



# OPEN SPACE *newsletter*



Mayor Martín J. Chávez

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

Volume 8, Issue 1, January - March 2007

## **CITY TO ACQUIRE 67 ACRES One of the Country's Most Important Wildlife Passages May Soon be Protected as Open Space**

~ by Joshua Willis

**W**ithin Tijeras Canyon exists a crossroads. Not just one for steel and rubber, but one for hoofs and fur. Tijeras Canyon serves as a major wildlife linkage point between the Sandia Mountains and the Manzano Mountain range. But for years now the Tijeras Canyon has also been known as one of the worst places in the country for road kill. A key site of land known as the Hawkwatch property has been identified as the focal point for this problem. The City has recently agreed to purchase Hawkwatch property, which will be incorporated into the Open Space management system. City of Albuquerque Open Space Division, in collaboration with the NMDOT (New Mexico Department of Transportation) and Cibola National Forest will work together to define a wildlife easement that will reunite the two mountainous territories.

As most of us know, historic Route 66 passes through this dramatic canyon. I-40, a super highway, also makes its home within the canyon walls. The canyon is a gateway for motorists heading east or west. Route 66 and I-40 run parallel to each other and effectively sever another highway or corridor that is much more subtle. Wildlife such as mule deer, black bear, cougars and various other large game cross the canyon as they travel from the Sandia Mountains to the Manzano Mountains south of Albuquerque. Several wildlife corridors have been identified within the canyon. All these wildlife corridors must cross the stream of commuters, commerce and steel traveling through Tijeras Canyon. The most established of

these wildlife routes passes through the Hawkwatch property.

Mayor Martin J. Chávez had the foresight to appropriate funds in the 2005 General Obligation Bond, making it possible for the City to be in a position to acquire the parcel. Then, in November 2006, various meetings and commitments were made concerning this key property. Mayor Chávez and the Albuquerque City Council endorsed a proposal to purchase the 67-acre parcel of land for about \$10,000 per acre. Once the purchase is completed, Open Space will then take responsibility of the site. The success of this project can be attributed to all involved. Agencies such as the NM Land Conservancy, the Tijeras Canyon Safe Passage Coalition, NM Department of Game and Fish and City Councilor Martin Heinrich deserve much praise for this acquisition. All involved have identified this purchase by the city as an important matter. Not only will it make passage for motorists traveling through Tijeras Canyon safer, but it also signifies a continued determination by Albuquerque's city government to the preservation of wildlife and habitat within the mission of the Open Space Division.

The easement will address the road kill problem in several ways. One difficulty we face is how to train wild animals to go where they will be safe and use the easements and opportunities we create for them. It has been suggested that a wildlife fence could effec-

*...continued on page 9*

## ***MESSAGE***

### **from the Open Space Alliance**

The Open Space Alliance (OSA) enjoyed a highly successful year in 2006 promoting awareness of Albuquerque's open space areas, and educating the public about the natural, historic, cultural, and recreational aspects of open spaces. The new Open Space Visitor Center, located off Coors Blvd on Bosque Meadows Road, opened in late September and will provide a focal point for public awareness of the city's open space areas. I can easily see that the Visitor Center, with its wonderful Bosque setting, imaginative architecture, and creative exhibits, will become a prominent facility that will offer the public exciting tours, exhibitions, lectures and special events concerning open space. The facility will be the starting place for exploring all aspects of Albuquerque's open space areas.

OSA was also effective this past year in working on projects that improved open space areas thanks to the help and support of our members. OSA was actively involved and co-sponsored a variety of open space events during the year, such as National Trails Day held at the Elena Gallegos open space, the corn maze at the Los Poblanos Fields open space, and Dia del Rio held in the Bosque. OSA hosted the Visitor Center gala opening, providing food and sponsoring the Plein Air Society art exhibit. In teaming with the City's Open Space Division, there were many activities and special projects accomplished for the benefit of open space. These events were successful due to the great support from OSA members and the city's trail watch volunteers.

OSA celebrated its tenth anniversary this year. As a non-profit organization, OSA was established in 1996 to promote awareness and conservation of Albuquerque's open space areas. OSA continues to work proactively to support open space and provide educational awareness. While we are proud of our accomplishments to date, many more successes are yet to come. We face a future of unprecedented challenges - population growth, escalating land values, and increasing pressure on open space and wildlife habitat. We must work creatively with our public agency and other nonprofit partners to respond to the public's increasing need for open space preserves in our metropolitan area.

