER INFLUENCE: PRESERVING SANTA FE'S SENSE OF PLACE

OSFA's century of work has had lasting impacts beyond individual projects:

- It helped cultivate and protect the distinctive Santa Fe Styles of architecture that today define the city's global reputation.
- Its advocacy contributed to regulatory frameworks and planning practices that embed historic character into city growth and zoning policies.
- Through education, awards and public engagement, OSFA has fostered a community that values heritage not as static relics but as living elements of civic identity.

In doing so, the Old Santa Fe Association has not only preserved buildings and landscapes but also helped sustain the cultural memory, traditions and environmental context that make Santa Fe unique among American cities.

For more information or to become a member, visit [WWW.OLDSANTAFE.ORG](http://WWW.OLDSANTAFE.ORG).

*Edward Archuleta, co-director of outreach for the OSFA, is a native Santa Fean whose family was among the city's founders in 1610. His 12th great-grandfather, Juan de Archuleta, was the second mayor of the town from 1614-1618.*

## BOOK PROFILE

### ADOBE TOWN

PRESERVING SANTA FE'S SENSE OF TIME AND PLACE

BY JOHN C. BIENVENU

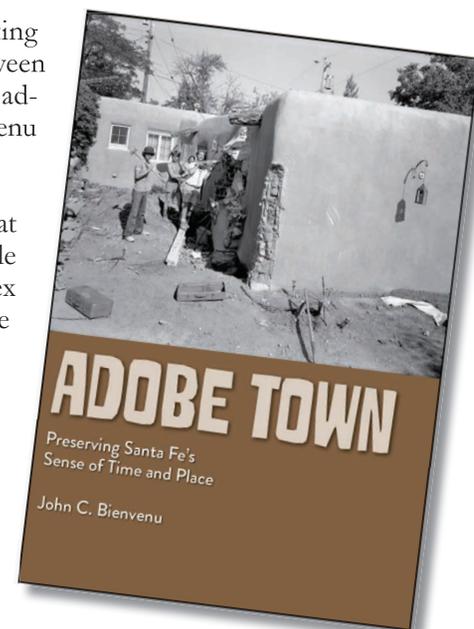
PUBLISHED BY THE OLD SANTA FE ASSOCIATION

This book examines the complex narrative of competing cultural values and the never-ending negotiation between honoring history and accommodating the present. In addition to his work as an attorney and historian, Bienvenu sits on Santa Fe's Historic Districts Review Board.

"The story of Santa Fe's architectural preservation that unfolds in the chapters of this book is not a simple tale of conservation versus progress. Rather, it is a complex narrative of competing visions, cultural values and the never-ending negotiation between honoring history and accommodating the present.

What makes this preservation story particularly significant is that it focused not just on grand monuments or buildings of exceptional architectural merit, but on an entire vernacular landscape—the humble, handmade adobe buildings that collectively created the city's unique sense of place."

— From the foreword by Adam Johnson, Ph.D.



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# THE FAITH AND JOHN GAW MEEM PRESERVATION TRADES INTERNSHIP

*A Program of Historic Santa Fe Foundation*

BY GIULIA CAPORUSCIO

The Faith and John Gaw Meem Preservation Trades Internship was founded in 2005 with the assistance of a generous grant from the Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw Charitable Trust. This year, 2026, marks our 22nd year of hosting this prestigious paid internship program. The internship has been held annually since 2005 except for no students in 2020-2021. The program's application process opens late in the preceding year for current students or recent graduates studying or working in historic preservation, architecture, planning, landscape architecture or a similar field. The selected applicant is invited to work in Santa Fe and gain hands-on experience in the theory and practice of preservation during an 8-10-week period over the summer.

*The mastery of traditional building trades stands at the heart of historic preservation.*

We focus on local students, with 30 percent of our interns attending or having attended the University of New Mexico. Others have been alumni of institutions including Belmont College, Clatsop Community College, Columbia University, Evergreen State College, Goucher College, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Tulane University, University of Arizona, University of Notre Dame, University of Oregon, University of Southern California and University of Texas at Austin.

The mastery of traditional building trades stands at the heart of historic preservation, along with knowledge of the ethics and rationale of preservation. Contemporary trades education does not always fully prepare individuals for the complex challenges associated with conserving historic sites. Globally, therefore, stakeholders in cultural heritage preservation are dedicated to strengthening existing educational programs and creating new models for training the next generation of craftspeople, including in Japan, Germany and France. A limited number of schools in the U.S. now offer traditional building trades training coupled with historic preservation courses. Few if any schools in America offer actual hands-on experience in conserving the historic earthen architecture that gives around 80 percent of the world's dwellings a unique flavor. With approximately



Rita Cofield, 2014 Meem Intern



Left: Mulham Alkharboutli, 2025 Meem Intern  
Photo by Story Coleman

Below: Sonia Vinajeras-Gallegos, 2015 Meem Intern



40 percent of the world's significant historic architecture of the typology described as vernacular earthen construction, this is a serious lack.

This internship provides an ideal opportunity for preservation students to gain experience in the conservation of earthen architecture without sacrificing the opportunity for summer employment. Interns perform hands-on preservation tasks at El Zaguán and with partner organizations including El Rancho de las Golondrinas, the Randall Davey Audubon Center & Sanctuary, and Chimayó Cultural Preservation Association. One of the most common tasks for the interns is mud-plastering the front wall of El Zaguán. Along with hands-on tasks, interns are exposed to the day-to-day and inner workings of a preservation nonprofit, preservation at the City of Santa Fe level, the state level and the federal level.

Mulham Alkharboutli, an intern in 2025, said, "For me, this experience was not only about learning technical trades, but also about weaving my own background in Syrian architecture into the preservation culture of New Mexico. It has affirmed my belief that preservation is an active, living, cultural practice between communities, traditions and materials. I leave this internship with a stronger sense of dialogue between past and present, and with a stronger sense of how I hope to contribute to preservation as both an architect and a cultural practitioner." ■

# PRESERVING PLACE: THE SANTA FE CONTINUUM

*Exploring Growth, Governance and the Future of Place*

BY MELANIE MCWHORTER

Nationally, May is Preservation month. Each May, Santa Fe's preservation organizations unite to honor the city's heritage and earthen building traditions. The City of Santa Fe, Historic Santa Fe Foundation and Old Santa Fe Association co-host the Heritage Preservation Awards at San Miguel Chapel, recognizing local architects, homeowners and professionals. Separately, the State Historic Preservation Office's Cultural Properties Review Committee presents its annual statewide awards—a tradition spanning over 50 years. To further celebrate this month and foster more opportunity to learn and discuss preservation-related issues, Historic Santa Fe Foundation partnered with the New Mexico History Museum and others in 2025 to present 'Preserving Place: The Santa Fe Symposium'—a day-long event exploring preservation challenges and relevance through expert discussions. In 2026 we will host the next symposium titled 'Preserving Place: The Santa Fe Continuum' on May 30 from 8:30 am-4:30 pm.



This will take place at the New Mexico History Museum in a day-long event of 3-4 panels and an open forum.

The upcoming 'Preserving Place: The Santa Fe Continuum' explores the aspects of Santa Fe that have made it an attractive tourist and re-location destination for decades. We look at

*Santa Fe stands at a pivotal moment.*



*Architect Anthony Guida speaking at Friends of Architecture Santa Fe's ReVISION: The Future of Santa Fe Style, 2025. Photo by Melanie McWhorter*

the many dualities that may create the disconnect in communication and social cohesiveness resulting from preserving the aesthetics primarily of the architecture of downtown Santa Fe. Preservation and its intersection with social issues proves to be a highly relevant topic especially on the occasion of the revisions of and changes to Santa Fe's General Plan and Land Use Code. In this year's symposium, we want to explore the connections between the various sections of town—downtown, midtown, and southside—and growth in the surrounding county; how the city and the county work together in governing this development, and what can be done to connect these areas and communicate more about issues in the various neighborhoods and communities in Santa Fe. The goal is to foster discussion about social-, planning-, development- and architecture-related issues around housing, development, adaptive reuse and designing for the New Mexico climate using our preservation of the historical character of Santa Fe as a basis for these discussions.

Santa Fe stands at a pivotal moment. *The Santa Fe Continuum* convenes civic leaders, architects/builders, developers, preservationists and community voices to explore how our past informs an equitable and sustainable future. The choices we make now about housing, design and growth will determine not only what our city looks like, but who can call it home. Continuum 2026 brings us together to ask a shared question: Where do we want to live, and how do we get there together?

*The Preserving Place: Santa Fe Continuum Symposium* brings diverse voices together to discuss alternatives to the continuation of Santa Fe's desirability as a travel location while providing essential services to its residents. We will explore the possibilities of creating more connectedness of the various areas of town; look at the growth on the north and south sides of Santa Fe to explore ideas of making the growth more human and community-centered and less impactful on the environment; foster dialogue on preservation-related issues beyond how to maintain the old and look towards how preservation can benefit the future; and explore the balance between meeting the needs of the local population with maintaining Santa Fe's unique character.

The current partners for this event are: Historic Santa Fe Foundation, New Mexico History Museum, Cornerstones Community Partnerships, among others. Sponsors include Clearstead Avalon Trust.

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*Each May, Santa Fe's preservation organizations unite to co-host the Heritage Preservation Awards.*

We are welcoming a diverse audience including architects, realtors, preservationists, government officials, nonprofits and other stakeholders, and those from organizations working in affordable housing, adaptive reuse, community building, planning, developers and homebuilders' organizations.

The speakers and panelists will be finalized by early March. For more information: <https://www.historicsantafe.org/2026-preservation-month> . Website for 2025 including all slide presentations and audio recordings: <https://www.historicsantafe.org/2025-preservation-month> ■

*Left: Old Santa Fe Association and Historic Santa Fe Foundation panel, Preserving Place Symposium, 2025. Photo by Hanna Churchwell*

## CORNERSTONES COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



Cornerstones Community Partnerships is a non-profit dedicated to preserving the architectural heritage and cultural traditions of New Mexico and the greater Southwest. We work with communities and federal agencies to preserve historic adobe, stone, and timber structures.



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# SAN MIGUEL IS ALIVE!

BY LAURIANNE FIORENTINO

## *A Living Community Space*

San Miguel Chapel rises quietly along Old Santa Fe Trail—a modest adobe structure whose earthen walls hold more than four centuries of memory. Long before preservation became a professional discipline, this building was already serving as a spiritual, cultural and civic anchor. Today, its continued care reveals something profound about New Mexico: that safeguarding historic places is not merely about protecting the past, but about strengthening the future of communities.

Constructed before 1626 and rebuilt after the Pueblo Revolt around 1710, the chapel stands as a landmark along historic trade routes that helped shape the American Southwest. Its thick adobe walls, wooden reredos dating to 1798, and centuries-old devotional artifacts offer a tangible connection to layered histories—Indigenous, Spanish, Mexican and American—that continue to define regional identity. It is regarded as “the oldest church,” sitting upon its original foundation and still celebrating Catholic mass (first Sunday of the month at 3 p.m.). San Miguel endures because people continue to care for it. People from all walks of life have gathered at this site for worship, lectures, concerts, meetings and refuge, reflecting the multifunctional role adobe churches historically played within their communities. The chapel remains consecrated and open to visitors.

## **PARTNERSHIP AS PRESERVATION STRATEGY**

Ownership rests with St. Michael’s High School, which has stewarded the building since 1859. But preservation at San Miguel has never been the work of one organization alone. It is fundamentally collaborative. In 2008, St. Michael’s entered a formal partnership with Cornerstones Community Partnerships, an organization known for restoring historic adobe buildings throughout northern New Mexico. Cornerstones brought technical expertise and grant support, launching a major effort that removed damaging cement stucco, repaired the adobe and returned the exterior to traditional mud plaster.

Modern materials like concrete and tar—once thought to be improvements—had actually accelerated deterioration of the original earthen structure. Restoration with authentic materials did more than stabilize the chapel; it restored architectural integrity and cultural authenticity. More than 1,400 volunteers contributed over 7,000 hours during the initial restoration alone, with St. Michael’s students participating in mud plastering.

## **ADOBE AS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM**

San Miguel is widely recognized as one of the best-preserved examples of adobe architecture in Santa Fe. Adobe is more than a building material—it represents a centuries-old environmental intelligence. Earthen construction responds naturally to desert climates, regulating temperature while using locally available resources.

## **PRESERVATION AS ECONOMIC ENGINE**

Historic preservation is often framed as cultural work, but its economic implications are equally significant. Without organizations like Cornerstones, many historic buildings would deteriorate until they were lost. Loss carries economic consequences: fewer heritage tourism opportunities and reduced incentives for local investment. Conversely, restoration projects can stimulate economic activity. The rehabilitation of an adobe structure in Chimayó, for example, transformed an unsafe ruin into a livable property intended to demonstrate how historic buildings could be restored—effectively helping bring the plaza back to life. San Miguel functions similarly within Santa Fe’s historic Barrio de Analco, inviting broader community engagement while reinforcing the district as a cultural hub. Preservation, in this sense,

## *One of the best-preserved examples of adobe architecture in Santa Fe*

becomes infrastructure—supporting tourism, education, skilled labor and community pride.

## **SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION**

Recent initiatives have explored solar energy as part of a broader vision for community sustainability, illustrating how historic sites can adapt to contemporary environmental realities without sacrificing integrity. Such projects signal an emerging philosophy: preservation is not resistance to change, but thoughtful continuity.

## **WHAT IS AT RISK**

Earthen buildings demand ongoing care. Cracks, monsoon rains and snow-fall signal the need for timely repairs to prevent further damage. History offers sobering reminders of what happens when maintenance falters. In the late 19th century, the chapel came close to demolition because repairs seemed financially impossible—until community members stepped forward to rebuild buttresses and re-roof the structure. That moment echoes today: Preservation is rarely guaranteed; it is chosen. If historic places disappear, the connection between past and present can be lost forever. The stakes extend beyond architecture. Cultural continuity, craftsmanship, shared memory—all erode when physical anchors vanish.

## **WHAT BECOMES POSSIBLE**

When communities invest in historic places, something equally enduring emerges: belonging. San Miguel’s vitality is sustained not simply by architecture but by docents, volunteers, preservationists and community members who greet visitors, repair adobe and share its story—weaving a community that bridges centuries. This is preservation at its most powerful: not nostalgia, but participation. It teaches younger generations that heritage is not



*Kateri López and other volunteers plaster the San Miguel Chapel; Illiana Sandoval cleans a railing; chapel interior. Photos by Laurianne Fiorentino.*

inherited passively; it is maintained through stewardship. It reminds residents that identity is rooted in place.

## A MODEL FOR NEW MEXICO

Across the state, historic adobe structures stand in villages, plazas, and neighborhoods—each carrying stories similar to San Miguel’s. Cornerstones focuses especially on rural and economically disadvantaged communities that often lack resources to restore such buildings on their own. By coordinating volunteers, students and funding partners, the organization shows how preservation can become a collective enterprise rather than an elite one.

San Miguel Chapel ultimately illustrates a larger truth: Historic places are not obstacles to progress. They are frameworks within which communities can grow—culturally grounded, socially connected and economically energized. More than four centuries after its construction, the chapel still gathers people together. That continuity is the result of deliberate care. And in that care lies a lesson: When communities protect the places that shaped them, those places, in turn, continue shaping the community.

## SAN MIGUEL CHAPEL AS CULTURAL CENTER

By pairing artistic innovation with reverence for place, Laurianne Fiorentino, San Miguel Chapel’s director since 2022, has deepened its role as both a sacred space and a vibrant cultural center within Santa Fe. Throughout the year, the chapel hosts a diverse calendar of concerts with acclaimed international, national and local artists. There are lectures and a yearly festival (Sept. 26 this year) that draw residents and visitors. Central to this programming is the Elemental Concert Series (the first Friday of each month at 6:30 p.m.). The Chamber Music at San Miguel series takes place in July and August.

For more information, visit [WWW.SANMIGUELCHAOPELSANTAFE.ORG](http://WWW.SANMIGUELCHAOPELSANTAFE.ORG) or on Facebook: San Miguel Chapel ~ the oldest church. ■

*Laurianne Fiorentino is the director of San Miguel Chapel.*

## CATHIE SULLIVAN

*Seldom seen oil paintings, drawings, serigraphs, bronzes and carvings*

Cathie Sullivan has lived in Tesuque, near Santa Fe, since 1966. She came to New Mexico with her husband, Bill Isaacs, and their daughter Suzanne to buy and operate Tewa Enterprises, a silk-screen business started in 1953 by serigrapher Charles (Chuck) Barrows and Navajo artist, Harrison Begay. Chuck was an early member of the National Serigraph Society, founded in 1940. He taught Cathie how to silk-screen the work of Pueblo, Navajo and several other Indigenous tribes that comprised the Tewa line of wholesale art prints. Today, Tewa Enterprises is owned by the Pueblo of Ohkay Owingeh.

