



OPEN SPACE *newsletter*



Mayor Martín J. Chávez

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Open Space Division and the Open Space Alliance

Volume 8, Issue 3, July - September 2007

THE ADVENTURE OF A DISCARD

A Metaphor

By Eugenia Eberle, Albuquerque Rotary Club

I am a paper cup. I was very useful once, but when I was no longer needed, I was discarded. Not put into a bag with other used items but merely pitched into the Rio Grande River, just north of the Bosque where I began my lonely and rather hazardous journey. Sink or swim! Some of us sank with other waste products to be caught by the weight of the silt thickening the river as it worked its long route south. Those of us who floated, however, went along for the ride, not knowing where we'd land or what might happen to us along the way. I'd meet other discarded objects, but my friendships would alter occasionally if I was caught temporarily in the limb of a tree that had fallen from the latest rain after the river flooded the banks, pulling it from its foundations. I'd sit there bobbing for who knows how long before the water level dropped back to normal, finally allowing me to pass under the long, fallen limb. There was a time when, still a rather reasonably new cup, I got caught in a broken branch, unable to free myself as the little whirlpool contained me beside a large piece of bubble wrap hooked quite permanently on another broken branch close by. It was there that my journey would lapse until the rains came and the river rose, spinning me away from the branch allowing me to move with the water, swift now, with the current now pulling, pulling so many of us who continued to survive to the next junction. When the water changed its tempo with the seasons, falling and rising through the year, I would usually be set free from my temporary traps. Off I'd go where I'd meet other friends, new friends, who would compare their stories as we continued to survive the flow and turmoil, bumping and churning along the way moving along for what seemed like forever. The shores began to clutter with so many of us survivors, now finding permanent resting places, locked in with plastic bottles, Styrofoam pieces, plastic petrol containers, once like me, whole and useful to someone. The

banks were resting places for clothing, magazines, and torn, rotting, muddy blankets. We were all shapes and sizes, a multitude of colors and personalities. It was when we were no longer needed that we felt safer by being put into a trash can where we could really make a party of it, knowing we were in our own place.

I recall a particular day which startled me, but also proved to be somewhat of a relief, when a group of people with large black bags stepped watchfully along the shore picking us up. Some had sticks to pull us in, to release us from our bondage, others crawled out along a tree trunk to grab us or hold on to another for support for that long reach, determined to collect us for our permanent resting place, that place where we should all go once we have been discarded!

As I sit crammed in my new home, I feel secure that I have been put where I am meant to be and thank that someone for putting me there.

NATIONAL RIVER CLEAN-UP

a messy success!

It is easy to drive on any of the bridges over the Rio Grande and say, "Wow, the river is beautiful and clean!" It is easy to overlook what is really lurking in the muddy waters of the Rio Grande. Yes, there are Silvery Minnows, but what people don't see or even want to think of seeing are the tons of trash clinging to the banks, floating down the river, or un-biodegradable plastics taking harbor where wildlife would rather be.

On May 19th, 2007 incredibly hard working volunteers helped the Open Space Division pull more

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NATIONAL TRAILS DAY 2007

Success Measured in Sweat & Smiles

We are fortunate in Albuquerque--not only because we have thousands and thousands of acres of public land with possibly hundreds of miles of trail, but because we have a lot of people who deeply care about it. And their care isn't just a kind word, but a willingness to dig out their work gloves and heave a Pulaski or McCleod on a searing hot June day to help maintain the very trails and lands they enjoy.

"It was immensely gratifying to know that over 170 volunteers gathered in the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area on June 2nd for National Trails Day with the purpose of helping to preserve the trails and habitat," said Mayor Martin Chávez. Fifteen projects including drain dip construction to protect trails from erosion, Double Shelter Amphitheater renovations (funded by an REI grant), gate and kiosk repairs and trail closure were accomplished on Open Space and Forest Service lands.

THANK YOU each and everyone for your participation in the conservation of trails.

