



OPEN SPACE *newsletter*



Mayor Martín J. Chávez

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

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An Interview with Bob Burgan, the First Director of the City's Parks Department, PART 1

by Matt Schmader, Open Space Division Superintendent

I was fortunate enough to get an interview with Bob Burgan on September 13, 2007. Burgan, 89, was the first director of the Parks Department when it was formed in 1954. Our talk took place in his living room as movers packed boxes. The next day he left Albuquerque after living here for 60+ years and moved to Ogden, Utah. – M.S.

Matt: I wanted to talk with you because I think as a society we are prone to losing track of our historical connections.

Robert: Let me start by saying about Open Space—if it hadn't been for Ed Engel, who was the City Manager at the time, this program probably wouldn't have gotten started.

I say that because when I was approached by people from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), I presented that information to him. He had been the City Planner prior to becoming the City Manager in April of 1954 but since he had planning experience he knew the value of obtaining land for Open Space and for parks and recreation purposes.

We had to justify the acquisition of the land through the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation because they were administering the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which made money available to cities and counties.

BLM at the time was trying to consolidate their holdings where they had isolated tracts: they wanted to either sell them or trade them off so that they could block up larger tracts of land which were easier to manage, obviously—when you had a lot of little tracts it was difficult for any agency to manage, particularly on a national scale.

BLM didn't want to hang on to tracts in the City limits since they didn't represent a large holding to lease for grazing purposes or mineral development. The Land and Water Conservation Fund set up a program where the City could lease land yearly for 25 cents an acre or purchase it for two and a half dollars—a nominal fee. In the early 60's, since this program was available, we had already developed communications between Phoenix/Maricopa County, Tucson/Pima County and even El Paso.

A group of representatives from these various cities and counties went to Washington D.C. We met with the Secretary of the Interior, Stuart Udall. In fact I had a picture in my file of a group of us with Stuart in his office. Then we appeared before the House Interior Insular Affairs Committee and a subcommittee of theirs in the House. Manuel Lujan was the congressman from Albuquerque who helped to arrange for us to appear before this subcommittee.

We testified as to the necessity of the various cities and counties acquiring this federal land.... the main objective of this contact was the limitation of acquiring 640 acres at one time, which was really inconsistent with the wide open spaces of the southwest.

It might have been okay for Missouri or Illinois or somewhere like that but not for Arizona or New Mexico. So we lobbied to get them to change the legislation, which they did eventually, and we could acquire more than 640 acres in one calendar year.

This enabled us then to get land in Volcano Ranch over by Double Eagle Airport and the Shooting Range out there; it was over 4,000 acres that we were able to get at one whack from the feds. And we got 4,000 and some odd acres out by Placitas, by Las Huertas Creek. We got some land on the western boundaries of Four Hills (40 acres). We got another tract up by Glenwood Hills—I think it was 12 acres or something.

We got 300 acres out by Gutierrez Canyon east of Highway 14 and also 168 acres south of Frost Road at San Antonito. We got 1,200 acres along the San Pedro Creek west of Highway 14 even though it was up in Sandoval County. We justified it because the city was growing among other things and the County didn't have the cash available in their capital fund program to acquire these lands.

We also got 27 and a half acres down off of 14 to the south (later, Carolino Canyon). We got La Boca Negra Park, and that was about it.

(.....CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

Open Space and the Nicodemus Wilderness Project Announce Something New for the Summer Series: “Leave No Child Inside”

~by Bill Pentler and Jim Sattler

The days are getting brighter and hints of the changing seasons abound. With the winds and growth of spring come thoughts of summer and potential outdoor activities. In these times of faltering New Year’s resolutions, Open Space is stepping up to offer activities for the whole family. We’re excited to announce that the Open Space Division and the Nicodemus Wilderness Project have started an innovative program for our annual Summer Series (see page 5) to help “Leave No Child Inside.”