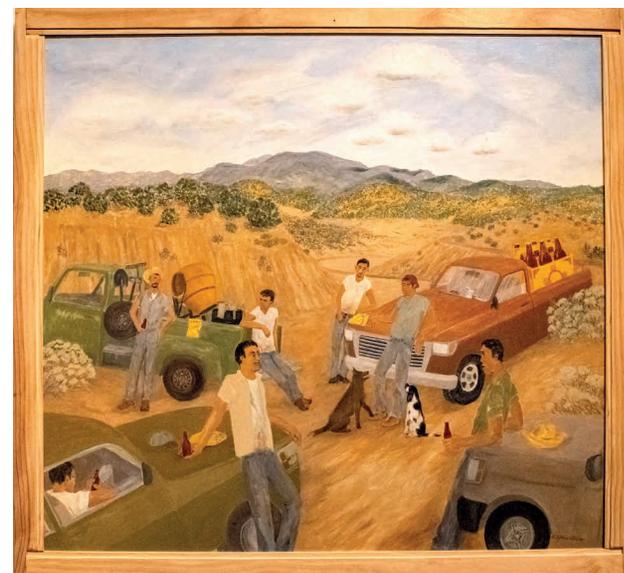
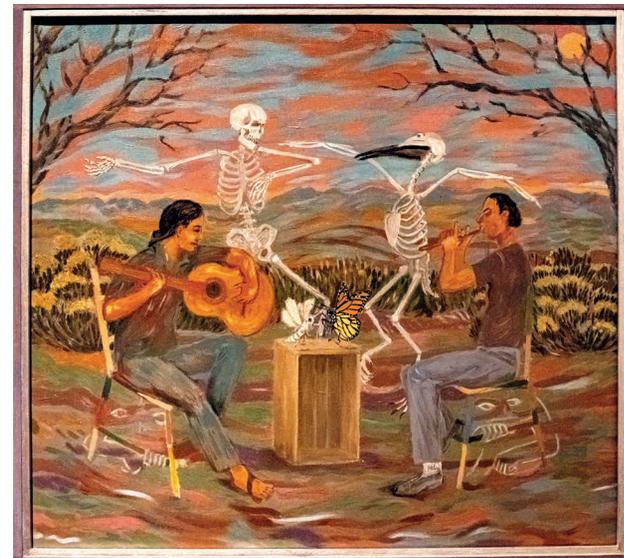
During the 26 years that Cathie was the printer for Tewa Enterprises, she also worked on her own paintings and serigraphs. Her artistic interests include Hispanic and Indigenous cultures of New Mexico, scenes in Santa Fe, natural history subjects, abstract designs, imagined scenes and images, as well as protest pieces related to U.S. military policy, nuclear weapons and “the U.S. version of capitalism.”

For about 20 years, Cathie had a line of hand-silk screened and digitally printed note cards that are available through gift shops in State of New Mexico museums (New Mexico Museum of Art, History Museum, Folk Art Museum and the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture), as well as at Agua Fria Nursery and the Santa Fe and Albuquerque stores of Plants of the Southwest.

A group of her paintings is being exhibited at El Nido, a restaurant in Santa Fe (Tesuque), March 12 through April. Cathie Sullivan may be contacted at 505-982-7144 or [cathiesullivan100@gmail.com](mailto:cathiesullivan100@gmail.com). ■



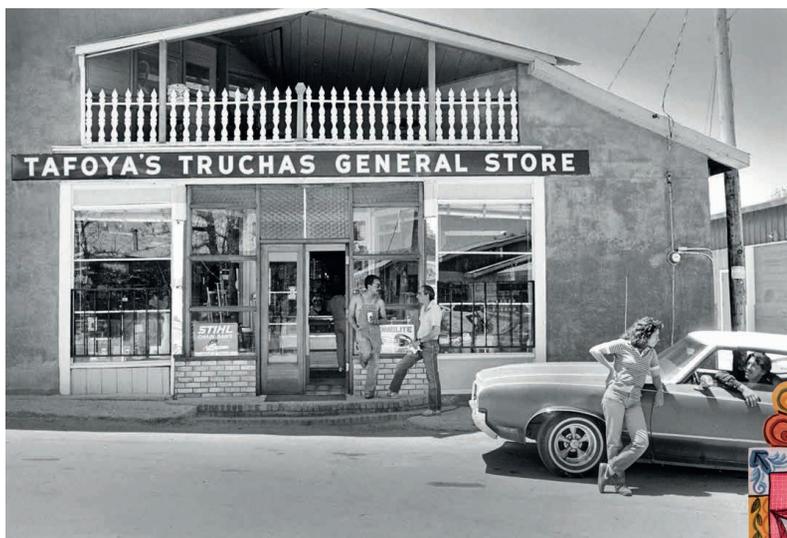
*Barbie's Birthday Party at Blakes Lotaburger; Carvings of creatures from the major steps in animal evolution 700 million years ago until today; Flute & Guitar (Dancing Moth, Raven and Man); Adobe Workers After Work; Gandhi & Einstein (their original ideas like fragile egg shells) Sullivan's "Fandango in La Fonda Hotel's La Plazuela" is on the cover of this issue of Green Fire Times.*



# Revitalizing Rural Grocery Stores in Northern New Mexico

BY EMILY ARASIM BELTRÁN

*This article is drawn from “Revitalizing Rural Grocery Stores in Northern New Mexico: A Community Handbook,” available online via the University of New Mexico Digital Repository. The handbook includes research on the importance and threats facing rural grocery stores, community maps, in-depth profiles of 12 Northern N.M. rural grocery stores, and a toolbox of practical strategies for protection and restoration.*



*Tafoya's General Store in Truchas, 1989, Courtesy Santa Fe New Mexican Collection, Palace of the Governors Photo Archives; (R:) General Store Retablo by Isaiah López of Alcalde*



Across the United States, hundreds of rural grocery stores have closed in recent decades, with profound impacts not only on the economy but also on the health and integrity of our rural communities. Beyond just food access, they are places for neighbors to gather and maintain relationships. They support the success of other small businesses, farmers, ranchers and craftspeople, ensure that elders and those without transportation have what they need close by, and in times of disaster and crisis they provide a lifeline of resources. Many are also historic institutions that hold memory and shape their community's sense of place.

Together, as neighbors, business owners, funders, planners and policy makers, it's time to re-value and re-invest in these special places. Sitting in the *resolana* of our restored rural grocery stores, our many efforts to nourish our families and communities will only grow stronger.

*There are enough people, and enough buying power and need to support local stores if we choose to rally together to support them.*

*‘Grocery stores’ were tied to the shift from traditional agriculture and foodways into the Western cash and commodity economy.*

## A SHORT HISTORY OF NORTHERN NM RURAL STORES

What would become “grocery stores” first came to New Mexico through “general merchandise stores,” which opened in the late 1800s with the spread of the railroad. Many were part of the story of westward expansion and colonialism and tied to the shift from traditional agriculture and foodways into the Western cash and commodity economy. Some early stores were also “company stores” (“*tiendas de raya*”) operated in association with industries like mining and timber, through which workers could be trapped in cycles of peonage and debt.

Around the 1930s, a new wave of ‘mom and pop’ stores began to open. No longer just clustered along the rail lines and owned by wealthy merchants, these stores were built by local families in virtually every single small community. Many were run out of the front of family homes or in conjunction with post offices, and carried basic dry goods, canned foods, and home items. Some expanded to include gas pumps, tools and building supplies, clothing, and freezers with ice cream that became beloved by village children.



Most families continued to grow their own staples, and between their farms, *enfrentes* (roadside farm stands), and the local stores, rural New Mexicans were able to meet most of their needs within their own communities, and for the most part, chose to do so well into the 1950s.

Following World War II, however, more people left for work and education in bigger towns where they could shop at new chain supermar-



*Above: Woman behind the counter of a general store in Truchas.*

*Below: The general store in Chacon. 1943*

*Photos by John Collier Jr. Courtesy Library of Congress*

kets, and highway construction moved traffic away from small communities, decreasing the customer base of rural stores.

By the 1970s, Española, Taos and Las Vegas had growing commercial strips with chain stores drawing in surround-

ing villagers. The coming of Walmart in the 1980s and ‘90s, followed by the rapid spread of dollar stores, was particularly monumental. At the same time, the elder generation of store owners grew of age to retire, and small businesses faced additional challenges with updated environmental and business regulations, like new requirements for stores with gas pumps and historic buildings with issues like lead and asbestos, with which many local owners couldn't afford to comply.

By the early 2000s, many rural stores had shut their doors, and those that hung on often did so not because they were running a profitable business, but because of their dedication to serving their people and their understanding that what they were offering extended far beyond just groceries.



Community members care for the Our Lady of Guadalupe shrine at Oliver's General Store in Ojo Caliente in 2023. Photo courtesy of Luis Peña

### TODAY'S LANDSCAPE AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Today, these layers of history are visible in our stores, which can be found in all conditions, from abandoned adobes, to stores running much as they always had, in the hands of a third or fourth generation, to those that have been revived with using alternative models like cooperatively owned markets (co-ops) to better withstand the obstacles faced by small business owners.

Across rural Santa Fe, Mora, Río Arriba, Taos and San Miguel counties (excluding the 'hub' towns of Española, Santa Fe, Las Vegas and Taos), research counted 47 closed rural stores; 12 open stores; four open but "at risk" stores; and six "repurposed" stores that have been transformed into art galleries, auto garages and coffee shops. Over 34 discount dollar stores were also counted, their widespread presence affirming the heavy impact of dollar stores' predatory approach to locating in low-income and people-of-color majority communities—but also indicating that there are enough people, and enough buying power and need, to support local stores if we choose to rally together to support them.

To rebuild a viable, thriving future for our rural stores we will need to work in a holistic way, including through storytelling, organizing and education; cultural and historic preservation; public investment and policymaking; small-business development; and improvements in land use and regulations. Some overarching observations that can help guide us include:

1. We must move away from isolated, individual businesses toward a regional network of alliance, both amongst store owners, and through support from nonprofits and community groups. Together, we can address many of the challenges that can simply be too much for a single store or family to bear alone.
2. Elected officials and local government staff should be engaged to understand the true value and function of rural stores. By reframing them as infrastructure for public health, happiness and wellbeing, we can open more avenues of support to tip the scales back in favor of these critical institutions.
3. Organizing within our communities to talk about the power of redirecting more of our wealth into local businesses is vital. We can make small but meaningful changes in our personal and families' choices, and then leverage our power to advocate for larger changes.

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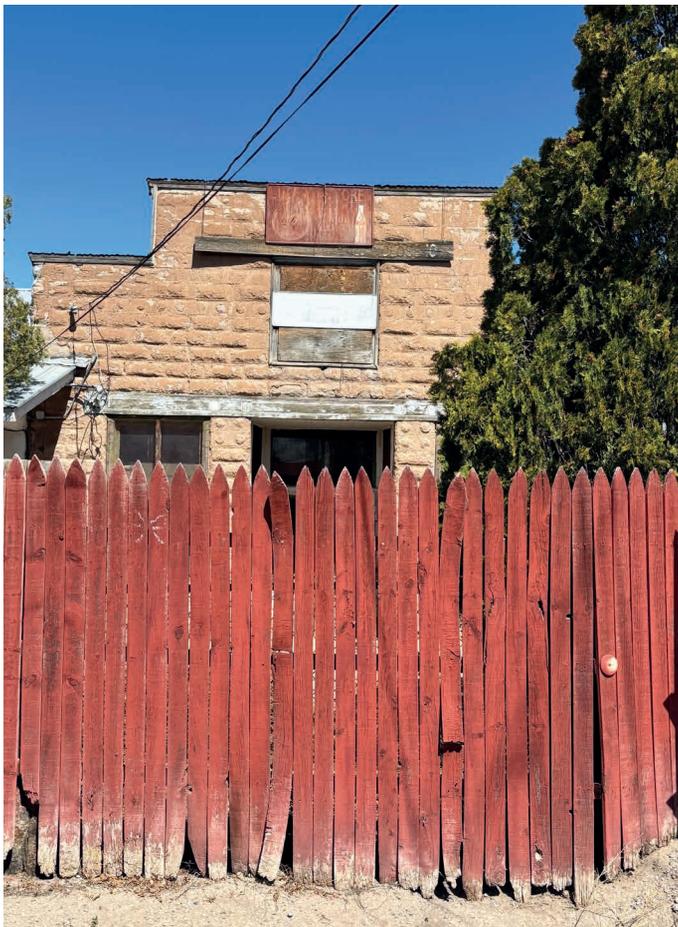
4. Our rural stores will find success, not from trying to compete with national chains and conventional markets, but by carving a new path. Stores that offer local food, culturally important foods, or other specialties are in the best position to endure. Single family-owned businesses that are struggling to make ends meet can also benefit from community input, technical assistance, and funding to explore innovative models and alternative business structures that can help keep the doors open. ■

*Emily Arasim Beltrán is a farmer, organizer and community planner from Northern New Mexico. She is passionate about building community health through work that centers land-based knowledge, environmental justice and the needs of young people.*

[WWW.ROOTEDSTRATEGIESNM.COM](http://WWW.ROOTEDSTRATEGIESNM.COM)

*Left: Doc and Lydia Zellers at their store in Dixon circa 1934, courtesy of the 2020 dissertation of Felicity Fonseca.*

*Below: Two historic stores that now stand empty. L: The Lucero store adjacent to La Iglesia de Santa Cruz de las Cañada in Santa Cruz; R: La Madera Mercantile in La Madera*



*Pg 22: Top Row: (L) Roybal's Grocery in El Rancho (unknown source and year) (R) Liz Roybal, daughter of founders Delluvina Vigil Cordova Roybal and José Edumenio Roybal, in her truck outside the store in 2024. After closing in the 1970s, the store was revived as a small grocery in the early 2000s and then transitioned into a graphic design studio operated by a grandchild of the original owners. Photo by Emily Arasim Beltrán*

*2nd Row: (L) Proprietor George Adelo at his Adelo's Town and Country Store in Pecos, 1988. Palace of the Governors Photo Archives, the Santa Fe New Mexican Collection. (R) Adelo's in 2025. While the original store closed in 2012, Pancho Adelo, representing the third generation to carry the family business, is finding creative ways to serve his people through Pancho's Gourmet to Go, a gas station/convenience store, deli and catering business that stands next to the historic building. Photo by Kevin Beltrán*

*Bottom: (L:) Interior of the Rael Store in Questa by John Collier Jr., 1943. Courtesy, Palace of the Governors Photo Archives and Questa Public Library (R:) Third-generation owners, Cynthia Rael-Vigil and her husband outside. (R) Rael's in 2025. The historic store is now a community coffee shop and artisans' market. Photo by Emily Arasim Beltrán*

# COMMUNITIES BENEFIT FROM NM MAINSTREET'S FREE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

BY JESSICA MRAZ



The New Mexico MainStreet program is part of a national grassroots movement that uses place-based economic development strategies to preserve communities, improve the quality of life and create resilient economies. As a Main Street America coordinating program, one of 47 nationally, New Mexico MainStreet serves 32 MainStreet districts across the state, serving mostly rural communities. The program is housed within the New Mexico Economic Development Department, where staff members work with state and local economic developers to engage people, rebuild places and revitalize economies. The

program has a team of expert professionals, called Revitalization Specialists, who provide free technical assistance to affiliated districts and projects. Such assistance uses Main Street America's trademarked Approach® strategy to transform communities, and is centered on economic vitality, design, promotion and organization.

Since 1985, New Mexico MainStreet has supported more than 95 New Mexico communities and helped build capacity for local economic revitalization efforts. The program has supported the revitalization of 11 historic theaters, preventing them from going dark and preserving central community gathering spaces. Additionally, New Mexico Mainstreet supports 11 state-authorized and two startup Arts & Cultural Districts, which work to strengthen the creative economy and grow creative industries. In the last 10 years alone, New Mexico's MainStreet districts supported more than \$400 million in private sector reinvestment, 1,600 new businesses or expansions and the creation of 5,900 jobs.

