DECEMBER 2019

A BRIEF HISTORY OF NORTHERN NM'S WATER

GREEN FIRE TIMES

News & Views from the Sustainable Southwest

Congreso de las Acequias

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How La Raza Became Invisible

Creating a Cultural Infrastructure for Education

Miguel Angel
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VOLUME 11 NUMBER 8

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GREEN FIRE TIMES
News & Views from the Sustainable Southwest

VOLUME 11 NO. 8 DECEMBER 2019

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Photo collage © Alejandro López

OP-ED: ALEJANDRO LOPEZ

HONOR THY FIRE AND THY MOTHER

A Precept for Winter and for All Time

The hearth in the home, the altar in the temple, is the hub of the whell of the earth, the womb of the Universal Mother whose fire is the fire of life.

– Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*

Having had it forever drummed into our heads that Christmas is about greater levels of consumerism (with perfunctory acknowledgement of religious traditions), many of us have all but forgotten what once lay at the heart of this important annual observance. It is significant that in the partially untamed landscape of northern New Mexico, unlike elsewhere in the United States, the custom of lighting bonfires during the Christmas season has been maintained. This was a practice that our remote ancestors adopted during the season of protracted darkness. **(cont. on p 30)**

The Taos Soil and Water Conservation District's Acequia Madre del Pueblo Flume

HUNDREDS GATHER FOR CONGRESO DE LAS ACEQUIAS IN TAOS

BY **PAULA GARCÍA**

The coffee was ready by 7:30 a.m. Farmers and ranchers, who are inclined to be earlybirds, started arriving before 8 for the *Congreso de las Acequias,* the annual membership meeting of the New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA). Soon after, the conference room started to come to life with *Las Mañanitas,* the traditional Mexican ballad that welcomes the day. Nearly 400 acequia parciantes and supporters from across the state gathered for the Congreso, which was also a celebration of the NMAA's 30th anniversary. The previous day, the Taos Soil and Water Conservation District hosted a tour of local acequia projects that contribute to the long-term viability of irrigated agriculture in the Taos Valley.

As is customary, the official start of the Congreso was *Canción de las Acequias,* a song written by David García, Roger Montoya and Cipriano Vigil, which has become the anthem of the NMAA. A collective of musicians, led by García and Jeremías Martínez, and which included former Lt. Gov. Roberto Mondragon, performed throughout the day. In the *Bendición de las Aguas,* waters from acequias and rivers throughout the state were shared and mixed together with a prayer for the well-being of families and communities and for protection of waters that are believed to be a *don divino* or divine gift.

While the gathering is infused with culture, the Congreso is very much a meeting of governance.

The Congreso de las Acequias is the gathering and governing body of the NMAA. As a federational body of regional delegations, one of the important moments in the annual convening is the roll call of regions, which illustrates the statewide scope of the acequia community in New Mexico. While the gathering is infused with culture from the very beginning, the Congreso is very much a meeting of governance, where leaders come together and affirm their core values and make collective decisions that form the basis for policy positions and strategic directions.

Corilia Ortega and family participate in the Bendición de las Aguas.

David García, Dora Pacías and Lorenzo Candelaria sing a despedida to bid farewell to Senator Carlos Cisneros.

Sharing Querencia Across Generations. Chavela Trujillo and mentor-mom Isabel Trujillo listen as Juanita Revak honors her dad, Gilbert Sandoval.

A celebration of the NM Acequia Association's 30th anniversary

The day included a moving tribute to the late Sen. Carlos Cisneros, including testimonials from important leaders in his district who spoke of his commitment, work ethic and the wit that many of his colleagues had grown fond of over the years. Esther García, former mayor of Questa and former commissioner on Cabresto Lake Irrigation Community Ditch, and Mary Mascareñas, long-time school board member for Peñasco Independent Schools and former commissioner on Acequia del Llano de San Juan Nepumoceno, shared memories of the senator as a friend and advocate for rural communities. Musicians ended the tribute with a *despedida,* a traditional farewell ballad.

NMAA President Harold Trujillo and I provided a retrospective of the NMAA's 30 years of advocacy and contributions to the acequia movement in New Mexico. Special thanks were given to the Taos Valley Acequia Association as the first regional association to help form the Congreso de las Acequias as a statewide governing body. A timeline reviewed included major milestones in acequia advocacy, including important pieces of legislation and the founding dates of NMAA's education and youth programs.

A highlight of the day was a segment entitled, "Sharing Querencia Across Generations." It was a time of recognition of both mentees and their mentors who have made a conscious effort to keep traditional knowledge alive across generations. The recognitions were an expression of gratitude by mentees for their mentors and an affirmation that the acequia tradition would continue for another generation. Chavela Trujillo of Abiquiú recognized her mom, Isabel Trujillo; Juanita Revak from Jemez Springs recognized her father, Gilbert Sandoval; Marcos Valdez recognized his mentor Kenny Salazar from La Mesilla; Zia Martínez recognized her mentor Lorenzo Candelaria; Nicanor Ortega recognized his mentor Miguel Santistevan, and Donne Gonzales recognized her mom, Juliet Garcia-Gonzales.

Other topics included a youth mapping project with the Carson National Forest and presentations by participants in NMAA's Sembrando Semillas youth project and Los Sembradores Farmer Training project. For some of the youth, the Congreso is one of the most important public speaking experiences of their young lives. It is part of NMAA's leadership development work to include youth as speakers.

Another highlight was a performance by renowned poet Olivia Romo, whose poem *Fighting the Tragedy of the Commons* critiques the privatization of communal waters of the acequias and pays homage to the elders who dedicate decades of their lives to defend water rights in the adjudication process. Her poem recognizes leaders of the Río de las Gallinas Acequia Association in the Las Vegas area who fought for 50 years to overturn a doctrine for the city to have an expanding water right, and who continue to fight fragmentation of their acequias.

Vibrant and spirited conversations took place during the lunch hour, which was followed by an awards ceremony honoring two individuals who have spent much of their lives directly involved with NMAA's grassroots organizing and advocacy work. Harold Trujillo was honored as a co-founder of NMAA in 1989, and David Benavides was honored for nearly 30 years of service as an attorney dedicated primarily to acequia water law. In the midst of the festivities, volunteers Martha Trujillo, Patrick Blumm, Olivia Romo and Priscilla Romo worked a silent auction as an NMAA fundraiser.

The day concluded with the adoption of a series of resolutions proposed by NMAA's regional delegates, leadership caucuses and policy working group. Four policy resolutions addressed a range of issues including opposition to proposed exploratory mining in the upper Pecos watershed, support for expanding the use of a fund for acequia legal expenses, and details regarding guidelines for the newly created Acequia Infrastructure Fund. Another resolution generated by caucuses involving youth and young adults urged the NMAA to implement a project to document storytelling by community members and elders. All resolutions passed unanimously, in large part due to the extensive participation in writing the resolutions well in advance of the Congreso.

The 30th Anniversary Celebration was a day to celebrate history and the passing of the torch to new generations. It will long live in the memories of those who were there. *¡Que Vivan las Acequias!* ■

Paula García is executive director of the New Mexico Acequia Association. www.lasacequias.org

Photos © Seth Roffman

Sam García, Río Chama Acequia Association, participates in the roll call.

Altar with offerings to ancestors included photos of important leaders of the acequia movement in New Mexico.

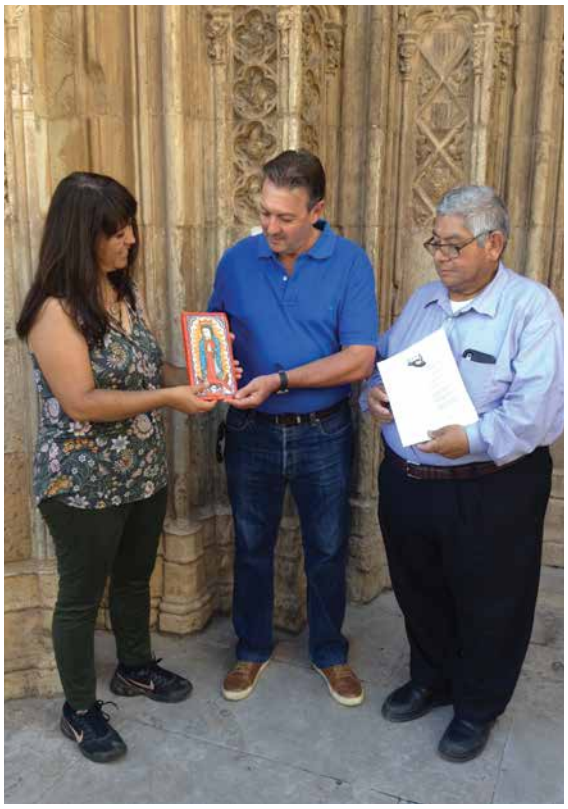
NM ACEQUIA ACTIVISTS REVISIT VALENCIA, SPAIN

BY **ENRIQUE LAMADRID AND JOSÉ RIVERA**

In late September 2019, 10 delegates of the New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA) made a pilgrimage to Valencia, Spain, to celebrate several linked anniversaries—five years of formal relations of *Hermanamiento* (brotherhood alliance) between the *acequieros* (acequia activists) of New Mexico and Valencia, 10 years since UNESCO inscribed the acequia institutions of Valencia and Murcia on the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage, 30 years since the foundation of the NMAA, 420 years of acequia culture in New Mexico and 1000 years of acequia culture and governance in Spain.

Stacey Talachy, Paula García, Joaquín Romero, Lucille Trujillo, José Rivera, Harold Trujillo, with fountain, Cathedral and Portico. Not pictured: David García, Jeremías Martínez, Patricia Perea and Trini Rivera.

Acequias and rice paddies at the edge of the city of Valencia



They gathered at the *Plaza de la Virgen*, the center of Valencia and *La Fuente del Turia*, the fountain representing the Turia river, with Neptune guarding over Valencian maidens with jars, pouring out the waters of the eight acequias of Valencia. Across the plaza stands the medieval cathedral and the *Puerta de los Apóstoles* (Portico of the Apostles). There, the *Tribunal de las Aguas de la Vega de Valencia*, Europe's oldest water court, convenes every Thursday noon as it has for countless centuries. Oral arguments and disputes are resolved quickly and definitively, with pageantry, ceremony and closure.

At the Portico, a reading of NMAA's declaration of alliance and presentation of gifts. Paula García, NMAA executive director, Enric Aguilar Valls, former president of the Tribunal and current Síndico *(officer) and Harold Trujillo, NMAA president.*

The declarations from both sides recognize and take pride in "the cultural and environmental significance of the acequias, symbols and expressions of the profound and rich historical link that unites the peoples who live within the arid and semi-arid lands, including Central Asia, the Middle East, the Mediterranean riverine lands, and the Americas." Everyone acknowledges "the common difficulties and challenges that we confront in the current context of globalization of economy and agriculture," and pledges "to strengthen our ties, promoting the exchange of experiences, the definition of solutions for the challenges we confront, and the extension of alliances with the communities of irrigators that share with us the millennial acequia culture (from mutual declarations exchanged in 2014 and 2019)."

A profound and rich historical link unites the peoples who live within arid and semi-arid lands.

Sailing the acequias between the rice fields of L'Albufera, south of the city

Below: Luis Pablo Martínez, Valenciano advocate for acequias in Spain and New Mexico; university project assistant, Harold Trujillo; Paula García and Joaquín Romero

The 2019 convocation at Universitat de València – "La cultura del agua en Nuevo México: Experiencias en la gestión del regadío norteamericano" (The Culture of Water in New Mexico: Experiences in the practice of irrigation in North America). In New Mexico, acequias, community activism, sustainable, farming, scholarship, education and a strong legislative agenda are integral components.

New Mexico acequieros toured all around the Vega de Valencia with their generous hosts. Over countless centuries, an intricate, gravity-fed irrigation system has watered the Vega, a vast and fertile coastal plain that supplies year-round crops to all of Spain. As winter snows fall in Madrid, Valencian oranges ripen. Through history, the Valencian farmers shared in the wealth of the agricultural cornucopia they harvested. The first rice farmers in Western Europe, the acequias of the arrozales (rice fields) are so copious that boats are used to traverse them. Aside from food, they propagated the first silk industry in Western Europe. Wealthy peasants dressed in silk often irked the nobility and royals alike.

• NMAA President Harold Trujillo presented on the History and Mission of the NMAA, in celebration of 30 years of achievement.

• NMAA Executive Director Paula García presented on Projects of the NMAA, including key legislative and New Mexico Supreme Court victories.

• NMAA's Joaquín Romero presented on the "Sembrando Semillas (Sowing Seeds)" Youth Project, with its focus on family, traditional culture, seed saving and sustainability.

Nuevo Mexicano musicians David F. García and Jeremías Martínez inspired everyone with the musical heritage of New Mexico acequias, from the traditional hymn to San Isidro Labrador (Saint Isidore the Farmer), the beloved patron saint of agriculture, to lively activist songs written to mobilize acequieros in defense of their culture and water:

CANCIÓN DE LAS ACEQUIAS
Ya viene amaneciendo
yo sigo trabajando
para mantener
lo que yo quiero tanto...

SONG OF THE ACEQUIAS
The sun is just coming up
and I am already working
to maintain that which
I love so much...

Goals for the future include compiling more documentation for the nomination for New Mexico to take its place through UNESCO recognition in the world community of culturally based traditional irrigators. The February 2015 issue of *Green Fire Times* included two articles by Valencian scholar activists. Carlos Ortiz Mayordomo and Lina Gracia wrote a proposal, "New Mexico Acequias and World Heritage," and Luís Pablo Martínez contributed "Safeguarding the Global Cultural Heritage of Community Acequias." We close with his quote: "Acequia cultural landscapes provide impressive testimony on the interdependence of cultural and natural heritage, as well as on how heritage can effectively contribute to the promotion of intercultural dialogue and sustainability." ■

Enrique Lamadrid edits the Querencias Series *(UNM Press) and is a* comisionado *and* parciante *of the Álamos de los Gallegos Acequia Association. José Rivera is a research associate at the Center for Regional Studies, UNM.*
Photos © Trini Rivera

Left: Clay artisan, José García Antonio, from Oaxaca, México, at the International Folk Art Market–Santa Fe, 2019
Right: Young José Marco Martínez, from Santa Fe, demonstrates his knowledge of Spanish. Santa Cruz, NM
Photos © Alejandro López

Mexicano, the Spanish of Northern NM

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY **ALEJANDRO LÓPEZ**

My Mexicano-speaking grandmother, Rosina, meant the world to me when I was little. She was the sweetest, kindest person I have ever known. Although we were close, one huge obstacle lay between us. In my family the Mexicano Spanish language had already given way to English and so I could not speak it, nor could she speak English because she had never been exposed to it much, even though she had been born and raised in New Mexico. Because of this, my grandmother and I resorted to just holding hands for long periods of time to let each other know how much we cared for each other. Just imagine though, she was never able to transmit to me a single one of the many things that she might have wanted me to know.

– Freddie Fresquez, Española, NM

Mexicano Spanish, which has been spoken in northern Nuevo México for centuries, is comprised of many strains and has evolved over time. Situated at the very heart of the culture, its value as a vehicle for the transmission of knowledge and wisdom through the generations is incalculable. Beyond that function, the language serves as the lens through which people view and understand the world. Speakers of Mexicano are currently undergoing a radical and momentous change in language as well as in their perceptions and understandings.

Mexicano has been spoken in North America longer than the United States has existed as a country. Indeed, the first book written in what is now the continental United States was *La Historia de la Nueva México* by Gaspar Pérez de Villagrá, in 1610. It chronicles, *en detalle,* the 1598 expedition of Juan de Oñate into Nuevo México. The language spoken by the first Spanish to set foot in this region formed the basis for the language spoken today in the remote villages of our mountain redoubt and in its ever-increasing population centers.

Although, Mexicano has undergone drastic changes, many of the archaic linguistic jewels and turns of phrases used by Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616), who wrote *Don Quijote de la Mancha* during the period of Nuevo México's exploration and colonization, are still found in current usage in northern Nuevo México. Among them are the terms *leguas* (leagues), *varas* (an archaic land measurement), *norias* (waterwheels) and *reales* (archaic monetary units or "pieces of eight"). Paradoxically, Mexicano can also sound much like the dialects of Spanish spoken in remote Indian villages of southern México where such forms were similarly retained, where people's speech mainly revolves around rural, family and community life, and where certain deviations from standard Spanish constitute an acceptable manner of speaking.

In reality, Mexicano has been kept alive in the home and community through the vigorous interaction of *gente* going about their business trying to survive in a challenging ecological and economic niche. In the previous century, the language was buttressed by publications that made their way from México and many generated locally in Nuevo México. Until the 1940s, there were scores of Spanish-language newspapers in the state and the dominant language was still Mexicano. Even Pueblo and Navajo people spoke it expertly or in part, and any Anglo hoping to live here permanently had to learn it or starve. After all, it had been the *lingua franca* from Nuevo México to California and from Colorado to Tierra del Fuego for centuries.