The Nicodemus Wilderness Project is a worldwide organization based in Albuquerque and the adopters of the Piedra Lisa Open Space in the Sandia Foothills. Their mission is “to protect wildlife and our environment and to build future conservation leaders by engaging youth in environmental stewardship projects worldwide.” They accomplish this through their Apprentice Ecologist Initiative in which participating youth undertake an environmentally oriented project. They then write an essay about their project results and what they learned. The author of the best essay wins a \$500 scholarship toward their college fund. This program helps to elevate young people (especially at-risk and low-income kids and teens) into leadership roles by engaging them in environmental stewardship projects. For more information see www.wildernessproject.org.

Starting this year the Open Space Summer Series Sunday Hikes will serve to draw families outdoors and encourage youth and their families to participate in the Apprentice Ecologist Initiative. Our Sunday Hikes will now take place throughout the city, in an effort to make them more accessible to all citizens. Those who attend specially designated Summer Series events and complete an Apprentice Ecologist project will be rewarded with a complementary 6 month parking pass for the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area and the Boca Negra Canyon in the Petroglyph National Monument!

Opportunities for this year’s Sunday Hikes include hiking the West Mesa’s volcanoes, a tour of Candelaria Farms, walking Piedras Marcadas Canyon while learning about ancient cultures and petroglyphs, or taking a guided tour of the Piedras Marcadas Pueblo near our Visitor Center. These and many more experiences await you and your family this summer. We hope that in coming to these events, the youth in your family will be inspired to enter the Apprentice Ecologist program and try for one of their scholarships.

Studies say that we are in a trend of child obesity, lethargy and an isolated awareness of nature. Children these days are more likely to experience nature through the TV or the internet with limited or no true experience of actually being outdoors. Richard Louv, the author of the book *Last Child in the Woods* and the article “Leave No Child Inside”, describes this as “nature-deficit disorder”. He states “Urban, suburban, and even rural parents cite a number of everyday reasons why their children spend less time in nature than they themselves did, including disappearing access to natural areas, competition from television and computers, dangerous traffic, more homework, and other pressures. Most of all, parents cite fear of stranger-danger.” However, the evidence shows that cases of child-snatchings have remained about 100 per year for the last two decades. Additionally, the rates of violent crimes against young people have fallen to well below 1975 levels.

Louv goes on to say, “Yes, there are risks outside our homes. But there are also risks in raising children under virtual protective house arrest: threats to their independent judgment and value of place, to their ability to feel awe and wonder, to their sense of stewardship for the Earth – and, most immediately, threats to their psychological and physical health.”

In addition to combating obesity and other health issues, research shows that children as young as age five who have direct contact with nature demonstrate reduced symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. A 2005 study by the California Department of Education showed that spending a few days in an outdoor- education program not only increases student’s awareness and appreciation for nature but also raised students’ science test scores by 27 percent, improved conflict resolution and problem solving skills, and engendered better self-esteem and motivation to learn. Getting kids outdoors has never been so important! So turn off the TV and computer and get your entire family outside to Open Space this summer! Studies have shown that people are more prone to follow through with exercise promises when with a partner or group. Help your family start a lifelong ritual of exploring nature. And remember *there’s no better place than Open Space!*

In early April we will have a complete Summer Series calendar available at: www.cabq.gov/openspace

“The Scoop on Poop”

~by Bill Pentler

Spring is beckoning and the urge to get out and enjoy the Sandia foothill trails is creeping into even the most lethargic recreational user. The clouds break, and the breeze blows through our multiple layers of clothing, reminding us that winter is still clinging, resisting the season's change.



Determined to break winter's dregs, you forge forward to breathe deep the fullness of the moment, but there's something wrong. The air is heavier and laden with a foreign odor. With another deep breath and a glance around, the sun gains ground to reveal a seemingly endless array of....*dog poop*.

Albuquerque is in the throes of an entitlement epidemic with people feeling that they have the right to run their dogs without leashes and the right to allow their animals to poop any and everywhere. After all, it is biodegradable, right? Moreover, while off leash, there's no way that owners can be responsible for their animal's excretions because they are often out of sight.

Land managers such as the Open Space Division hope that educational signs and easy to use poop bags placed at trailheads (along with common sense and reasoning) will get people to naturally “do the right thing” when outdoors with their dogs.