New Mexico MainStreet also receives annual funding from the state Legislature to support Capital Outlay projects in its districts. Since fiscal year 2016, more than \$39.5 million has been reinvested in communities to upgrade public infrastructure, improve public safety and create thriving places. Strong partnerships between the state, local governments and MainStreet leaders make these impactful projects possible, as they take years to plan, design and complete. Capital Outlay projects often upgrade public utilities and create visible improvements to commercial districts, which helps instill confidence in business and property owners. Projects create positive ripple effects in local economies as they create revitalized spaces for local businesses and entrepreneurs to shine.

## NEW MEXICO MAINSTREET PRESERVES COMMUNITIES



**Alamogordo MainStreet** celebrated the grand opening of its Great Blocks on MainStreet project in December 2025. Great Blocks projects are intensive infrastructure projects that dramatically upgrade a core three-block commercial area within a MainStreet District.

This project revitalized the 800 and 900 blocks of New York Avenue, a \$4.7 million investment that includes new utilities (main water and sewer lines), street surface, accessible sidewalks, landscaping with an irrigation system, lighting,

benches, trash receptacles, wayfinding, decorative pylons and artwork. It was supported in part by \$2.9 million in New Mexico MainStreet Capital Outlay from the New Mexico Economic Development Department and \$1.8 million from the City of Alamogordo.

After a year of construction, the project significantly improved access to local businesses, public safety, appearance and walkability. New York Avenue is Alamogordo's central small business district—home to the city's favorite local shops and eateries. It's also the main site for annual holiday events and community gatherings.

**Carlsbad MainStreet** helped bring the historic Cavern theater back to life after years of construction. Built in 1951, the Cavern was the premiere movie theater in the growing city of Carlsbad. It closed in 1981 and was tied up in a trust for years. In 2014, Bob Lights gifted the theater to the city with the intent that it be rehabilitated and used as a performing arts center. Rehabilitation of the cultural property started in 2018, and the grand opening was held in 2025. Thanks to a task force of community advocates (including Carlsbad MainStreet), the rehabilitation project received support from the city and state.

The total cost of the project was \$8.3 million and was funded in part by non-promotional lodger's tax, State of New Mexico DFA Regional Recreation Centers/Quality of Life grant, New Mexico MainStreet Capital Outlay funding and private donations.



The theater is becoming a multi-functioning performance arts center and currently hosts movies, special events and live performances.

In 2025, **Raton MainStreet** received the prestigious Great

American Main Street Award from Main Street America, one of three districts nationally. The award recognizes communities for their excellence in comprehensive preservation-based commercial district revitalization. Raton received accolades for its exemplary implementation of public improvement projects, dedication to historic preservation and distribution of grants to small businesses.

Raton MainStreet built strong partnerships with local and state agencies to implement a \$2.2 million Great Blocks on MainStreet project. The



Top: Alamogordo MainStreet 2025 Volunteer of the Year Martha Jones  
Bottom: Great American Main Street Award-Winner, Raton, N.M.



project started in 2015 and was completed in 2021. It revitalized three blocks in the historic downtown district and upgraded infrastructure and streetscapes. It also influenced the restoration of nearby historic sites: the El Raton Theatre, Yucca Hotel and Shuler Theater.

### NEW MEXICO MAINSTREET'S NEXT 40 YEARS

In 2025, New Mexico MainStreet celebrated four decades of community economic development work, and there's plenty to look forward to.

The Route 66 Centennial in 2026 is a good opportunity to explore New Mexico's MainStreet districts. Ten districts along the iconic highway invite travelers to visit local businesses and collect stickers as part of the NM MainStreet Route 66 Centennial Passport program. Throughout 2026, visitors can collect all 10 stickers in their passport



to visit local businesses and collect stickers as part of the NM MainStreet Route 66 Centennial Passport program. Throughout 2026, visitors can collect all 10 stickers in their passport

Top: Cavern Theater, Carlsbad, N.M. 2023

Bottom: Raton, N.M. Main Street. Photo courtesy of Holloway Video



New Mexico MainStreet communities

rack card from Gallup to Tucumcari as a memorable keepsake during the Centennial celebration. New Mexico MainStreet districts are showcasing their local history, cultural landmarks and small businesses during the Centennial to welcome visitors and grow community pride. Additionally, New Mexico MainStreet is hosting both its annual conference and institute on the Mother Road. The conference was hosted in downtown Albuquerque in February. The institute will take place in another district along the Route 66 corridor in the fall—details, location and dates to be announced.

New Mexico MainStreet is among the top five coordinating programs nationally that are contributing to Main Street America's Building Opportunities on Main Street (BOOMS) Tracker. The tracker is a first-of-its-kind inventory technology tool that allows local leaders to gather information about buildings and lots, with the goal of identifying vacant spaces for activation and development. Data in the tracker helps local leaders gather and showcase information to better understand the spaces that impact their Main Streets.

Learn more about upcoming events and initiatives at [nmmainstreet.org](http://nmmainstreet.org) . ■

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# Restoring an Adobe Home in Mora

BY ILKA VILLARREAL

Few things in northern New Mexico are more emblematic of our land and heritage than adobe architecture. Mark Schwartz's journey to restore a century-old adobe farmhouse in the heart of the Mora Valley provides a great example of what is possible.



*Old adobe farmhouse that has been renovated by Mark Schwartz*

Owning and restoring an adobe home had always been Schwartz's lifelong dream. After roughly 30 years as a health technician and deep soul-searching following the Covid pandemic, his time, finances and life path converged, leading him to purchase land in Mora in 2020 while still living and working in Albuquerque. On the land was an uninhabited adobe farmhouse. Some of the contractors Schwartz consulted with told him it wasn't worth fixing; that it should be torn down. He didn't listen. Consultation with Cornerstones and other adobe experts convinced him that it was not only eminently salvageable but more cost-effective and a better long-term investment than new construction.

## In his own words...

From the moment of first setting eyes on the land and adobe farmhouse, it was love at first sight—the place that I had searched for all along. A pasture irrigated by a high

*The adobe buildings of northern New Mexico tell such rich and vibrant stories of the land and peoples of this place.*

mountain watershed with a small apple and pear orchard standing peacefully above it. The adobe farmhouse sits tucked into a small depression of land above the orchard, sheltered from cold winter winds while enjoying ample Southern sunlight to keep its thick earth walls warm. Against that same wall rested an old greenhouse foundation, awaiting restoration. Behind the house, gently rolling hills of native grasses and ponderosa pines rise to steep timberland of juniper, piñón, and oak—completing the farm's third ecosystem.

The farmhouse had been left abandoned—save for mice, feral cats and bats—for years and was not livable. Fortunately, the previous owners had added critical infrastructure over the years, including septic, plumbing, electricity and community water, assets that made restoration far more manageable.

*The ancestors who shaped homes from earth and love seem to reach across time and guide the way.*

The home is believed to have been constructed in three distinct parts, each reflecting the era in which it was built. The oldest is the central rectangular section, featuring older-style window casings and thick 16-inch adobe walls dating to the early 1900s. A northern addition followed in the 1930s or '40s, introducing newer window casings, thinner adobe bricks and a gabled roofline with a small attic window. A third addition on the south side was added in the 1970s, mirroring the northern wing's style but constructed of cinder block.



Restoring the adobe has been a tremendous endeavor, drawing on early construction experience, invaluable guidance from the folks at Cornerstones, local craftspeople, neighbors and plenty of reading and YouTube videos. The first logical step was addressing the roof—the old bones of the farmhouse were strong, but it needed a new hat. A local roofer was brought in to replace it, preserving the original lines while adding insulation and new corrugated tin to match the historic material. Gutters were added for rainwater harvesting, and combined with excavation work, the new roof now protects both the foundation and walls from the elements.



With the exterior secured, attention turned inward. Cleaning the attic came first, followed by removing all the drop-ceilings, revealing beautiful wood vigas and a milled wood ceiling crafted from timber cut in the valley. Next came stripping five-to-seven layers of old plaster, paint and wallpaper from the interior walls, freeing the adobe to breathe again after years sealed beneath synthetic materials.



The floor told its own story—an eclectic mix of milled-wood sleeper joists on grade with particleboard subflooring, and even a few remnant strands of lime green and purple shag carpet still clinging to their staples. Rather than a conventional replacement, a traditional earthen clay floor will be laid throughout the entire home in the spring, once the walls are repaired and plastered.

*The home was constructed in three distinct parts, each reflecting the era in which it was built.*

That plastering process has become an unexpected joy. Using earth sourced directly from the site—much of it from the house itself—making and applying clay plasters has become equal parts art, science and alchemy. Experimenting with ratios of clay,

sand, water and straw yields an infinite number of combinations, each with its own texture and character. Even a large section that cracked and delaminated completely just after I completed it brought no frustration. The failed mix was peeled off, adjusted and reapplied a touch thinner—the result was beautiful.

The cinder block addition will serve as the functional heart of the home, a thoughtful tiny home containing the kitchen and bathroom with a modern foundation and crawl space that makes plumbing and electrical work manageable. The interior will be transformed with locally milled timber, some new and some old and weathered, treated with nontoxic linseed oil paints and stains. The original rusted and patinated corrugated roofing, salvaged from the old roof, will find new life as texture and contrast on the walls and ceiling, completed by hand-built rustic cabinets and counters.

A wood stove and hearth now anchor the adobe, complemented by beautifully restored 1900s radiant electric heaters. The home's southern orientation, thick adobe walls and newly insulated ceiling keep it naturally cool in summer and warm in winter, just as it was always meant to be.

Restoring an adobe home was never meant to be a solitary act. Working alongside friends, neighbors, skilled artisans and local tradespeople has brought the true spirit of the adobe tradition full circle—the same spirit of community that raised these walls generations ago. A lifelong dream, built by many hands, and finally, a beautiful home. ■

*Ilka Villarreal is executive director of the New Mexico MainStreet accredited Mora Arts & Cultural Compound, a program of the Mora Creative Council. [HTTPS://WWW.MORAMAINSTREET.ORG](https://www.moramainstreet.org)*

## ADOBE ON CAMPUS: BUILDING COMMUNITY AND CURRICULUM

BY MATEO SALINAS CLARKE

Community colleges provide hands-on experience in the advancement of the natural building trades. They are ideally placed to promote natural building, and as a current student in the Adobe Certificate Program at Santa Fe Community College (SFCC), I've experienced firsthand the potential they hold in providing affordable and credible education.

It makes sense for a program in the Southwest to be focused on adobe, but perhaps a program in the Great Plains focuses on strawbale, while a program in the Northeast could leverage the growing hempcrete movement. Community colleges could offer bio-regionally specific courses that fit the needs of their communities and the strengths of their local ecology and climate.



The Adobe program at SFCC began in 2012 under the leadership of veteran adobe practitioner and educator Quentin Wilson. My instructor, Kurt Gardella, took the generational baton to become the current primary educator, using the courses and curriculum at SFCC developed by Quentin and supported by The Earthbuilders' Guild. In Santa Fe, there is a practical need for adobe education in

*The Adobe Mud Club, started in 2014, connects adobe enthusiasts through education, community and hands-on building experiences. [HTTPS://ADOBEMUD.CLUB](https://adobemud.club)*

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the construction workforce, and also a cultural relevance in preserving historic traditions that contribute to its sense of place.

SFCC's coursework is a hybrid approach. I live in Denver, Colorado, so being a student at a campus 400 miles away may seem strange, but through the hybrid curriculum, I'm able to do lectures and coursework remotely and occasionally embark on the six-hour commute to New Mexico for our practical workshops a couple of weekends per semester. It sounds like a big commitment but I look forward to these road trips down I-25, through the San Luis Valley, Taos Valley, and into Santa Fe. The drive into northern New Mexico has an enchanting power on me that provides a sense of relief from the day-to-day stressors in my life.

### GET INVOLVED WITH THE ADOBE STUDENT MOVEMENT

One of the most direct ways to grow natural building offerings is to build the community that asks for them. That's what we did with the Adobe Mud Club at Santa Fe Community College. We wanted to keep our cohort connected after class, to use adobe as social fabric, as it was traditionally. So we started a student organization to turn our individual energy into a collective movement. We didn't want the conversation to end when the workshop did. Through the Adobe Mud Club, we've helped get students access to conferences like Earth USA and we hosted an adobe-preservation workshop with architect Ronald Rael in Río Arriba County. We've also hosted social events like barbecues and meetups to make students feel at home in the adobe community.

Now, we're expanding our efforts to regional campuses like UNM-Taos, where we're launching a second chapter. Through the Adobe Mud Club, we're advocating together for more earthen construction class offerings. UNM-Taos already offers a passive-solar adobe course, but we're planning a summer intensive in adobe and other natural building methods, along with future courses on rammed earth, compressed earth blocks and clay plaster finishing methods.

So if your community college or branch campus already offers natural building, join it and then ask how you can help build the community around it, whether it's a club, a listserv, or regular meetups. If they don't offer a class yet, point them to programs like SFCC's and to the demand that exists in the zeitgeist for an earthen building renaissance. Ask how your local college or regional campus is training the workforce for green construction and the energy transition. The best education takes theory into practice, and community colleges are positioned to bring practical, affordable training to the most people. The world needs more *adoberos/as, enjarradoras/es*, preservationists and earthen builders. It also needs more community campuses teaching them. ■

*Mateo Salinas Clarke, a Civic Technologist and Software Engineer, says that his interest in earthen construction "is a personal response to the climate crisis and it connects me to heritage practice."*

## PUEBLO COMMUNITIES

# PRESERVING TRADITIONS AT TAOS PUEBLO

BY VERNON G. LUJAN

According to archaeological investigations in the 1950s that were restricted to excavation of one of four middens for a 12-hour period, the current five-story structures at Taos Pueblo were constructed in the 12th century. There is evidence of a previous structure—"Cornfield Taos"—to the immediate east of the present one that was just as magnificent, but due to abandonment, it has since fallen into mounds that are only slightly discernible.

Since its construction, Taos Pueblo, or the "Red Willow Village," has been under constant maintenance to withstand the weather at 7,200 feet above sea level at the base of the tallest mountains in New Mexico. Constructed entirely using traditional building methods and natural materials, the foundation consists of a wattle-and-daub mixture with stones. Built on top of this foundation, Taos Pueblo people used adobes to construct the iconic five stories, reminiscent of the Classic Pueblo Period along the Río Grande.

*Traditional building customs, techniques and materials have resulted in harmonious construction throughout the walled precinct.*

But before this stage of cultural and architectural evolution, Pueblo people were constructing homes dug into the ground about 6-to-10 feet deep. Large timbers (*vigas*) and *latillas* (decking) were chinked with a mixture of mud, willow and bark. On top of this was piled two or more feet of dirt, which acted not only as insulation but as drainage to shed water. This is how the roofs of Taos Pueblo's buildings were constructed, and over seven centuries, they are unchanged. The evolution of above-ground Pueblo home-building emerged as ancillary one-room shelters. These eventually became multi-room homes, which evolved into the multi-story buildings of the Pueblo Classic IV period.

Both the North and South houses require annual maintenance, including replacing adobes, occasionally replacing *vigas* and *latillas*, and plastering with mud and straw. This is a process that begins in early spring and takes a short hiatus in late October when the winter settles in. All members of the community engage in this maintenance, with children threshing straw and mixing mud; men making adobes, harvesting and shaving *vigas* and *latillas*; and women plastering the walls with the mud and straw mix. Oftentimes, neighbors helped neighbors, and whole families engaged in this effort. For nine centuries, this has been the annual process of taking care of the houses at Taos Pueblo.

With the advent of HUD



Top photo: Rebuilding second floor home

Bottom left: Repairing parapets, laying new adobes and applying plaster

Bottom right: Reviving agricultural traditions



*Traditional building skills are highly marketable, and many tribal members work in related construction trades in and outside the pueblo.*

(U.S. Housing and Urban Development) and manufactured housing, coupled with a move away from the pueblo's central village, more family homes in the central village have fallen in disrepair. Families are no longer engaged in the annual maintenance of the homes. This is due to the maintenance requirements of their new homes and employment outside of the pueblo. Despite the increasing number of residents who have homes outside the walled area, the historic village still serves as the most important focus for intra-village interaction and cultural activities.