It is doubtful that the Mexicano language will survive much longer unless there is an awakening.

A close relative of northern Mexican Spanish, Mexicano (as it has traditionally been referred to) is a singular language due to its antiquity and status as an "orphan language" within the greater United States since 1846. Although adopted by the state of New Mexico as its second official language, its importance has waned dramatically.

This change is an indication of the degree to which the Mexicano people of Nuevo México have been assimilated, at least linguistically, into the mainstream during the last 50 years. But it is also a reflection of something dear that people have had to give up as a result of the shame attached to the language in dominant institutions. As of 1919, the state declared that Spanish did not have a place within its school system. With English spoken exclusively in the schools of that and later periods, children returned home speaking only English until, within a generation or two, it pretty nearly supplanted Mexicano. A community that once defined itself in terms of land stewardship, cooperation and spiritual and human values, has become one generally preoccupied with comfort, ease and the outward trappings of financial success. It has also become a community beset by the fears and anxieties that gnaw at the heels of most Americans.

Transplanted to the remote northern frontier in the second half of the 16th century by explorers, conquistadores and settlers, Mexicano was also planted

Mexicano is a viable bridge to Spanish-speaking communities in other parts of the world.

here by presumably bilingual Tlaxcalen and Nahuatl or Aztec-speaking Indian porters and servants who helped populate Santa Fe during its earliest period. This first wave, comprised of *Españoles, nativos and mestizos*, was followed by many others—including possibly a few *crillollos* (New World descendants of the Spanish) from the Valley of México and points north.

Mexicano, then, is a loose synthesis of Andáluz, Extremeño, Gallego and Castellano, with possibly a sprinkling of Vasco. These are the languages of Spain and those spoken by the men aboard Cortes' ships. In centuries to come, it was seasoned, enriched and otherwise recast, not only by Native American voices after 1519, but also by the stillness and austerity of the vast desert landscape of northern México and Nuevo México. And yet, Mexicano maintains both a lexicon and a grammatical core consistent with the Spanish of other parts of the world and serves as a viable bridge to Spanish-speaking communities elsewhere. When spoken without reliance on English, its quality can be good, although studded with archaic or regional uses.

The words *barro* (clay) and *perro* (dog) are considered to be the oldest Spanish words in existence. Undoubtedly of Celtiberian origin, they are still thriving in Nuevo Mexicano speech. As a Latin-derived language, Spanish was heir to the Latin of the common people, as were the other romance languages. It took from the fall of the Roman empire and Spain's invasion by Germanic tribes around 409 A.D. until the 10th century for Spanish to emerge as its own language.

There were many competing dialects across the Iberian Peninsula when Castellano/Castillian Spanish became the main language of the peninsula. The region of Castilla/Castille dominated the southward advance of Christian military might for more than 700 years in an effort to divest itself of Arabic and Moorish rule. As a result of Castilla's leadership, Catellano, or what we now call Spanish, became the dominant language of Spain.

When, in 1492, Columbus sought the support of the Castillian/Aragonés monarchs, Isabél and Fernando, it was in Castellano that he made his case. For the next century and a half, Spain was the dominant power in the world, principally because, together with Portugal, it had developed the science of navigation to a very high degree. Its men, fresh from military exploits, were restless and thirsted after adventure.

One of the biggest influences on Mexicano, as indeed on all of the variants of the Spanish language, has been the 1500 years of Christianity that transpired by the time the so-called "New World" was conquered and settled.

Consistent with this influence, one can still hear in northern New Mexico, *"Buenos días dele Diós"* (May God grant you a good day), *"Dios dirá,"* (God determines) and *"¡Jesús!"* (Jesus), when someone sneezes. Until recently, Spanish prayers seemed to comprise half of the language.

The nearly 800-year Islamic presence on the Iberian Peninsula also left its imprint on peninsular Spanish and subsequently on the language spoken by Nuevo Mexicanos and other Spanish speakers of the Americas. The most obvious example is in the expression *¡Ojalé or ¡Ojalá!,* still heard across northern Nuevo México. It expresses a desire for something to happen and originates from the Arabic, *in shallah*, meaning, if Allah wills. The word *almud,* an archaic unit of measurement for grains, still survives in Nuevo México, as do many other commonly used words of Arabic origin such as *almohada* (pillow), *azucar* (sugar), *acequia* (irrigation canal), *zanja* (trench), *albaricoque* (apricot), *aceite* (oil), *alfiler* (pin), *azul* (blue) and *adobe*.

There are two other cultures and languages that have left an indelible mark on Mexicano. They are Nahuatl (the language of the Aztecs) and American English. Among the most common contributions from Nahuatl are the terms *coyote, tecolote* (owl), *ocote* (pitch wood), *malacate* (spinning whorl), *mecate* (string), *guajalote* (tadpole), *jumate* (dipper), *elote* (ear of corn), *chicote* (stick), *atole* (blue corn meal gruel), as well as many other terms having to do with domestic life.

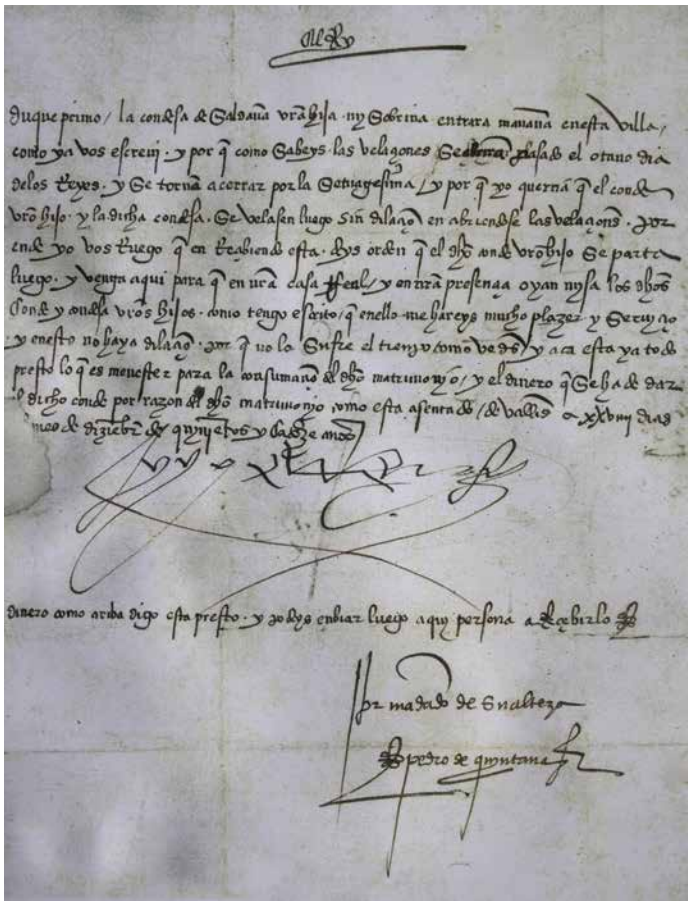
Language serves as the lens through which people view and understand the world.

More significant than these culinary and household words are terms having to do with the body, with childbearing and child-rearing. *Cuate* (twin), *chocoyote* (the last born in a family), *chiche* (a woman's breast), *chichihue* (wet nurse) and *nana* and *tata* (mother and father) all seem to point to the fact that many of our great, great-grandmothers were Aztec and not Spanish women. This is particularly significant when the equivalent terms in peninsular Spanish, in most cases, have all but been eclipsed by those in Nahuatl.

The impact of English in the last many years has made Mexicano a thoroughly hybrid language. When American English first appeared in force in Nuevo México during the mid-1800s with the military takeover of México's northern half, one of the first Spanglish words coined was "gringo," from a song sung by Yankees, "Green Grows the Grass of Home." The archetypal globe-trotting "gringo" was irreversible from then on.

From that humble beginning, a virtual avalanche of English was unleashed in northern Nuevo México and incorporated into Mexicano through the vehicles of schooling, commerce, media, industry and government. Unlike other influences, English, with its aggressive culture, widespread commerce and advanced technologies, introduced any number of nouns, verbs, adjectives and phrases. *Munquear,* from to monkey around; *cliquear,* from to click; *craquear,* from to crack; *spinear,* from to spin; *friquear,* from to freak-out; *quipear,* from to keep; *sandear,* from to sand; and *trostear,* from to trust, are examples of the hundreds of Mexicano verbs in current usage adapted from English.

Friends and family share a meal and converse in a mixture of Mexicano, English and the Spanish of México. Santa Cruz, NM
Photo collage © Alejandro López



One of the earliest Spanish documents in existence in the New Mexico State Archives. Dating from the early 1600s, it is a communication between two officials. (Courtesy Office of the State Historian)

Indeed, English has gone further than any other language affecting Mexicano and has dramatically altered not only pronunciation, making the language softer and more English-like, but also the grammatical structure. The changes brought to bear on Mexicano are so drastic, that based on the rate of its abandonment by children, youth and young adults, it is doubtful that the language will survive much longer unless a sudden awakening to its value were to occur within the Mexicano-speaking community.

Because of México's proximity and the steady stream of immigrants from there, the Mexicano dialect is being replaced as New Mexico's second most important language by crisp modern Mexican Spanish. Mexican Spanish has until now shored-up Mexicano and provided it with a multitude of words and expressions that were missing in the local dialect. *Desarmador* (screwdriver) and *motosierra* (chainsaw) are but two examples. Conversely, new arrivals from México have had to learn Mexicano and its Spanglish offspring to survive in the region. In time, transplants stop complaining about having to pay *recibos* (bills in México) and switch to complaining about the *biles* (bills) of northern Nuevo México.

It is highly unlikely though, that Mexican Spanish will be the salvation for the unique Mexicano dialect or will stave off its demise. Each of these related languages came into maturity within its own localized environment and equivalent, although people from both communities can understand each other. Furthermore, it appears as if the sun is setting in every sense—socially, culturally and economically—on the original Mexicano speakers of New Mexico, but is shining brightly on the new wave of immigrants from the south with their unbridled industriousness, optimism and enthusiasm.

It would be a pity to never again hear the beloved language spoken again, *pero como dijían* (decían) los viejitos, de antes, todo se acaba hasta lo más bueno (but as the old people used to say, everything comes to an end, even that which is good). ■

Years ago, Alejandro López, a native northern Nuevo Mexicano, recorded scores of elderly Mexicano speakers; some born in the late 1800s. He is a teacher of both Spanish and English.

España Pisa Dentro de su Propia Historia

Filmmaker Natalia Díaz brings a traditional musical group from Spain to Northern New Mexico

BY **ALEJANDRO LÓPEZ**

Ronda los Carrozas de de Cifuentes performing in the street of a Spanish village Photo courtesy Natalia Díaz

En el papel de voluntarios, nosotros los integrantes de la ronda, nos esforzamos para que, tanto los habitantes de nuestros pueblos como la gente de por fuera, se animen a conocer el legado de nuestros antepasados. Estamos convencidos de que lo antiguo puede coexistir robustamente con lo moderno. Ordinariamente trabajamos como funcionarios, electricistas, maestros o geólogos pero llegandose las fiestas, nos convertimos en los músicos que fueron nuestros antepasados. De esta manera podemos sentir la belleza, magia y encanto que los animaron y que les dieron sentido y color a sus vidas.

As volunteers, those of us associated with the Ronda (traditional musical group), strive to enable the inhabitants of our towns as well as people from the outside to become familiar with the musical legacy left us by our ancestors. We are convinced that the ancient can coexist dynamically with the modern. Ordinarily, we might work as civil servants, electricians, teachers, or geologists, but when the fiestas come around, we become the musicians that our ancestors were. As such, we feel the beauty, magic and joy that moved their spirits and gave meaning and color to their lives. – Natalia Díaz

Not just a few times was filmmaker Natalia Díaz of Cifuentes, Spain, told that she was crazy for wanting to bring La Ronda de los Carrozas de Cifuentes, a group of 16 musicians, from her obscure community in the hinterlands of Castilla-La Mancha, to perform in the boonies and cultural centers of Nuevo México. The likelihood of such an undertaking seemed nil because when she first began dreaming of an encounter between old-time northern New Mexico Chicano musicians and musicians from her community, she had no money or time to organize such an expedition. Díaz was in the final throes of completing an advanced degree in Environmental Sciences and had to study around the clock. Furthermore, logistical considerations were particularly difficult because, at first, the musicians did not want to come. And many of the emails she sent across the Atlantic seemed to end up marooned somewhere as if they were *buques* or precarious sailing vessels from the 16th century.

And yet, due to sheer determination, her group, many of whom have never before left their province of Guadalajara, will arrive with their *instrumentos musicales* at the Albuquerque Sunport on the 15th of December to begin a whirlwind tour that will include Santa Fe, Abiquiú, Tularosa, Acoma Pueblo and Albuquerque.

Natalia was able to get the musicians excited about coming with accounts of Nuevo México's endless vistas, its antiquity, complex cultural mosaic, and most importantly, the survival of extremely old Spanish-Mexican musical forms and customs that bit the dust in Spain long ago. She has visited northern New Mexico many times and filmed some of its *músicos.* They wowed her with their fusion of Iberian-Spanish elements with Native American influences, as is the case of *Las Inditas,* a musical form exclusive to Nuevo México. Plaintive in tone, *Las Inditas* bespeak the heartbreaking experience of Indian captivity and eventual assimilation into Indo-Hispano communities centuries ago.

A quickly vanishing Christmas musical tradition once common to most of Spain

La Ronda de los Carrozas is part of a quickly vanishing Christmas musical tradition once common to most of Spain. The group sings coplas, romances and sacred hymns, many of which date to the Middle Ages. They play traditional and, in some cases, archaic instruments such as the rabel, a stringed instrument of Arabic origin. They customarily perform in village churches, but the fact that they wander up and down streets, plazas and plazuelas and sing wherever the spirit moves them, has earned them the name of ronda, which means "to make the rounds."

Northern New Mexico possesses a similar tradition called *dandole los días a los Manueles* (a musical salute to whomever is named Manuel or Manuela) by going house to house on Jan. 6, All Kings Day. People in some of the pueblos have copied this tradition. Instead of arriving with just drummers and singers, they appear with a small dance troupe as well. Conscious of these shared influences, La Ronda has planned a stop at the Acoma Pueblo's Sky City Cultural Center.

Although the *rondas* in Spain have mainly died off, La Ronda de los Carrozas has held its own and has even managed to recruit some new blood. *"Nos esforzamos en revivir y trasmitir este legado a las nuevas generaciones. Soñamos con ser los eslabones en una cadena inquebrantable de una muy linda y valiosa tradición."* ("We work at reviving and transmitting this legacy to the new generation. We also aspire to be links in an unbroken chain of a priceless and beautiful tradition"), said Enrique, Natalia's brother, a member of La Ronda de los Carrozas.

On one occasion, on a visit to Madrid, Spain's capital, the group caused quite a stir on the city's streets because of the number of people that stopped to listen. The impromptu audience was seemingly powerless to continue on their way because La Ronda de los Carrozas had awakened deep childhood memories, when rondas were commonplace and a vital component of people's cultural and spiritual lives.

Natalia's dream of bringing the musicians to the Southwest, first visited by her countrymen as early as 1540 (and where Spanish government reigned until 1821), rapidly took shape once the project was adopted by Lore of the Land, a New Mexico based non-profit organization. ■

Alejandro López is a Spanish language instructor from northern New Mexico. He has led Spanish language study tours to La Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain.

RONDA LOS CARROZAS DE CIFUENTES ITINERARY TRADITIONAL SPANISH CHRISTMAS MUSIC

(Free performances)

SANTA FE
DEC. 17, 10:30 A.M.
Mary Esther Gonzales Senior Center, 1121 Alto St.

PUEBLO OF ABIQUIÚ **DEC. 17, 4:30 P.M.**
Joe Ferran Gym, County Rd. 187 (off Hwy. 84)

TULAROSA **DEC. 19, 6 P.M.** St. Francis de Paula Church

ACOMA PUEBLO **DEC. 20, 2 P.M. AND DEC. 21, 11 A.M.**
Sky City Cultural Center & Haak'u Museum

ALBUQUERQUE
DEC. 21, 5:30 P.M.
St. Michael and All Angels Church, 601 Montaño Rd. NW
Public reception with cider and biscochitos will follow.

More information: rondacifontina@gmail.com,
hpps://spanishchristmasronda.blogspot.com/

OIL AND GAS LEASES THREATEN WATER SECURITY

According to a recent analysis from the Center for American Progress (CAP), an independent nonpartisan policy institute, more than 60 percent of oil and gas leases offered on public lands in the Intermountain West since January 2017 pose a potential threat to the water security of farmers and local communities. The findings come from a review of data on about 5,550 leases. More than six in 10 have been in areas suffering from "high" or "extremely high" water stress, as defined by the World Resources Institute.

