



OPEN SPACE *newsletter*



Mayor Martín J. Chávez

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

Volume 8, Issue 2, April - June 2007

NATIONAL RIVER CLEAN-UP

Help Preserve Awe and Reverence for the Rio Grande and Bosque

~by Joshua Willis

I found myself one day in the Bosque (riverside forest) in the dead of winter. The leafless Cottonwoods appeared restful and barren as they store up the energy to transform themselves in the coming spring. As I approached the new Tingley wetland just south of Central, I had the distinct feeling that something was watching me. Nothing menacing or threatening (I well know that I am more of a threat to nature than it is to me), but something majestic and beautiful. I hesitated for a few seconds before proceeding. I had my binoculars but I could see nothing. I only felt a presence.

I continued forward and as I stepped closer to the recessed bank of the wetland my heart skipped a beat as a large winged bird rose from the water edge. The bird seemed to rise like a vapor out of the water. It was silent and left little evidence of its retreat in the waters glassy surface. I could faintly feel the wind from its wings as it gained momentum and flew toward the safety of the Rio Grande.

I later learned that the Great Blue Heron is very sensitive to the approach of any animal or person. I felt fortunate, as I often do when nature reveals its complexity to me in such a simple way, but I doubt the heron felt as fortunate in our encounter. Knowing how I impact delicate habitats, such as the Bosque, helps me to make better choices when visiting areas where wildlife can thrive.

The River today is not what it once was. We have placed levees, dams, invasive species and jetty-jacks in the flood plains of the Rio Grande, and yet it is still a place where one can clumsily stumble into the habitat

of highly skilled hunters such as the Heron. There are some things that we cannot change, but there are some things that we can influence to maintain the integrity of vital places such as the Rio Grande and Bosque.

The City of Albuquerque Open Space Division has taken on the responsibility of maintaining and organizing volunteer efforts to restore the Bosque. Through various seasonal projects the Open Space Division erases some of the mistakes we have made in the past. Efforts such as Cottonwood and Black Willow pole-planting throughout the winter months reclaim burned or disturbed Bosque sites. Sustainable trail work and access is also a key role that the Open Space Division plays in maintaining the health of the Bosque.

This May we will be in need of volunteers for National River Clean-up! On **May 19, 2007** Open Space in partnership with Adobe White Water Club will continue an annual clean-up effort. Boaters are highly encouraged to attend. If you don't have a boat, rafts and guides provided by Kirtland Airforce Base Outdoor Recreation will take a limited number of volunteers to help clean trash out of the river. Registration for the event will begin at 8:00 am at Central Avenue and the river at the northeast corner parking area.

Play an active role in preserving this treasure and volunteer for the day. There will be people to meet and a river and Bosque to clean. You can call Open Space to find out more at (505) 452-5200 or visit www.cabq.gov/openspace.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

As the days get longer and the weather warms, Albuquerque residents treat themselves to the extraordinary qualities Open Space lands have to offer. As Mayor, I have helped secure approximately 4,000 acres of Major Public Open Space in and around Albuquerque. The City currently owns and/or manages an astonishing 28,000 acres.

And now, it's time for spring cleaning. Not only do our homes need a thorough cleaning after the snowy and muddy winter, but our public lands can also use a healthy polishing. Four spring clean-ups are scheduled on Saturday's from 9:00 am-1:00 pm during the month of April. National River Clean-Up will be on May 19th and will lead Albuquerque to the ever-exciting National Trails Day event on June 2nd which grows in community participation every year. Trash not only affects the way citizens view the land (no body wants to recreate where there is a lot of trash) but it affects the health and safety of wildlife that live on these lands. Wildlife can become dependent on human food scraps that are thrown on the ground, causing illness or even death. Plastic food packaging can be swallowed by wildlife and block their digestive system causing death; and birds can become tangled in them and injured. Please be responsible with trash and dispose of it properly. Albuquerque can always use more dedicated volunteers within the vast Open Space system to make our public lands cleaner for us and safer for wildlife. To volunteer and help keep Albuquerque beautiful and safe for humans and animals, visit www.cabq.gov/move or www.cabq.gov/openspace for more information. With spring on its way and Albuquerque looking forward to many fun and exciting projects on Open Space lands, let's not forget all the great accomplishments of 2006.