The City applauds those of you who take responsibility for your animals but unfortunately you are in a minority. Some animal owners who live near Open Space lands just let their animals out the backdoor off leash.

Other animal owners drive to trail heads and let their dogs off leash within yards of their vehicles, never realizing the repercussions of their actions. Daily visits by hundreds of animals rapidly result in huge accumulations. These unsightly and odorous piles can end up ruining a visitor's experience. Need proof of how bad the problem is? The above photo shows the amount of poop on a stretch of trail in the foothills. Each flag represents an individual pile of poop. There were 46 piles in a 50 foot area!

Both domestic and wild animal feces can spread bacterial (Plague, Salmonellosis or Campylobacteriosis), protozoan, viral (Rabies) and parasitic diseases (roundworms or toxoplasmosis) to other animals and humans. These are mostly spread through contact from your off leash dog or cat sticking their nose into some poop or rolling in it and then returning to their owner for acknowledgment of their

success. Poop can also harm the environment by increasing nitrogen levels in stream runoff and in the soil.

We are not alone in this epidemic. Other cities across the nation are having similar problems. Boulder, Colorado conducted a study utilizing trailhead education, the results of which can be found in their 2004 report, “Effectiveness of Trailhead Education on Cleaning Up Dog Litter.” While Albuquerque is a much larger city than Boulder, our climates and ecozones are very similar.

The study estimates that one million dogs visited their foothills areas over a year with approximately 30 tons of dog waste left behind. The Albuquerque Hydrology Department estimates that the 80,000 registered dogs in Albuquerque generate *20 tons of waste per day*.

In wetter and/or more humid climates the feces would likely deteriorate but it still takes weeks. In dry climates such as ours, they seem to just petrify. (There's a challenge for young, budding scientists looking for school science projects: “The Biodegradability of Dog Poop!”)

Dogs off leash and feces along the trail also create social conflict in several ways. It's uncomfortable when an unknown dog approaches you when you're hiking. Also, when our Open Space employees request owners to comply with the leash and clean-up rules, many respond with verbal abuse followed by some form of sign language as they walk away.

Additionally, owners don't always understand the potential impact to wildlife of an unleashed dog. Many of these encounters are dangerous to both the animal and wildlife, with the dog usually getting the worst of it.

(.....CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

Planning for the John A. Milne Open Space Begins

~by Kent Swanson



In early 2008 a multi-agency and community effort involving the Trust for Public Land, with funding coming from both the State and City, led to the purchase of 420 acres of Open Space in the East Mountains. The new John A. Milne Open Space (named after the original owner and former APS administrator) is contiguous with the existing Gutierrez Canyon Open Space.

Together the two properties create a total of 720 acres of protected Major Public Open Space stretching from Highway 14 east to Gutierrez Canyon Road. The additional land helps to make the area more accessible to the public, and plans are underway to develop a small parking area off of Highway 14 near the Cedar Crest Post Office.

Open Space Division employees have begun to survey the area with the hope of formalizing access and creating a sustainable trail system for low-impact recreation. The Open Space Division will strive to keep the property in its natural state for the enjoyment of all citizens and the protection of wildlife. Until formal trails are established, please respect all private property in the area and pack out any garbage. Please call us at **452-5200** with any questions you may have.

THE TRUST for PUBLIC LAND



Celebrate Earth Week with a hike hosted by the Trust for Public Land in the newly expanded John A. Milne/Gutierrez Canyon Open Space. **APRIL 26TH, 2008**

RSVP by April 18th to Anais Weckert:
railyard.program@tpl.org
or call (505) - 988-5922 ext. 117

Schedule:

10:30am Reception
11:00am Refreshments
11:30am Interpretive Hike

The Scoop on Poop... (Continued from Page 3)

Thankfully, Albuquerque's Animal Welfare Department is now working with Open Space to assist us in this problem. The city's new HEART laws state that animals must be on leashes no longer than 10 feet when outside of enclosed yards or dog parks and that owners are responsible for the animal's excretions. By the way, that's for both cats and dogs!

The Animal Welfare Officers have enthusiastically said that they will patrol the bosque and foothills areas to help us educate the public with words or, if necessary, handouts (you get the idea) to decrease this potential health risk and social blight to our natural areas.