Senior policy analyst for Public Lands at CAP, Jenny Rowland-Shea, said, "The expansion of fossil fuel development on U.S. public lands could endanger the quantity and quality of water that is available to water users in the region." In New Mexico, 387 of 402 leases—more than 95 percent offered—are located in "extremely high" water-stress areas. In Nevada, 93 percent were in water-stressed areas, while it was about 63 percent in Wyoming.

Virtually all new oil and gas leases in New Mexico use hydraulic fracturing. Up to 2.6 million gallons of water are used to frack a single well, the report says. The report recommends that the government better track water used for energy development in the West and urges the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to develop specific agency-wide guidance to ensure adequate and consistent consideration of the potential impact on watersheds when it comes to oil and gas leasing on public lands.

To read the report, "Oil and Gas Development Is Creating a Problem for the Arid West," visit: www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/news/2019/11/12/477018/oil-gas-development-creating-problem-arid-west/.

Parciante clearing out an acequia in northern New Mexico
Photo courtesy Don Bustos

OP-ED: DON BUSTOS

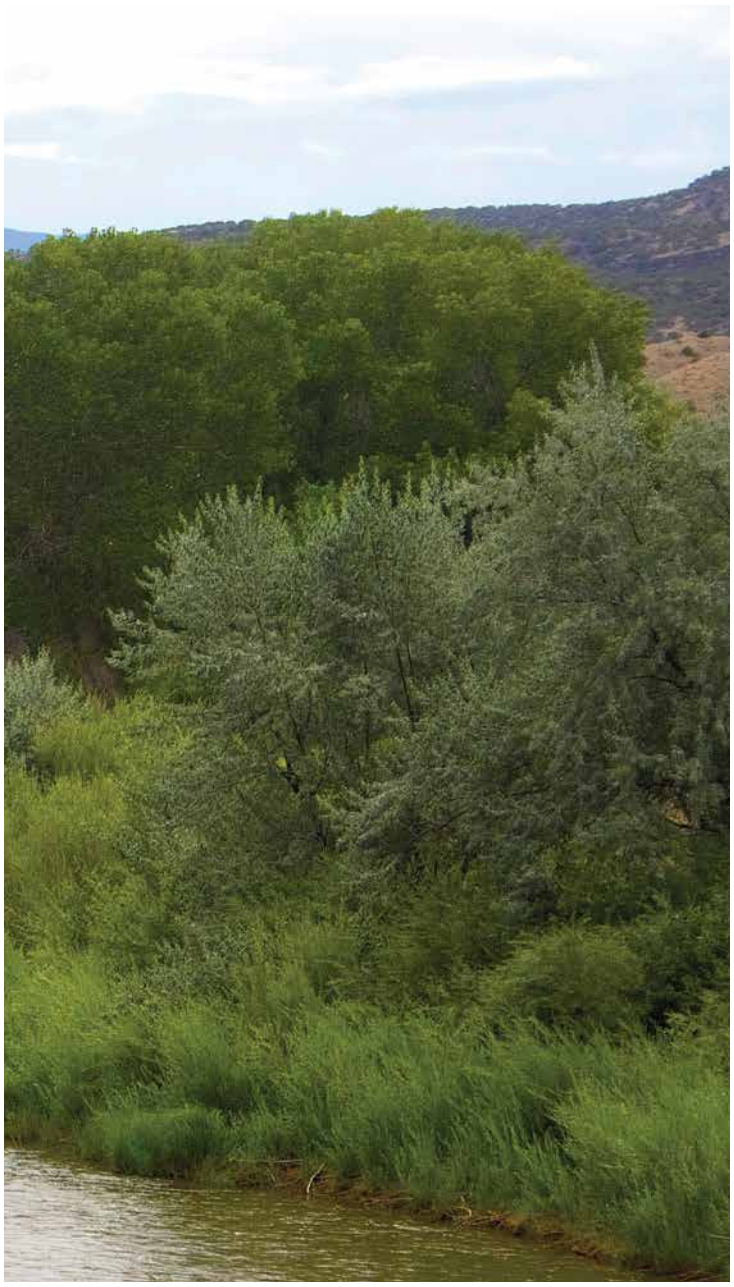
FROM THE GROUND UP

Cross-sector conversations are growing in the Española Valley about the need for greater community involvement in creating holistic approaches that address our land, water, cultural and economic challenges. There is a keen awareness here in the Valley that *Water is Life. —Agua es Vida.*

The water-sharing acequia system creates a powerful way for us to connect with each other. The Santa Cruz Irrigation District manages water distribution and dam management for much of the Valley through 28 acequias that serve over 15,000 community members. As we contend with climate change, development, mining interests and other factors, concerns about preserving and protecting water are at an all-time high.

Conversations about water provide an opening through which we plan to stimulate discussions, involvement and community-based solutions that address our diverse current and future needs. We have recently established the non-profit Greenroots Institute to act as a community partner, a convener and incubator of projects and programs. We have an ambitious vision. We believe in processes and programs that are participatory, democratic and inclusive. It will take years, if not decades, to bring this vision to fruition and will involve many phases.

Concerns about preserving and protecting water are at an all-time high.



The Río Grande flows through Alcalde, New Mexico
© Alejandro López

KEY ACTIVITIES FOR PHASE I

- Conduct listening sessions with Acequia leadership and parcientes (members of acequias) in the Santa Cruz Water District to identify concerns, needs, interests and assets.
- Undertake a landscape analysis to identify water and land-use issues in the Española Valley.
- Create an information hub using various media to share relevant information with community members in real time.
- Develop a plan and budget necessary to rebuild the on-site farmer training program at Northern New Mexico College.
- Host meetings at municipal, county, state and tribal levels that include representatives from Española Valley-area acequia communities to share cultural understanding related to water.

THE CHALLENGES

Increasing strains on available water in the Valley due to over-allocation, adjudication processes and drought, in addition to water-transfer threats, affect the health and sustainability of the Española Valley. The Valley is facing a number of interrelated challenges:

- Decreasing agricultural production and fewer acres under production due to aging of the operators coupled with significant barriers to entry for younger people
- Cultural, economic and jurisdictional siloing that inhibits timely and accurate information-sharing and limits community involvement in decision-making
- Limited accessibility to agricultural training opportunities
- Increasing frequency and duration of drought and high temperatures that affect what can be produced sustainably highlight the need for transition research
- An economic base that is overly dependent on limited low-wage jobs, or jobs outside the Valley, rather than on a sustainable, locally based economic structure that provides living wages

GREENROOTS INSTITUTE'S GOALS FOR LONG-TERM IMPACT

- Retain regional water supplies for local community use and prevent diversion to other regions.
- Maintain and expand the regional agricultural base through integrated programs designed to protect land, train new farmers, link new farmers with available land and create value-added food products and stable agricultural markets.

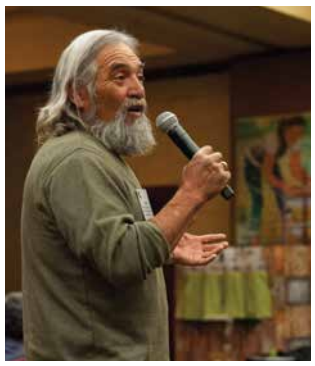


Photo © Seth Roffman

- Support the development and adoption of appropriate regional climate change transition strategies for local growers. ■

Don Bustos' Santa Cruz Farms is on land that has been in his family since the Spanish Land Grant of 1598. Bustos has won numerous awards and was one of the first farmers in New Mexico to receive organic certification. santacruzfarm1@gmail.com

"PRODUCED" WATER BEING EVALUATED FOR USES IN NEW MEXICO

The New Mexico Environment Department held public meetings around the state in October and November prior to writing rules about "produced" water treatment and re-use. After drilling down to a rock formation that holds oil or natural gas, an average of 12 millions gallons of water per well are mixed with hundreds of chemicals and injected under extreme pressure to fracture (frack) the rock. The slurry of chemicals and released minerals that come back up is called produced water. Peer-reviewed studies have shown this wastewater, even after treatment, to have carcinogenic contaminants. And wastewater generated in New Mexico tends to be very salty, which is expensive to remove.

New Mexico State University (NMSU), UNM, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and the U.S. Dept. of Energy (DOE) are partnering under a multi-million dollar grant to study how to re-use fracked water. "Beneficial uses" being considered include agricultural crops, livestock, road-spreading, aquifer injection and dumping into arroyos, streams and rivers. "This consortium has an opportunity to look at cleaning up and [finding] alternative uses for this water," New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture Jeff Witte said. "If the water can be purified to a standard suitable for agricultural production, it could help ease water shortages around the state." Witte is confident that the technology is advancing to the point that this is becoming more feasible. "I'm pretty optimistic that it's going to happen," he said.

Neighbors help with a tractor at Mil Abrazos Community Land Trust.
© Poki Piottin

OP-ED: POKI PIOTTIN

REPOPULATING FARMLAND

Designing new agrarian settlements

Fourteen years ago, while driving on a West Coast freeway, I had a vision so vivid that I overshot my destination by 17 miles. In my mind, I saw people arriving on farmland devastated by chemical-based agriculture, pouring out of colorful semi-trucks—vigorous young people, children and elders, too. They were highly organized and well-supplied.

Some trucks were set up for cooking, others for carpentry. Already, the group had erected mess halls, bunkhouses, shops and bathrooms to accommodate large numbers of people. And crews were working the land, using technologies to remediate polluted and sterile soil to grow organic food. They were an Earth Restoration Corps.

We can harness our collective resources, ingenuity and wisdom to create food security for our region.

At the time, I was deeply involved in running a community dance project in several cities, so I put the vision on the back burner of my creative kitchen. A few years later, though, I began to dig into the challenges of creating a sustainable culture, including the critical need for healthy soil. Soon, I was growing my first home garden, then came a community garden in San Pancho, México, and finally, Gaia Gardens, a large urban farm in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

From those experiences a larger vision emerged. A year and a half ago, the Mil Abrazos Community Land Trust, a non-profit created during the Gaia Gardens experience, purchased 32 acres of irrigated land 30 miles south of Las Vegas, N.M., along the Pecos River. Mil Abrazos' mission is to create a new agrarian settlement that will be a farm with affordable housing, a school for learning life skills, and a demonstration center for deploying appropriate technologies in the modern world. Beyond this, it will be a place of practice for cooperative living for the young, the old and everyone in between.

I am already hard at work constructing the foundation of this settlement. I have been building a basecamp, and have begun reaching out to both the local community and the larger northern New Mexico area to start a conversation about how to create an agrarian settlement that can inspire and support rejuvenation of our farmland.

When driving through our region, be it Mora, Abiquiú, Chama, Villanueva, Ribera, Peñasco, Anton Chico and many other irrigated areas, you can't help but notice how little "agriculture" is left. Most of what people call agriculture in the region consists of growing hay and grazing a few cattle on irrigated pasture or public land, both of which can harm the land unless done with a holistic approach.

It was not always this way. Until World War II, these areas were the breadbaskets of the region, growing an abundance of diverse foods. But the cheap price of oil after the war made it possible to import food from faraway places, food usually grown on large commercial farms powered by underpaid and abused immigrant labor from south of the border. Young people did not stay on the family farms and were drawn to new jobs offered at Los Alamos, Sandia Labs, Kirtland Air Force Base and other urban areas. With good salaries, they could afford to buy cheap food grown elsewhere.

Over 90 percent of the food we consume in New Mexico is imported, while thousands of acres of fertile, irrigated land are left fallow.

The people who stayed on the land resorted to grazing cattle for a living, which doesn't require nearly as much labor as growing vegetables, fruits and grains. With able bodies deserting the family farms, rural food stores disappeared and fresh food was no longer available as it had always been. People's health started to decline. With poor health, poverty crept in and more farmlands were abandoned.

Today, in New Mexico, over 90 percent of the food we consume is imported, while thousands of acres of fertile, irrigated land are either left fallow, or used for growing alfalfa and grazing cattle.

This dismal situation is actually a golden opportunity for a new generation of rural settlers. The older generation needs help maintaining ditches to keep the irrigated lands alive and to protect their water rights from the State, which is always looking to supply urban and suburban expansion. They also need new ideas for using the land. Many modern city dwellers, on the other hand, hunger for a simpler lifestyle, and for connecting once again with the land.

But bringing these two populations together is not easy. As much as people say they would prefer to live in a rural community, raise their children in a farm setting and spend their elder years in Nature, there are many obstacles that keep them from their dreams: The price of land is high, and though we might imagine the bucolic village life, the truth is that it requires patience, skills and courage. And families that have lived for generations on the land are not always welcoming to outsiders who come in with new ideas or who lack an understanding of the cultural context.

Harvesting beets at the Mil Abrazos farm
© Poki Piottin

NMSU, UNM STUDY MASTER GARDENERS AND CANCER SURVIVORS

Horticulture interventions have therapeutic benefits

New Mexico State University (NMSU) is teaming up with the UNM's Comprehensive Cancer Center for a "Southwest Harvest for Health" research study starting in early 2020. The study will pair cancer survivors who have completed their primary cancer treatment with local Master Gardeners. The team will plan, plant, maintain and harvest three seasonal gardens at the survivor's home.

The study will measure the effects of gardening on overall health and functioning, quality of life and more. Data collected will be able to be used for the study of recovery from diseases such as cancer.

Supplies and tools needed will be provided. The Master Gardener mentor will visit his or her survivor partner once a month for nine months to check on the garden's progress, troubleshoot issues, offer encouragement and suggestions. The pilot study will be limited to a 60-mile radius of Albuquerque with 20 or 25 Master Gardeners participating in the Bernalillo–Sandoval county area.

Cindy Blair, cancer epidemiologist at the UNM School of Medicine, reached out to the Master Gardener program at NMSU. Blair spent two years working on initial research at the University of Alabama in collaboration with the Alabama Cooperative Extension Office. The initial study found that survivors who increased vegetable consumption and physical activity experienced improved quality of life. Of breast cancer participants, 100 percent stated they would "do it again," and one year later 86 percent were still gardening. "Vegetable gardening is an integrated approach to promote a healthful diet, physical activity and psychosocial well-being," Blair said.

"Master Gardeners are key to the success of the study and we invite them to join us," Blair said. Sara Moran-Duran, horticultural extension agent at NMSU, said the program will be an excellent experience for Master Gardeners. "The researchers are incorporating gardening ideas to benefit the health of communities in New Mexico. This is exciting, and I'm proud to be a part of such a great study."

NATIVE AMERICAN AGRICULTURE FUND

The Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) is delivering on its mandate to distribute a trust fund through a grant process to support Native American farmers and ranchers. The fund provides resources for business assistance, agricultural education, technical support and advocacy services.

The fund is the result of an 18-year-old lawsuit (Keepseagle vs. Vilsack) in which it was established that the U.S. Department of Agriculture discriminated against Native agriculture interests in loan programs, credit and servicing since at least 1981. NAAF's fund is the final piece of the settlement. In 2018, the court directed that the remaining $266 million be distributed through a newly created fund. NAAD says it intends to do that through a transparent, fair process. Grants will be given to 501(c)3 non-profits, educational organizations, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), Native CDFIs and tribal governments. The first round of applications was accepted in September 2019. The organization has 20 years to disburse its funds.

A growing movement across Indian Country is empowering food sovereignty. Tribes and communities have a wide variety of foods, food systems and agricultural environments. Janie Simms Hipp (Chickasaw), president and CEO of NAAF, said, "We fed ourselves for millennia before contact, and we need to unlock the potential of our communities through agriculture, food and fiber production, feeding ourselves and others, building strong community economies through agriculture, and protecting our lands, natural resources and traditional foods. NAAF has been reaching out to American Indian agriculturists, so the organization can identity where the fund can do the most good."

These ancient breadbaskets in our backyard are where civilization will survive.

So where do we start? How do we move from the when-I-win-the-lottery or when-I-retire fantasy, and begin a journey toward a different life for ourselves and future generations?

We can look at history. There has been a multitude of communal experiments in which people left the city in search of a more satisfying life. In the 1960s and 1970s there were intentional communities started by hippies, the back-to-the-landers movement, and the kibbutz experiments in Israel. But you can go back much further, to the 1880s in Germany, when a young and educated generation left cities polluted by the coal-powered Industrial Revolution and resettled in the country, launching what we know today as the alternative health movement.

And there is Cuba. When the Soviet Union collapsed, Cuba lost all its subsidies—imported oil, fertilizers, tractor parts and imported food, overnight. They recalled the old-timers who knew how to farm with draft horses. They went organic. They cultivated every empty city lot. The average Cuban lost 30 pounds. Cuba is now one of the most self-sustaining countries in the world, despite a 60-year U.S. embargo.

How do we draw from the successes and failures of all these experiments to design a new form of existence where simplicity, sharing, caring and cherishing Nature are the tenets of our lives? That's what I have been contemplating over the past 18 months as I have planted windbreaks, built basic housing and workshop space, and become more attuned to the land and community along the Pecos River that has lived in this region for generations.