Albuquerque is fortunate to have a wide diversity of open space lands, but there is reason to look ahead. There are opportunities to expand open space areas around Albuquerque. Recently a proposal to preserve a 67-acre piece of land that lies adjacent to the city's Tres Pisos Open Space area and the Sandia Mountain Wilderness was introduced to the city council. This strip of land would help provide a corridor for wildlife movement between the Sandia and Manzano mountains. Another proposal to be introduced to the city council would acquire open space land in the vicinity of Petroglyph National Monument, partly to help buffer the monument from surrounding development and to bolster recreational opportunities. These proposals are important to Albuquerque's future. With your support, we can make Albuquerque's open space areas an even better resource.

***Steven Hamp***

Open Space Alliance President



**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](http://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](mailto:jhedderig@cabq.gov) and tell her to cancel your subscription to the Open Space newsletter. Thank you for supporting the Open Space Alliance!

## PERSISTANCE PAYS OFF Park Attendant Positions Become Permanent

The park attendant is considered one of the most important public relations jobs in Open Space. They are our frontline and may be the only Open Space representative a visitor may ever meet. They must be knowledgeable about Open Space lands, friendly, dependable, work well independently, willing to work early mornings and well into the evening, confident in public speaking, and, of course, enjoy working outdoors.

Until now, it was a Temporary position. This meant low wages, no benefits, and a two-year term limit. Needless to say, many (many, many) park attendants have come and gone. The *average* number of park attendants per year since 1993 is **10**. Yes, you read that right--10 people for five positions. In 1997 alone, 15 people worked in the available positions. But that will now change.

Each new fiscal season for over the last ten years, the Open Space Division has made a plea to give park attendants Permanent status. This means a better wage with potential for increases, benefits and job security. The '07 fiscal cycle was our break. Open Space was given 4 Permanent park attendant positions. Joseph Valdez and Charley Pfuntner (who has patiently waited for this day to come) have already filled two of the positions.

Be sure to congratulate the park attendants on their new status the next time you visit Elena Gallegos or Boca Negra Park.



## Paseo del Bosque Trail Rated BEST Bike Trail in the West!

It's no longer a secret, folks, but it was bound to get out. Sunset Magazine announced to the rest of the West that we have the **best** biking trail from the Rockies to Hawaii. Competing with Boulder, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Seattle and LA (I've been on the LA trail and it's 23 miles of coastal joy) our very own Paseo del Bosque trail took top prize!

OK, so the list was in alphabetical order, which, in reality, puts us on equal ground with the other top cities, but the Bosque trail was still among the top ten bike trails in the West.

If you've never visited the Paseo del Bosque (PDB) trail, you're in for a treat. It is 16 paved miles from Alameda to the South Diversion Channel south of Rio Bravo. It follows the course of the riverside drain on the east side of the river and offers views of wildlife, cottonwood shade, picnic areas and convenient access to highlights such as the Rio Grande Nature Center, Bio Park, Tingley Beach and the National Hispanic Cultural Center.

Pack a lunch, lots of water, air up the tires on the ol' Cruiser and head out to one of the parking areas that access Rio Grande Valley State Park or grab a map of the greater Albuquerque bike trails and find the most convenient connection to PDB. Follow these links for both options:

### Rio Grande Valley State Park Access Points

[www.cabq.gov/openspace/paseodelbosquetrail.html](http://www.cabq.gov/openspace/paseodelbosquetrail.html)

### City Bike Map

[www.cabq.gov/bike](http://www.cabq.gov/bike)

Or call **311** for more information.



## NEW FACES <sup>AND</sup> GONE TO NEW PLACES

### New Faces

The Open Space Division is excited and pleased to announce the selection of **Tony Barron** as the new Assistant Superintendent. Tony, along with Jay Hart and Joe Perea, was an Open Space employee before it was its own division! That was 24 years ago. As Tony recalls, “We started in a one room office at Pino Yards operating under Golf Management.” It seems Park Management didn’t quite know what to do with the “Open Space” group, because from that office they were moved to a trailer, then to a bay area in Vehicle Maintenance and then to an office in Weed and Litter. After Tony suggested the City obtain the facilities at Montessa park that the United States Forest Service (USFS) was planning on vacating, negotiations began. The USFS leased the property from the City, but had built offices and warehouses required to operate a large tree nursery. Perfect for the growing Division.