THANK YOU SPONSORS

Generous contributions from local businesses and organizations provided NTD commemorative t-shirts, gobs of food and beverages, and fabulous raffle prizes. Thank you for helping us illustrate to the volunteers how much their participation in the conservation of trails is valued.

OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE	LA MONTANITA COOP
FRIENDS OF SANDIA MOUNTAINS	FRITO LAY
SPORTZ OUTDOOR	GREAT HARVEST BAKERY
SPORTS SYSTEMS	SATELLITE COFFEE
REI	STONEAGE CLIMBING GYM
USFS SANDIA RANGER DISTRICT	THEOBROMA CHOCOLATIER
THE WAY CHURCH	WOLFE'S BAKING CO.
WHOLE FOODS MARKET	WALMART

THANK YOU CREW LEADERS

A special thanks goes out to our volunteer **crew leaders** who stepped up to lead or co-lead trail crews for National Trails Day. Thank you to Ray Berg, Rob Dudley, Diane Goodman, Yih-Ming Hsu, Daniel Ryerson, Chris and Anne Stageman, Mike Stark, and Bill White.

Thanks also to all of our **Adopt - An - Open Space** groups that participated including Believers On Mountain Bikes (BOMB), the Four Hills Village Homeowner's Association, Diane Goodman, High Desert Homeowners Association, Mountain Bikers For Trail Maintenance, the Nicodemus Wilderness Project and the Women's Mountain Bike and Tea Society (WOMBATS).



THE WILLIS WARBLER

Bird News from Open Space

~by Joshua Willis



Nesting and parenting season is in full effect for many birds. For Open Space this means stop what you are doing and let nature take its course! To be more specific, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA) states within Public Law 95-616 “nations will take measures

to protect identified ecosystems of special importance to migratory birds against pollution, detrimental alterations, and other environmental degradations.” How does this translate within the Division? It means all motorized vehicles and exotic plant removal halt in the bosque during breeding season. Many birds choose to nest in some of the exotic trees such as tamarisk, Russian olive, and Siberian elm that Open Space works hard to remove. One of those birds happens to be a very bright bird called the Summer Tanager.

During nesting season tools such as chainsaws, mowers, large tree crunching machines and wood chippers are discouraged in the bosque. The combination of noise pollution and the potential disruption of nesting habitat keeps the Open Space bosque crew from their normal routine down by the river. Not to worry. The crew has much to do in the foothills and on the west side during that time. This break from bosque restoration allows the Summer Tanager to get busy....you know....building nests.

The Summer Tanager will draw your attention if you are lucky enough to be near one. The male's feathers are bright red, whereas the female is a grayish yellow. Her appearance is far less magnetic than her male counterpart. There is a reason for the contrast in their appearance. The male is a great distraction. His bright red feathers allow him to draw danger away from the nest where the female and chicks sit. Her dull appearance allows for camouflage, thus providing more safety for the Tanager family. Rumor has it that the female is more attracted to the male with the brightest feathers. The better he is at being a target, the more likely he will be selected as a mate.

The MBTA is not applied in the bosque due to a threat of the Tanager becoming endangered. The treaty targets all migratory birds, so the Tanager obviously benefits from the institution, as do many other bird species. It would seem that being a target has its benefits. Being targeted as a threatened or endangered species is not such a good thing, yet just as the male Summer Tanager draws attention to himself in potentially fatal situations in order to promote the safety of his mate and offspring, so too does any endangered species bring much needed attention to habitat such as Open Space. As we realize how our consumer culture affects the habitat of birds, fish, and literally everything around us, institutions such as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act helps us to more efficiently target the adjustments we ourselves need to make in our behavior in order to promote the health of the land and our offspring. So let's get busy!

http://www.ncwildlife.org/pg07_wildlifespeciescon/Profiles/tanagersummer.pdf

National River Clean Up 2007



THE BEAR FACTS

Sharing Open Space with Bears & Cougars

Please remember that Open Space is home to many wild animals including black bears and cougars. Recent dry weather has forced these animals to search for food at lower elevations. Bears have been spotted at the Elena Gallegos throughout the spring and summer and if the dry weather continues they may be tempted to visit picnic areas and backyards.