The year 2006 was unique in many ways. The weather seemed to play tricks on us starting off as one of the driest years on record, but then it suddenly turned into one of the wettest. As the weather created many opportunities to fix rutted and washed out trails, the Open Space Division opened a beautiful Visitor Center in September. Located adjacent to the bosque with plenty of fantastic views of agricultural fields, bosque trees, and the Sandia Mountains in the distance, this west side museum explores all the

windows that the Open Space system has to offer.. If you have not visited, it will be a must see attraction as the leaves begin to bud and the fields turn green. Call 897-8831 for information on location and hours or visit www.cabq.gov/openspace.

The Paseo del Bosque Trail was ranked as one of the top ten best western recreational trails by Sunset Magazine. This trail stretches roughly 16 miles between Alameda Blvd and the South Diversion Channel. Explore and follow the trail as it meanders along the Rio Grande. Also, Albuquerque was ranked as the fittest city in the United States by

Men's Fitness Magazine. One of the main criteria used to determine the fitness of a city's residents is based on how many acres of recreational Open Space is available. Therefore, we can thank Albuquerque's Open Space system as one of the main reasons we were ranked number one in the country.

Let us look at the accomplishments of the past to keep Albuquerque moving forward in 2007. Get outside, recreate, clean-up, volunteer, be safe, and keep Albuquerque beautiful. Keep up the good work Open Space!

Martin Chávez, Mayor

JUST THE POOP, MA'AM

~ by Jim Sattler

8/15/03

0810

I was going about my normal morning routine of checking phone and email messages when an assignment came my way. It was a complaint from a woman who lived near the end of Menaul. It was a 10-11 call: a poop problem. I tried to pass the problem on to the Park Attendants, but somehow it kept coming back to me. I finally decided the poop would stop here so, I called the woman.

8/21/03

1000

I met the complainant at the end of Menaul, she introduced herself along with her two leashed dogs. She was carrying a plastic bag full of poop--dog I hoped. She thanked me for meeting her and asked me if I wanted to see the poop problem. Unfortunately, I couldn't refuse, "That's why I'm here ma'am." I followed her down a dirt road towards the power lines. We turned west down a small wash and ended up behind her house. Along the way she informed me that this particular poop problem was an ongoing one. She indicated that a neighbor was responsible for the mess, or at least the neighbor's dogs were. She had taken action on her own and tried to discuss the problem with the neighbor, but to no avail. I told her it wasn't a good idea to take poop problems into her own hands and assured her that this was a problem best left to professionals.

1015

The poop problem was located behind her house. It was one of the worst I had ever seen. I surveyed the area, rubbed my chin beard for a moment and took some photos using my Swiss Army knife for scale. I informed her that in order to cite the responsible party our law enforcement officers would have to catch the dogs in the act. She told me that the suspects are walked three to four times a day. She recommended we stake the area out around 0700 hours. I explained that due to the recent fires our officers were busy with bosque patrols. She looked disappointed so I told her I would see what I

could do. We then spoke about various diseases carried in poop and how it could make people and other dogs sick. She suggested we call the news to publicize the problem. I told her that she could if she wanted to and I suggested she try channel 4--seems like they're always looking for a big scoop.

THE SCAT SONG

~by Jaimal Proctor

It begins with an "S" and ends with a "T"
It comes out of you and comes out of me
I know what you're thinking, but you can't call it that
So let's be scientific, and call it Scat

If it was your dog, I'd call it poop
That's when you need a bag or a scoop
But if it's left on a trail by coyote or cat
We can be scientific and call it scat

If you walk on the trail and feel a squish
You may think you've stepped on frog or a fish
It's probably not an animal, not even a bat
If you are scientific you can call it scat

You might find something on the bottom of your shoe
Trying to get it off, there are many things you could do
You don't want it on your carpet or mat
Because the smell is no good be it dog poop or scat

You might try to clean it with the end of a stick
If you slip and you miss it might make you sick
I know what your thinking, but you can't yell that
We'll know what you mean when you shout out "SCAT!"

Don't Be a Nincompoop CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PET

It stinks. Dog feces on our trails, in the streets and washed into our waterways. And there is nothing good about it.

Dog feces carry and transmit disease to other dogs and people--especially children who play in the dirt and grass and then put their hands in their mouth and eyes. Just a few of the disease causing critters dog poo can carry include fecal coliform, E. coli, salmonella, whipworm, hookworm, and roundworm.