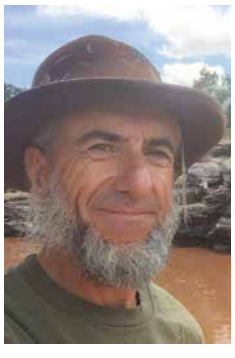
I see an obvious link between the need to reclaim and restore farmland for food security, and the creation of new agrarian settlements. They go hand-in-hand. Farming must return to a community model. Agricultural land must be reclaimed into the commons.

I also see that it must be done in collaboration with the elders who are still living in these remote agricultural areas; they hold a wealth of knowledge, as I have learned as a member of my local *acequia*. We need to capture the story of their generation, learn about the food they grew, and the grain surplus that was milled all over the region when most of the food grown was for human consumption.

Much like those well-organized farmer-settlers I saw in a vision 14 years ago, I am eager to collaborate with people who are ready to tackle the challenge of revitalizing our rural areas while rising to the bigger ecological, social and economic challenges of our times. Together, I believe we can prepare for what looks like a difficult period of massive climate change; we can harness our collective resources, ingenuity and wisdom to create food security for our region; we can start innovative cottage industries that co-exist with small agriculture and provide a resilient economic base to the rural communities of the future; we can help young people repopulate farmland, raise their family on the land and live a good life; and we can all learn how to work together with fair-minded practices of governance and love.

I know we can do it. Now is the time to engage a deeper part of ourselves, to radically broaden our imagination, rediscover our humanness and create new models of sustainable existence.

We must bring people back to the land to care for the land that feeds us. These ancient breadbaskets in our backyard are where civilization will survive.



As much as the ecological predicaments we have created can seem insurmountable, we can also look at the task ahead as a sacred mission to rebuild our beautiful world. ■

Poki Piottin is executive director of the Mil Abrazos Community Land Trust, and commissioner of the Vado de Juan Pais Ditch Association in Dilia, NM. He created the now-closed Gaia Gardens, a popular one-acre urban farm in Santa Fe. He welcomes people's expertise, creativity and wisdom on the myriad of topics pertinent to designing and governing a modern day agrarian settlement. Mil Abrazos is a community-funded project. For more information, visit www.milabrazos.org or call 505-557-7962.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF NORTHERN NEW MEXICO'S WATER

From Sacred and Common Use to Commodification

BY **HILARIO E. ROMERO**

INTRODUCTION

For the past five years I have published articles on the history and geography of the Santa Fe River, emphasizing the human experience and livelihoods of those who have lived along its banks, from the upper watershed to where it enters the Río Grande.

I have chronicled water use among all cultural groups. It was a complicated investigation covering almost two millennia, from early indigenous (Native American) history, 400 years of Spanish tradition, and 170 years since the arrival of North American Anglos and other groups. My goal was to provide an introductory look at the complexities of survival, conflict, world views and the many significant cultural differences.

This series about water in northern New Mexico began with an article about the village of Agua Fria that appeared in the May 2015 issue of *Green Fire Times*. In an article published in the Old Santa Fe Association's *El Boletin Preservation News* in the fall of 2018, I summarized the history of the upriver community and acequias that became the City of Santa Fe's water system. This present article investigates major changes in land tenure and water rights from the turn of the 20th century that have negatively impacted Native American and traditional Spanish New Mexicans in northern New Mexico to the present time.

BACKGROUND

The earliest indigenous residents of northern New Mexico settled primarily along river corridors because of flowing water—cold springs and shallow aquifers that brought fresh, clean water to the surface and supported riparian life. Water was considered sacred. Each community and individual understood that no one can own it and that it must be shared equally. For that reason, Pueblo culture survived despite severe periodic droughts. When the droughts subsided, people planted drought-resistant seeds—corn, squash and beans.

Extensive experience with the environment, along with an ability and willingness to relocate, made them adaptable to natural disasters. The needs of the Pueblo people never outgrew the water capacity in the areas of settlement as long as droughts were periodic rather than long-lasting. Their adaptation was exemplary. They stored enough food to last several years, and if necessary, were able to move family groups to other pueblos—including some temporarily abandoned—that had sufficient water and land.

Squash and beans grown at Taos Pueblo. With corn, they comprise the "Three Sisters." © Seth Roffman

Pueblo villages became multi-storied and closed-off to protect them from semi-nomadic tribes that arrived in the early 1500s. Although little remains of the diversions they created and the canals they dug, both methods of irrigation were well documented by Spanish explorers as early as 1590. The Pueblos' ability to steward natural resources continues today. When Spanish explorers arrived, the Pueblo people, realizing that the intrusion would change their way of life, began to organize and settle differences between villages.

Arriving in the late summer of 1598, the first authorized Spanish settlers under Gov. Juan de Oñate were impressed with the physical structure of Pueblo villages as well as the apparent extent and success of their agricultural enterprises. The Spanish authorities proceeded to take advantage of the Puebloans by demanding food supplies as well as fertile land to cultivate for their ongoing survival.

Overzealous Franciscan missionaries tried in vain to convert the Pueblo people to Christianity during the first 82 years of Spanish dominance. In the late 1670s a drought caused further tension. After the Pueblo Revolt and the return of Spanish settler families from exile, some concessions were made. Court cases involving water rights and land tenure resulted in gradual establishment of priority rights for Pueblo villages. Eventually the Spanish emulated Pueblo survival practices while contributing technical knowledge that included Arabic farming traditions such as accessing and distributing water. A *dicho* (folk saying), *"El Agua es la vida"* (Water is Life), echoed throughout the settlements. The shared use of water flowing through acequias was managed by a father-caretaker called a *mayordomo.*

The Spanish contributed technical knowledge, including Arabic farming traditions for distributing water.

Miera map detail of northern New Mexico, 1778

Life was difficult, and survival in *La Frontera del Norte de la Nueva España* required courage, determination and diplomacy while living on the edge of starvation, and challenged by disease, severe winters and attacks from semi-nomadic tribes. Survival was almost totally independent of other Spanish colonies to the south since missionary supply and trade caravans only arrived every one, two or three years.

In 1846, the United States of North America entered New Mexico with a large army and occupied it until the signing of a treaty with the government of México in 1848, promising rights and privileges as outlined in the U.S Constitution. Arriving as early as 1850, speculators and carpetbaggers went to work seeking opportunities to acquire and monopolize land, water and other key resources throughout the Territorial period (1850-1912). When Congress passed the Homestead Act of 1860, settlers poured into New Mexico Territory—at that time the largest territory in the U.S.—and planted their stakes on many Native American and Spanish settler land grants. They also looked west toward California, north to what would become Colorado, and west to the future states of Utah and Nevada. The new system of government facilitated rampant land speculation.

Forty-one years later, a serious change in land adjudication was introduced with the creation of the Court of Private Land Claims, convened from 1891-1904 in order to determine who had legal right to land. Of the estimated 36 million acres of land grants that went before the court for adjudication, 33 million were not approved, reverting to public domain or common lands set aside for "protection" by the newly created U.S. Forest Service in 1904.

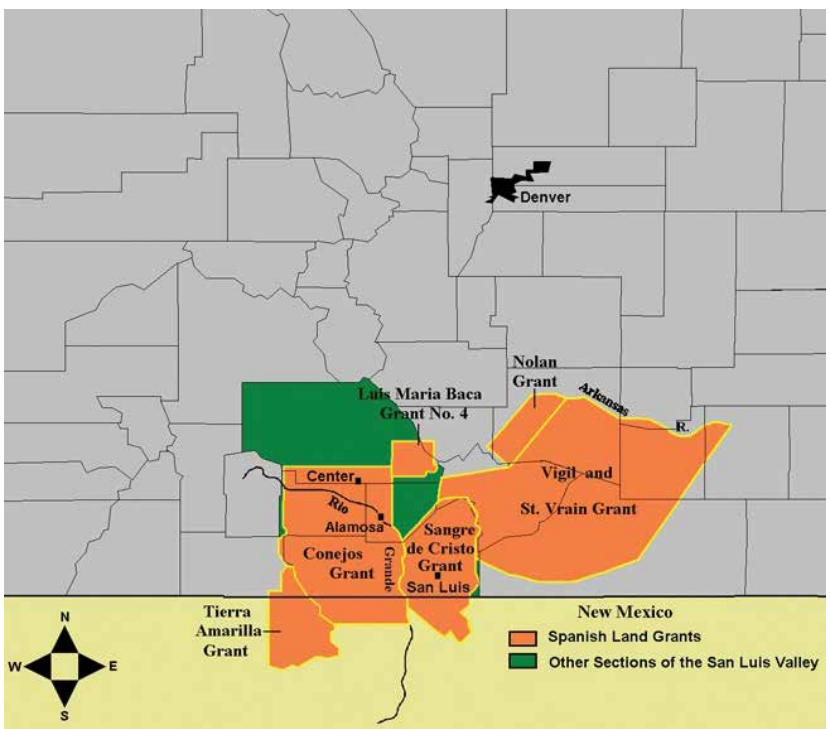
San Luís Valley potato farm. Courtesy Pikes Peak Library

The U.S. government created the Bureau of Reclamation in 1903 to take control of water in Western states. At the time, the future states of New Mexico and Arizona comprised the New Mexico Territory. Just four years later, in 1907, the territorial legislature and governor approved the New Mexico Territorial Water Code, which created the office of the Territorial Engineer, who would determine priority rights and documentation required for the beneficial use of water. This code also separated acequias from the land where they flowed by making water a commodity that was bought and sold. This code would have long-lasting negative effects on native New Mexico tribes as well as Mexican grantees of Spanish land and, eventually, on all water users to the present time.

Río Grande Reclamation Project

New Mexico's northernmost territory was severed by the creation of the territory of Colorado in 1861. For the next 30 years, farmers, mostly from the eastern U.S., rushed into the San Luís Valley to stake claims within Spanish and Mexican land grants. They developed large farms to grow root crops and alfalfa in the high, dry valley, using the upper Río Grande to irrigate. They gradually overused the water. By 1890, almost 300,000 acres were being irrigated as a decade of drought created chaos for downriver users in New Mexico, México, and Texas.

Various groups from New Mexico and Texas went to Washington to seek a solution. It took almost a decade before the U.S. Congress



Spanish and Mexican land grants in the San Luís Valley

Court cases involving water rights and land tenure resulted in establishment of priority rights for Pueblo villages.

attempted to solve water use problems in the Southwest. In 1903, the Bureau of Reclamation was established. In 1905, Congress approved the Río Grande Reclamation Project, which created plans to build dams across the Southwest to resolve water conflicts, but their plans did not provide adequate consideration for all of the users along the river in northern New Mexico. The Army Corps of Engineers studied, designed and built the dams.

On the Pecos River in southeastern New Mexico, cattle barons' huge herds overgrazed. With the arrival of the railroad, the need for cattle drives slowly diminished. New arrivals

Avalon Dam, on the Pecos River north of Carlsbad, NM, breached in 1905. Courtesy National Park Service

established farms in this sparsely populated area, with help from several wealthy developers who built the Avalon Dam near Carlsbad in 1889. Four years later, a flood destroyed the dam. It was rebuilt in 1893 and, with private funding, reinforced in 1902-03. But it was breached again by a flash flood in October, 1904. After the Bureau of Reclamation purchased and repaired it in 1906, it was breached yet again as a result of a severe leak. In 1907, the Bureau laid a concrete and steel base, which held for several decades.

Colorado Compact of 1922

In 1917, a group of promoters, developers, businessmen and professionals, calling themselves the League of the Southwest, met at the Hotel de Coronado in San Diego, California. Their main purpose was to see how they could develop the Southwest, utilizing Colorado River water for agriculture. This was two years before U.S. Sen. Ketner of California introduced a bill to facilitate an agreement among southwestern states. Eight states signed the Colorado Compact in 1922 in Santa Fe, at Bishop's Lodge. Later that year it was approved by Congress and the president. It directed that the Colorado would be managed and operated under federal laws, court decisions and decrees, compacts and contracts. Ironically, that same year, the Flood Control Act of 1917 was approved, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was given the authority to administer a program of controlled irrigation because of floods and other natural disasters.

Pecos River Compact of 1948

The Pecos River Compact of 1948 was the first attempt for Texas to secure a water flow below the New Mexico state line. This compact initially favored Texas users downriver, where sparse populations of farmers tried to establish large farms on desert. Studies conducted to determine how much water would be available created models that gave Texas as much water as it received in 1947. However, the drought that lasted from 1952 to 1957

Elephant Butte Dam, 1916. Courtesy National Park Service

rendered the models useless, leaving the parties clueless as to how to solve their competing demands.

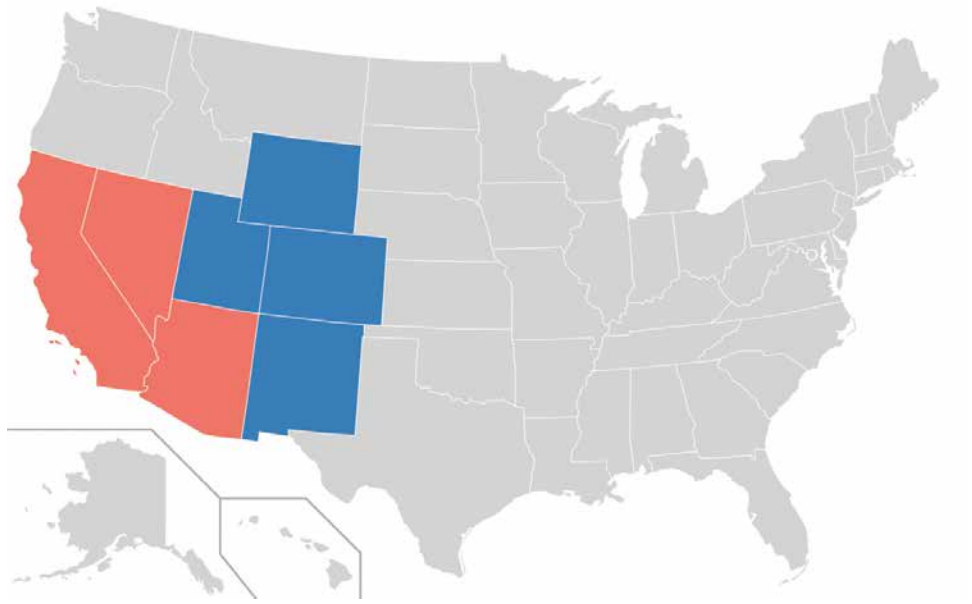
In 1905, Elephant Butte Dam was authorized by Congress to bring electric power and irrigation to the dry, sparsely populated area of the lower Río Grande. The Army Corps began construction in 1911 and completed it in 1916. The compact allowed 1.4 million acre-feet to be stored in order to provide irrigation for southwestern New Mexico farms and also allow for Texas and México to receive their share. All surface water moving south from the Río Chama and the Río Grande, including all the streams flowing into the Río Grande, would contribute to water measured at the Otowi Bridge gauge on the road to Los Alamos. The measurement would require that water users above Otowi allow 57 percent of surface water to pass to Elephant Butte until it reached a capacity of 1.4 million acre-feet.

Water Allocations of the San Juan-Chama Project		
User	**Share (Acre feet)**	**Percent**
Albuquerque, New Mexico	48,200	55.91%
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District	20,900	24.24%
Jicarilla Apache	6,500	7.54%
Santa Fe County, New Mexico	5,605	6.50%
Los Alamos County, New Mexico	1,200	1.39%
Pojoaque Valley Irrigation District	1,030	1.19%
Española, New Mexico	1,000	1.16%
Belen, New Mexico	500	0.06%
Los Lunas, New Mexico	400	0.05%
Taos, New Mexico	400	0.05%
Bernillo, New Mexico	400	0.05%
Red River, New Mexico	60	0.01%
Twining Water and Sanitation District	15	0.01%

An introductory look at the complexities of survival, conflict, world views and significant cultural differences

Percha Diversion Dam, 25 miles south of Elephant Butte Dam, was built as an afterbay of Elephant Butte, to produce hydroelectric power for the area and act as an irrigation source during dry summers. This distribution of water over 250 miles downstream from the Otowi gauging station has had negative impacts on the Río Grande and its continuous flow since it was built, especially during dry or drought years. Upriver cities and towns such as Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Santa Cruz de la Cañada and Taos have fought efforts between local governments and developers attempting to control how water would be distributed, working against traditional farmers by usurping their ancient water rights.

In 1962, the San Juan-Chama Project was created to supplement the Río Grande Compact of 1938 by providing water from Navajo Dam to communities along the Río Grande by diverting water from the San Juan Mountains through tunnels to Willow Creek and on to Heron Lake near the Río Chama. Since that time, the need for water has increased among many communities. When the Buckman Well Field was brought online for Santa Fe in 1972, it became the city's major water source as it reached its capacity. The Middle Río



Colorado River Compact states. Google Maps.

Settlers poured into New Mexico Territory and planted stakes on many Native American and Spanish land grants.

Grande Conservancy District and the City of Albuquerque are also dependent on this water because they too have reached their surface water capacity.