If you use Open Space or Forest Service picnic areas in the Sandias please help us by cleaning up the picnic area when you are done and properly disposing of any food scraps, napkins or food containers. Food scraps left on picnic tables may draw bears to that picnic table. Please do not feed any wild animals, **ever** as it can cause the animal to associate humans with food. This can result in dangerous encounters between humans and wild animals and may result in an animal having to be destroyed by a game warden.

If you live near the Sandia Foothills or in the East Mountains please take steps to keep your home safe from invading bears and other wildlife. Remember to secure your trash in a bear proof area such as a garage or shed; hang your bird feeders 10 feet or higher; keep your barbecue grills clean; keep all pet food and dishes indoors; watch your pets and children when they are outside; and planting fruit trees is discouraged.

Bears that become drawn to backyards will get used to humans and our unintentional interference in their habitat. Many of the same bear precautions apply to protecting your home from cougars if you live near the foothills or in the East Mountains.

Safety Tips If You Meet a Black Bear

Stay calm, do not run. Running may prompt the bear to chase you. If the bear hasn't seen you, calmly leave the area and talk out loud to let the bear know of your presence. If the bear has seen you back away while facing the bear, but do not make eye contact. If on a trail, step away to the down hill side and slowly leave the area. Speak softly, this may reassure the bear that you are not a threat. Never come between a mother and its cubs. If a bear does attack then fight back. Use rocks, sticks, or even your bare hands.

Safety Tips If You Meet a Cougar

Stop and stay calm. Do not run. Immediately pick up small children and try to keep them calm. Face the cougar and stand tall. Hold a jacket or a back pack up over your head to appear bigger. Back away slowly. If a cougar approaches throw sticks or rocks and speak loudly. If a cougar attacks fight back with all means.

While hiking remember to keep your children within arms reach and always keep your dogs on a leash. Look for additional safety tips and information at sandiamountainbearwatch.org.

...RIVER CLEAN-UP cont'd from page 2

than 150 full bags of trash out of the Rio Grande. You don't realize the garbage is there until you have 11 rafts, several kayaks, and a couple of canoes floating down the river with determined boaters wanting to protect this precious habitat.

Mayor Martin Chávez and the Open Space Division would like to thank everyone who helped make this day such a success. A special thanks is extended to **Kirtland and Holloman Airforce Base's Outdoor Recreation Service** programs and their crews for bringing the rafts to make this event possible. The magnitude of the event would not have been possible without the help of the Adobe Whitewater Club of New Mexico, the Albuquerque Police Department and Bernalillo County Sheriffs Department for their patrols using hovercrafts, Sage Brush Community Church, Thomas Village Neighborhood Association, and the West Central Alliance of Neighbors (WeCAN). All of the rafting, rowing, paddling, reaching, and bending to get trash out of the river and bosque drained the energy out of the volunteers and we would like to thank the following sponsors for providing food and refreshments which helped replenish this lost energy and kept everyone smiling: **Sophia's Place, Albuquerque Rotary Club, Sunflower Market, Wolfe's Bagels, and Starbucks** on Rio Grande

To top off this fun and important event, the Open Space Division held an "oddest trash" competition where we elected a first prize and three runner-up prizes. First prize went to a 2-liter plastic soda bottle that had a living ecosystem (a miniature bosque) within it. The first place prize was a Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains book. The runner-up entries were a piece of a dashboard from a decades-old car, a really old toilet float (when they were made of metal), and a fire extinguisher. All runner-up winners received an annual pass to Open Space.

