



# OPEN SPACE *newsletter*



*Mayor Martín J. Chávez*

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

Volume 9, Issue 1, January 2008- March 2008

## A MESSAGE FROM THE OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE

As I look back on 2007, it's been one fantastic year. The Alliance continues to be a dedicated advocate for Albuquerque open space, and there have been many accomplishments throughout the year. These successes are attributable to the strong support that was achieved from Open Space Alliance (OSA) members, trail watch volunteers, and the Albuquerque Open Space Division. One highlight from 2007 was to see the Open Space Visitor Center become a viable and superb city attraction. The facility continues to display the diversity of open space lands in Albuquerque and introduce the public to a wide variety of landscapes and recreational opportunities.



A perfect example of this showcase was the presentation given by Dr. Larry Crumpler on the West Mesa volcanoes in May. This event was sponsored by OSA and provided an in-depth look at the prominent landscape on the West Mesa. Then, in September the Visitor Center hosted the second annual art exhibit and sale, "Open Space: A View with Room". The 2007 art show featured paintings from 17 different artists whose work captured the variety of open space in Albuquerque. The exhibit was on display for three months and during that time there were several artist demonstrations and featured activities, such as the wildlife presentation by nature photographer Jerry Goffe. The art exhibit and sale was a major fund raising activity for the Open Space Alliance.

Another highlight of 2007 was the renovation of the outdoor amphitheater at the Elena Gallegos open space area. The project was funded from a stewardship grant given to OSA from Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI). The design and pre-construction layout was provided by the Open Space Division. Improvements included re-graveling the amphitheater floor area, construction of 21 new wood block benches and re-configuring them within the theater area, some trail repair leading to the amphitheater, and planting native vegetation around the immediate area. The project was completed as part of the National Trails Day event that was held at the Elena Gallegos open space area in early June. That event drew about 130 people to work on maintaining trails and other activities in the foothills open space.

About 16 volunteers helped with the amphitheater project and the end result was a much improved outdoor facility that is used for educational programs and presentations at Elena Gallegos.

OSA was also a proud sponsor of several other annual events held in 2007. National River Clean-up took place in May. It was a well attended event with many people volunteering for a day to help clean trash out of the Rio Grande and to maintain

the Bosque. The Dia del Rio event was held in October. This year the activities and conservation projects took place at the Open Space Visitor Center. Among the projects completed was the development of two Bosque interpretative trails just southeast of the Visitor Center. This represents a big first-step in linking a series of hiking trails in the Bosque that can be accessed from the Visitor Center.

There are many challenges for OSA in 2008. Completing the stewardship activities at Elena Gallegos with the remaining REI grant funding is a top priority. Plans are in place and with cooperation from the city Open Space Division the work should be completed in the spring. OSA will play a large role in getting a gift shop opened at the Open Space Visitor Center. The goal is to have an operating shop before summer. Equally important, the Alliance will work towards sponsoring more activities and presentations at the Visitor Center this year to engage more people at the facility. Planning for the 3rd annual Art Exhibit and Sale, which will open in September, is slated to get started early in the year. There is tremendous interest from local artists to participate in the 2008 exhibit. OSA will again co-sponsor the major Open Space Division annual events, like National River Clean-up and National Trails Day, and will continue to fund and provide support for the Quarterly Open Space Newsletter. All of these activities depend on volunteers. To help with any of these activities, contact the OSA Board of Directors or visit [www.openspacealliance.org](http://www.openspacealliance.org) for more information.

Let us look forward to the challenges of 2008 and treat ourselves to the extraordinary qualities Open Space lands have to offer.