CONCLUSION

With the climate crisis presently affecting New Mexico perhaps more than any other state in the union, we need to understand history to see what has put us in this situation. The public needs to know how serious this is. The Secure Water Act of 2010 and the WaterSMART program grants, administered by the Bureau of Reclamation, are efforts to assist local communities in stretching water supplies.

This is a good start, but there are many other water problems we need to solve. ■

New Mexico native and former state historian Hilario E. Romero is a musician, archivist, researcher and author. He worked in higher education for four decades as a federal grant writer/administrator as well as professor of history, education and Spanish at Northern New Mexico College. He has also been an adjunct professor at New Mexico Highlands University and the University of New Mexico.

Upper Pecos River near Dalton Picnic Area
© Michael Jensen, NM Environmental Law Center

COMMUNITIES FIGHT NEW PECOS MINE PROPOSAL

BY MICHAEL JENSEN

The response to news of a proposed new mine in the Upper Pecos watershed shows what can happen when a community mobilizes early and connects with the broad environmental community.

On April 4, New World Cobalt announced it had acquired the Tererro Copper-Gold-Zinc-Lead VMS project. VMS (Volcanogenic Massive Sulphide) refers to the volcanic origins of the mineralization and often indicates a high-grade ore site. These formations generally contain significant amounts of copper, lead and zinc and often have economic amounts of gold and silver as byproducts of mining the other deposits.

Community members are mobilizing to protect the area.

Alerted by increased activity in the area by Comexico, a subsidiary created by New World Cobalt to explore the site, the community, with the Upper Pecos Watershed Association (UPWA) in the lead, organized to resist proposed new mining. Many people still remember the mill tailings contamination that killed tens of thousands of fish in the Pecos and forced closure of a park along the river.

On June 17, UPWA requested a public hearing from the U.S. Forest Service and on June 25 held the first public workshop. The following day, a group of environmental organizations met in Santa Fe to develop a collaborative response to the proposed mining activity.

One aspect of he mine makes active and broad organizing necessary: The mine site is almost entirely in Santa Fe County, but the impacts to water resources and community members are in San Miguel County, with tributaries around and through the site running east to the Pecos.

San Miguel County passed a resolution on July 19 "in support of strong measures to protect clean water and the quality of life." The resolution called for a public hearing on the exploration permit already filed by Comexico, along with any further permits; support for Outstanding National Resource Water protections for the Upper Pecos; collaboration with Santa Fe County for protection of watersheds and tributaries; and revisions to any county ordinances dealing with water resources and mining regulation as needed.

One and a half months later, on Sept. 1, Santa Fe County adopted a revised mining ordinance. Although drafting the ordinance began before knowledge of the proposed new mining activity, the proposed new Tererro mine was on everyone's mind as the public and some commissioners spoke in favor of the new rules, which passed unanimously.

The community organized a second workshop on Aug. 8 in Pecos, with a panel of speakers that included representatives from the New Mexico Acequia Association, Amigos Bravos and the New Mexico Environmental Law Center (NMELC). A second workshop, held in Santa Fe on Oct. 26 followed the same format.

In between those two workshops, and following an active outreach campaign by both community members and environmental groups, the governor stated her opposition to the proposed new mine.

NEXT STEPS

At this point, any actual mining of marketable minerals is a long way off. However, as Charles de Saillan, staff attorney at the NMELC, said at the Pecos workshop in August, "There is nothing a mining company fears more than an organized community."

There are many opportunities for people to stay engaged in the new Tererro mine issue. The first formal process will likely involve Comexico's exploration permit application, which will include a hearing in front of the Mining and Minerals division of the Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department. Given the governor's stated opposition and the amount of attention the mine has attracted in northern New Mexico, it is possible that there could be some legislation in the short session from mid-January to mid-February.

Above: Heavy equipment in an open pit mine
Photo from a New World Cobalt press release about the Tererro VMS Project
Below: June 25, 2019 meeting of the Upper Pecos Watershed Association © Michael Jensen, NM Environmental Law Center

Community members can work to protect the area, including the Pecos River, by contacting county commissioners in Santa Fe and San Miguel and supporting their mining ordinances and other efforts to protect the Pecos. They can send comments to the Forest Service and the Mining and Minerals Division. ■

Michael Jensen is Communications and Public Education director for the New Mexico Environmental Law Center. https://nmelc.org

HOW LA RAZA BECAME INVISIBLE

History happens to people. Our little lives are like the cells of a hologram; they are miniature replicas of a larger historical narrative. – Grandma Coyota

My mother, Grace Graham King, was one of the privileged white women who came to Taos shortly after it was conquered by the United States. She came to study art, wandered into my father's drugstore on the plaza and drank the chocolate soda he made her. Alfredo Antonio Rodríguez's Aztec ancestors knew the aphrodisiac qualities of chocolate. So, despite the mutual horror of their families, they married. That was about 1935.

In 1962 she published a little book of cartoons entitled *Viva Los Turistas!* from which I include here two drawings. Tourism was a byproduct of the art colony whose stunning images revealed to the world our only resources—achingly beautiful land and strikingly different cultures. Almost all of Mother's drawings are spoofs on the way the local community perceived the tourists—clueless.

Could it be arranged for us to watch some of the painters paint, and the writers write?

Artists and writers had just put Taos on the map. Among Mother's peers were such names as Willa Cather, Georgia O'Keeffe, Mary Austin, Millicent Rogers, and of course, Mabel Dodge Luhan. They helped shape the role our local art community play today in our famously diverse but racially segregated "tricultural paradise."

Eager to escape the restrictions of Victorian society, passionate to preserve "vanishing" art forms, these women and the painters, and the society they founded were not conscious of participating in the colonization of a people whose worldview was completely unknown to them. In fact, it was precisely that difference that inspired their passion to consume the exotic. Cultural appropriation was not recognized as racist or damaging.

The paintings of Phillips, Sharp, Couse, Blumenschein, Berninghaus and Dunton were pivotal in developing the tourist industry. They collectively marketed their images of Indians to Fred Harvey, who used them to launch the tourist business in the Southwest. There is some clutching of pearls over questioning the artistic integrity of intentionally painting for advertising purposes (see the PBS production, Painting Taos (KNME 2009). "Is it real art?" I love those paintings. I saw them as a child and still love them. Okay, so they painted for money. I know that's tacky, but the real question here is moral integrity. Tourism is the last stage of colonialism, and colonialism is violence. This might not have been as clear in 1930 as it is now, but today people who do not understand the violence implicit in colonialism are guilty of willful ignorance.

The loss of land caused shattering cultural trauma and impoverishment.

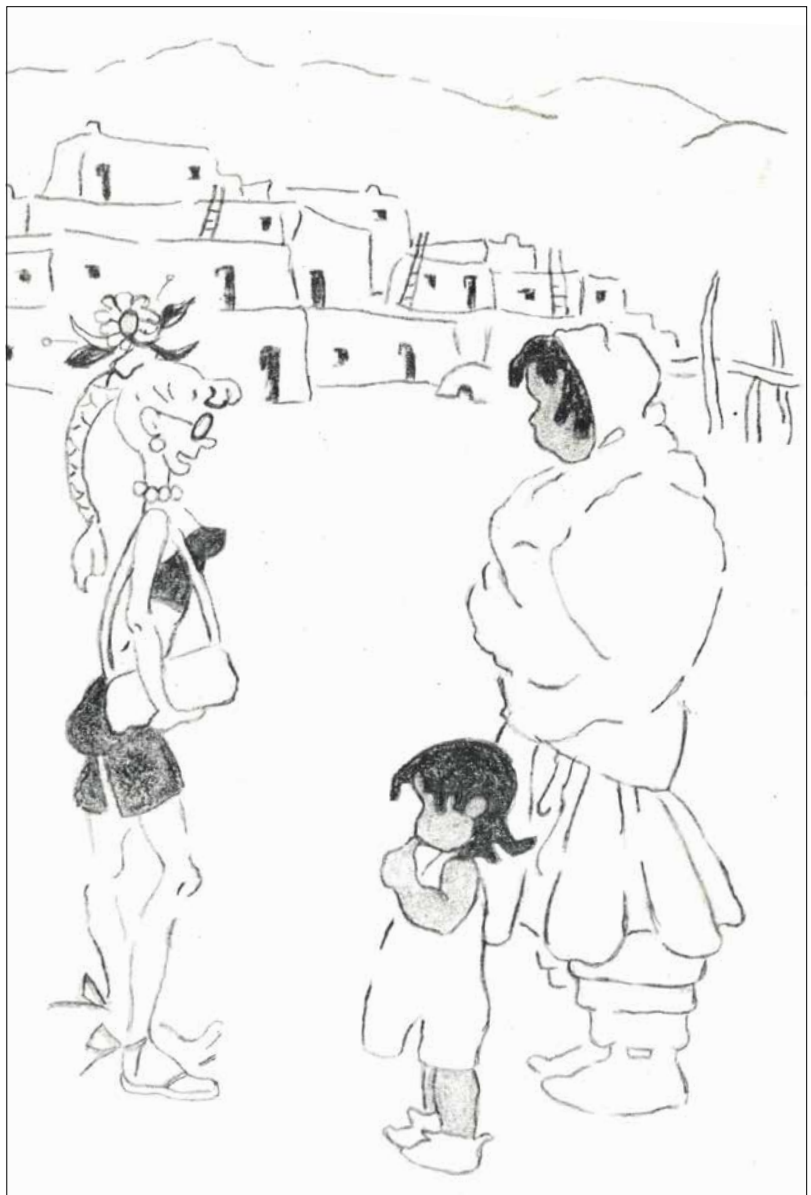
Commercializing "otherness" is inherently racist, and the tourist industry has been flagrantly guilty of cultural appropriation and stereotyping. There is clear privilege in the continuing indifference to the collective impact these Anglo artists and the community they founded had on the cultures that "inspired" them.

To paraphrase Ursula K. Le Guin: "If you declare any kind of person to be fundamentally different from you, as men have to women, class has done to class or race has done to race—you may hate them, or deify them but in either case, you have made them into things, to which the only possible relationship is a power relationship. And thus, you have fatally impoverished your own reality."

While Mabel and friends were using their white privilege to support the return of Blue Lake (which was a good thing) and painting Indians, the same people were literally stealing Hispanic *santos,* our religious art, and were vocally unsympathetic about the loss of the land grants. "Well! They stole it from the Indians."

The loss of land caused shattering cultural trauma and impoverishment. It meant the loss of grazing, agricultural and food-gathering rights; it drove men and adult children elsewhere to find work. From a self-sustaining agricultural people with an intact, functioning culture, we became landless, cheap, seasonal labor. These effects continue into the present. New Mexico's unemployment rate, poverty, addiction rate, lack of housing, jobs, education, high property crime and racial apartheid can all be traced to the loss of the land and the system that appropriated it.

Mabel manifested an iconic narrative of her time when she married Tony Luhan from Taos Pueblo. She lived in real life Rousseau's myth of the Noble Savage, promulgated by Aldous Huxley, who was a member of her clique. Hers was the marriage in the society of her time, featured in newspapers from Taos's *El Crepusculo* to *The New York Times.*



Did you folks build all of this under the F. H. A.?

Cartoons From Viva Los Turistas! *By Grace King Rodriguez (1962)*

The myths and biases of every time in history shape the attitudes of whole communities and impact personal lives.

Along with the subtly racist mythologizing of the noble savage comes the image of the ignoble savage—to borrow a term from historian Tomás Atencio. Hispanics became the ignoble savages. The myths and biases of every time in history shape the attitudes of whole communities and impact personal lives.

My mother's marriage to a self-identified Mexican is an example. Her family had nowhere near the Dodge fortune, but Mother was a member of the small Anglo clique, the daughter of upper-class southerners. My father was poor, but from a family of educators, and a business owner. But the day after their modest wedding, no Anglo or Spanish-speaking person congratulated them, not on the plaza or in the drugstore. Their marriage was unmentionable. This says a lot about the complexity of racism in New Mexico and the depth of feelings about it.

The Hispanic people of the north have been erased to the extent that, on Wikipedia it says: "The Taos art colony was founded in Taos, New Mexico by artists attracted by the rich culture of the Taos Pueblo and beautiful landscape. Hispanic craftsmanship of furniture, tin-work and more played a role in creating a multicultural tradition of artwork in the area."

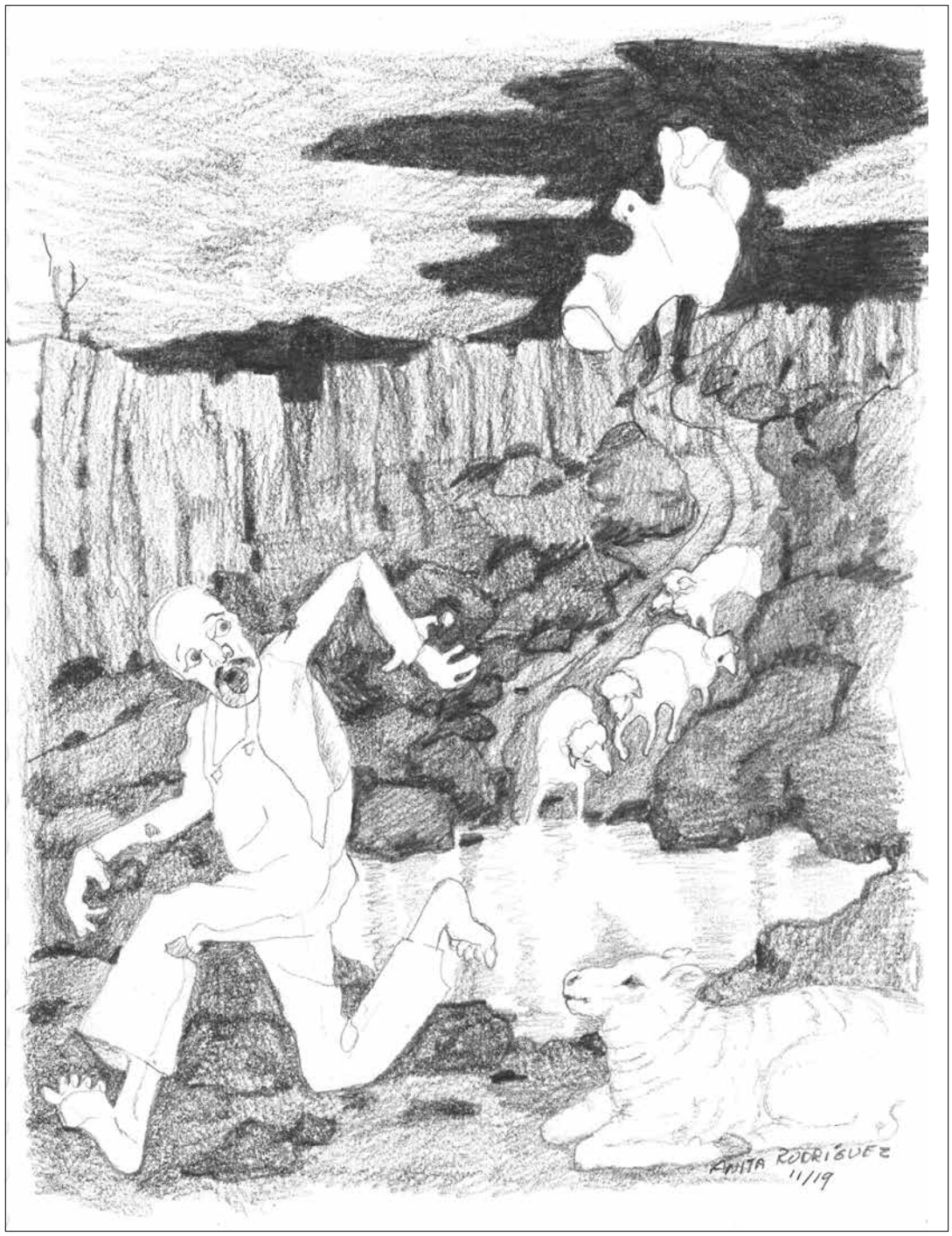
People who do not understand the violence implicit in colonialism are guilty of willful ignorance.

You could conclude from reading this that Hispanics are extinct, or that our artifacts were created by invisible people. In a public interview for director of a local museum, Pueblo culture was recognized something a director would be expected to know something about—but Hispanics were never mentioned.

Why did La Raza end up being erased from view? Lots of reasons.

The Mexican-American War. We were demonized as the enemy only a few years before the founding painters arrived. Even my mother, born one year after the Mexican Revolution (1910), mixed poison for Pancho Villa in her doll dishes. The literature of the time described the local population as "dirty, ignorant, drunken and lazy." New Mexico's petition for statehood was denied because of this "social undesirability." So, partly in the hope that statehood would stop the massive land fraud, our politicians decided to emphasize our Spanish blood to "whiten" the petition—which was still not granted until 1912 and did not stop the land loss.