AUGUST

4 *SUNSET SERIES: ROLLING RIVER***Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM**

The Ciudad Water and Conservation District's Rolling River simulates a watershed with miniature models to simulate a living environment with hills, valleys, houses, streets, cars, animals and trees. Hidden plumbing pumps water into the tiny environment to show the effects of flood and drought. This is hands-on and a lot of fun.

5 *SUNDAY HIKE: INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHICAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS)***Elena Gallegos Pino Trailhead ● 9:00 AM**

Open Space's very own GPS/GIS guy, Erik Zsemlye, will teach you how to find your unique place in the world using a device that communicates with satellites. Please bring your own GPS unit if you have one. A limited number of GPS units will be available for the training.

11 *SUNSET SERIES: WHAT'S IN THE SKY TONIGHT?***Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM**

A guided trip through the Summer night sky with Judy Stanley. Bring binoculars.

18 *SUNSET SERIES: STORYTELLING AND MUSIC***Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM**

A princess who marries a wolf, an old hag who steals the sun and the moon, the first singer of stories, a magic rosemary plant, sea-ladies, dragons, air daughters--these are just some of the characters you may meet conjured by Scott and Johanna Hongell-Darsee.

19 *SUNDAY HIKE: GEOLOGY OF THE SANDIAS***Elena Gallegos Pino Trailhead ● 9:00 AM**

Would you be surprised to know that Sandia Crest is made up, partly, of limestone? And that limestone is made up of sea creatures? How did sea creatures get there? Get that answer and more fascinating geologic history of the Sandia Mountains from geologist, Jack Babcock.

25 *SUNSET SERIES: LIGHT AND SHADOWS SKETCHING***Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM**

"Learn to slow down and capture the human experience" with Leo Neufeld, known for his contemporary realist portraits and landscapes. Please bring a sketchpad.

26 *SUNDAY HIKE: MAP & COMPASS FOR KIDS***Elena Gallegos Pino Trailhead ● 9:00 AM**

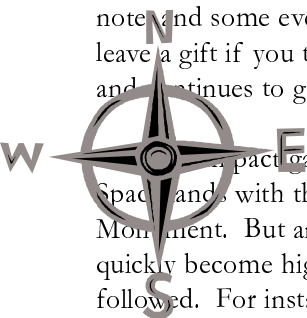
Okay, KIDS! Learn how to find your way out of the forest or desert or the city with a map & compass.

GEOCACHING SPECIAL EVENT Promoting Responsible Recreation on Public Lands

Saturday * September 29, 2007 * 9:00 AM
Elena Gallegos Picnic Area

Geocaching is a modern day treasure hunt. These days, the parchment map with a giant X is replaced with a Global Positioning Unit (GPS). This is a handheld device that communicates with satellites to identify its unique place on earth. A geocacher places a cache at a particular spot, posts the coordinates on a

website (typically geocaching.com) and the game begins! A cache may contain a log to record visitors; it may have a note and some even have small gifts. It is courtesy to leave a gift if you take one. Geocaching appeals to all ages and continues to grow in popularity.



In fact, geocaching is enjoyed on Open Space and with the exception of Petroglyph National Monument. But any kind of low-impact recreation can quickly become high-impact if certain guidelines aren't followed. For instance, a bicyclist that goes off-trail on the same route just a few times can quickly create a discernible path that can lead to erosion and loss of habitat. The Geocaching Event will be a fun and unique event that promotes geocaching guidelines and sustainable public land use practices for everyone.

The Geocaching Event is for seasoned GPS users and beginners alike. If you are a beginner, there will be an orientation for GPS use the week before the event. If you do not own a GPS unit, there will be a limited number of units available to loan. Pre-registration is recommended for all participants, but required for those who would like to attend the orientation and request a loaner. Registration will begin at REI August 31. Please call 247-1191 or visit the store at 1550 Mercantile Ave NE.

More information about this event will be available at www.cabq.gov/openspace by the end of August or call Erik Zsemlye at 452-5200.