"Situated in the valley of a small tributary of the Río Grande, this adobe settlement—consisting of dwellings and ceremonial buildings—represents the culture of the Pueblo Indians of Arizona and New Mexico." This description headlines the Taos Pueblo webpage on the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) World Heri-

*Taos Pueblo Blue Lake Wilderness Area is of critical importance to the pueblo's living culture and agricultural sustainability.*

tage Convention site. Taos Pueblo was registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1992. This designation was based on not only the pueblo's unique, multi-story adobe architecture, but also for its contributions to the history of the United States (<https://whc.unesco.org>)

The UNESCO website notes that the two main adobe complexes retain their traditional three-dimensional layout. Additions and some limited use of non-native materials have not fundamentally altered the visual impression of the pueblo or its striking evidence of ancient building traditions. Traditional building customs, techniques and materials have resulted in harmonious construction throughout the walled precinct. The 47-acre property is authentic in terms of its location and setting, forms and designs, materials and substance, uses and functions, as well as spirit and feeling.

Taos Pueblo has been continuously occupied and cared for by the traditional and culturally based community. The community maintains controls to protect its traditions, including the prohibition of electrical power and piped water supply within the pueblo's walled area. The Taos Pueblo Preservation Program was established to provide continuous maintenance on these sacred buildings. The State of New Mexico and the U.S. government provided limited funding, but that has waned and, while monetary contributions are welcome, the pueblo must largely finance annual maintenance on its own. The community continues to provide labor to accomplish the required maintenance. The Preservation Program hires young tribal members to learn traditional building techniques. These skills are highly marketable, and many tribal members work in related construction trades in and outside the pueblo.

The Taos Mountains (part of the Sangre de Cristo range of the Rocky Mountains) provide a dramatic and memorable backdrop setting for the pueblo.

*Right: New staircase over exterior wall  
New roof with bonding beams, vigas and adobes*



*Top to Bottom:  
Scraping worn plaster to prepare for new coats of mud and straw plaster  
Rebuilt and replastered second floor home  
Main cause of deterioration  
Nearing completion of interior: new walls, vigas and decking*



Plastering fourth floor home. Photos courtesy Taos Pueblo

*Taos Pueblo's UNESCO World Heritage Site designation was based on not only the pueblo's unique, adobe architecture, but also for its contributions to the history of the United States.*

Within these mountains is the Taos Pueblo Blue Lake Wilderness Area, a resource of critical importance to the pueblo's living culture and agricultural sustainability. The sacred Blue Lake is the source of a stream that flows through the settlement, dividing the historic village into the North and South houses. Taos Pueblo made history in 1970, when President Richard Nixon signed H. R. 471 into Public Law 91-550, returning the sacred Blue Lake watershed, along with 48,000 acres of pristine forest to the pueblo. The fight was not over however, and this struggle continued until President Bill Clinton signed Public Law 104-333 in November 1996, which made "The Path of Life," the trail from the village to Blue Lake and a little over 764 acres, part of the Blue Lake Wilderness. In the 56 years since the passage of P.L. 91-550, millions of acres were returned to Indian tribes by judicial or legislative action, all based partly on the Blue Lake case, which was the first time that an Indigenous, sovereign tribal nation was victorious in the courts and Congress of the world's most powerful nation. ■

*Vernon G. Lujan is deputy chief operations officer at Taos Pueblo.*

## PICURIS PUEBLO BIKE PARK, NEW MEXICO



[SINGLETRACKS.COM](https://www.singletracks.com), a leading mountain bike news and review website covering bikes, gear and trails, has recognized the Picuris Pueblo Bike Park as "arguably the most extraordinary project built this year [2025]."

For Singletracks, the term "bike park" refers to urban or skills parks. This pro-level skills park in northern New Mexico was envisioned by Picuris Pueblo leadership and brought to life with support from New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division's Trails+ Grant, alongside Santa Fe-based Rocket Ramps' expert trail builders. It's a good example of what's possible when community-led vision, skilled partners, and strategic investment come together. The

world-class space that reflects innovation, pride of place and opportunity on the land.



Photos by Eric Arce

**Picuris Pueblo Bike Park awarded "Best bike park/skills park in North America"**  
Singletracks, December 15, 2025

The bike park (Length: 0.72 mi; Vertical: 100 ft.) features three progressively difficult jump lines—medium, large and pro—plus a world championship-certified track.

From Singletracks' review: When Henry Lanman, founder of Rocket Ramps, outlined the possible jump lines and features they could build for the pueblo, he was initially taken aback by their request. "I was like, 'Okay, let me be clear: this jump is 50 feet long and the lip is 15 feet tall. Is this what you want?' And they're like, 'Absolutely. We want to jump the road. We want the craziest jumps ever.'" The



Photos by Eric Arce, [SINGLETRACKS.COM](https://www.singletracks.com)

vision was spearheaded by former tribal Governor Craig Quanchello, who wanted to provide infrastructure for the pueblo's youth to pursue their passions. According to Lanman, there's nothing like the Picuris Pueblo Bike Park within a 300-mile radius of this tiny village. The scale and quality are entirely new for New Mexico, and potentially, the entire Southwest.

# COMMUNITY PRESERVATION EFFORTS AT THE PUEBLO OF SANTA ANA

BY MONICA L. MURRELL

Preservation efforts at Santa Ana Pueblo (Tamaya) emphasize a land stewardship philosophy rooted in the traditional perspective that the land doesn't belong to people but, rather, people belong to the land. The concepts of property and ownership stand at odds with the Pueblo world view, and were not recognized until European populations entered the American Southwest between A.D. 1541 and 1598 and claimed possession of ancestral lands in the name of the Spanish crown.

The *Tamayame* (people of Santa Ana Pueblo) were accustomed to the use of land and water for everyone who sought to use those resources. Spanish settlers, who established towns with farmers and ranchers, demanded land and water. Colonists also moved onto or near Pueblo lands. Native American communities eventually



resorted to reacquiring portions of ancestral lands necessary for farming and subsistence activities. The primary mechanisms available to the Tamayame were to purchase the lands back from settlers and to reacquire them through grants from the legal system introduced by the Europeans that apportioned ownership and land use. Tamayame became adept at using this framework to their advantage. Their efforts were pioneering in regard to the contemporary Land Back movement, and paradoxically, now serve as a foundation for land conservation activities against a backdrop of urban growth and encroaching development.



Above: Tribal Historic Preservation Office staff monitoring a cultural site for any evidence of recent disturbances  
Below: Deer drinking at a wildlife guzzler at Tamaya Kwii KeeNee Pnuu

Santa Ana completed a series of land acquisitions in the 1700s, which were recorded through still-existing deeds that document each purchase and the goods (e.g., oxen, cattle, horses, blankets) or currency remitted to execute each transaction. These lands are considered part of Tamaya's El Ranchito farmlands that extended north of Angostura and east along the northern front of the Sandia Mountains near modern-day Placitas. Loss of access to ancestral lands

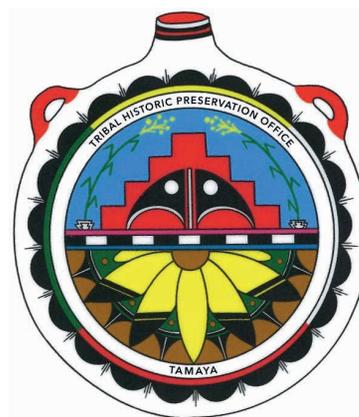
for traditional hunting and gathering activities greatly transformed Tamayame ways of life, as there was no recognition of aboriginal title outside of the standard Pueblo League granted by the Spanish government. Sufficient grazing lands extending

*Santa Ana's historical efforts to regain ancestral lands now serve as a foundation for conservation activities against a backdrop of urban growth and encroaching development.*

*Due to overlapping claims made by adjacent Spanish land grant families, the Ojo del Espiritu Santo Grant was not acknowledged under U.S. rule.*



Santa Ana leadership and departments visiting the King Alamo Ranch during the purchase process

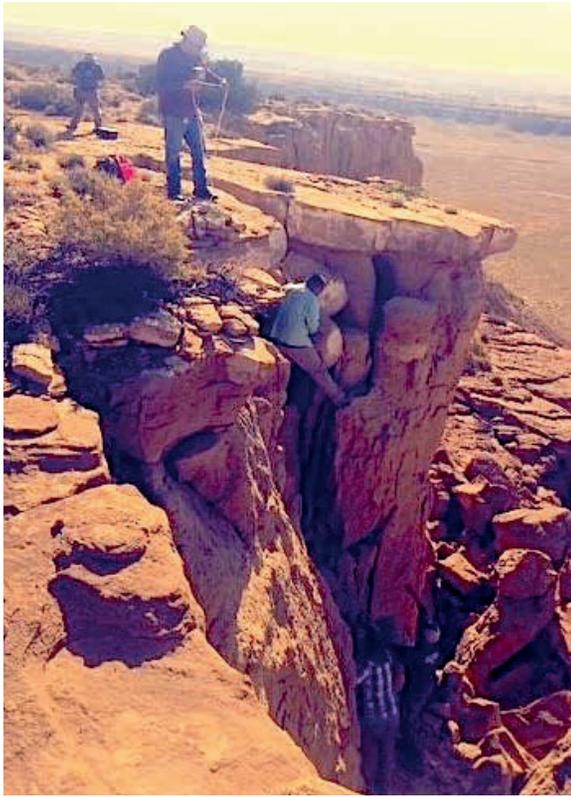


beyond Santa Ana's land base were also necessary to sustain the European-introduced economic pursuit of livestock raising. In 1766, Santa Ana, Zia and Jemez pueblos applied for a joint community grant encompassing a sizeable tract of land measuring approximately 520,000 acres that extended from La Ventana on the north; a stone ford on the Río Puerco to the south; and from

*Santa Ana is actively investing in extensive revitalization efforts to conserve the landscape in perpetuity for future generations.*

east to west, bordered by the pueblos of Zia and Jemez to the Río Puerco. This grant, known as the Ojo del Espiritu Santo, was issued by the New Mexico governor through decree on Aug. 6, 1766, and used jointly by Zia, Jemez and Santa Ana for almost 100 years, throughout the duration of both the Spanish and Mexican governments. The southernmost portion of these grant lands, known currently as *Tamaya Kwii KeeNee Pnuu*, incorporates a much deeper history to the community; a significant place along the Tamayame migration route, formerly used as traditional hunting and gathering grounds that includes dozens of ancestral Santa Ana settlements on Kene'ewa and along the Arroyo Cuervo and Río Puerco that were now being sought for use to sustain historical livestock ranching.

Although these lands were claimed by the Pueblos who sought recognition of their land grant through the Court of Private Land Claims, now, under a third foreign government, when New Mexico was considered a U.S. Territory after the Mexican-American War, due to overlapping claims made by adjacent Spanish land grant families, the Ojo del Espiritu Santo Grant was not acknowledged under U.S. rule.



Throughout the Territorial period, portions of these lands were allotted to various Spanish-American families through the Homesteading Act of 1862. Tamaya Kwii KeeNee Puu was ultimately acquired by the family of former New Mexico Governor Bruce King in 1961 and incorporated as the King Alamo Ranch. For about 55 years, these lands were subject to substantial commercial ranching activities.

In 2016, Santa Ana purchased the King Alamo Ranch and has since focused tremendous efforts to restore the lands for traditional use. Widespread arroyo cutting and the proliferation of invasive plant species are some of the deleterious environmental impacts from commercial ranching that require landscape restoration. Additionally, the Tribal Historic Preservation Office found substantial looting of ancestral sites and developed a cultural resource monitoring program to identify any continued impacts.

Tamaya Kwii KeeNee Puu was formally incorporated into tribal trust status in 2024, a grueling process that took almost nine years to complete. Santa Ana is actively investing

in extensive revitalization efforts to conserve this landscape in perpetuity for future generations. The pueblo has no plans for any commercial development there. Rather, the formal land-management plan emphasizes conservation, incorporating traditional perspectives designed to balance stewardship and use. For instance, hunting activities conform to existing wildlife code, ensuring animal populations are not overhunted, while traditional activities adhere to a strict policy of leave-no-trace.

To restore this landscape to suitable wildlife habitat, Santa Ana is encouraging the regrowth of natural grasslands; has constructed dozens of guzzlers, ensuring animals have access to adequate water; is removing over 50 miles of interior fencing to ensure migration patterns are not disrupted; and is actively working to design a wildlife crossing through U.S. 550. Río Rancho urban sprawl and industrial development remain a consistent threat to landscape conservation efforts. Solar field expansions and a new defense manufacturing facility, both currently under construction, foreshadow substantial hurdles for Santa Ana's desire to see this cultural landscape remain intact through the ages.

For more information on Santa Ana's conservation efforts, check out the PBS *Our Land: Ancestral Connections* special: Tamaya Kwii Kee Nee Puu. ■



Top: Santa Ana Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) and Conservation Enforcement ascend Kene'ewa to monitor cultural sites. Center: Santa Ana THPO and Conservation Enforcement staff after collecting high-resolution drone imagery to monitor cultural sites. Bottom left: Department of Natural Resources staff collaring an elk for monitoring

Monica L. Murrell, M.A., RPA, is Tribal Historic Preservation officer and director of the Santa Ana Historic Preservation Department.

Photos courtesy Santa Ana Pueblo

## NM DEPT. OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

# Coronado and Jemez Historic Sites: Where Pueblo History Lives On

BY JAIMIE ADAMS PHOTOS BY TIRA HOWARD

Across New Mexico's high desert landscape, Coronado and Jemez Historic Sites stand as powerful reminders that history is not just something we read about, it is something we can walk through, experience and learn from. These sites preserve the architectural remains of ancestral Pueblo communities while telling a larger story about resilience, cultural survival and the importance of protecting heritage for future generations.

For today's visitors, these sites offer an opportunity to connect with centuries of Pueblo history to better understand the enduring legacy of Indigenous communities.



Coronado Historic Site is located at the ancestral, multi-ethnic Pueblo of Kuaua, whose inhabitants were the descendants of today's Tiwa-speaking villages of Taos, Picuris, Sandia and Isleta. At its location in Bernalillo, New Mexico, visitors encounter the remains of a large settlement that flourished long before Spanish colonization.



Above: Coronado Historic Site  
Below: Jemez Historic Site

*Educational gateways to broaden conversations about heritage preservation*



Top left and right (vertical): Coronado Historic Site  
Below left: Jemez Historic Site

## *This collaborative approach emphasizes the continuing relevance of Indigenous history.*

Kuaua was not simply a village; it was a thriving center of social, agricultural and ceremonial life.

Archaeological excavations have revealed multi-room adobe structures, plazas and ceremonial kivas that speak to the organization and sophistication of Pueblo society. Among the site's most significant discoveries are the painted kiva murals, which reveal the depictions and symbolic world of the people who lived there.

Further northwest, Jemez Historic Site preserves the ruins of Gisewa Pueblo, the ancestral village of today's Jemez Pueblo, alongside the imposing stone walls of the 17th-century San José de los Jémez mission church. Walking through the site, visitors see a physical representation of the dramatic historical changes that swept through the region during Spanish colonization. The traditional Pueblo architecture reflects long-standing Indigenous lifeways, while the mission church stands as evidence of colonial attempts to reshape those lifeways through religious conversion and political control.



Jemez Historic Site

## *These places are culturally significant to descendant Pueblo communities.*

Spanish colonization in 17th-century New Mexico brought extreme disruptions to Pueblo communities, as new labor systems, governance and religious beliefs were imposed. Historian Andrew Knaut explains that mounting pressures from colonial administration and religious suppression contributed to widespread unrest among Pueblo communities throughout the century.

Over time, these tensions led to one of the most significant acts of Indigenous resistance in North American history—the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, when Pueblo communities united to expel Spanish colonists from New Mexico. Archaeologist Matthew Liebmann emphasizes that the revolt was not simply a sudden rebellion, but a carefully organized movement rooted in Indigenous goals of restoring cultural autonomy and renewing traditional practices. The revolt demonstrated the strength of Pueblo alliances and their determination to preserve their social and ceremonial worlds.

The legacy of the Pueblo Revolt is connected to both Coronado and Jemez Historic Sites. At Jemez, the abandoned mission church stands as a visible reminder of the revolt's impact, symbolizing the temporary reassertion of Pueblo independence. The ruins are a place where visitors can reflect on a time when Indigenous communities reshaped the political landscape and reclaimed their cultural space.

Today, preserving these sites means more than protecting archaeological ruins. These places are culturally significant to descendant Pueblo communities. Modern preservation practices emphasize collaboration with Pueblo partners to ensure that interpretation respects Indigenous perspectives and honors living connections to ancestral lands. This collaborative approach shifts historic sites away from presenting Indigenous history as something confined to the past and instead emphasizes its continuing relevance.