Dog feces also have high levels of nitrogen. Native plant species can't tolerate a lot of nitrogen, but non-native weeds love it. It also has phosphorous. When dog poop is washed from our arroyos and streets into the river, nitrogen and phosphorous accelerate algae and aquatic weed growth. Decay of these plants rob the water of oxygen and ultimately choke out other life.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

San Francisco is looking into the possibility of turning dog poop into useable energy--specifically methane. This solution is still a distance down the road, so please, in the meantime clean up after your pooch and set a good example for others. The City has installed dog clean-up stations in parks and Open Space trailheads to encourage responsible use of these shared spaces.

The Open Space Division will consider installing a Mutt Mitt station if an individual or group agrees to "adopt" it. Adoption would include refilling the dispenser with Mutt Mitts, emptying the trash, and relining the trash can. The City would provide all the materials. If you know an area that would benefit from a dog clean-up station and you or a group would like to adopt it, please call 452-5200.

FACTS

- In 2002, nearly 22% of all fecal coliform bacteria in the Rio Grande was from canines, according to the Middle Rio Grande Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for Fecal Coliform in Stormwater.
- There are 80,000 registered dogs in Albuquerque that produce 20 tons of dog waster per DAY.
- It is a City ordinance to clean up after your dog, "...waste left by a dog on any property other than the owner's must be cleaned up by the pet owner."



VOLUNTEER HELP WANTED

DATABASE

Do you have experience with Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access? Are you looking for an alternative way to volunteer for Open Space? The volunteer coordinator needs assistance maintaining the volunteer databases **4 hours a month**. This would involve data entry. If you have extensive experience with Excel and/or Access, the databases are also in desperate need of a new design. They are rather cumbersome in their current state. If you are interested, please contact Jodi Hedderig at 452-5210.

OPEN FOOTHILL PARKS ^{AND} GREET VISITORS

Are you an early riser? Do you enjoy the morning song-birds and coyote greetings? Help us get the parks open and ready in the morning for visitors. We can also use help during special events at the Elena Gallegos Information Center greeting and providing information to visitors. Please contact Jim Marmon for more information at 452-5209.

Help support the Open Space Alliance. *Read your newsletter on-line!*

Consider cancelling your subscription to the Open Space News and view each issue at www.cabq.gov/openspace/news

Cancelling your subscription saves not only trees, but the Open Space Alliance printing and mailing costs -- that much more cash to put toward education and conservation projects in Open Space!

To cancel your subscription, send Jodi Hedderig an email at jhedderig@cabq.gov and tell her to cancel your subscription to the Open Space newsletter. Thank you for supporting the Open Space Alliance!

OPEN SPACE SPRING EVENTS

Open Space is host to endless opportunities for outdoor enjoyment. Hiking and biking aren't even the half of it! Identifying, photographing and journaling wildlife and plants; exploring historical and ancient ruins; finding a unique view using a map and compass or GPS; and participating in activities that contribute to the preservation of this invaluable and shared resource.

Throughout the Spring months learn about all the unique ways to enjoy Open Space by attending a **Summer Series** program or help out on a volunteer event.

Summer Series programs include *Sunset Series* held Saturdays at 7:00pm at the Elena Gallegos Double Shelter. This is a popular event so you may consider bringing your own fold up chair. Please, leave pets at home.

Summer Series also includes *Sunday Hikes* and start at the Elena Gallegos Pino Trailhead at 9:00am. This is a walking program, so wear appropriate shoes, sun protection and carry water.

The Series runs through August. The programs are **free**, but there is a \$2.00 parking fee. Call 452-5200 for a complete program.

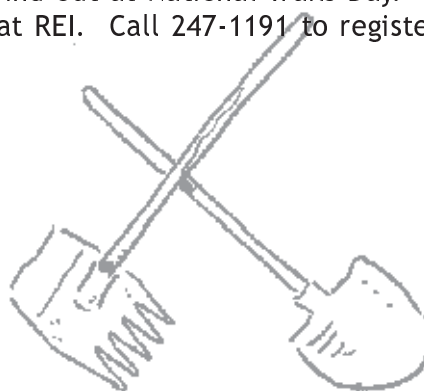
Volunteer projects also abound and provide a perfect opportunity to show your love for open space. Please bring work gloves, water and sun protection to projects.