In the eyes of Protestants riding the wave of Manifest Destiny, the picturesque enchantment attributed to the noble Pueblo savages did not extend to the ignoble Catholic Mexican savages—instead it was our land and religious art they wanted, not our spirituality.
The hippies repeated this syndrome of selective racism like some kind of eerie group reincarnation. Dennis Hopper bought Mabel's house, and while he posted armed guards on the roof to look out



Manby and Sheep by Anita Rodriguez

for the ignoble savages (Chicanos), inside, noble savages from the pueblo partied on Dennis's nickel. Also characteristic of both generations of newcomers is the erasure of the United States' conquest of 1847, and an emphasis on the Spanish conquest of 1540. I always wondered if another reason for making us invisible was a way of erasing guilt for swallowing our land with half of Mexico.

In Taos, a real estate agency was actually named "Doughbelly Price's Clip Joint." Doughbelly was a local character with a pronounced paunch, and we don't need to ask who was getting "clipped." Perhaps the most famous among the corrupt land speculators drawn to the statewide land boom was Arthur Manby, who was murdered in Taos. My father was one of the businessmen who found his decapitated corpse when they went to collect unpaid debts.
One of Daddy's stories: Manby owned the springs that still bear his name and the grazing land above. He sold it to poor sheepherders, and when their sheep were conveniently corralled and several payments pocketed, he would dress up as a ghost and scare them off, keep the money, the sheep, and sell it again.

The new conquerors let the Indians keep most of the land immediately surrounding the pueblos, although there was continuing encroachment everywhere else. But 85 percent of the land grants upon which the Spanish-speaking people had lived for centuries was lost in a historic, frenzied land grab before Anglo painters got here. The government confiscated millions of

Horseshoe Game by Anita Rodriguez.

Both generations erased the United States' conquest of 1847 and emphasized the Spanish conquest of 1540.

acres and converted it into Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Kit Carson [National] Forest; land speculators accumulated the biggest tracts of land in the history of the country—such as the Maxwell Grant. *"Cuando vino el alhambre, vino el hambre."* "When the wire [fences] came, hunger came."

This unequal application of laws, and different perceptions of Natives and Mexicans upset an old and fragile relationship between two old neighbors already on the defensive. And the new players brought the programming of a white supremacist system behind them, which always divides.

In my father's time, many people spoke Tiwa and Spanish. There were trilingual horseshoe games on the plaza, liberally peppered with jokes. Over centuries, while sharing the water, trading, fighting the Comanches and Apaches together, intermarrying, squabbling—we changed each other, we blended. There were formal ceremonial relationships, like crosscultural standing up for a marriage, confirmation or baptism *(compadrasco)*.

Pueblos and the Hispanics share the same DNA. And we share the same poverty—the fate of all "savages" in a racist country, whether noble or ignoble. The real division here is not between ignoble and noble savages, but between savages and "non-savages" in a country founded on white supremacy.

Under the new laws the old relationship between Taos Pueblo and Hispanic Taos town began to break down. The selective application of racism and property laws had consequences. It was open season on the Hispanic farmlands, villages and commons. Private property was taxed—whereas Pueblo villages and lands were held in trust and could not be not sold, taxed, or mortgaged. This had severe economic consequences on the reservations, and is one of the reasons for poverty and the lack of development, but it permitted greater cultural cohesiveness and privacy at the same time. Hispanic villages and private houses were subject to sale, breaking up extended families and weakening intergenerational support systems.

Back to the tenacious grip the "tricultural paradise" myth has on New Mexico's self-image. Consider the reality: The two older communities in northern New Mexico have been historically traumatized and continue to be in ways that Anglo migrants have not. Whatever personal hardships our Anglo neighbors have survived, they have not been conquered as a people, lost their land, been enslaved, and their community has not been subjected to systematic genocide, mass incarceration, ongoing police killings and racial violence.

History tells us that the dispossession of Native peoples and the legacy of slavery is a living part of our country's present circumstances. Science reveals that the emotional impact of violence on our ancestors changes our bodies. The groundbreaking science of epigenetics basically says that the traumas of previous generations "turn on" or "turn off" certain genes linked to disease. This discovery is revolutionizing biology, psychology, medicine and changing the way we think about history.

What you just read is a window into the hearts, the blood memory and bones of all the Hispanic and Native strangers you pass on the street. And it is just a peek into the grand, sweeping, complicated, tragic, bloody, beautiful, violent story of those of us who have ancestors buried here. ■

Anita Rodríguez's family goes back to DeVargas in her beloved Taos Valley. Creating art and "making things"—unique in style and content—has been a lifelong love. Rodríguez has traveled the world, observing many cultures. She conducts workshops on subjects such as envy and racism, tamales and painting. She has published Coyota in the Kitchen, *a book of thought-provoking stories around food (including recipes). Prints of her paintings are available through Fine Art New Mexico, LLC (www.fineartnewmexico.com) and her website, anitarodriguez.com.*

¡PRESENTE! IN A VULNERABLE QUERENCIA

BY **DR. ESTEVAN RAEL-GALVEZ**

Querencia comes from the Spanish word *querer*, a deep love, but has evolved to reflect specifically a love of place, even a sense of homeland. Querencia is especially important for land-based people ancestrally connected to a place they call home. I believe it is possible to come to love a place, particularly if someone is willing to listen and learn from those who are its stewards.

Stories of gentrification, displacement and belonging foster a sense of community and inspire creativity.

In this way, place is not only something that is represented, but something that is experienced, something that gives the world shape because of how we live in it. No matter where we come from, places also shape us—our consciousness, our sense of being in the world. As the Western Apache say of their homelands in Arizona, wisdom sits in places, and New Mexico is certainly no exception.

But one cannot grow wise simply by looking at the surface of the buildings in neighborhoods. I believe that wisdom can only be achieved by seeing past the layers, which in essence make it deeply and profoundly contested and connected. This means thinking about what connects one site to the next as part of a deeply complex and intricate network. Sometimes this is visible and can be mapped, but for instance, it can also be found in the flow of the acequia, the profundity of language, music and traditions that linger long after a note has been played, the dust rising ever so slightly from an ancient dance. These spaces are also sacred because here is where people have lived for generations, burying their dead, nurturing their young, as well as their minds and hearts.

But there has always been a vulnerability to querencia as well for people who live here, and perhaps anywhere. Just as developing a sense of place and belonging reflects the delicacy and strength of humanity, the vulnerability is displacement from the land, which is also one of the formative experiences that mark the human experience across time and space. Displacement has certainly marked the history of this place now called the Southwest, New Mexico and Santa Fe across the centuries. And even as we look at contemporary neighborhoods, this context has impacted, shaped, and continues to loom large in the aching consciousness of Santa Fe's contemporary residents.

¡Presente! is a creative initiative that responds to the reality in Santa Fe of this ongoing vulnerability of querencia. It builds upon previous movements, including protests and efforts to shift practices and policies alike. It emerged specifically, however, from Culture Connects Santa Fe – A Cultural Cartography, the city's first cultural plan, which I was honored to have designed and developed, and which included broad community engagement and extensive research, all culminating in a roadmap that is framed by the intrinsic value of culture and how it can be leveraged to address and improve the resilience, health and well-being of Santa Fe's residents.

The document addressed various issues, including long-standing fractures across the community, concerted efforts to induce migration (e.g. artists, retirees) past and present, and urban planning, tourism and preservation policies that have been detrimental and that have in the end contributed to gentrification and the displacement of people.

The objective of ¡Presente! is to raise consciousness about gentrification, displacement and belonging, to foster a sense of community and to inspire creativity, including community-based generative ideas about ethical redevelopment in Santa Fe. Above all, this project is built to emphasize that when development happens, it should happen without the displacement of people. It is a multi-disciplinary project, focused on collecting personal histories and current reflections on displacement and belonging, culminating in ways to share this publicly, including through multimedia performances throughout the city. The project consists of two primary elements—story gathering/preparation and the amplification of those stories—both set within the goal of elevating civic engagement. ■

While there are many partners involved, the initiative is led by Littleglobe. To learn more and to get involved, visit https://www.littleglobe.org/portfolio/presente/ or connect with us on our Facebook site: ¡Presente: Stories of Belonging and Displacement in Santa Fe.

Dr. Estevan Rael-Galvez, project director for ¡Presente!, is a former state historian of New Mexico, scholar, writer and CEO of Creative Strategies 360°.

Anastacio Trujillo and Vioma Trujillo
© Seth Roffman

¡Presente! performance at the Lensic Theater in Santa Fe
© Caitlin Elizabeth

Rita Rios-Baca
© Seth Roffman

CREATING A CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR EDUCATION

The two pedestals of any society that desires to create a progressive and stable environment for its citizens are health and education. In the absence of the viability of one or another, the community will deteriorate. Today, we are living the results of a broken health and education system.

The lack of these basic services drastically limits the capability of individuals to function in society. Let's be frank. The corporate banking sector has essentially been in charge of the economy and political decision-making of New Mexico for some time now. Coal, uranium, oil, natural gas, mining and some national banks have used New Mexico like a borrowed tool. It is not surprising that these companies are the greatest contributors to climate change and global warming. New Mexico is last, or close to last, in the nation in health and education. New Mexico is:

- the least functional in political and fiscal matters.
- first in murder by guns.
- one of the worst in water, air and land contamination.
- one of the top five in child poverty.

At the same time, it is one of the states that produces the most wealth for extractive industries in the United States. These industries enjoy many tax privileges, but they refuse to accept responsibility for their pollution or restoration of the environment.
I am focusing here on an education perspective and will leave the issue of health for a future article.

We got a glimpse of what was possible during the '60s and '70s when many communities exerted influence in public education with Early Childhood Education, free meals, sex education, bilingual/bicultural education, peace studies, music and the arts, physical education, health and nutrition studies, strong vocational programs and collaborative control of schools by teachers, parents and community leaders. Since then, many of these programs have been eroded or abolished by business-oriented interests that looked at students primarily as potential consumers or workers for corporate industries. They sacrificed internally directed community development for a corporate model.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB), President G. W. Bush's educational policy model, greatly exacerbated an already ailing education system. In the 17 years since its inception, NCLB has produced a 10-percent increase in dropout (pushout) rate across the country and has promoted the growth of charter schools as a weapon in the privatization of public education. The scalpel that most facilitated this operation was to create schools almost completely devoid of culture, with a heavy dose of high-stakes testing. Ironically, the average student spends seven weeks a year testing, mostly on rote memory material, at the expense of learning critical thinking and problem-solving activities related to classroom subject matter and its relationships to the real world.

Over 8,000 students drop out of New Mexico schools every year.
It is remarkable that few educators have come forth to question the validity of "core subjects" and endless testing that were brought forth by NCLB proponents. The issues of culture, history, social relations, environmental and other social issues that make learning relevant were conspicuously missing from the curriculum. To add insult to injury, respect for the life experience of people of color was greatly diminished, and appropriate methodologies that address cultural, social and class diversity were never incorporated into the so-called accountability model. It was business as usual, accompanied by a rigorous testing regime. Bush blamed teachers and parents and let NCLB off the hook.

Many communities cannot call themselves a "community" because there are no common efforts to address the issues of our time.

A vision statement for the State of New Mexico could be: The role of public education is to develop the optimum potential of every child and to provide opportunities to participate in real community development, driven by community needs.

Brazilian educator Paolo Freire was exiled from his country by right-wing generals for teaching that true education is ideas, praxis and action on the part of the individuals in order to change society by challenging the contradictions that infringe on democratic ideals. The teacher exposes the student to ideas and information through dialogue among community, students and teachers. Together they assess the validity of those ideas and social data and create organizational strategies to address the problems that beset the community. Freire, in reality, called for the formulation of an authentic community that establishes its own norms and standards and is organized to defend itself. At this juncture in our history, many communities cannot call themselves a "community" because there are no common efforts to address the issues of our time.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

Curriculum should be thoroughly infused with culture; i.e. customs, traditions, land- and water use, language and history. It must be community and socially oriented. A wide range of subject matter should be implemented around basic subjects that can be utilized as practicums for student understanding and participation:

- Language Arts
- History and Herstory
- The Sciences
- Art, Music, Theater
- Computation
- Bilingual Studies
- Multicultural studies
- Computer Skills
- Physical Fitness
- Sex Education
- Community Fieldwork
- Vocational Training
- Conflict Resolution
- Gardening and Culinary Arts
- Other subjects that are specific to a geographical location

METHODOLOGY

The framework implemented by any school district must incorporate methods that respect student learning styles, social and family environment and special needs. They could include:

- Individualized Instruction
- Problem Solving and Critical Thinking
- Group Learning
- Community Relations with elders and other races and cultures.
- Utilization of institutions of higher learning as resource partners, including mentors and tutors.

© *Seth Roffman*

All schools should strive for a maximum class size of 15 students per classroom. I emphasize that the curriculum must be thoroughly steeped in culture because culture is the most important motivational force in learning.

In an individualized instruction classroom, all students are tested to ascertain the level of their academic status. From there, the building blocks are sequentially arranged from simple to complex and from less rigorous to more rigorous. Each student proceeds at his/her own pace and is encouraged to achieve his/her maximum ability. Students at a more advanced stage may become tutors for other students. Students with deficiencies are remediated immediately.

All students have responsibilities to their classroom, to the school and to the community. They form a web of mutual help and understanding at all levels. No student is allowed to fail!

The community will participate with the schools in real community efforts that address problematic issues and projects.

At the start, the most perplexing question will be how to organize the community as equal partners with teachers and community leaders. Traditionally, educational policy and teaching strategies have been left to "experts" in Santa Fe or Washington D.C., who, over time, have demonstrated their ineptitude and lack of vision.

Successful community development must begin by convening citizens to converse *(la plática)* in order to understand their concerns; how these concerns impact the people; what is the cause of the problematic issues and the process that has brought us to this point in history; then, to determine what the community needs and wants, followed by a plan of action to achieve the community's goals. To convene the community is to respect democracy. The organizational goal is to establish consensus and to strengthen the ability of the community to mandate the political leadership to act on their behalf. Strong leaders will emerge from a strong community.

Gente de la comunidad are thirsty for *cultura.* Many parents have told me emphatically, "We need *cultura!* We need to pass it on." This is similar to the sense of cultural survival by Native Americans whose main axiom of life is that those alive today have an obligation to future generations. The nexus between a way of life and the time continuum demonstrates the relationships between the love of one's people and the reverence for *La Madre Tierra.*

Culture is the most important motivational force in learning.

In his article on Mayan culture, in *Green Fire Times,* Alejandro López quoted José Diaz Bolio on the essence of living: "The ancient Yucatán was among the civilizations of the world having a major degree of scientific elements—a civilization in which religion was science and science was religion, and at the same time, both were art."

Native America is showing us the way. Across the country, tribes are fashioning schools, community centers and social policies based on culture, traditions, language, and organizing tribal liaisons. They have demonstrated their love for Mother Earth at Standing Rock and countless other places and as a result, have suffered brutal police tactics. Native Americans are challenging the established order throughout México, Central America and the Andes, and are paying dearly for their efforts.

The status quo is rapidly degenerating into full-blown environmental and social crises, but they persist. We, as Chicanos and other concerned citizens, must also get our feet wet in the same river. Let us organize ourselves into democratic, autonomous and independent groupings. Saving the environment, preserving our culture and creating a new education and health system is our mantra. We must create our own path by walking.

Cultura, Ciencia, Communidad, La Madre Tierra – are all one. ■

Miguel Angel is a retired professor of Chicano Studies from Laney College, Oakland, Calif., and is currently the director of Casa de Cultura in Las Vegas, N.M.

Albuquerque Becoming a Leader in Sustainability

BY **SETH ROFFMAN**

In an effort to reduce climate change impacts at the local level, the City of Albuquerque has been implementing a series of sustainability initiatives. A new website (www.cabq.gov/sustainability) provides cross-departmental updates revised monthly, with goals, wins and current projects.

"Climate change is real, it is costly, and it is already impacting our city," said Mayor Tim Keller. "We take the threat seriously, and now the public can see exactly how much progress we are making as we make Albuquerque a top-10 city in sustainability and renewable energy. It's not just a number to us; it's about equity," the mayor said. "Our residents already know the impacts of climate change, as local farmers along the Río Grande deal with changing conditions and kids with asthma can't play outside on high-ozone days."

Since Keller took office in December 2017:

- The mayor signed the Paris Agreement committing to climate action.
- Albuquerque won the Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge, which includes funding for sustainability efforts.
- The Green Team Initiative was launched to expand sustainability thinking and practice across city departments.
- The city has partnered with PNM and the Jicarilla Apache Tribe to launch the Solar Direct project to get ABQ to 65 percent renewable energy by 2021.
- As of November 2019, the city had invested $25 million in solar projects at 12 city-owned buildings.
- City buildings have been retrofitted to increase energy efficiency and lower carbon footprints.
- Albuquerque has transitioned to LED streetlights citywide.
- The city has invested $600,000 in Volkswagen settlement funding to build charging stations for public use and begun to transition the city fleet to EV.
- The city purchased the first EVs for its fleet, and committed to replacing gas-powered vehicles with EVs wherever possible.
- Albuquerque won a $2.7-million federal grant to bring the first electric buses to the city

WATER

Albuquerque has been successfully conserving water. The city provides rebates for residents to update home appliances and install water-conserving xeriscape landscaping. Residents are only allowed to water yards on certain days. The Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWA) reported that its customers, through Sept. 9, 2019, had used 812 million fewer gallons than by the same time the previous year. The city's use in 2018 was 125 gallons per capita per day. The authority's goal is 110 gallons by 2037.