For visitors, these sites provide an opportunity to experience history in a tangible and meaningful way. Walking among the adobe walls of Kuaua or the stone foundations of Gisewa allows visitors to imagine daily life in ancestral Pueblo communities—how families lived, farmed, worshipped and gathered. At the same time, learning about Spanish colonization and the Pueblo Revolt encourages visitors to think more deeply about cultural persistence, resistance and adaptation. Visitors come away understanding that Kauau and Gisewa Pueblos are not confined to history but remain important today.

Coronado and Jemez also serve as educational gateways to broaden conversations about heritage preservation. Archaeological sites are fragile, and their preservation requires ongoing stewardship, research and public support. By visiting these places, people gain a better understanding of why protecting cultural landscapes matters, not only for historical scholarship, but for honoring the identities and histories of living communities.

Coronado and Jemez Historic Sites serve as bridges across time. They preserve the physical traces of ancestral Pueblo life, interpret the complex history of colonization and resistance, and invite visitors to reflect on the enduring importance of cultural heritage. By protecting and sharing these places, we ensure that future generations will continue to learn from them, walking the same ground, hearing the same stories, and gaining a deeper appreciation for the resilience and continuity of Kauau, Gisewa and many other surrounding Pueblo communities. ■

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*Jaimie Adams is regional site manager at Coronado and Jemez Historic Sites.*

# How a Flock of Sheep from a Place of Suffering Bring Healing and Hope to Diné Families

BY BOSQUE REDONDO MEMORIAL AT FORT SUMNER HISTORIC SITE STAFF

Bosque Redondo Reservation was a place with a dark, painful history for the United States. The Diné (Navajo) call it *Hwéeldi*, or place of suffering. It was where Diné, as well as Ndé (Mescalero Apache) were interned after being forcibly removed from their homelands between 1863-68.



*Navajo-Churro sheep*



More than 3,000 people died, either during the “Long Walk,” when the Diné were forced to walk more than 350 miles to the reservation, or after they arrived, from extreme climate exposure, starvation, or sickness. Those who survived were resilient, adapting to the conditions and relying on each other.

One important component to their survival was the tradition of weaving. The Diné traditionally used sheep, weaving their wool into fabric for clothes and blankets, and also for meat and milk. First using

wild mountain sheep, then Churra (later becoming Navajo-Churro) sheep introduced by the Spanish to the Northern Territory of New Spain (what is now Arizona and New Mexico), this domesticated sheep became integral to Diné life. While at Bosque Redondo Reservation, they were able to weave blankets providing much-needed warmth, and clothing for those interned.

Unfortunately, between the slaughter of Diné sheep during the period of internment, and later the Livestock Reduction Act in the 1930s, Navajo-Churro sheep were nearly decimated. It has taken time and effort by individuals and organizations to see this breed come back from the brink. Bosque Redondo Memorial at Fort Sumner Historic Site is proud to play a part in this effort.

Together with the help of the Friends of the Bosque Redondo Memorial, the site has been raising Navajo-Churro sheep and donating them to Diné families. The Friends group owns the sheep, which enables them to donate two or three to families who apply for the program each year. Since 2017, more than 200 sheep have been donated, and the site continues this program.

These sheep help sustain traditions and also provide an opportunity for economic support for Diné families. Gloria Johnson (Diné), a recipient of sheep from the Bosque Redondo Memorial flock says, “To us it’s like slowly bringing back, you know, not so much healing, but something that our ancestors have lost, and it means a lot to us to get any kind of anything from there (Bosque Redondo).”

To learn more about Bosque Redondo Memorial and the Navajo-Churro sheep, visit [nmhistoricsites.org/bosque-redondo](http://nmhistoricsites.org/bosque-redondo) . ■



*Top left photo: Navajo-Churro sheep flock © Tira Howard Photography  
Center photo: Gloria Johnson (Dine) and family  
Bottom photo: DeAngelo Lakin, 2022*

# PROTECTING NM'S LARGEST HISTORIC SITE FROM CATASTROPHIC WILDFIRE

BY OLIVER HORN, PH.D.

On Memorial Day weekend of 2025, Fort Stanton, the largest and most complex historic site in New Mexico, nearly burned down. But because of quick response and multi-agency collaboration, this cultural gem stayed safe from the Camp Fire. Now the site is creating fire mitigation plans that will put it at the forefront of cultural resource management.

Fort Stanton Historic Site is one of eight New Mexico Historic Sites. Located in Lincoln County, the fort was first established in 1855. It served as a military post until 1896 and then became the first federal tuberculosis hospital in the country in 1899. During World War II, the fort was the site of the first German internee camp in the U.S. In later years, the site was used as a state hospital, training school for the mentally disabled, low-security women's prison, and juvenile drug and alcohol rehabilitation program, until becoming a historic monument in 2007.

Today, the site consists of 85 structures situated on 240 acres that tell the stories of the Mescalero Apache (Ndé), Civil War-era troops, Buffalo Soldiers, U.S. Public Health Service doctors and nurses, U.S. Merchant Marine sailors, and WWII-era German prisoners.

While Fort Stanton is vital to the history of New Mexico, it is also located within one of the most wildfire-prone regions in the state. The threat of wildfire has shaped how the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) has managed the site in recent years. DCA has channeled more than \$8 million into infrastructure improvements aimed at preserving and protecting the fort, including upgrades to the water system, installing fire resistant roofs, and removing and replacing hazardous trees. The fort is emerging as an innovative center of historic preservation and fire mitigation in New Mexico and an important resource for firefighting efforts within Lincoln County.

While last year's Camp Fire struck before DCA had completed fire mitigation improvements, swift response by multiple agencies and a collaborative approach saved the day. Roughly 200 county, state and federal firefighters, supported by 12 aircraft, came to battle the blaze, which was just a mile away and fed by dense vegetation and strong winds. They fought the fire in what became the largest firefighting operation to protect a cultural resource in state history.

## FORGED BY FIRE

Fire has always been an important element of Fort Stanton's history. In 1855, the U.S. Army erected the fort in the middle of a grass valley along the Río Bonito, which was then at the heart of Mescalero Apache (Ndé) territory. The Ndé periodically set fire to the grassland, a practice they continued after the construction of Fort Stanton.

During the Civil War (1861-1865), Union and Confederate troops each occupied, abandoned and burned the fort, leaving many of the structures in ruins. This period also marked the beginning of the Ndé's dislocation from Fort Stanton. They were forced to relocate to Bosque Redondo Reservation between 1862 and 1863,

*The Buffalo Soldiers were the first recorded firefighters in southeastern New Mexico.*

enduring brutal conditions until their escape in 1865. Eventually, the majority of the Ndé chose to settle in what is now the town of Mescalero. The displacement of the Ndé had ecological consequences for the landscape around the fort, especially since the practice of setting fires ceased.

Cattle ranchers, in turn, introduced tens of thousands of cattle that overgrazed the landscape, and combustible piñon and juniper trees began to encroach on the grassland.

The Buffalo Soldiers of the 9th Cavalry were the first group to confront the ecological changes. Between 1875 and 1881, they fought blazes in the area, and these Black soldiers were the first recorded firefighters in southeastern New Mexico.



*Camp Fire, Fort Stanton, 2025*

*In 2025, Fort Stanton, the largest and most complex historic site in New Mexico, nearly burned down.*

In 1899, the fort became a federal tuberculosis hospital, and over the next 50 years many dramatic changes took place in the region. Everything from railroads to dams to cattle altered and diminished the Río Bonito watershed. The onset of the Dust Bowl (1931-1939) and severe wildfire seasons also affected the landscape. In 1935, the Civilian Conservation Corps set up a large camp north of the fort and were charged with fire mitigation and firefighting for the next six years. They used the US Forest Service's "10 a.m." policy, which mandated that fires be suppressed by 10:00 a.m. the day after their initial eruption, setting the stage for federal fire management.

During the next decade, more buildings were added to the fort complex, and the landscape transformed more or less into what it is today. The loss of Indigenous burns, plus droughts, overgrazing, damming of the watershed and fire suppression all contributed to the spread of dense, thirsty and highly combustible, piñon-juniper forests across the grassland.

## FIRE CONDITIONS TODAY

Today's ongoing megadrought, the worst in the Southwest in more than a thousand years, has exacerbated fire conditions. The intensity and destruction of wildfires have accelerated over the past 25 years, culminating last summer with the nearby Salt and Southfork fires. These twin wildfires swept across Ruidoso and the Mescalero Apache reservation, burning 30,000 acres, destroying 1,400 structures and killing two people.

While these fires did not reach Fort Stanton, between 2004 and 2024 seven wildfires larger than 300 acres broke out within 10 miles of the fort. Fires in



*Inspecting German Rec Hall post-fire*



*Fort Stanton, showing roof replacement in process*

such close proximity pose a threat, as embers can float across this distance and land on roofs or nearby vegetation causing spot fires that could damage or destroy the historic structures.

### **FUSING HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND FIRE MITIGATION**

It is this threat that has shaped how DCA manages Fort Stanton. Since 2022, more than \$8 million has been spent on historic preservation and infrastructure improvements, marking the largest investment in Fort Stanton since the New Deal era of the 1930s.

The Salt and Southfork Fires highlighted the benefits of these upgrades. Nearly every community across Lincoln County experienced

disruptions to key utilities such as power, water, internet and cell service. At Fort Stanton, however, the utilities remained unimpacted.

## *Fort Stanton is emerging as a center for innovative fire mitigation work.*

provides 75 percent of the Lincoln Volunteer Fire Department's water. The department serves Fort Stanton and Lincoln Historic Sites, as well as about 300 surrounding private residences. The improvements resulted in the Insurance Service Office (ISO) rate increasing, a key benchmark for how well a department serves its community. The new ISO rating is now among the best in the county, and it will help the Volunteer Fire Department better protect the district, while also lowering local home insurance rates.

In the meantime, DCA has spent the past year-and-a-half collaborating with the New Mexico Forestry Division's Capitan District, hosting chainsaw and crosscut training for the district's fire crews. State and urban foresters have helped identify combustible material across the site, helping Fort Stanton establish a fire mitigation plan, the first of its kind for a historic site in the Southwest.

This new plan is guiding the approach to preservation. Last summer, the site replaced the highly flammable wood shake roof at the Visitor Center, one of the original barracks dating from 1855, with a synthetic shake roof. The new material not only maintains the historic character of the structure but also has a Class A fire rating. It now serves as a prototype for future roofs across the site, with plans to install synthetic shake roofs on 15 historic structures.

Using Congressionally Directed Spending for a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant, work is currently underway to establish defensible space across the site by removing dead or dying invasive Siberian elms and replacing them with native oaks. DCA hopes to obtain more funding to continue to build defensible space around the historic structures and further safeguard this cultural resource.

Fort Stanton is emerging as a center for innovative fire mitigation work. DCA's investments, initiatives, and collaborations with federal, state and local agencies has bolstered the preservation of the site, benefitted Lincoln County, and is providing new models and opportunities for communities across New Mexico. ■

*Oliver Horn, Ph.D., is regional manager for the Fort Stanton and Lincoln Historic Sites.*

## **REBUILDING FORT SELDEN'S HOSPITAL ONE ADOBE BRICK AT A TIME**

**BY FORT SELDEN HISTORIC SITE STAFF**

It's difficult maintaining adobe structures in Southern New Mexico. Wind, rain and time contribute to the erosion of this traditional building material. Staff at Fort Selden Historic Site are particularly aware of the challenges, as they monitor the eroding adobe walls of a historic fort dating back to the 1860s.

The fort's abandonment in 1891, the removal of all wooden supports, and the actions of early 20th-century treasure hunters have all caused significant damage to the structures. Deposits created by the erosion of the fort's walls have also obscured the original floor plan over time, making restoration efforts tricky.

Fort Selden holds a unique history that drives restoration efforts. Built to bring law and order to the region as expansion and territorial conflict threatened travelers and settlers, the fort was the base for almost 2,000 soldiers between 1865-1891. Notably, units of the African American regiments referred to as Buffalo Soldiers were stationed there. This was also where Captain Arthur MacArthur, a Civil War veteran and Medal of Honor recipient, was post commander in the late 1880s. His young son Douglas, who later came to fame as a general in World War II, spent some of his early childhood at the fort.



*Fort Selden adobe restoration*

Fort Selden Historic Site is dedicated to sharing the stories of the past and preserving the structures for visitors to experience and learn from. Last April, the site embarked on a preservation project rebuilding a room of the fort's original hospital block. Staff received training on how to create adobe bricks and use dirt mortar to rebuild the structure. Working with Scarab Design, a multi-disciplinary design firm that provides support for adobe restoration projects, staff were able to learn firsthand how to preserve these structures.

Guided by New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs' historical research documents, the first step was determining the actual width of the original walls and where windows and doors would have been located. Using string to mark the lines of the original hospital, the team was able to come up with an average height that determined where

*The project offers a chance for visitors to learn history visually.*

# Take a Walk on the Wild Side of the “Most Dangerous Street in America” Using 3D Scans

BY LINCOLN HISTORIC SITE STAFF

In New Mexico, the historic town of Lincoln is known as Billy the Kid country. The town is a popular site for visitors who are drawn to the “Wild West” history of the Lincoln County War (1878-1881), as well as Billy the Kid’s daring escape from the Lincoln County Courthouse (1881). President Howard Taft once declared that “Lincoln was the most dangerous street in America.” While Lincoln is a place that seems frozen in the past, today, staff at Lincoln Historic Site use high-tech tools to preserve these stories for the future.

During the spring of 2025, a collaboration among New Mexico Historic Sites, the New Mexico Humanities Council, and Northrop Grumman brought a unique project to Lincoln Historic Site. Northrop Grumman, an aerospace and defense company, used various forms of technology to connect the past to the future. The idea behind the project was to scan many of the historic buildings across the town of Lincoln, which are operated by New Mexico Historic Sites, to preserve the architecture in a digital manner.

Over the course of a week, staff from Northrop Grumman brought photogrammetry equipment to photograph and scan multiple historic site buildings throughout the town. Photogrammetry is a process of taking images from multiple angles and perspectives using a drone or Matterport 360-degree camera and then stitching the images together to create a composite 3-dimensional image or model. Often these 3D images are used to create a virtual tour of a space, much like museums create virtual tours that allow visitors to “walk” through a gallery from their computer.

The photogrammetry scans have provided a unique opportunity for Lincoln Historic Site to reach students across the state. Access to transportation, tight budgets and scheduling constraints are often barriers to school groups visiting the site. With scanned images of the buildings, including the Tunstall Store, Courthouse, and Torreón, staff at the site are now able to meet with classrooms via video conference and show them around the digitally created 3D buildings. This also allows site staff to meet with larger groups of students, since there are no physical limitations from building sizes or maximum occupancy rates.

With these 3D models, an infinite number of students can virtually walk around our buildings. Accessibility issues, such as navigating a narrow flight of stairs to the second floor of the historic courthouse, a major area of interest, is no longer a problem to con-



Top: Ft. Selden adobe brick making for hospital restoration  
Center: Ft. Selden room 7 hospital restoration  
Below: Ft. Selden rebuilt hospital wall



to dig and lay the first adobe bricks. The hospital building, as well as the barracks, were built without stone foundations and thinner walls, contributing to their deterioration and adding complexity to the project. As a team, the walls were slowly rebuilt, brick by brick, and the hospital room was completed by early June.

Visitors can now walk by the restored hospital room and envision what it would have been like to be

treated in the small adobe space. You can also see firsthand the impacts of weather on other areas of the structure. The project offers a chance for visitors to learn history visually. Now that the hospital room is complete, site staff hope more restoration work will be planned for the future.

The opportunity for Fort Selden Historic Site’s staff to receive hands-on training in adobe construction has been invaluable and will help the state continue preserving history where it happened for generations to come. ■



Torreón with 3D models

tend with. Prior to these scans, those with mobility limitations were often unable to, or uncomfortable with, accessing the stairs to the second level, and the window where Billy the Kid shot Deputy Olinger.

One unique structure that was scanned was the Torreón, a defensive tower made of adobe and stones and built by New Mexican settlers in the 1850s. Northrop Grumman created a different type of 3-dimensional model of the Torreón. Thousands of photos were taken of the interior and exterior, and a computer program knitted them together into one model. This model was then turned into a computer file that allowed staff to use a 3D printer to build a scaled-down physical model out of layers of plastic. Right now, the model is available for people to see onsite inside the Courthouse, but we hope staff can take this model to schools or community events.