**Steven Hamp**

President, Open Space Alliance

## HONORING OUR FRIENDS AND SPONSORS

### Notable Contributions to the Open Space Program in 2007

The Open Space Division would like to take this opportunity to thank our friends and sponsors who made 2007 such a success! We couldn't have done it without you! Thanks go out to:

#### ◆ REI-Recreational Equipment Incorporated



For generous support with National Trails Day, National River Cleanup Day, Dia del Rio, and for providing a \$10,000 grant for improvements at the

Double Shelter Amphitheater at the Elena Open Space

- ◆ **The Open Space Alliance**
- ◆ **Sportz Outdoor**
- ◆ **Sport Systems**
- ◆ **Frito Lay**
- ◆ **Great Harvest Bakery**
- ◆ **Whole Foods Market**
- ◆ **Sunflower Market**
- ◆ **Stoneage Climbing Gym**
- ◆ **Theobroma Chocolatier**
- ◆ **The Way**
- ◆ **Friends of the Sandia Mountains** (for their generous donations supporting National Trails Day in both 2006 and 2007)
- ◆ **Albuquerque Rotary Club** (for their support on the National River Clean Up, and for donating picnic tables to the new Rio del Norte Picnic Area)
- ◆ **Wolfe's Baking Company**
- ◆ **Satellite Coffee**
- ◆ **Sophia's Place Café**
- ◆ **La Montanita Coop**
- ◆ **Wal-Mart on San Mateo**



Thanks to the following groups for their support in our East Mountains properties:

- ◆ **San Pedro Creek Estates Homeowner's Association**
- ◆ **The Trail Partners**

Thanks also to:

**Kirtland Air Force Base Outdoor Recreation Team and Halloman Air Force Base Outdoor Recreation** (For providing rafts and guides for National River Cleanup Day)

A special thanks goes out to our adoption groups, including:

- ◆ **The Four Hills Homeowner's Association**
- ◆ **Terry Ballone**
- ◆ **Nicodemus Wilderness Project**
- ◆ **St Joseph on the Rio Grande**
- ◆ **WOMBATS**
- ◆ **First Unitarian Church Earth Web Group**
- ◆ **Las Placitas Association**
- ◆ **Bosque School**
- ◆ **PNM**
- ◆ **BOMB**
- ◆ **FOOMTB**
- ◆ **Bill White**
- ◆ **FBOMB**
- ◆ **Emily Sandall Family**
- ◆ **Diane Goodman**
- ◆ **Homebuilders Association of Central New Mexico**
- ◆ **Albuquerque Academy**
- ◆ **Girl Scout Troops 238 and 1265**
- ◆ **Margaret Chavez** (mother of Mark Chavez, tree sculptor)

## The Governance of a Season

~  
Joshua Willis



Photo by Bill Pentler

*The success of an omnivore is measured in oneness with the present. Serenity produced by soft and deliberate footsteps reveals abundance within our chosen resting places. To live adroit and unencumbered is our desired path on earthen soil and above it. That path will lead us south soon. Days pass. The aperture of warmth and light has come and gone in our summer home, so too have the many blessings of abundance grown scarce. We listen to and feel the season's messages, for our bodies are shaped by them. Eons of ancestral migration have carved our wings, our patterns, and presence into the banks and slopes of this river, embedded in clay and sand lay our deliberate footprints. Tethered golden leaves sigh, a chill whispers across the glassy surface of the river. Our direction is clearly marked by gravity's tow. It is time to go...*

Cool weather has crept into our socks chilling our toes and inspiring warm drink and flannel sheets once again. The onset of golden yellows, rusty reds, earthen browns and contrasting blues and grays ignite transition in our lives as the season moves into winter. Suddenly you hear it. It bubbles up from somewhere.... you look around; the sound is at times clear, at times muffled. It finally occurs to you to look upward into the vivid blue of the sky. There in perfect formation is a squadron of birds soaring high above. Their general direction is south. They too have been touched by the chill of the cool month and are in search of a hardy supply of food. They have come back to accompany us for the winter months. At least that is how we feel here at the Open Space Visitor Center (OSVC). In preparation for the return of the Sandhill crane we have grown many acres of sorghum and other wildlife crops for our omnivorous friends.