If Albuquerque receives the WaterSmart grant it has applied for (which could amount to as much as $750,000), infiltration ponds will nurture small wetlands, enhancing neighborhoods, while channeling Río Grande water to help recharge the aquifer. Aquifer levels have been rising as a result of the San Juan-Chama Project.

The Río Grande flows near downtown Albuquerque. Photo courtesy City of Albuquerque

ENERGY

SOLAR INSTALLED ON CITY BUILDINGS

By the end of 2019, solar will have been added to 27 city-owned buildings, including the convention center. With the help of Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (CREBs), this represents a $50-million investment.

COLLABORATION ON ENERGY-SAVING PROJECTS

Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) and the City of Albuquerque plan to collaborate on projects including a 50-megawatt (MW) solar plant that will remove 93,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions every year—the equivalent of taking almost 20,000 cars off the road.

Solar installation near the Albuquerque Convention Center

BIOPARK SOLAR PARKING STRUCTURES

In September, Albuquerque's Cultural Services Department announced the completion of solar parking facilities at the ABQ BioPark. The 200-kilowatt (kw) system capacity structures provide shade for visitors and are projected to offset 15 percent of the facility's energy use, eliminating 2.5 tons of carbon emissions per year. The BioPark, which consists of the zoo, aquarium, botanic garden and Tingley Beach, draws more than one million visitors each year.

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO REDUCE ENERGY FOOTPRINT

Seeking to reduce energy costs, an APS committee is seeking proposals and designs for a battery energy storage system at Atrisco Heritage Academy High School. The school uses the most energy in the district, spending up to $50,000 per month.

LED STREETLIGHT CONVERSION

In April, in the International District, the city kicked-off an LED streetlight conversion. PNM signed an agreement to convert 11,000-plus high-sodium bulbs to energy-efficient LEDs. In 2018, PNM converted more than 20,000 of its streetlights to LED. When work is completed (in partnership with local company, Bixby Electric) by Dec. 31, all of the city's 32,000 streetlights will be LED. LED lights are more true "white light," vs. a soft yellow that was previously used. LED wattages will be equivalent to existing wattages.

PNM Resources President and CEO, Pat Vincent-Collawn said, "These new energy-efficient lights will save Albuquerque over $1.3 million annually and help the city move toward its sustainability goals." Bernalillo County Commission Chair Maggie Hart Stebbins said, "Adequate lighting is vital to making our neighborhoods safe places to live, walk and play, and the International District has more pedestrians than any other part of Albuquerque."

TRANSPORTATION

CITY FLEET ADDS ELECTRIC VEHICLES

An order signed by the mayor states: In the Albuquerque area, vehicles are the largest contributor of hazardous air pollutants and also emit carbon monoxide and precursors which form ground-level ozone. These can cause lung damage and heart disease, shortening human lifespans. Reducing ozone precursors is especially important here because ozone concentrations in our air are close to the federal health-based limit. Vehicles are the primary source of nitrogen oxides, a key ozone precursor.

On Sept. 7, Keller unveiled the first EVs in the city's fleet and set a goal of 100 percent alternative fuels for all eligible vehicles. "Technology of electric, hybrid and alternative-fuel vehicles has steadily improved, and the time has come to turn the page on gas-powered cars and trucks. And as the electric grid becomes solarized, each vehicle replaced with electric will eliminate emissions for that vehicle, forever."
The city is planning to transition 63 percent of its light-duty vehicles to electric or hybrid-power by changing-out 50 vehicles by the end of 2020. Additional gas-powered vehicles will be taken off the road as they come up for replacement or when new vehicles are purchased. Gas vehicles will be replaced by low- and no-emissions vehicles such as Chevrolet Volts and Nissan LEAFS. In early 2020, the city will announce the results of a study of where to site 10–15 EV charging stations.

FIRST ELECTRIC BUSSES IN ALBUQUERQUE

In May, at the end of a statewide Energy Summit convened by Sen. Martin Heinrich and co-hosted by the city, Keller announced that Albuquerque is bringing in its first electric buses with $2.78 million in federal funding won through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Low- or No-Emission grant program. In combination with other funding, the grant will buy five 40-foot buses to supplement service on local ABQ RIDE routes. The grant also pays for related expenses such as chargers for the new buses.

Mayor Tim Keller with electric vehicle
Photo courtesy City of Albuquerque

ORGANIZATIONS THAT CONTRIBUTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR ABQ'S GRANT APPLICATION TO THE FTA:

NM Energy Conservation and Management Division
NM Solar Energy Association
Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
Mid-Regional Council of Governments
Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM)
Southwest Energy Efficiency Project
Land of Enchantment Clean Cities
Renewable Energy Industry Association of New Mexico
BioPark Conservation Program
New Mexico Environmental Law Center
Audubon New Mexico
Electrification Coalition
350.org New Mexico
Juntos: Our Air, Our Water
NM BioPark Society
National Resources Defense Council

ABQ AWARDED EPA GRANT FOR CLEANER ENGINES

In October, an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) spokesman announced that Albuquerque has been awarded a $909,697 grant funded by the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act. The funding will make possible the replacement of 14 diesel vehicle engines used by the city's Solid Waste and Parks and Recreation departments. Diesel engines emit pollutants such as nitrogen oxide and fine particulates, which create smog and exacerbate breathing problems. Newer diesel engines, such as the department will buy, emit fewer pollutants.

The city is also adding four trash collection trucks powered by compressed natural gas (CNG) as part of its transition from diesel.

The Sustainaility Office is positioning ABQ as a resilient, equitable and sustainable community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BUY LOCAL INITIATIVE SWITCHES CITY CONTRACTS

As of Oct. 16, Keller's Buy Local Initiative had switched six contracts from out-of-state vendors to local companies, according to a news release. "We are steadily aiming our spending power at the local economy," the mayor said. "Through our procurement process, in the past nine months we have kept an additional 7.7-million taxpayer dollars in Albuquerque's economy."

Existing contracts switched to local vendors include: A four-year contract totaling an estimated $1,100,000 with Workforce Dynamics, Inc. for office furniture; a four-year contract totaling an estimated $5,000,000 with Diverse Office Supply for office supplies; a four-year contract totaling an estimated $1,000,000 with Desert Paper & Envelope for paper; a four-year contract totaling $47,424 with General Mailing & Shipping Systems for mail machine services; a two-year contract totaling $50,382 with Security Logistics for electronic security system maintenance and parts; and a four-year contract estimated at $540,000 with LL&D for armored vehicle services.

"In purchasing products produced in Albuquerque, sourced and delivered locally, the city is demonstrating its commitment to sustainability," said Kerry Brennan Bertram, president and CEO of Diverse Office Supply, a woman-owned business that employs 15 people with disabilities. "Partnering with the city, we can hire more adults with special needs who can earn real wages and work real jobs with real benefits."

Albuquerque's purchasing division has also begun to make it easier for local vendors to do business with the city by using new online procurement software, which helps identify local vendors and streamlines procurement processes. "If you are a vendor who wants to do business with the city, register your business in Bonfire," said Economic Development Director Synthia Jaramillio. Business owners and the public can see what the city buys at www.cabq.gov/webuy or sign up to receive notices of upcoming bids on opportunities to provide goods and services at www.cabq.gov/getbids.

INITIATIVE SUPPORTS SMALL BUSINESSES

On Sept. 24, Keller and the Economic Development Department joined city leaders, small business owners and small business ecosystem partners to launch the Albuquerque Small Business Office, located downtown at 117 Gold St. SW. "Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and a major job creator," the mayor said. "We need to address gaps for homegrown small businesses that are vital to economic growth."

According to a news release, Albuquerque's 42,000 small businesses provide 300,000 jobs. The Small Business Office will serve as a resource for smal-business owners and entrepreneurs ready to open or expand their businesses. In addition, the city is focused on empowering minority- and women-owned businesses. An estimated 16,000 small businesses In Albuquerque are owned by entrepreneurs of color and 16,000 are women-owned.

The office will provide navigation help for permitting, licensing and technical assistance. In partnership with more than a dozen leading business service organizations, and working closely with other city departments, including fire, planning and finance, the office will also provide training, networking and one-on-one assistance to make sure that local businesses have access to the same programs and incentives as out-of-state businesses. To learn more, visit: https://www.cabq.gov/economicdevelopment/small-business/smallbusinessoffice.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL RESTAURANTS

In conjunction with the launch of the Small Business Office, Lavu, an industry leader in mobile point-of-sale and payment systems, announced the launch of a pilot program: Lavu Loves Local (https://lavu.com/lavu-loves-local/). The campaign was created to assist restaurants with their overall operations by providing a mobile Point of Sale (POS) and associated hardware, at no upfront cost—a savings of up to $2,000. Restaurants headquartered in the Albuquerque metro area are encouraged to apply. Lavu CEO, Saleem S. Khatri, said, "We are supporting local businesses by providing technology that will efficiently manage all operations and improve the experience for customers."

U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS, WELLS FARGO AWARD

In July, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and Wells Fargo Foundation announced that Keller was selected for the top honor in the metropolitan city category of the 2019 CommunityWINS Grant Program. Launched in 2015, the program recognizes nonprofits and cities that drive neighborhood stabilization, economic development and job creation. An independent panel of judges selected grant recipients from 136 applicants.

"The grant program is an opportunity to honor and showcase productive neighborhood revitalization efforts that are making a real difference in communities across the country. CommunityWINS also celebrates the leadership of mayors and city governments," said Tom Cochran, CEO and executive director of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

The grant extends into 2020. The Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) Film Production Center of Excellence was presented with a $300,000 donation to be used for the planning and design of the center. As part of Albuquerque's economic development plan, the city has partnered with CNM to revitalize the Barelas neighborhood and historic Rail Yards building in support of the state's growing film industry. More than 200 major productions have filmed in New Mexico since 2003.

HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS ALBUQUERQUE

On-the-job training is part of an initiative sponsored by Healthy Neighborhoods Albuquerque to grow jobs and spur business development in underinvested neighborhoods. The initiative was launched in 2017 as a partnership among local "anchor" institutions, including The University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, Presbyterian Healthcare Services, Albuquerque Public Schools, Central New Mexico Community College, First Choice Community Healthcare, the City of Albuquerque and the Albuquerque Community Foundation.

"There are a lot of different initiatives going on with our anchor partners," said Richard Larson, M.D., Ph.D., executive vice chancellor at UNM Health Sciences Center. "We have had some significant wins." Healthy Neighborhoods Albuquerque encourages its anchor institutions to buy from local growers, manufacturers and suppliers to help Albuquerque's economy."

PARKS & REC DEPARTMENT WINS GRANT TO IMPROVE PARKS ACCESS

In October, the city's Parks and Recreation Department won a $40,000 grant from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in support of planning efforts to improve access to city parks and green spaces. NRPA, along with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) are working together to ensure everyone has safe access to a quality park within a 10-minute walk of home.

Since 2018, the Parks and Recreation Department has acquired nearly 40 acres of open space in the Tijeras Arroyo and opened the Anderson Heights Park in southwest Albuquerque. The department is also constructing Memorial Park on the west side and Juan Tabo Hills Park in the southeast part of the city. In addition, the department is exploring options such as creating new access points and building infrastructure to shorten the distance it takes residents to travel to a park or open space.

Albuquerque's Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for maintaining nearly 300 parks, 143 miles of multi-use trails, more than 29,000 acres of major public open space, four municipal golf courses and numerous aquatics and recreation facilities. ■

NEW MEXICO CLIMATE STRATEGY

On Nov. 21, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's interagency climate change task force issued a 26-page report that sets a course for New Mexico. It identifies water as a primary concern to address through new protections for rivers, streams and wetlands, using tools including the Outstanding National Resource Waters designations that prohibit watershed degradation.

New Mexico Climate Strategy: Initial Recommendations and Status Update (climateaction.state.nm.us) offers a full-spectrum approach of mitigation measures and a plan to strategically adapt to the effects of climate change with an emphasis on increasing landscape-level resilience. This is bolstered by a focus on economic resilience, to be achieved through a transition to a diversified, clean-energy economy.

The report, a joint project of the state Environment and Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources departments, also reasserts the need to move forward with new rules limiting methane and volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from the oil and gas industry. The state has also established a Methane Advisory Panel, which is expected to release a report for public comment by mid-December.

"Given the plumes of pollution emitted by the industry in the Permian and San Juan basins, these rules will provide welcome relief to communities and help combat climate change," said Erik Schlenker-Goodrich, executive director of the Western Environmental Law Center (WELC). "These new rules are a great first step." The strategy does not include what WELC sees as critical "second-step" actions, including a plan to phase-out oil and gas over the coming years. State legislators who support the Energy Transition Act met in November to explore ways to accelerate execution of the landmark law.

On the same day the New Mexico Climate Strategy was released, Congresswoman Deb Haaland (D-NM), along with five other U.S. representatives, introduced a bill called the 100% Clean Economy Act of 2019. The bill sets a nationwide goal of achieving a 100-percent clean-energy economy by 2050 by reaching net-zero climate pollution across all sectors of the U.S. economy. It lays out principles and creates an advisory committee, comprised of a broad range of stakeholders, to provide recommendations on interim goals.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY URBAN CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Albuquerque's overall tree canopy is less than 10 percent. In addition to providing shade, a healthy tree canopy also improves air quality by removing pollutants. Science has shown that trees and greenspace can reinvigorate a connection with nature, which makes people happier and healthier.

In October, 60 volunteers—including Congresswoman Debra Haaland (D-NM)—planted 105 trees in the front yards of homes and along streets in Albuquerque's Mountain View neighborhood, an area that, because of a lack of trees, has often been eight degrees warmer than other parts of the city.

Mountain View's neighborhood association has designed a master plan to improve landscaping in the South Valley. The association's tree planting in October was a collaboration with The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) Urban Conservation Program, which brings nature into underserved urban neighborhoods and engages youth, such as Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, in conservation and tree-care projects. The trees planted in the Mountain View and Joy Junction neighborhoods were on a climate-ready tree list, which identifies the kinds of trees that can thrive through their natural life cycle in spite of a warmer, drier climate.

The project was made possible through support from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, Wells Fargo, General Mills, Nusenda Foundation and private donors. Wells Fargo has supported TNC of New Mexico with a $200,000 grant—part of the company's effort to build partnerships with nonprofits that are helping communities become more resilient in the face of a changing climate, including environmental education, resiliency planning, green infrastructure and bringing renewable energy to low-income communities.

NEIGHBORWOODS TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

The NeighborWoods program is also helping restore Albuquerque's urban canopy by planting trees along streets. City Council Vice President Cynthia Borrego facilitated $40,000 of District 5 Set-Aside funds to implement the program in the Taylor Ranch neighborhood. A press release says that "NeighborWoods effectively builds community cooperation and pride." Community members have committed to volunteering, attending tree education classes, watering and maintaining the plantings.

Courtesy The Nature Conservancy

STATE LAND OFFICE ESTABLISHES OFFICE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

New Mexico is ranked fifth highest in the nation for generating wind and solar electricity to supply the state's needs. More than 32 percent of the electricity New Mexicans used came from wind and solar. From 2009 to 2018, the state increased its wind production by more than four times, from 1,547 to 6,68 gigawtt hours (GWh) and solar production by more than 338 times, from 4 to 1,553 (GWh).

New Mexico State Land Office Commissioner Stephanie García Richard requested and received funding during the 2019 Legislative session to create the Office of Renewable Energy (ORE) in order to help the Land Office reach a goal of tripling the generation of renewable energy on state trust land. As of September, there were 17 active renewable energy leases on state trust lands with over 30 pending applications for new solar and wind projects.

ORE director Jeremy Lewis and analyst Kelly Haug are tasked with managing existing projects, pursuing new opportunities and stewarding relationships between the renewable energy industry and the Land Office. Lewis comes to the Land Office from the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department's Energy Conservation and Management Division, where he was chief of the Energy Planning and Programs Bureau. Haug is former senior land negotiator for Enchantment Energy, Inc.

NAVAJO NATION COMPLETES KAYENTA SOLAR II

In 2016, several grazing permit holders allowed the Kayenta Solar Generation facility to be constructed on 300 acres of their grazing lands. The Navajo Nation recently completed the second phase of the facility, which now produces enough emission-free energy to power about 36,000 homes. "We are moving ahead with long-term sustainable energy development that will make our communities and economy stronger," said President Jonathan Nez. Nez also said that the facility aligns with the Háyoołkáál (Sunrise) Proclamation, which states that the Navajo Nation will pursue and prioritize renewable energy development for the long-term benefit of the Navajo people.