A benefit of having a 3D printed model is the ability to offer a hands-on experience for students, visitors and those who are blind or low-vision, allowing people to get hands-on with history in a different and new way. Usually, museums and historic sites have few experiences that allow people to touch items, but with models like the Torreón, we can offer a physical and tactile experience.

Overall, the use of 3D scanning has been exciting, as it is allowing Lincoln Historic Site to be accessible to more visitors. Limitations like distance and mobility are no longer obstacles to visiting the site. Staff can also use these new technologies to think creatively about how we share history with visitors. If you are an educator who is interested in working with Lincoln Historic Site to create a virtual visit, please reach out to us at [info.lincoln@dca.nm.gov](mailto:info.lincoln@dca.nm.gov). ■

# Historic Preservation in Mesilla, New Mexico

*Frontier Fair: History, Outlaws and Culture: April 11, 10 am–5 pm*

BY LIANA AGUIRRE

New Mexico is usually associated with things such as deserts, the Río Grande, pueblos, mountain peaks, the Balloon Fiesta. However, when the state is considered for all those wonderful things, southern New Mexico is usually an afterthought. One reason for this could be the distance from the state capital. Santa Fe, established in 1610, is approximately 300 miles north of Mesilla. When referring to southern New Mexico, I am referring to the portion of the state south of Socorro. Southern New Mexico was a little late in joining the party. Once part of the Arizona Confederate Territory, its incorporation into the state was almost 250 years after Santa Fe was established.

I am writing from the Town of Mesilla, where our population is just under 2,500—small compared to our neighboring city. A hop, skip and a jump away, Las Cruces holds the state's second largest population of about 118,000. Many consider Mesilla part of Las Cruces, since the city uses our town in various ads, although we are independent of it. Tourists walk our adobe-lined historic district and visit the kiosk on the plaza. Unlike our northern compatriots, many do not know that the Río Grande only makes visits here and it does not run throughout the year. It is controlled by the Elephant Butte Irrigation District near Radium Springs. The *rio* usually makes its first glorious appearance in June, and usually by August, we are saying our farewell.

This area, with its rich and fertile farmland, once had a huge agrarian economy. It was a sanctuary for those fleeing after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, a key location during the Civil War, and, as mentioned, the Confederate capital of Arizona. It was a central hub for commerce, stomping grounds for Billy the Kid, a crossroads for the Chihuahua Trail, the Santa Fe Trail, the Butterfield Overland Trail, the Río *way abajo* (lower, lower Río Grande region), among many other notable stories. These are roots that, as the town's Historic Preservation Specialist, I am trying to uncover, share and use to educate. Through the work I am doing, I am trying to unite the community.

To my surprise when I took this position, there were hardly any town records, any information on our historical structures or general town history, the exception being our National Register nomination forms (work began around 1978 and finished in 1980). I found it interesting, especially for a town that is known for its history, that there are no grassroots community organizations, nothing where the residents come together to discuss preservation, nominate buildings and secure this beautiful, historic town. No residents advocating, at least not publicly.

Mesilla is home to the nonprofit *Querencia mi Mesilla*, which helps restore some of our historic adobe structures. It is run by Pat Taylor, a man who has a passion for his work and has interns that help and learn the hands-on restoration process. Taylor's process is an intentional one, where from clay and sand gathering, mixing for brick, fitting and plastering, he is invested. He is a wealth of information. I was also happy to find guidelines on preservation that are enforced in our town code, which serve as an amazing tool to help retain the integrity of the town and its structures and align with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historical Properties. Unfortunately, this was all we had for Historic Preservation. For me, that wasn't enough. I need to get the community invested and excited!

*Through the work I am doing, I am trying to unite the community.*

What are historic buildings if there are no stories attached to them? A historic building without a narrative is like food without salt. Flavor needs to be added, if it is to be desired. Would the residents actually care about saving a random building that is up for rehabilitation or demolition with me just saying, "It's an old building and it needs to be saved!" I certainly don't think so. The building needs to be brought back to life with its stories, photos, oral histories, etc. to give it added value.

What is historic preservation without community involvement? Well, that just doesn't make any sense at all! I certainly did not personally conceptualize Mesilla to tell the history of its inception on my own. This is the shared land of a people from a variety of places who have created it to be what it is today. I need their help. Not only to tell these stories, but for them to share the stories amongst themselves and with others, whether good or bad. These accounts can create cohesiveness, pride and belonging for the residents. All of this in the name of historic preservation. Not to mention the

## *The Mesilleros' pride, resilience, solidarity and love of place can make this community stronger.*

potential economic and overall value. The possibility of historic walking tours, home/farm tours and other opportunities would put us on the map as a treasure trove of protected history.

My mission began by putting community engagement first. I created a quarterly newsletter, "The Preservation Times," to serve as a way to get the residents thinking about history and historic preservation more and in a different way. I began by distributing these newsletters at local cafes, public schools and town meetings, while encouraging local contributors and participation. Creating an event that would highlight the frontier history of Mesilla, and

### *What are historic buildings if there are no stories attached to them?*



*Above: I accomplished my first dry pack with Pat Taylor's Querencia Mi Mesilla team.*

*Below: A beautiful yet rare scene of a full acequia running through the town. These adobe homes were some of the first to be built, due to their proximity to the water source.*

for historic preservation in particular. This is part of the Borderlands region, with hardly any water resources but lots of open land. Recently, the land has been increasingly regarded as a manipulable resource, and yet, the small town of Mesilla continues to hold on. Historic preservation can fuel the fire for this town and its community to stand strong in their identity, heritage and history. ■

*Liana Aguirre is a cultural anthropologist, a historian and the first historic preservation specialist for the Town of Mesilla, N.M.*

## TAYLOR-MESILLA PRESERVES NM'S BORDERLAND HISTORY AS NEWEST HISTORIC SITE

BY TAYLOR-MESILLA HISTORIC SITE STAFF

Walk into the Reynolds Store Visitor Center at Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site, and you'll get a nice overview of the history of the Southern New Mexico borderland town of Mesilla. Take a dozen steps from the front desk and through a door into a *zaguan*, or passageway, and you'll enter a labyrinthine home that has been carefully restored for visitors to explore.

Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site is located on the Mesilla Plaza outside of Las Cruces and fully opened its doors to the public in November 2025. The site includes three buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, including two storefronts and a large residence.

The home belonged to the late New Mexico legislator, educator and community leader J. Paul Taylor and his wife, Mary Daniels Taylor, an award-winning photographer and writer. They lived and raised their family for 70 years in the home, amassing a large collection of fine art from New Mexican artists and folk art from around the world. In 2003,



*Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site. Tira Howard Photography*

# LOS LUCEROS PULLS BACK THE CURTAIN ON THE LIFE OF ITS HISTORIC HACIENDA

BY LOS LUCEROS HISTORIC SITE STAFF

Los Luceros Historic Site, a 148-acre property along the east bank of the Río Grande, and located north of Alcalde in Northern New Mexico, features a variety of historic structures, some dating back a few hundred years. The site is home to a large hacienda, or the “Casa Grande,” believed to have first been an Indigenous field house and then slowly expanding during the Spanish Colonial, Territorial and American periods.

The hacienda has been closed for the past year for much needed restoration, supported through a Saving America’s Treasures grant funded by the National Park Service. Extensive work has included new exterior plaster and paint, repairing the deck—which included taking it apart, sanding each plank, and replacing the rotted ones—and painting the deck to match the building. A new electrical panel was installed, and interior upgrades have included new baseboard heaters for more constant environmental control throughout the year. Currently, repair of the interior plaster and repainting of the interior walls is underway.

In addition to the physical building restoration, site staff have been researching and writing new interpretive materials to be installed once the building is complete and objects have been restored inside the house. The new exhibit materials will have more varied narratives, expanding from the previous focus on anthropologist and museum founder Mary Cabot Wheelwright’s time as an owner.

New information to be included throughout the hacienda will tell more about the history of Phiogeh Pueblo, local Genízaro communities, the Lucero family lines and LGBTQ history. Staff hope to create a fuller picture of the complex history of the site through time.

While there is no date set for the reopening of the hacienda, visit [NMHISTORICSITES.ORG/LOS-LUCEROS](https://nmhistoricsites.org/los-luceros) for updates. The site has many other historic buildings, nature trails and farm animals to explore, as well as regular programs and events.



*Taylor-Mesilla  
Historic Site  
Tira Howard  
Photography*

they donated their home to the state to become a historic site and retained a life tenancy in the home until after their passing.

In 2023, restoration work of the historic property officially began. Renovations have included updating the Reynolds Store to become a museum space with display cases, informational panels and an accessible bathroom. The Barela Store was renovated to accommodate a gift shop run by the Friends of Taylor-Mesilla volunteer group. The Taylor home received restoration to the adobe, replastering and leveling of the floors.

In addition to the structural upgrades, site staff cataloged more than 4,000 objects including furniture, books, art, textiles and other collectibles. Most of these items are on display throughout the home, as they would have been when the Taylors lived there. Site staff spent countless hours meticulously documenting each room and then removing items for storage so that the physical upgrades to the building could be completed. Once the work was done, they returned almost every item to its original placement.

With the three buildings restored and additions such as restrooms and wheelchair access made, the public can now fully experience this unique site. Unlike a historic home, a visit to Taylor-Mesilla offers an opportunity to have a museum-like experience, while also feeling welcomed into a warm, cozy home. A visit includes museum exhibits, an oral history recording booth and box turtles in the courtyard. Visitors end their visit in the Barela Store, where New Mexican and Mexican-made arts and crafts are available for purchase.

Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site is open to the public Wednesday through Sunday, 8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m., and guided tours are offered Wednesday through Saturday at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. For admission prices and background information, visit [nmhistoricsites.org/taylor-mesilla](https://nmhistoricsites.org/taylor-mesilla). ■

[HTTPS://NMHISTORICSITES.ORG/LOS-LUCEROS](https://nmhistoricsites.org/los-luceros)



*Los Luceros landscape at sunset. © Seth Roffman  
Los Luceros Hacienda during and after renovation*

# Revitalize San Pedro: Preserving Place, Building the Future

BY ADRIAN N. CARVER, MCRP

San Pedro Drive is one of those Albuquerque corridors people think they know—because they’ve driven it a thousand times. But if you slow down, it tells a story: mid-century storefronts, long-standing family businesses, changing neighborhood edges and the daily movement of residents between home, school, parks, jobs and the State Fairgrounds. It’s a working corridor, and that is exactly why it matters.

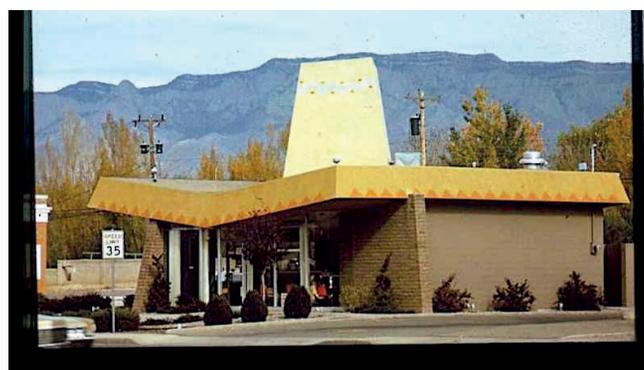
Revitalize San Pedro Partnership (RSPP) is Albuquerque’s accredited MainStreet organization for the San Pedro corridor between Central Avenue—Historic Route 66’s original alignment—and I-40, the “new Route 66” that reshaped where people go and how the city works. RSPP was created to do the unglamorous, essential work of keeping a place stable while it changes: strengthening local businesses, improving streets and public spaces, and organizing neighbors and partners around a shared vision.

In historic preservation, it’s easy to picture a single landmark building saved from demolition. On San Pedro, preservation is also about continuity—the ability of people to remain rooted here, to access opportunity here, to recognize themselves in the built environment, and to build wealth and wellbeing without being priced out by the very improvements meant to help.



## A CORRIDOR WITH LAYERS

Our corridor sits at the intersection of several New Mexico stories. There’s the Route 66 story: a transportation corridor that brought travelers, commerce, roadside architecture and a distinctive cultural landscape. There’s the story of postwar growth: auto-oriented development patterns and commercial strips, and the ways those choices still shape safety, access and health today. And there’s the story of reinvention: businesses adapting, neighborhoods organizing, and the steady work of making an older corridor function better for contemporary life.



When RSPP talks about “preserving place,” we’re not only talking about keeping older buildings standing. We’re talking about preserving community memory—the businesses and social spaces people associate with their own histories—along with the cultural landscape of the

*Preservation and economic development are tied together.*

corridor itself: how it feels, how it works, and how it connects neighborhoods to daily needs. We’re also talking about local economies: storefront vitality, jobs, and the entrepreneurial fabric that makes a district resilient. And we’re talking about reinvesting in existing assets—buildings, street trees, sidewalks and local talent—because it’s often cheaper, greener and more equitable than starting from scratch.

That’s the MainStreet approach in plain language: treat the corridor like a place worth caring for, and organize the work so the results are visible.

## WHAT WE’VE DONE SO FAR: STABILIZING THE “EVERYDAY HISTORIC”

In many communities, preservation is treated as separate from economic development. In practice, they’re tied together.

When a locally owned business signs a longer lease because the district is improving, that’s preservation of the local economy. When a property owner repairs a façade instead of waiting for a speculative buyer, that’s reinvestment in an existing asset. When the public realm becomes safer and more welcoming, that’s preservation of community life—because people can actually use their own neighborhood.

RSPP’s work to date has focused on three outcomes:

**Reinforcing the corridor as a MainStreet district—an identity people can participate in.** MainStreet revitalization works when it is legible: People can tell where they are, why it matters, and how to engage. That means consistent communication, district storytelling, regular business spotlights and relationship-building with merchants, property owners, neighborhood associations and public agencies.

**Building a pipeline of “small wins” that add up to real change.** A corridor improves when practical actions happen reliably: clean-ups, business support, community events, design assistance and incremental façade improvements. These aren’t distractions from preservation—they are how preservation becomes real for the people who live and work here.

**Preparing for major reinvestment without losing the community fabric.** The San Pedro corridor sits next to one of the most consequential redevelopment conversations in New Mexico: the future of the State Fairgrounds. Large-scale change can create opportunity—or accelerate displacement—depending on how it’s designed, financed and governed. RSPP exists in part to help the corridor’s everyday stakeholders stay visible, organized and protected as big decisions move forward.

## MICRO66 AND THE CASE FOR “PRESERVATION AS COMMUNITY BENEFIT”

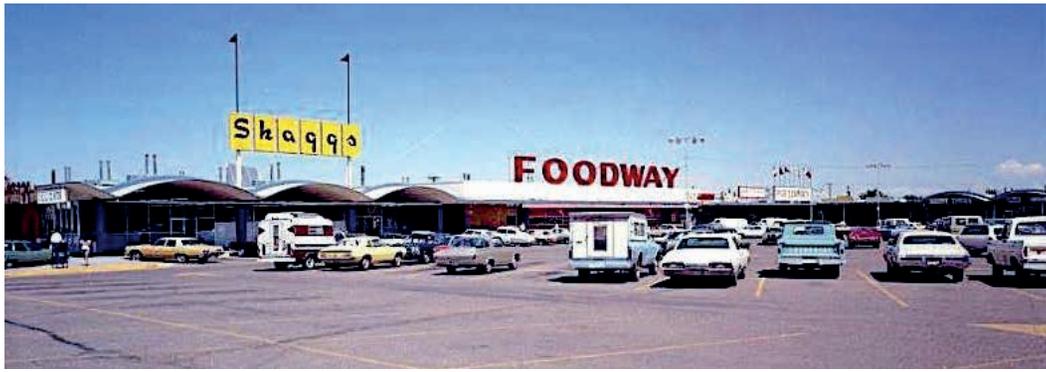
One of the most urgent preservation stories in our district is a long brick building near the Fairgrounds—known as the Cal Linn Building—with deep ties to the early personal computing era. It is the founding headquarters for the company that became Microsoft Inc. This isn’t preservation for nostalgia’s sake. It’s preservation because the building represents a rare convergence of history, technological innovation and New Mexico’s place in a national story.

But significance alone isn’t the point. Community benefit comes from what preservation enables: protecting cultural resources that give residents a sense of continuity; reinvesting in existing assets rather than demolition and replacement; strengthening local economic development through district identity and small business activity; and building community pride through interpretation and locally led stewardship.