The Rio Grande Valley has been and continues to be the ancestral winter home of the Sandhill crane (*Grus Canadensis*) and Whooping crane (*Grus Americana*). A Miocene crane fossil, thought to be roughly ten million years old, was found in the Midwestern United States. The fossil is the spitting image of our modern Sandhill crane and denotes the crane as the oldest known bird species. Cranes have followed their ancestral flyways for all these years and, like the Midwest, the Southwest has its ancient flyways. The Rio Grande, not known for its deep waters or wide channel, is known for the distance it travels in order to finally reach the ocean. Gaining most of its grandness at the Southern border between New Mexico, Texas and Mexico, the river serves as a guide way and safety corridor for our friends in the *Grus* family.

These cranes have established important rest stops and winter homes within the Rio Grande Valley. However, their habitat is susceptible to change. Oxbows, riparian areas and savannas within the valley are swallowed up by development and many other disturbances. These traditional safe havens for the birds are replaced by harvestable crop land and parking lots. It only makes sense to offer these ancient travelers an alternative for safety and security. Places such as the Bosque del Apache, Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge, Candelaria Farm, Los Poblanos Fields, and the Open Space Visitor Center are identified places of refuge for such birds. Each sanctuary grows a percentage or wildlife crop which these birds feed on throughout the winter.

This morning I witnessed from the window of my office the familiar slow descent of three Sandhills in our sorghum fields...the first of many guests to come. These animals are charming to watch as they posture and dance asserting their dominance or simply play in courtship. They keep close tabs at an onlooker's distance: people, coyotes, foxes, and cats all fall within a "dangerous" category for the crane. Humans may come no closer than 40-50 feet. So if you would like to view these animals it is wise to bring binoculars. Here at the OSVC we welcome those who desire to see these birds in mass. Additionally, because the OSVC is located in Albuquerque, we offer great viewing opportunities of these birds for local folks who don't want to travel very far.

**The Open Space Division invites all interested parties to come and enjoy the return of the cranes with us here at the Visitor Center.** We offer many experiences including an art gallery, a collection of permanent and temporary exhibits, Bosque walks, volunteer opportunities and of course wildlife viewing. The VC is located east of Coors Road between Montaño and Paseo del Norte on Bosque Meadows Road. Visit us on the web [www.cabq.gov/openspace](http://www.cabq.gov/openspace) or call 897-8831 for more details. Come be our guests.

## OPEN SPACE PARKS YEAR END REPORT

by Jim Marmon, Open Space Specialist, and  
Jim Sattler, RMVS Program Manager

2007 was a busy year at Boca Negra Canyon and the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area/Albert G. Simms Park. In general, attendance has been up over the last 10 years, especially during holiday weekends and special events like the Balloon Fiesta. Even our attendance during the winter months is increasing steadily. In fact, in terms of visitors 2006 and 2007 were the busiest years since 1997!

**Open Space Park Stats:** In 2007 we had about 143,000 visitors at the Elena and about 62,000 at Boca Negra. It is important to note, especially for the Elena, that these numbers only reflect visitors who enter in a vehicle, and in the case of the Elena, do not include visitors who walk in, ride a horse, or bicycle in.

**Boca Negra Canyon:** Attendance in 2007, especially during the two weekends of the Balloon Fiesta, exceeded all expectations. During the Fiesta Boca Negra Canyon, part of the Petroglyph National Monument, continued to be a popular destination for residents and out of town visitors alike. Even with shuttle buses and ample overflow parking, some visitors had to return later in the day in order to visit. However, we took advantage of this increased traffic to educate guests about other areas within the Petroglyph National Monument that they could visit such as Rinconada Canyon and Piedras Marcadas Canyon.

**Staff Update:** In terms of staff, we are currently operating with just three full time Park Attendants. Richard Chavez, Paul Sedillo and Chani Washington are doing an excellent job of greeting visitors, keeping the Parks clean, and interpreting the natural and cultural treasures of these Open Space lands. Visitors to our Parks can expect to see new faces in 2008 as we hire new Park Attendants and finally get up to a full staff.

In other news, Charlie Pfuntner retired as a Park Attendant this year. Charlie worked with Open Space for over 6 years. Congratulations Charlie and we hope to still see your face around Open Space as a visitor! Thanks again for all your hard work!