I myself have volunteered to lead poop patrols during our Spring Cleanups in the foothill areas each Saturday of April. Check the events calendar on page 5 for details of the Cleanup and other volunteer opportunities in Open Space. If you feel strongly about this then please come out and join us!

So that's my scoop on poop. Here's hoping that after reading this you'll do your scooping too.

Bill Pentler

Open Space Division
Parks Program Specialist/Education Coordinator
(505)452-5222
wpentler@cabq.gov

APRIL 2008

EACH SATURDAY IN APRIL, 9:00am - 1:00pm: 8th Annual Foothills Spring Cleanup. Help us clean your favorite Sandia Foothills Open Space area! Arrive early to register and enjoy coffee and snacks!

- ◆ April 5: Copper
- ◆ April 12: Indian School
- ◆ April 19: Menaul
- ◆ April 26: Piedra Lisa

April 26th through June 24th: An Exhibit of Chain Saw Carvings in Wood by Mark Chavez at the Open Space Visitor Center. Call 897-8831 for more information, or email: jrwillis@cabq.gov

MAY 2008

May 4th, 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM: Opening Reception for Chain Saw Carvings in Wood by Mark Chavez at the Open Space Visitor Center. Call 897-8831 for more information, or email: jrwillis@cabq.gov

May 17th, 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM: National River Cleanup. Central Avenue on the northwest side of the Rio Grande. Help us clean up the Rio Grande and its bosque during this annual event and enjoy morning snacks, prizes, and an afternoon BBQ. Call 452-5213 or email jsattler@cabq.gov for more information.

May 23rd through August 2008: 2008 SUMMER SERIES. This popular event includes the Saturday Sunset Series at the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area Amphitheater and our Sunday Hikes. Sunset Series events start at 7:00pm. Sunday Hikes start at 9:00am. Sunday Hikes will now take place throughout the Open Space system. A complete calendar will be available on www.cabq.gov/openspace in early April. Highlights from the 2007 Summer Series include wildflower hikes, discussions about archaeology and astronomy, nature photography, presentations from Talking Talons, live music, GPS and compass lessons, and more! See the article "No Child Left Inside" on page 2 for some exciting news about the Summer Series. Call 452-5222 for more information.

May 24th, 9:30AM - Noon: Nature Journaling for Beginners with Margy O'Brien. Open Space Visitor Center. Instruction fee is \$10.00. Call 897-8831 to register. Space is limited to 20 people 10 years old and above.

May 25th, 9:00AM - 4:00PM: Chain Saw Carving Demonstration by Mark Chavez. Open Space Visitor Center. Call 897-8831 for more information, or email: jrwillis@cabq.gov

JUNE 2008

ONGOING through August 2008: 2008 SUMMER SERIES continues with the Saturday Sunset Series at the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area Amphitheater and our Sunday Hikes. See www.cabq.gov/openspace or call Bill Pentler at 452-5222 for more details!

June 7th, 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM. National Trails Day at the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area. Celebrate access to the outdoors! Volunteer for National Trails Day and get involved in a variety of projects including trail maintenance, graffiti removal, trash pickup, and erosion control. Call 452-5213 or email jsattler@cabq.gov for more information.

June 14th, time TBA: Two Decades of Protection, 700 Years of History, Celebrating the Anniversary of the Acquisition of the Piedras Marcadas Pueblo Ruin. Open Space Visitor Center. Presented by Dr. Matt Schmader, chief archaeologist for the site. Call 897-8831 for more information, or email jhedderig@cabq.gov.

June 28th, 10:00am - 12:00pm: Introduction to Papermaking Workshop with Kent Swanson. Open Space Visitor Center. Call 452-5216 or email kswanson@cabq.gov to RSVP. Spaces are limited.

Please see www.cabq.gov/openspace for a regularly updated calendar of events, or call 452-5200 for information about events, volunteer opportunities and recreational activities on Open Space lands.

THE OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE ANNUAL MEETING



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The Open Space Alliance (OSA) Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday May 15th from 6:30 to 8:00 pm at the Open Space Visitor Center.