RSPP is supporting active efforts

*On San Pedro Drive, preservation is also about continuity. We're preserving community memory.*



*Shopping Center at San Pedro Drive and Lomas Boulevard, 1973. Photo: Richard A. Ruddy*

to recognize and preserve significant properties on and near the corridor, including submissions to historic registers. Preservation in this context is not a “nice-to-have.” It’s part of a broader strategy to ensure that major redevelopment in the area honors the past, serves current residents, and creates a future people can afford to live in.

### **THE NEXT PHASE: A CORRIDOR THAT FUNCTIONS LIKE A NEIGHBORHOOD AGAIN**

If you ask corridor users what they want most, they usually don’t start with “historic preservation.” They start with basics: safer crossings, more comfort for walking and rolling, easier access to local businesses, a corridor that feels cared for, and a district identity you can recognize the moment you arrive.

These are not separate from preservation. They are the conditions that let a district remain a district—rather than becoming a pass-through roadway lined with vacancies.

RSPP is advancing a longer-term revitalization direction anchored in three transformation strategies—Physical Improvements, Business Activation & Development, and Placemaking—because in an older corridor, the public realm, the local economy, and the shared civic experience rise or fall together. That means safer, cooler, more welcoming streets; practical support that helps businesses stabilize and grow; and visible reasons to stop, gather, and participate in the district.

In a corridor like ours, one of the strongest preservation tools is a complete street—not as a buzzword, but as a practical commitment to safety, access, and dignity. When a corridor is safer and more comfortable, it becomes easier for long-standing businesses to survive, easier for new businesses to open, and easier for residents to stay connected to daily life without depending on a car for every trip.

### **PRESERVATION THAT STRENGTHENS COMMUNITIES**

This issue of *Green Fire Times* asks a simple question: Why do certain places matter, and who is doing the work to care for them?

On San Pedro, the answer is straightforward: places matter because people live here. Elders aging in place. Families balancing rent and groceries. Workers commuting. Small business owners doing payroll, repairs and customer service with grit and pride. Students walking to school. Neighbors organizing around what they love and what they’re worried about. RSPP’s role is to help those people shape the corridor’s next chapter. Preservation, in our work, isn’t about freezing time. It’s about keeping what’s valuable intact while we make the corridor work better.

And when we do it right, the benefits are concrete: cultural strength (local history remains visible and usable), social strength (people have places to gather, connect, and belong), economic strength (small businesses and local property owners have a path to stability and growth) and environmental strength (reinvestment favors existing assets, reduces waste and supports green infrastructure that makes the corridor more resilient).

That’s the promise of MainStreet work in an older urban corridor: not simply “revitalization,” but community continuity—on purpose. ■

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*Adrian N. Carver, MCRP, is executive director of the Revitalize San Pedro Partnership.*

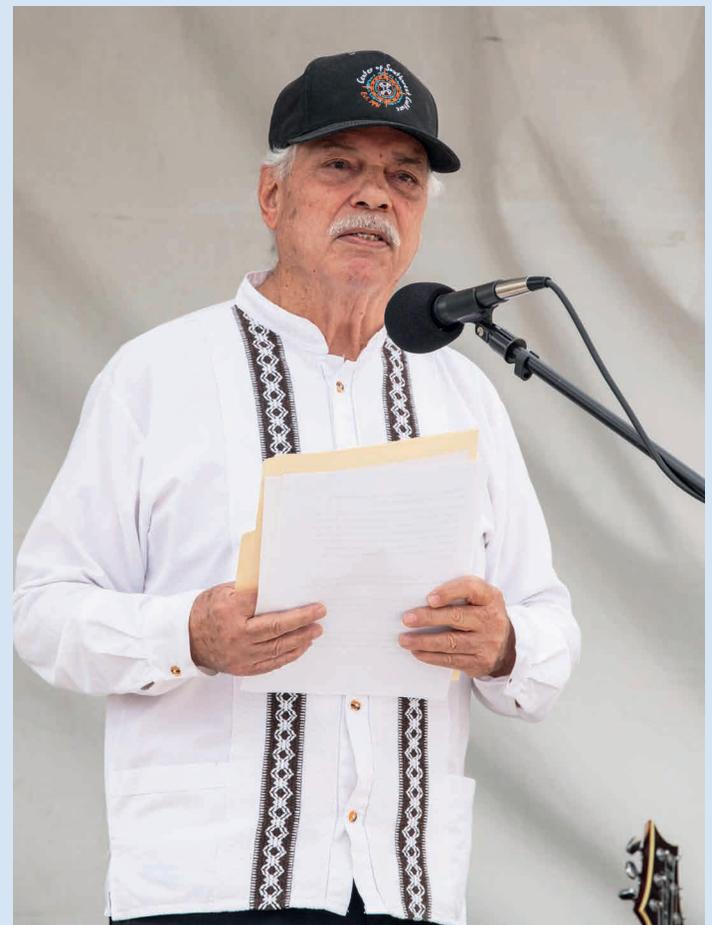
## **2026 EARTH DAY FESTIVAL**

*April 26, Balloon Fiesta Park, Albuquerque*

Earth Day 2026 is almost here—a global moment of unity where more than one billion people take action for our planet. This year’s theme, *Our Power, Our Planet*, calls for moving beyond pledges toward real, measurable action. The focus is on community-scale solutions that address the climate crisis while strengthening places we live.

In 2025, the City of Albuquerque’s Energy Efficiency program provided 10 families with energy retrofits, lowering their energy burden and helping curb climate emissions. That program now is more robust with new state funding. The city is working to identify households and will be conducting the work this year. Other city initiatives include increasing the offsetting of electricity use on city buildings with renewable energy, addition of EV charging stations, conversion of the city’s bus fleet to electric, and addition of bicycle lanes and bicycle boulevards.

“Earth Day is a chance to share the city’s success,” said sustainability officer Ann Simon. The Earth Day Festival returns on April 26, showcasing ways to participate in climate action. Attendees can talk to energy experts about ways to maximize energy efficiency and save money. You can test drive an electric vehicle or electric bike, participate in a cooking demonstration, enjoy food trucks and hundreds of booths and exhibits.



*Arturo Sandoval, director of the Albuquerque-based Center for Southwest Culture, Inc., was on the national organizing team for the first-ever Earth Day in 1970. Photos from Earth Day Festival 2025 © Seth Roffman*

“Since 2019, the City of Albuquerque’s Sustainability Office has worked to confront climate change while putting people first,” Simon said. “Our 2026 projects include green stormwater infrastructure in the Mile-Hi neighborhood to reduce flooding, calm traffic and beautify neighborhoods; participation in the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact to advance sustainable and inclusive food systems; and updates to the Integrated Development Ordinance that define and support composting, which reduces the city’s water use.”

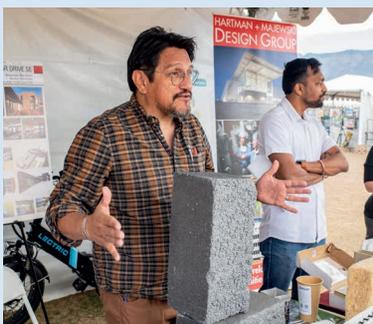
This Earth Day, the city has invited students, educators, faith groups, farmers, first responders and local governments to come together in support of clean air, renewable energy, clean water and the health of people and ecosystems. “Our power is strongest when we act together,” Simon said.

**What:** Earth Day

**Where:** Balloon Fiesta Park

**When:** Sunday April 26, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Cost:** Admission is free through March 31; after that, tickets are \$5 for adults, free for children 12 and under. Go to <https://earthdayfestivalnm.org/> for tickets and information.



## GREENPOWER MOTOR COMPANY ESTABLISHING ADVANCED EV MANUFACTURING FACILITY IN NEW MEXICO

Electric vehicle manufacturer GreenPower Motor Company has reached an agreement with the New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) to establish operations in Santa Teresa. Headquartered in Vancouver, Canada, with current operational facilities in southern California and West Virginia, GreenPower is a leading manufacturer and distributor of all-electric, purpose-built, zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles serving the cargo and delivery market, shuttle and transit space, and school bus sector.

The new 135,000-sq.-ft. facility in Santa Teresa will become the company’s base for North American operations and its US corporate headquarters. It is estimated that the move will generate over \$200 million in economic impact for New Mexico over the next decade and create more than 340 jobs. The new facility will also reinforce New Mexico’s role as a hub for green manufacturing and international commerce, according to an EDD press release.

The company will receive a \$5 million LEDA award from the state and \$4.6 million in job training incentive funds (JTIP). The company also qualified for a \$1.36 million Rural Jobs Tax Credit (RJTC) and \$3.65 million as part of New Mexico’s High-Wage Jobs Tax Credit program. GreenPower says that those incentives and programs will enhance its ability to efficiently produce and distribute zero-emission vehicles, parts and inventory throughout North America and beyond. “Establishing GreenPower’s new manufacturing facility in Santa Teresa marks a significant milestone in our expansion and commitment to safe, sensible, sustainable transportation solutions,” said CEO Fraser Atkinson.

GreenPower entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the state to assess the viability and reliability of fast charging in various environments and circumstances. In 2025, GreenPower worked with EDD to launch the state’s first all-electric, zero-emission school bus pilot project at two Las Vegas public schools and a Santa Fe charter school. The state agreed to support the two-year program with \$5 million in capital outlay appropriation to purchase the vehicles and cover the cost of the pilot project. EDD Cabinet Secretary Rob Black said, “We know the transportation sector is the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the nation. The real-world data and insights we are gaining from the pilot project will help inform New Mexico’s electric school bus roll-out and specifications, ensuring that fleets are safe, efficient and tailored to the unique needs of local districts.”

“Las Vegas City Schools is proud to participate in this first round of the GreenPower pilot project. We look forward to seeing how an all-electric school bus can benefit our school system and students,” said Superintendent Melissa Sandoval. “We have been looking at grant opportunities to begin migrating from diesel to all-electric school buses for the past couple of years,” said Christopher Gutierrez, West Las Vegas Schools superintendent.



After two successful pilot phases, EDD will support an additional \$15 million for more school buses. The state also pledged to work with the company to expand the all-electric, zero-emission commercial fleet at the Department of Transportation and the General Services Department. GreenPower is offering dealer-level pricing to the state for a comprehensive lineup of Class 4 all-electric, purpose-built, zero-emission commercial vehicles. The selection includes a variety of options like box trucks, refrigerated trucks, passenger vans, buses, utility trucks and stakebed trucks.

*Photo (l-r): EDD Regional Rep. Peter Mitchell; GreenPower’s Mark Nestlen; Dr. Zoe Nelsen, Head Learner, Monte del Sol Charter School*

## MICROGRID RESILIENCE FOR DISASTER- AND CLIMATE-VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

In partnership with Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, Inc., New Mexico State University (NMSU) has been approved for funding under the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) Grid Modernization program for a \$5.7 million microgrid project. This work builds on NMSU's community partnerships developed through the National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded DigiCARES program.

The project will build a utility-operated, edge-of-grid microgrid in northern New Mexico, integrating renewable generation, battery energy storage, advanced controls and AI-enabled energy management and wildfire detection to strengthen resilience for rural and wildfire-prone communities.

By providing grants to energy customers, e.g., local governments, education institutions and tribal governments, the EMNRD program supports projects that enhance electricity reliability and affordability (among other objectives), while facilitating the integration of renewable electricity generation resources.

## STATE LAUNCHES NM CREATIVECON EVENT SERIES TO BOOST CREATIVE ECONOMY

New Mexico is investing in its creative economy with a new statewide event series, *NM CreativeCon*, offering business workshops and networking opportunities to creative professionals across the state.



Hosted by the New Mexico Economic Development Department's Creative Industries Division, NM CreativeCon will bring together creative entrepreneurs and community leaders for a series of full-day events through education, networking and hands-on learning. Beginning in March, the lineup includes five regional events, culminating in a statewide convening in June.

The regional events will highlight local creative assets, including historic theaters, connect attendees with state and local resources, and strengthen networks within

each region's creative ecosystem. Current sponsoring partners include the New Mexico Marketing Center of Excellence, Meta, New Mexico Arts within the Department of Cultural Affairs, New Mexico Tourism, Department of Workforce Solutions, Triad National Security LLC, Regional Development Corporation of Northern New Mexico and several local Mainstreet organizations.

"New Mexico's creativity is one of our most powerful economic assets," said Shani Harvie, director of the Creative Industries Division. "CreativeCon is about helping

## URANIUM MINE PROPOSED FOR CIBOLA FOREST AND NATIONAL GRASSLANDS

In January, Laramide Resources, Inc. submitted a plan to the State of New Mexico supporting the La Jara Mesa Project, which proposes underground uranium mine development, operation and reclamation within the Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands over a 20-year time span. The plan says that the mine is expected to produce 12-to-15 truckloads of uranium a day, to be processed at an unspecified offsite.

This area has already been severely impacted by the legacy of uranium mining, resulting in chronic illnesses and additional risks for community members. In addition, adjacent to the proposed area for mine development is Mount Taylor, protected as a Traditional Cultural Property under the Historic Preservation Act (in 2009) that holds cultural importance to the people of Acoma Pueblo, Laguna Pueblo, the Navajo Nation and other Native communities.

The Pueblo of Acoma and the All Pueblo Council of Governors released letters opposing the proposed mine in 2024. The Pueblo Action Alliance (PAA) and community members are currently actively opposing this project, which was placed on the federal fast-track list to streamline the approval process. Under the state of New Mexico, there is a multi-agency review process that includes the New Mexico Environment Department, the State Engineer's Office, the state Forestry Division and Historic Preservation Division.

Uranium mining ceased in New Mexico nearly 40 years ago. According to a letter from PAA, "The opening of a new mine in this region would severely impact groundwater and surface water resources. Groundwater from the San Andres Glorieta Aquifer—the primary source of surface water for the Pueblos of Acoma and Laguna—is already highly contaminated and appropriated. We are also concerned about the environmental and public health hazards that would arise from the transportation and storage of radioactive material and waste."

people find the tools that can turn their ideas and artistry into opportunity, whether they're just starting out or are already a part of the fabric of our creative economy."

### 2026 CreativeCon Schedule:

- March 7 – Carlsbad (Southeast) – Cavern Theater
- March 28 – Raton (Northeast) – Shuler Theater
- April 25 – Silver City (Southwest) – WNMU Fine Arts Theater
- April 11 – Gallup (Northwest) – El Morro Theater
- May 30 – Pueblo of Pojoaque (Northcentral) – Buffalo Thunder Casino
- June 6 – Albuquerque (Central) – National Hispanic Cultural Center

All events will feature creative industry panels and region-specific programming tailored to local strengths and opportunities.

Set for Saturday, June 6, the final CreativeCon event in Albuquerque will feature immersive workshops, networking and three learning tracks for:

- Creative makers and hobby artists—turning passion into profession
- Creative businesses and support organizations—growing and collaborating for impact
- Local governments, developers and policymakers—leveraging creative industries for community and economic development

Registration is open at [edd.newmexico.gov/creativecon](http://edd.newmexico.gov/creativecon). To learn more about the Creative Industries Division and sign up for updates, visit [edd.newmexico.gov/creative](http://edd.newmexico.gov/creative) and follow @NMCreativeDiv on social media.

# WHAT'S GOING ON

## ALBUQUERQUE / Online

**MARCH 14, 1–3 PM**

### **SAVE THE FARM, SAVE THE FUTURE**

*Guild Cinema, 3405 Central NE*

Film screening and panel discussion about this new film exploring agrivoltaics. Free. NM Healthy Soil Working Group.

**APRIL 8, 7:30 AM–4 PM**

### **ACEQUIA & LAND GRANT EDUCATION PROJECT PRE-CONFERENCE INSTITUTE**

*Embassy Suites, 1000 Woodward Pl. NE*

For NM K-12 teachers interested in cultural and linguistically sustaining pedagogy and curriculum that centers land and water across content areas. 4/9: Student leadership Institute. 4/9-11: NM-based culture and language sessions.

[AISANDOVAL@NMHU.EDU](mailto:AISANDOVAL@NMHU.EDU), [HTTP://TINY.CC/0JYY001](http://tiny.cc/0jyy001)

**APRIL 9**

### **ELECTRIFY NEW MEXICO 2026**

*Sid Cutter Pavilion, Balloon Fiesta Park*

Flagship gathering for renewable energy innovators. Discussions on NM's evolving energy landscape. Panels on policy and practice. Spotlights on successful partnerships. Connections with the workforce of the future. Business booths.