**A Final Note:** Don't forget that the winter months are a wonderful time to get out and enjoy Major Public Open Space lands. The Elena Gallegos Picnic Area/Albert G. Simms Park is the gateway to year round hiking in the high desert wonderland of the foothills of the Sandia Mountains. Boca Negra Canyon offers a great way explore the ancient petroglyphs found along the volcanic escarpment visible as the western skyline of our city.

On behalf of the Open Space Parks staff, we thank you for your support and we look forward to seeing you in 2008!



### The Nicodemus Wilderness Project Contributes to Make a Difference Day

The Open Space Division would like to thank the Nicodemus Wilderness Project for their help in making this year's *Make a Difference Day* such a success!

The Nicodemus Wilderness Project is a non-profit whose mission is: "To protect wildlife and our environment and to build future conservation leaders by engaging youth in environmental stewardship projects worldwide." They are the adopters of the Piedra Lisa Open Space and help the Open Space Division organize at least three different events each year.

Please see [www.wildernessproject.org](http://www.wildernessproject.org) for more information.

## JANUARY, FEBRUARY 2008

**January 12 - February 6:** *EL CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO at the Open Space Visitor Center*

“El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro” (or “The Royal Road to the Interior Lands”) is an exhibition of 50 stunning black and white panoramic photographs by award-winning Mexican photographer Eniac Martinez, enhanced by an integral soundscape of songs and stories produced by historian and radio producer Jack Loeffler. Martinez retraced the 1,500-mile route of the Spanish colonial Camino Real from Zacatecas to its northern terminus in Taos, New Mexico. His evocative photographs of people and the landscapes in which they live tell a story of daily life and folk traditions.

This exhibition is brought to the Open Space Visitor Center by the Albuquerque Mexican Consulate.

*There will also be a series of presentations at the Open Space Visitor Center in support of the exhibit during the month of January. Please call 897-8831 for more information*

1/12, 1pm: Enrique Lamadrid: “Camino Real Travelers and Pilgrims”

1/24, 10am: Enrique Lamadrid: “Locating and Traveling the Camino Real,” a presentation for students of all ages.

1/25, 7pm: Jerry Gurulé: “El Camino Real: Then and Now”

Jack Loeffler is a renowned aural historian and musicologist who has traveled the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro recording people and their music. Enrique Lamadrid is a cultural historian and professor of Spanish at UNM, where he also directs the Chicano Hispano Mexicano Studies Program. Jerry Gurulé worked with the National Park Service Spanish Colonial Research Center which did the basic research of the Camino Real.

*Please see [www.cabq.gov/openspace](http://www.cabq.gov/openspace) for a regularly updated calendar of events*

\*The Camino Real exhibition continues at the Camino Real International Heritage Center, New Mexico State Monument in Socorro, NM February 9 - February 21. For more information visit [www.caminorealheritage.org](http://www.caminorealheritage.org) or call 575.854.3600

### SPREAD THE STEWARDSHIP

*Become an Open Space Visitor Center Volunteer!*

**In 2006, the Visitor Center for Albuquerque Major Public Open Space was born.** The Open Space Visitor Center is nestled among 24-acres of working agricultural fields and features interpretive exhibits on the history of our local Open Space and the three main land areas in the system: West Mesa, Bosque and Sandia Foothills. A gallery hosts changing art exhibits that express a unique interpretation of Open Space. Guests can also access bosque trails from the Center. Additionally, the Visitor Center serves to protect the 7-acre site of the Piedras Marcadas Pueblo Village. Unexcavated, and intended to stay that way, this area tells the story of the Rio Grande Valley’s cultural past.

Now we begin the process of nurturing this special place into a vibrant and vital facility that teaches the importance of having Open Space as a component of our community. And one of the most influential elements the Center needs to accomplish this goal is advocates for Open Space—community members who understand the value of Open Space and wish to spread the stewardship. In other words, we need **VOLUNTEERS!**

**The Open Space Visitor Center will be launching its volunteer program in February, 2008.** Volunteers will be trained to greet visitors and educate them on the Open Space program and the Center’s surroundings.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7.....