MAY

- 19 NATIONAL RIVER CLEAN-UP**
Central and the River, adjacent to the BioPark 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
It's a sure bet that on any day of the year there's a visitor picking up a piece of trash, but not everyone has gotten the message that *trash has its place, and it's not in Open Space!* It requires a community effort to preserve the river and bosque for the future and all of us must lend a hand in its restoration and maintenance. **Boaters encouraged to participate!** Shuttle available for your convenience. *All are encouraged to organize a clean up in their favorite area of the bosque during the clean up week.* Call 452-5210 for more information.
- 26 SUNSET SERIES: OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHY**
Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM
Learn the art of capturing the outdoors on film with professional photographer, Bob Barton. Bring your camera.
- 27 SUNDAY HIKE: WILDFLOWER HIKE**
Elena Gallegos Pino Trailhead ● 9:00 AM
Enjoy the wildflower identification expertise of USFS volunteer, Pearl Burns.

JUNE

- 2 NATIONAL TRAILS DAY**
Elena Gallegos Picnic Area ● 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM
A national day of reverence for the paths that lead us to, into, over, under and through all the wonders of the outdoors. Good trails don't just happen, they must be planned, designed, built and maintained--Open Space achieves this with the help of volunteers. Celebrate outdoor access and conservation with a McCleod. What is a McCleod? Find out at National Trails Day. Registration starts May 4 at REI. Call 247-1191 to register.



JUNE

- 2 *SUNSET SERIES: TWO ROSES***
Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM
Enjoy a soothing evening with flute and harp music by Bonnie Schmader and Donese Mayfield.
- 3 *SUNDAY HIKE: NATURE JOURNALING***
Elena Gallegos Pino Trailhead ● 9:00 AM
Expand your observation of the environment around you, start a nature journal. Ray Kreise will guide you on the art of recording your experience.
- 9 *SUNSET SERIES: TALKING TALONS***
Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM
Learn about local birds of prey and bats and see one up close. Talking Talons is a not-for-profit youth development organization that rehabilitates injured birds of prey. Youth learn about these animals and then teach others about the animal's story and science. Visit www.talkingtalons.com for more information.
- 10 *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.
- 16 *SUNSET SERIES: WILDLIFE WEST NATURE PARK***
Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM
Wildlife West Nature Park is a wildlife preserve and "enhanced zoo" located in Edgewood, NM. Learn about local wildlife and ecosystems. Visit their website at www.wildlifewest.org for more information.
- 17 *SUNDAY HIKE: BIKE MAINTENANCE 101***
Elena Gallegos Pino Trailhead ● 9:00 AM
Biking is exhilarating and freeing, but it isn't any fun if you have to wait for it to be repaired by the bike shop. Learn how to maintain your bi-wheel vehicle yourself and be back on the trail in no time!
- 23 *SUNSET SERIES: FLINTKNAPPING***
Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM
Master flintknapper, Luther Rivera, demonstrates the ancient art of turning stone into tool.
- 24 *SUNDAY HIKE: ORIENTEERING WITH MAP & COMPASS***
Elena Gallegos Pino Trailhead ● 9:00 AM
Okay, so you know how to use a GPS unit. What if the batteries go dead? Paul Daily will teach you how to orienteer with the no-fail map & compass.
- 30 *SUNSET SERIES: GHOST HUNTING 101***
Elena Gallegos Double Shelter ● 7:00 PM
New Mexico has a rich history and many ghosts. Learn how to find them from the professionals of Southwest Ghost Hunters Association.

OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE ANNUAL MEETING

This year's Open Space Alliance (OSA) Annual Meeting will be held on **Saturday, May 19th** from 4:00pm - 5:30 pm at the Open Space Visitors Center.

The annual meeting will highlight the West Mesa Open Space areas. Re-discover the diversity of Open Space areas on the west side of Albuquerque, including the volcanoes. OSA has arranged for a special guest speaker, **Larry Crumpler** from the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, to give a talk about the volcanoes. Mr. Crumpler is a well-known volcanologist with extensive experience of volcanic fields in New Mexico.

The annual meeting will also include a brief highlight of OSA activities this past year and election of a new Board of Directors.

Drinks and light snacks will be provided. Following the meeting, you are invited to stay and see the Visitor Center. Bring a picnic dinner and enjoy the spectacular setting the Center offers.

Alliance members, guests, and Open Space volunteers are welcome.

Join us at the Open Space Visitor Center and see this remarkable new facility and learn more about the Open Space on the West Mesa!

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

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

☐ RENEWAL

☐ \$10 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 News

is a quarterly publication of the
City of Albuquerque, Parks & Recreation Department, **OPEN SPACE DIVISION**
P.O. Box 1293, Albuquerque, NM 87103
Phone: (505) 452-5200 (voice/relay) | FAX: 873-6628
www.cabq.gov/openspace
and funded by the **OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE**

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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

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