Renewable Energy Industries Assoc. of NM. Registration: [HTTPS://REIA-NM.ORG](https://reia-nm.org)

**APRIL 26, 10 AM–3 PM**

### **EARTH DAY FESTIVAL**

*Balloon Fiesta Park*

125–150 exhibitors, food trucks. Presented by the City of ABQ, Sierra Club Río Grande Chapter, 350NM, SUNNY505, others. [HTTPS://EARTHDAYFESTIVALNM.ORG](https://earthdayfestivalnm.org)

**THROUGH MAY 3**

### **DELILAH MONTOYA: ACTIVATING CHICANA RESISTANCE**

*Albuquerque Museum, 2000 Mountain Rd. NW*

Photography, printmaking, installation art and bookmaking explore historical and contemporary narratives, fostering an understanding of identity, history and community activism. 505-243-7255, [ALBUQUERQUEMUSEUM.ORG](http://albuquerquemuseum.org)

**THROUGH JUNE 7**

### **“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](http://nhccnm.org)

**SEPT. 17–19**

### **38TH ANNUAL GREAT MINDS IN STEM CONFERENCE**

*Albuquerque Convention Center*

GMS inspires and supports students and professionals—especially from underserved communities—to build a diverse and inclusive STEM workforce. Hosted by the Hispano Chamber of Commerce. Info: 323-791-9295

**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. [CABQ.GOV/ARTSCULTURE/ALBUQUERQUE-MUSEUM](http://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](http://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](http://resilientfuturesnm.org)

## SANTA FE / Online

**MARCH 4**

### **NATIONAL HISTORY DAY NM REGIONALS**

*New Mexico History Museum*

Annual event supported by the Historical Society of NM. Hundreds of students, teachers and judges. A juried competition of student projects. The theme: “Revolution, Reaction and Reform in History” was chosen to align with the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. [CHRISTINA.CLAASSEN@DCA.NM.GOV](mailto:CHRISTINA.CLAASSEN@DCA.NM.GOV)

**MARCH 12, 8:30–10 AM**

### **SF OUTDOOR RECREATION CONVENING**

*El Rancho de las Golondrinas*

Co-hosted by the City of SF Economic Development and SF County Economic Development, this quarterly meetup convenes outdoor recreation organizations, businesses, employers and ecosystem partners to advance a thriving outdoor recreation economy. [CONTACTOED@SANTAFENM.GOV](mailto:CONTACTOED@SANTAFENM.GOV)

**MARCH 12, 5:30–7 PM**

### **FLORA & FAUNA OF THE SF RIVER WATERSHED**

*Ikonik Red, 1366 Cerrillos Rd.*

Free talk by Arle Kruckeberg of the Native Plant Society, and Michael Carr of SF County. Also, the SF River iNaturalist Project and the City Nature Challenge.

**MARCH 16–17**

### **BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL WORLD TOUR**

*The Lensic Performing Arts Center*

Breathtaking adventures, heart-pounding action sports, stunning wildlife and environmental films and culturally diverse stories. Tickets on sale Jan. 30. \$20 one night/\$38 both nights.

**MARCH 18–MAY 20 (WEDS. EVENINGS)**

### **CLIMATE MASTERS COURSE**

Focuses on climate change in NM, with locally relevant connections between water, soil, food production, consumption and waste, forest management, transportation, energy, at-risk communities and climate science. Registration: [HTTPS://WWW.SANTAFEWATERSHED.ORG/EDUCATION-AND-OUTREACH/CLIMATEMASTERS/](https://www.santafewatershed.org/education-and-outreach/climate-masters/)

**MARCH 24, 6:30–8 PM**

### **COMMUNITY INPUT SESSION ON HOUSING**

*Genevieve Chavez Center, 3221 Rodeo Rd.*

Free bilingual session with brief overview of City housing programs and funding. Presented by the City of SF Office of Affordable Housing.

**APRIL 9, 3–6 PM**

### **EXPO 26**

*SF Community Convention Center*

Discover products and services from area businesses. Presented by the SF Chamber of Commerce. [SANTAFECHAMBER.COM](http://santafechamber.com)

**APRIL 17–18**

### **INDIGENOUS WAYS FILM FESTIVAL**

*LALA Campus, 83 Avan Nu Po Rd.*

A celebration of Indigenous storytelling centers Indigenous women and student filmmakers through screenings, workshops and artist conversations. Free and open to the public. [HTTPS://WWW.INDIGENOUSWAYS.ORG/IW-FILMFESTIVAL-2026](https://www.indigenousways.org/iw-filmfestival-2026)

**APRIL 25, 10 AM–2 PM**

### **EARTH DAY AT THE RAILYARD**

*Railyard Park*

**APRIL 25**

### **OLD SF ASSOCIATION 100TH ANNIVERSARY**

*Scottish Rite Temple*

**MAY 2, 10 AM–2 PM**

### **FOLK ART FLEA**

*SF County Fairgrounds*

Thousands of folk and fine art items donated by folk art lovers, artists and collectors to benefit the Museum of International Folk Art. Admission and parking are free. [ASHLEY.ESPINOZA@DCA.NM.GOV](mailto:ASHLEY.ESPINOZA@DCA.NM.GOV), [MUSEUMFOUNDATION.ORG](http://museumfoundation.org)

## MAY 15–17

### SANTA FE INTERNATIONAL LITERARY FESTIVAL

*SF Community Convention Center*

World-renowned authors, thinkers and passionate readers celebrate the power of story. [SFINTERNATIONALLITFEST.ORG](http://SFINTERNATIONALLITFEST.ORG)

## MAY 20–25

### NATIVE ELEMENTS ART FESTIVAL + MARKET

*SF Botanical Garden and SF Convention Center*

Approximately 160 Native artists. Reception, VIP Night Market, panel discussion, art sales, food, entertainment. [NATIVE-ELEMENTS@VISITSEFBG.ORG](mailto:NATIVE-ELEMENTS@VISITSEFBG.ORG), [HTTPS://VISITSEFBG.ORG/NATIVE-ELEMENTS/](https://VISITSEFBG.ORG/NATIVE-ELEMENTS/)

## MAY 31, 9 AM–2 PM

### CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS FARM TOUR & LUNCHEON

Celebrating the international year of the woman farmer. Lunch at the SF School of Cooking. Presented by the SF Farmers' Market Institute. Tickets on sale April 1.

## JUNE 5 OPENING

### INDIAN THEATER

*SITE Santa Fe*

Native Performance, Art and Self-Determination Since 1969. Exhibition curated by Candice Hopkins centers performance as an origin for the development of contemporary art by Native artists. [SITESANTAFE.ORG](http://SITESANTAFE.ORG)

## JUNE 11–12

### NEXT GENERATION WATER SUMMIT

“Increasing demand, declining realities.” The state of water conservation in the Southwest. Join water policymakers, water reuse professionals and the building community. Registration: <https://lnkd.in/gtRJEp86>, [NEXTGENERATIONWATERSUMMIT.COM](http://NEXTGENERATIONWATERSUMMIT.COM)

## JUNE 20

### INDIGENOUS FOODWAYS FESTIVAL

### MUSEUM OF INDIAN ARTS & CULTURE

Indigenous food, art and culture. Tastings, conversations and hands-on learning. Meet chefs and farmers and explore a marketplace.

[INFO@INDIGENOUSFOODWAYSFESTIVAL.COM](mailto:INFO@INDIGENOUSFOODWAYSFESTIVAL.COM), [HTTPS://WWW.INDIGENOUSFOODWAYSFESTIVAL.COM](https://WWW.INDIGENOUSFOODWAYSFESTIVAL.COM)

## AUGUST 7–9

### TRANSFORMATION & HEALING CONFERENCE

*Southwestern College & New Earth Institute*

“Navigating Modern Chaos: Integrating Ancient Wisdom, Somatic Healing and Creative Practices” [NEW-EARTH-INSTITUTE@SWC.EDU](mailto:NEW-EARTH-INSTITUTE@SWC.EDU)

## AUGUST 15–16

### SANTA FE INDIAN MARKET

[SWAIA.ORG](http://SWAIA.ORG)

## SEPT. 18–20

### EARTH USA 2016

*Scottish Rite Center*

13th International Conference on Architecture & Construction with Earthen Materials. Podium presentations, poster sessions, reception, tours. <https://www.earthusa.org>

## THROUGH SEPTEMBER

### 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](http://WWW.INDIANARTSANDCULTURE.ORG)

## THROUGH OCT. 4

### ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS

*New Mexico Museum of Art, 107 W. Palace Ave.*

Photographic exhibition of Route 66 landmarks traces visual and cultural legacy of America's storied highway. [HTTPS://WWW.NMARTMUSEUM.ORG](https://WWW.NMARTMUSEUM.ORG)

## SATURDAYS THROUGH DEC., 9 AM–2 PM

### SANTA FE ARTISTS MARKET

*The Railyard north of the Water Tower*

Local juried artists sell fine art and crafts. [INFO@SANTAFEARTISTSMARKET.COM](mailto:INFO@SANTAFEARTISTSMARKET.COM)

## SUNDAYS

### RAILYARD ARTISANS MARKET

*SF Farmers' Market Pavilion*

Gifts, souvenirs and mementos from local artisans and creative small businesses.

[SANTAFEFARMERSMARKET.COM](http://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. Nah 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](http://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](http://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, [SANTAFECCHILDRENSMUSEUM.ORG](http://SANTAFECCHILDRENSMUSEUM.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](http://GOLONDRINAS.ORG)

## SAT., 9–4, SUN., 10–4

### EL MERCADO DE EL MUSEO

*El Museo Cultural de Santa Fe*

Many vendors. Art, jewelry, herbal remedies, textiles, beads, tapestries, books, furniture and more.

## EL RANCHO DE LAS GOLONDRINAS

*La Ciénega, N.M.*

Living history museum. [GOLONDRINAS.ORG](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](http://WWW.INDIANARTSANDCULTURE.ORG)

## MUSEUM OF INTERNATIONAL FOLK ART

*706 Cam. Lejo, Museum Hill*

“Protection: Adaptation and Resistance.” More than 45 artists explore themes of climate crisis, struggles for social justice, strengthening communities through ancestral knowledge and imagining a thriving future. \$3–\$12. NM residents free first Sunday of the month.

## 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% 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.SANTAFEEYOUTHWORKS.ORG/SANTA-FE-YOUTHBUILD/](http://WWW.SANTAFEEYOUTHWORKS.ORG/SANTA-FE-YOUTHBUILD/)

## **ESPAÑOLA**

#### **THROUGH MAY**

#### **NORTHERN NM ARTIST INVITATIONAL EXHIBIT**

*Bond House, 706 Bond Street*

Group show. 505-747-8535, [FACEBOOK.COM/SGHSBONDHOUSEMUSEUM](https://www.facebook.com/SGHSBONDHOUSEMUSEUM)

## **TAOS / Online**

#### **MARCH 15, 4 PM**

#### **THE FUTURE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

*Taos Center for the Arts*

Ecologist Dr. Jon Jundgren will explain how to grow food that heals ecosystems, empowers farmers, nourishes eaters and strengthens communities. 5 pm happy hour with local and regional agricultural and conservation organizations. \$10–\$30 donation.

#### **THROUGH MAY 30**

#### **PUEBLO FOODWAYS**

*Harwood Museum of Art, 238 Ledoux St.*

Taos Pueblo foodways, from seed to ceremony. A glimpse into diverse activities and relationships that define food culture and sovereignty. 575-758-9826, [HTTPS://HARWOODMUSEUM.ORG](https://www.harwoodmuseum.org)

#### **LA HACIENDA DE LOS MARTÍNEZ**

*708 Hacienda Way*

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

#### **MILLICENT ROGERS MUSEUM**

*1504 Millicent Rogers Rd.*

Tuah-Tah/Taos Pueblo: Home, highlighting the pueblo's culture and artistic achievements. Open daily. [MILLIF4N65OY45E.ORG](http://MILLIF4N65OY45E.ORG)

## **HERE & THERE / Online**

#### **MARCH 6, 9 AM–3:30 PM**

#### **ANNUAL FRUIT GROWERS WORKSHOP**

*Los Luceros, Alcalde, NM*

NMSU College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences Cooperative Extension Service. \$20. Lunch provided. Pre-registration required: 505-852-4241, [EARE@NMSU.EDU](mailto:EARE@NMSU.EDU)

#### **MARCH 11, 9 AM–12 PM**

#### **THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION IN NM**

*Sunland Park Sports Complex, Santa Teresa, NM*

Public policy forum presented by the NM Energy, Mineral and Natural Resources Dept. [COEEMND@NMSU.EDU](mailto:COEEMND@NMSU.EDU)

#### **MARCH 14–15**

#### **TUCSON FESTIVAL OF BOOKS**

*University of Arizona*

Third-largest book festival in the country. [HTTPS://TUCSONFESTIVALOFBOOKS.ORG](https://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org)

#### **MARCH 20 ONLINE APPLICATION DEADLINE**

#### **NMDA HEALTHY SOIL PROGRAM**

NM Dept. of Agriculture provides grants for on-the-ground projects beginning in July that improve soil health. 575-646-2642, [HSP@NMDA.NMSU.EDU](mailto:HSP@NMDA.NMSU.EDU). NM Healthy Soil Working Group offers grant writing support. 505-231-8471, [INFO@NMHEALTHYSOIL.ORG](mailto:INFO@NMHEALTHYSOIL.ORG)

#### **MARCH 21 APPLICATION DEADLINE**

#### **RURAL ROOTS ENDOWMENT**

American AgCredit funding helps strengthen NM's agri-community. Eligible organizations: youth ag programs, underserved producer populations, direct producer support (startup, development, conservation), efforts protecting NM ag, hunger-fighting initiatives, ag and producer education. [HTTPS://BRNW.CH/21WZBXM](https://brnw.ch/21wzbxm)

#### **MARCH 26–28**

#### **37TH ANNUAL BIONEERS CONFERENCE**

*Berkeley, Calif.*

“Revolution from the Heart of Nature” [HTTPS://CONFERENCE.BIONEERS.ORG](https://conference.bioneers.org)

#### **MARCH–APRIL**

National Renewable Energy Laboratory Industry Growth Forum

[IGF@NREL.GOV](mailto:IGF@NREL.GOV), [HTTPS://LNKD.IN/GJCI6IUX](https://lnkd.in/g/jci6iux)

#### **APRIL 11, 10 AM–5 PM**

#### **FRONTIER FAIR: HISTORY, OUTLAWS & CULTURE**

*Mesilla Plaza, Mesilla, N.M.*

#### **APRIL 22–23, 9 AM–11:30 AM**

#### **EXTREME HEAT, HEALTH & RESILIENCY SUMMIT**

*Online*

Healthy Climate New Mexico—Health professionals for climate action. 505-946-8678, [INFO@HEALTHYCLIMATENM.ORG](mailto:INFO@HEALTHYCLIMATENM.ORG), [WWW.HEALTHYCLIMATENM.ORG](http://WWW.HEALTHYCLIMATENM.ORG)

#### **MAY 19–21**

#### **CONFLUENCE 2026**

*Fort Collins, Colo.*

“The Future of Collaboration: The Power of Working Across Divides.” Western Collaborative Conservation Network, New Mexico Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute. <https://lnkd.in/gWtjCcy4>

#### **JUNE 6–8**

#### **8TH ANNUAL NAVAJO NATION ECONOMIC SUMMIT**

*Twin Arrows Casino Resort, Flagstaff, Ariz.*

“Our Resources, Our Responsibility.” Conversations with leaders, innovators, community partners on economic growth, sustainability and stewardship. [HTTPS://LNKD.IN/GJBCC8AA](https://lnkd.in/gJBCC8AA)

#### **THURS–SUN, 10 AM–4 PM**

#### **BOSQUE REDONDO MEMORIAL**

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

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. [HTTPS://CONFERENCE.BIONEERS.ORG](https://conference.bioneers.org)

# Earth Day Festival New Mexico

JOIN US FOR THE  
EARTH DAY FESTIVAL



**Sunday April 26<sup>th</sup> • 10 am–3 pm**  
**Balloon Fiesta Park**

The Third Annual Earth Day Festival promises to provide information that will save people between \$500 and \$20,000 by incorporating green practices into your day-to-day lives. Tickets \$5. FREE if reserved in March.

- Kids activities
- Kids Entrepreneurs section
- Clean energy vendors
- Clean Car Concourse—test drive EVS
- Experts on rebates (PNM, state, federal)
- Food Court
- Workshops

**WINE • PUPPIES • ENTERTAINMENT**

[EarthDayFestivalNM.org](http://EarthDayFestivalNM.org)



Earth Day Festival NM 2025