## City Gains 78 Acres of Open Space

On Wednesday December 5th, 2007, State Land Commissioner Pat Lyons and Albuquerque Mayor Martin Chávez agreed to add 78 acres to the City's Open Space system through a land trust swap. In order to complete the land exchange, the state Land Office will obtain city-owned lands of equal value in San Juan, Torrance and/or Bernalillo counties.

The newest addition to the West Mesa Open Space System is located within the Volcano Heights Master Plan area. It is adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument and southwest of the Albuquerque Public Schools education complex. The complex currently includes Volcano Vista High School and sports facilities. There are plans to build middle and elementary schools at the complex as well.

City Councilor Michael Cadigan has been closely involved in helping to protect land around the Petroglyphs and stated that he is very pleased with the exchange.

The new Open Space property will serve to connect the Boca Negra Arroyo with other recreational trails and parks in the area. It will also provide a buffer between residential and commercial development and the Petroglyph National Monument.

Additionally, preserving this land as Open Space serves to protect five archaeological sites located on the property including what is know as the "Folsom-period Paleo-Indian site."



### **Announcing Extended Visitor Center Hours!**

Starting January 2008, the Open Space Visitor Center will be open on Sundays from 9:00am to 5:00pm

## Crime Prevention Tips and Issues that Open Space is having (from an Open Space Officer Point of View)



I would like to remind citizens who visit our Open Space Lands to not leave valuables in your parked cars that are visible to burglars. On occasion we get parking lot vehicle burglary "smash and grabs" from thieves, which lasts only seconds and enables them to get away. Take your wallet or purse with you when you hike or leave your irreplaceable items at home.

Please keep your pets on a leash! One of the biggest complaints we get from the public visiting Open Space is animals off a leash. There are many reasons for this and it is to protect you, your animal, and the many forms of wildlife on these preserves. There have been instances when an unleashed animal has caused an accident with citizens on bicycles or roller blades. **Remember it is the law and we will issue citations for this violation.**

I would like to recommend that visitors carry cell phones and have the Open Space dispatch number programmed into it, in case something needs to be reported (**452-5206** Non Emergency, or **911** Emergency calls only).

You can also be intelligence gatherers for officers when a crime is committed or help is needed. For example, if there is a fire on an Open Space area you may spot it first. Seconds count, especially when getting resources to put a fire out.

Thank you, be safe, and enjoy your Open Space lands!

### **Brandon Rail**

Master Patrol Officer,  
Albuquerque Police Department,  
Open Space Unit.

**Become an Open Space Visitor Center Volunteer!**.....CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Volunteers will enjoy trainings on the history and geography of the Open Space program, the Piedras Marcadas Pueblo Village, the natural and human history that has shaped the Middle Rio Grande Valley, Visitor Center wildlife and plants, and interpretive method.

Topics will be broken into 4-hour trainings over 2 days. Volunteers will then be scheduled to shadow Open Space staff during public orientations. At the end of the training, volunteers will be issued a volunteer vest.

Be a part of the next phase in the development of the Open Space Visitor Center—a special place that illustrates the components and heart of what Albuquerque Open Space is about.

Contact **Jodi Hedderig at 897-8831** to register for the Open Space Visitor Center Volunteer Program. You will be mailed the schedule of trainings.

The Visitor Center is located at 6500 Coors Boulevard, between Montañño Road and Paseo del Norte at the end of Bosque Meadows Road.

See [www.cabq.gov/openspace](http://www.cabq.gov/openspace) for more information.

**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](mailto: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
- RENEWAL
- \$15 STUDENT (18 & UNDER) / SENIOR
- \$20 INDIVIDUAL
- \$30 FAMILY
- \$250 SUSTAINING
- \$500 CORPORATE
- \$1000 LIFE MEMBER

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

**Open Space Alliance**  
 P.O. Box 91265  
 Albuquerque, NM 87199



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# Open Space News

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**Open Space Alliance**  
 Steven Hamp

## HOURS OF OPERATION

### OPEN SPACE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

3615 Los Picaros Rd. SE  
 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**