BRANCHING OUT Maze in the Maize 2007

Begins Saturday * September 1

Rio Grande Community Farms is going to *amaze* everyone once again with the 2007 Maze in the Maize event at Los Poblanos Fields Open Space. The Maze will be a nature theme and cut in the design of a cottonwood tree and sunflowers. The title of this year's maze is called **"Branching Out"** to celebrate Rio Grande Community Farm's tenth anniversary as a non-profit farm organization providing education and agricultural opportunities for the community. The grand opening will be on **Saturday, September 1st** at 10 a.m. The maze will be open every weekend beginning Labor Day weekend until Halloween night.

Hours of Operation

Fridays: 6:00pm-8:00pm
Saturdays: 10:00am-8:00pm
Sundays: 12:00 noon-6:00pm

Cost

Adults – \$8
Children 4-12 years old -- \$4
Children under 4 are free

Location

On Tierra Viva Rd. between 4th St. and Rio Grande Blvd. off Montano Blvd.

Hours of operation and prices are subject to change. To schedule a weekday visit or for more information on the maze please call Rio Grande Community Farms at 345-4580. Volunteers are always needed, so if you would like to help this be one *amazing* year please inquire by calling 345-4580.



OPEN SPACE: A VIEW WITH ROOM
2nd Annual Art Exhibition and Sale

~

September 15 through November 16
Open Space Visitor Center

The Open Space Alliance in partnership with the Open Space Division is hosting the Second Annual "A View with Room Art Exhibit and Sale." Last year, the show was a rewarding event which brought the talents of many New Mexican Plein Air artists together to celebrate the rich Open Space landscape. Plein air is derived from the french *en plein air* meaning "in the open air." These artists have spent the last year touring and painting Open Space land. Their new work will be featured at this show for the first time. Enjoy and support a creative perspective on our beloved Open Space lands.



Visit www.cabq.gov/openspace for more information and directions to the Open Space Visitor Center.

**Get involved in the Open Space Alliance *today* and contribute
to the future of YOUR Open Space!**

Your generous contribution to the Open Space Alliance supports OSA's mission of enhancing our quality of life through: heightening public awareness of Open Space lands; building and strengthening partnerships with groups who share Open Space values; promoting conservation, acquisition, and stewardship of Open Space lands; strengthening volunteerism and community outreach programs, and providing financial support.

For information about our current activities, contact Steve Hamp, OSA Board President, at shamp7@comcast.net, or 247-2523.

To join, please fill out the information and return the form with your check or money order.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

☐ NEW MEMBER

☐ \$10 STUDENT (18 & UNDER) / SENIOR

☐ \$250 SUSTAINING

☐ RENEWAL

☐ \$20 INDIVIDUAL

☐ \$500 CORPORATE

☐ \$30 FAMILY

☐ \$1000 LIFE MEMBER

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Open Space Alliance, P.O. Box 91265, Albuquerque, NM 87199

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Albuquerque, NM 87199



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PAID
Permit #297
Albuquerque, NM

Open Space News

is a quarterly publication of the
City of Albuquerque, Parks & Recreation Department, **OPEN SPACE DIVISION**
P.O. Box 1293, Albuquerque, NM 87103
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and funded by the **OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE**

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OPEN SPACE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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7:00 am to 5:00 pm

Monday through Friday

(505)452-5200

ELENA GALLEGOS PICNIC AREA

Winter: 7:00 am to 7:00 pm

Summer: 7:00 am to 9:00 pm

all week

\$1.00 weekdays / \$2.00 weekends

(505)857-8334

PETROGLYPH NATIONAL MONUMENT BOCA NEGRA CANYON

8:00 am to 5:00 pm, all week

\$1.00 weekdays / \$2.00 weekends

(505)897-8814

OPEN SPACE VISITOR CENTER

6500 Coors Blvd. NW

(505)897-8831

9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Tuesday - Saturday

TO REPORT VIOLATIONS

8:00 am to 6:00 pm, all week

(505) 452-5206 (voice/relay)

OR

242-COPS