This year we will host an "open house" that will highlight our members and their many contributions that help make Albuquerque Open Space special. Awards will be presented in several categories.

Come and have a good time, meet new members, share stories, photos, and experiences from your time in Open Space areas. Pick up some fantastic doors prizes, and enjoy some light refreshments and desserts!

The meeting is open to all OSA members, guests and Open Space volunteers.

Join us at the Open Space Visitor Center and see this remarkable facility and learn more about Open Space in Albuquerque!

For more information on the Annual Meeting, or how to get involved in OSA activities, please contact Board President Steven Hamp at president@openspacealliance.org



An Interview with Bob BurganContinued from Page 1

We sort of infringed on the people who were using the land on the west side. You may recall that there was a checker-boarding of sections out there that the railroads had acquired clear back in the 1800s from the federal government, plus school land— out of every township there was one section set aside for public schools.

The rest of it was either private or under the control of the BLM in many cases going out towards the Rio Puerco. There were sheep ranchers out there—the Bond family among others. The Bonds had a warehouse which became the Wool Warehouse on First Street south of Lomas. Later it became a theater, but when you first walked in there it smelled of sheep skins.

But the Bonds saw the writing on the wall and they didn't protest the City's acquisition of Boca Negra because they eventually quit sheep grazing, particularly as Paradise Hills got organized in the 1960s. Later on we got land for the petroglyphs on Atrisco Road as it went up the escarpment to get to Boca Negra and they still have trails out there.

I think the citizen's groups really got involved a little later. They would recommend to the City Commission in favor of proceeding with acquisition and including money in each bond fund for Open Space acquisition. Some people didn't think that was too great but at least there were a few bureaucrats who had enough initiative to proceed with the program. There were some people—a couple who lived in the North Valley and they later moved to Florida.

MS: The Rosners, Hy and Joan Rosner.

RB: Yes, and they were instrumental in getting people started in the county and their state representatives in this program too. Then the city proceed with getting lands down by the river and of course by the extension of Candelaria where we built a structure so people could get an idea of what the aquatic life was and animal life in general as well as the characteristics of the bosque including the vegetation.

Stay tuned for more of this fascinating interview in future issues of the Open Space News.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR OPEN SPACE VOLUNTEERS:



As you may remember, in 2007 the City's email system suffered a crash, causing problems with our volunteer database. We're doing our best to resolve the issue but we're not quite there yet.

We are asking volunteers to email Jodi Hedderig their current contact information if you would like to receive announcements related to volunteer opportunities, programs, workshops, etc. by email. Thank you for your patience and understanding!

Jodi Hedderig, jhedderig@cabq.gov, 897-8831

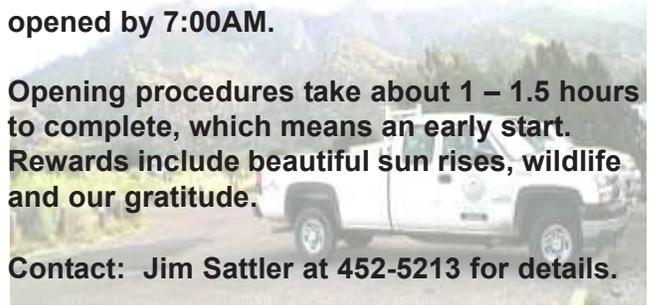
Exciting Volunteer Opportunity in Our Beautiful Open Space Parks!

Are you an early riser? Do you enjoy watching the sun rise over the Sandias and seeing wildlife? Well if you have some extra time on your hands in the mornings and you don't know what to do with it, we can help you.

Volunteers are needed to assist our Park Attendant staff with opening the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area and the Sandia Foothills Trailheads. All of these facilities need to be opened by 7:00AM.

Opening procedures take about 1 – 1.5 hours to complete, which means an early start. Rewards include beautiful sun rises, wildlife and our gratitude.

Contact: Jim Sattler at 452-5213 for details.



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: _____

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- () \$20 INDIVIDUAL
- () \$30 FAMILY
- () \$250 SUSTAINING
- () \$500 CORPORATE
- () \$1000 LIFE MEMBER

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 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