Completion of the Kayenta Solar facility comes just as the coal-fired Navajo Generating Station, one of the largest in the West, was shut down on Nov. 18, after nearly 50 years or operation. The plant provided a major source of revenue for the Navajo and Hopi tribal governments and its workforce was mostly Native American.

Revenue generated from Kayenta I and II will help fund the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority's (NTUA) "Light Up Navajo" initiative, a joint effort between NTUA and the American Public Power Association dedicated to bringing electricity to Navajo homes. In the first phase of the initiative, 228 Navajo homes received electricity for the very first time.

The facility also provides electricity for the community of Kayenta and helps promote the "Buy Navajo, Buy Local" initiative. During construction, the mostly Navajo workforce received over 4,700 hours of specialized training in solar-utility construction. An estimated $15.6 million in economic activity occurred within surrounding communities during the construction period, according to NTUA.

The Navajo Nation is also moving forward to design and construct its Paragon Bitsi Ranch solar utility-scale development project in the Navajo community of Huerfano. The project is supported by $2 million in New Mexico capital outlay funds, approved by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham.

(cont. from p 3)

Lighting such fires continues to carry symbolic value. In pre-scientific minds, bonfires held a magical-religious significance. Reassurance that the sun would return to its summer home of warmer temperatures, longer days and more abundant food was expressed around Dec. 21, the winter solstice, when Mother Earth, our planetary home, tilts perilously far away from the sun's incessantly burning fire.

It is no stretch of the imagination to surmise that sacred fires lit at this time of year represented the sun itself, which was actively coaxed back through ritual appeasement and supplication. Human aspirations were sent sailing toward the heavens, seat of mighty unseen powers, by symbolically attaching them to flames and clouds of smoke.

In the winter-based *fallas* of Valencia, Spain, piles of old household furnishings, representing the passing of the old year and the approach of the new, are publicly burned in the city's plazas and *plazuelas* amid much excitement and fanfare. This celebration harkens to a mythic past when humans participated fully in cosmic dramas as our world exhibited pronounced seasonal changes.

When our remote ancestors first lit winter fires in their freezing and dark primeval surroundings, they were able to bask in warmth and delight in flickering flames. Seated around a roaring fire, which kept wild animals at bay and attracted other humans into their circle, they might have sung, not carols, but tribal songs after sharing cooked morsels of tubers, game and fish, and perhaps roasted piñon.

Humans participated in cosmic dramas as our world exhibited pronounced seasonal changes.

As night wore on, they likely told stories about their common origin and the origin of the world. They would also have spoken at length about the movement of celestial bodies, together with descriptions of extreme weather events and unusual landscapes that had commanded their attention. No doubt, they also told stories about fantastic beasts, plants and minerals encountered during the course of their wanderings. Perhaps the most enthralling, however, were tales about mighty exploits of their gods, heroes and ancestors.

They would also have spoken about encounters with peoples of different hues, languages and customs and of alliances or conflicts that ensued. Gossip too must have had its place around campfires. Certainly, glowing, semi-transparent yellow-orange flames added layers of mystery and wonder to people's utterances and incantations.

Pot being fired in an adobe horno. © Alejandro López

Northern New Mexico horno, fired-up for baking on a winter day. © Alejandro López

Where did early humans first acquire fire? Until they were able to generate their own, combustion was relegated to acts of nature such as lightning-ignited forest fires or volcanic eruptions. Were stern and forbidding gods loath to share this awesome power with puny, mortal humans, lest they destroy themselves? In Greek mythology it was a selfless and intrepid Prometheus who dared steal fire from the gods and hand it over to humans for their benefit.

Humans pursued numerous attempts to unlock the secret. They took to using pieces of flint and other stones, which, when struck together in a certain way, produced sparks. These were ingeniously captured, fed combustible materials and fastidiously nursed into smoldering flames by human breath.

Others used a carefully selected, rounded, smoothed-out stick such as the dry spire of the yucca plant. Held upright, its end was placed into a shallow hole on the edge of a flat piece of wood. The stick was twirled back and forth in the palms of the hand at top speed. The friction generated intense heat. With great effort, sawdust and other combustibles placed near the shallow hole (a channel for air) eventually ignited. Many other similarly ingenious techniques were devised the world over. By learning to use fire, people gained a decisive advantage over all other species.

Fire, of course, has been employed in a thousand different ways in cooking, from smoking, singeing, boiling and broiling, to sautéing, baking and roasting. A Pueblo Christmas-day feast would not be complete without the stoking of outdoor earthen horno fires while baking delicious loaves of bread, prune pies and cookies. Nor would a northern New Mexico Indo-Hispano Christmas be complete without the intense activities required to bake *empanaditas* and *bizcochitos,* not to mention stacks of tortillas to accompany pots of posole, beans and red chile, served to all who might attend an evening posada at a family home.

Historically, fires figured and still figure prominently in ritual in nearly every culture. Fire is employed in the immolation of plant and animal sacrifices and in the burning of candles, incense and *copál*. It is central to the devotion accorded to ritual fires and the activation of funeral pyres. In the consecration ceremony of Persian Zoroastrian children, their bodies are lightly passed over a living flame to light the inner flames of their spirituality. In the offerings of a peace pipe, the celebrant's thoughts and prayers are lifted up to the Great Mystery in the form of billowing tobacco smoke.

In the centuries since the Industrial Revolution, fire has become a servant of the industries that light our cities and drive the world's motors and turbines. Burning fossil fuels is now the predominant cause of global climate change, which threatens the very survival of our planet.

During the Christmas season, when we customarily wish others peace on earth and goodwill, it may be fitting to reflect on how our personal choices perpetuate constructive or destructive applications of fire. It may also be appropriate to renew our respect for fire and its positive, life-sustaining benefits. Candle, anyone? ■

As a builder and user of earthen hornos and as a potter who fires his vessels, Alejandro López, a northern New Mexican, maintains a close kinship with lumbre (fire).

WHAT'S GOING ON

ALBUQUERQUE

DEC. 6, 6–9 PM
TEDXABQ WOMEN 2019
So. Broadway Cultural Center, 1025 Broadway SE
Talks spotlighting extraordinary risk-takers and innovators. $25. Tedxabq.com

DEC. 7, 10 AM–5 PM
DEC. 8, 10 AM–4 PM
WINTER SPANISH MARKET
National Hispanic Cultural Center, 1701 Fourth St. SW
Spanishcolonial.org

DEC. 16, 6:15–7:45 PM
ABQ CITIZENS' CLIMATE LOBBY
Erna Fergusson Library, 3700 San Mateo NE
Monthly meeting. Lisas.ccl@gmail.com, https://citizensclimatelobby.org/chapters/NM_Albuquerque/

JAN. 9, 2020, 8 AM–4:30 PM
NM WATER DIALOGUE 26TH ANNUAL MEETING
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, 2401 12th St. NW
Building water resilience for NM communities. Speakers include David Gutzler, UNM, and Melinda Harm Benson, UNM. $20-$70. Registration: nmwaterdialogue.org

FEB. 21-22, 2020
NM ORGANIC FARMING CONFERENCE
Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town
Highlights: healthy soils, seed saving, marketing, wholesale, regulations, individual crops, grant assistance, new product showcase and much more. $130 until 12/15; $150. For registration or to sponsor a farmer: sagefaulkner@yahoo.com, www.nmofc.org

FEB. 21, 10 AM–FEB. 22, 6 PM
NATIONAL HISPANIC CULTURAL CENTER HISTORY FESTIVAL
1701 4th St. SW
Hispanic/Latinx history events related to Mundos de Mestizaje fresco 10-year anniversry. www.nhcchistoryfest.com

FIRST SUNDAYS
NM MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY AND SCIENCE
1801 Mountain Rd.
Museum admission free to NM residents on the first Sunday of each month. 505.841.2800

SATURDAYS, 1 PM
WEEKLY DOCENT-LED TOURS
National Hispanic Cultural Center, 1701 4th St. SW
Tours of exhibits and themes in the Art Museum. $2-$3, free with museum admission. 505.246.2261, nhccnm.org

ABQ 2030 DISTRICT
Voluntary collaboration of commercial property tenants, building managers, property owners and developers; real estate, energy and building sector professionals, lenders, utility companies and public stakeholders such as government agencies, nonprofits, community groups and grassroots organizers. Property partners share anonymous utility data and best practices. Professionals provide expertise and services. albuquerque@2030districts.org

SANTA FE

DEC. 2, 6 PM
FAMINE FOODS OF THE SOUTHWEST
Hotel Santa Fe
SW Seminars lecture by archaeologist/professor/author Dr. Paul E. Minnis. $15. 505.466.2775, Southwestseminars.org

DEC. 7, 3:30–6:30 PM
KINDRED SPIRITS CHRISTMAS PARTY
3749-A Hwy. 14
Eldercare for senior dogs, horses and poultry. Tour the sanctuary and visit the animals. Free. 505.471.5366, www.kindredspiritsnm.org

DEC. 8, 5:30–8 PM
SANTA FE COMMUNITY CLIMATE FORUM
SF Prep, 1101 Cam. de Cruz Blanca
Event to promore climate change engagement, education and collaboration. Earth Science Symposium, breakout sessions, panel discussion. www.santafeclimateforum.com

DEC. 9, 6 PM
PUEBLO PERSISTENCE OF RESISTANCE
Hotel Santa Fe
SW Seminars lecture by Dr. Matt Schmader on Resiliency and Survival in the Pueblo World: 1539–1696. 505.466.2775, Southwestseminars.org

DEC. 12, 6:30–9:30 PM
Winter Watershed Benefit
Hotel Santa Fe
Speaker: Andrew Erdmann, Water Conservation Specialist, Water Division, City of Santa Fe. Silent auction, raffle, hors d'oeuvres. $50. Santafewatershed.org

DEC. 14, 9 AM–4 PM
IAIA HOLIDAY ART MARKET
IAIA Performing Arts and Fitness Center, 83 Avan Nu Po Rd.
Original artwork by students, alumni and other Native artists. 505.424.5730, Sharon.russell@iaia.edu, www.iaia.edu

DEC. 14, 9 AM–5 PM
DEC. 15, 10 AM–3 PM
SF WINTER INDIAN MARKET
La Fonda on the Plaza
150 artists. Jewelry, pottery, paintings, weavings and much more. Live music & dance. $10 one day; $15 two days; 12 & under free. Swaia.org

DEC. 14, 6–8 PM
CLIMATE DEFENDERS NEW MEXICO
SF Library Main Branch, 2nd fl.
Biderman429@gmail.com, https://citizensclimatelobby.org

DEC. 15, 4 PM
PRAISING EARTH WINTER SOLSTICE COMMUNITY CELEBRATION
IAIA Hogan, 83 Avan Nu Po Rd.
Song, dance and ritual guided by Song Carriers Women's Circle and Speaking Fires Men's Circle. Pot-luck (bring dish to share). By donation. Info@PraisingEarth.org

DEC. 16–20, 9 AM–3:30 PM
WINTER BREAK CAMP
SF Children's Museum, 1050 Old Pecos Tr.
A "winter wizard lab," ages 5–12. $285, limited scholarships available. Santafechildrensmuseum.org

THROUGH JAN. 19, 2020
RECONCILIATION EXHIBITION
IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, 108 Cathedral Pl.
A multi-artist response to the ending and transformation of "La Entrada" as part of SF Fiesta intended to open dialogue. 505.983.1666, iaia.edu/iaia-museum-of-contemporary-native-arts

FEB. 6, 9–10 AM
LOCAL FOOD AND FARM TO SCHOOL AWARDS
Rotunda, State Capitol
Awards, ceremony and presentations, organization tables. pam@farmtotablenm.org

FEB. 9, 5–11 PM
OSCAR BENEFIT EVENT
Eldorado Hotel & Spa
Brandi's Studio 54 Prom Party. Benefits Communities in Schools of NM. Early Bird tickets through Jan. 5: $125. Info: 505.954.1880, Holdmyticket.com

FEB. 13–JULY 26
INDIGENOUS FUTURISM IN CONTEMPORARY NATIVE ART
IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, 108 Cathedral Pl.
The future from a Native perspective, illustrating the use of cosmology and science as part of tribal oral history and ways of life. 2/13, 5–7 pm: opening reception. 505.983.1666, iaia.edu/iaia-museum-of-contemporary-native-arts

SUNDAYS, 11 AM
JOURNEY SANTA FE CONVERSATIONS
Collected Works Bookstore, 202 Galisteo St.
12/1: Cartoonist Roberto Caté (Santo Domingo Pueblo); 12/8: 2016 NM-Ariz. Book Awards winner Mary E. Carter; 12/15: NM Speaker of the House Brian Egolf on the 2020 Legislative session; 12/22: NM Attorney General Hector Balderas with Holly Beaumont on the opioid crisis; 12/29: NM Wildlife Center on Collected Works photo exhibit. Free. www.journeysantafe.com

SUNDAYS, 10 AM–4 PM
RAILYARD ARTISAN MARKET
SF Farmers' Market, 1607 Paseo de Peralta
Art & gift galeria by local artists and crafters. 505.983.4098, https://santafefarmersmarket.com/railyard-artisan-market/

MON.–SAT.
POEH CULTURAL CENTER & MUSEUM
78 Cities of Gold Rd., Pueblo of Pojoaque
In T'owa Vi Sae'we: The People's Pottery. Tewa Pottery from the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. Nah Poeh Meng: 1,600-sq.-ft. core installation highlighting Pueblo artists and history. Poehcenter.org

MON.–SAT., 8 AM–4 PM
RANDALL DAVEY AUDUBON CENTER
1800 Upper Canyon Rd.
Trails lead through several habitats and plant zones ranging from meadows to Ponderosa Pine forests. No dogs allowed. 505.983.4609

TUES., SAT., 7 AM–1 PM
SANTA FE FARMERS' MARKET
1607 Paseo de Peralta
Northern NM farmers & ranchers offer fresh tomatoes, greens, root veggies, cheese, teas, herbs, spices, honey, baked goods, body-care products and much more. 505.983.7726, santafefarmersmarket.com

TUES.–SAT.
EL MUSEO CULTURAL DE SANTA FE
555 Cam. de la Familia
Rotating exhibits, community programs and performances designed to preserve Hispanic culture. Elmuseocultural.org

WEDS.–SUN.
SANTA FE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
1050 Old Pecos Tr.
Interactive exhibits and activities. 505.989.8359, Santafechildrensmuseum.org

FRIDAYS, 2 PM
INDIAN ARTS RESEARCH CENTER DOCENT-LED TOURS
School for Advanced Research, 660 García St.
Collection of nearly 12,000 pieces of Native American art. $15/free to members. 505.954.7272, www.sarweb.org

ONGOING, 10 AM–5 PM
TELLING NM: STORIES FROM THEN AND NOW
New Mexico History Museum, 113 Lincoln Ave.
500 years of stories—from early Native inhabitants to today's residents—told through artifacts, films, photographs, computer interactives, oral histories and more. 505.982.6466, www.museumfoundation.org/exhibitions

TAOS

DEC. 7, 5–7 PM
LIGHTING LEDOUX ST.

THIRD TUES. MONTHLY, 5:30 PM
TAOS ENTREPRENEURIAL NETWORK
KTAOS, 9 State Rd. 150
Networking, presentations, discussion and professional services. Free or by donation. 505.776.7903, www.taosten.org

OPEN DAILY
LA HACIENDA DE LOS MARTÍNEZ
708 Hacienda Way
Northern NM-style Spanish colonial "great house" built in 1804 by Severino Martínez. 575.758.1000, Taoshistoricmuseum.org

HERE & THERE

DEC. 7, 4–9 PM
LIGHTS OF LOS LUCEROS
Los Luceros Historic Site, Alcalde, NM
Nmhistoricsites.org

DEC. 7, 4 PM; DEC. 8, 2 PM
WINTER FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS
Moving Arts Española, 368 Eagle Dr., Ohkay Owingeh, NM
505.577.6629, www.MovingArtsEspanola.org

DEC. 10, 8 AM–4 PM
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE
UNM-Valencia, 280 La Entrada Rd., Los Lunas, NM
Focused on managing pests and diseases as well as technologies to improve ag infrastructure. Hosted by NMSU College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. Sponsored by Western SARE. http://rsvp.nmsu.edu/rsvp/sustainable2019

DEC. 15 APPLICATION DEADLINE
MASTER GARDENING CLASSES, JAN. 14–APRIL 28
Sandoval Administration Building, Rio Rancho
High-desert gardening. Presented by NMSU Extension Service and other specialists. $175. Sandovalmastergardeners.org

JAN. 17–19, 2020
UCCS GRAIN SCHOOL
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs
Brings together experts in the science and practical applications of heritage and ancient grains–from farming to baking and cooking, fermenting, malting and milling. www.uccs.edu/swell/grainschool