In the first years, the primary goal was to protect all vulnerable land with fencing and signage--City open space land was popular for recreation such as dumping, target practice, off-road driving, parties, and camping. In those days they had no heavy equipment: no mechanical post slammers, no gas powered augers--everything was done by hand. The first property to be fenced was from Volcano Park to the Horseman’s Complex. Imagine fencing several miles of basalt-capped earth. Just imagine that for a moment. And that wasn’t the most challenging hurdle; the hardest part was changing the public’s behavior in how they used the land. Tony remembers, “At first, people would say, ‘Open Space? What’s that?’ and then that changed to, ‘Open Space! All you do is lock people out!’” After many years of hard work, Tony now hears compliments for many of the premier recreation sites Open Space has built and the lands he has maintained.

For many years, Tony has orchestrated the Maintenance & Operations section; now he will take that knowledge, experience and a true love for the resource and apply it to a broader management of the Open Space Division. Congratulations, Tony!

The Division is also happy to announce the promotions of **Chris Archuleta** and **Chris Tavasci** to Manager I and Manager II, respectively, of the Maintenance & Operations section.

The Open Space Visitor Center is now up and running under the direction of **Norman Edwards** and with the assistance of **Stephanie Garcia**. Norman comes to us from Orlando, Florida where he managed over 200 units of the State Park system.

### Gone to New Places

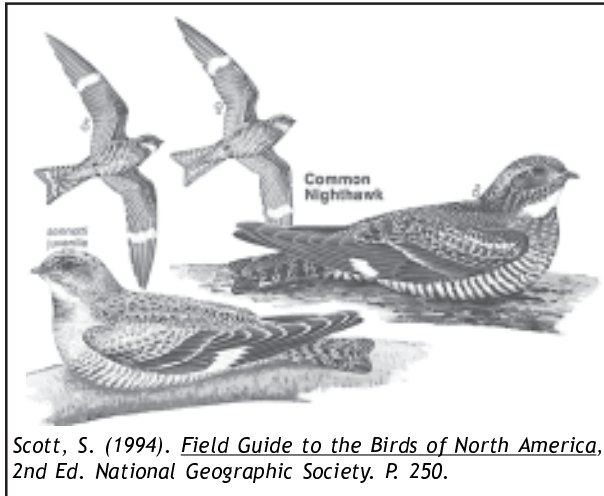
Seven years ago the woman with the long blonde mane walked into Open Space with her flute and transformed our education program. As the Environmental Education Coordinator, **Bonnie Schmader** developed the Travelling Trunks, expanded the Summer Series programs, developed the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area Information Center exhibits, produced numerous and fantastic Open Space publications, and most recently, and notably, prepared the Open Space Visitor Center interpretive exhibits, grand opening and art exhibit. We sadly wish Bonnie the best as she leaves Open Space to work with the Jane Goodall Foundation’s Roots and Shoots Program as the State’s program coordinator. Bonnie’s creativity, humor, talent and hard work will be hugely missed.

We also say goodbye to Associate Planner, **Myrna Marquez**. Myrna is an architect by training and applied her skills to assist with the construction of our incredible Open Space Visitor Center. Among the other projects she managed with finesse was maintenance of the Open Space website and construction of a loop trail at Alameda. Myrna accepted a job with the United South Broadway Corporation’s Neighborhood Revitalization Program as a project manager. Good luck, Myrna, we’ll miss you.

## THE WILLIS WARBLER

### Bird News from Observations Made in Open Space

By Joshua Willis



Scott, S. (1994). *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, 2nd Ed. National Geographic Society. P. 250.

The infamous “Goatsucker” has been sighted in our greater Albuquerque area. Hide your children, cattle and goats! These elusive birds are nocturnal, stealthy and mysterious. Actually, all these things are true, but the Goatsucker, also known as the Common Nighthawk, is far less threatening than its name may lead you to believe. These birds are part of the Nightjar family *Caprimulgidae*, and although one of their alias names would have you believe that they suck the blood of goats, they are quite harmless. The Nighthawk is a highly skilled insect hunter.

The name Goatsucker emerged as a myth as pioneers and herds men tended their animals. The Nighthawk was often seen lurking near their herds. Most likely the reason for this is the abundance of insects localized near such animal

groups. The Nighthawk will open its beak in flight in order to catch insects on the wing.

These birds do not build nests choosing rather to roost. They are well camouflaged and are not easily spotted while roosting. Their feather pattern blends perfectly with the forest or Bosque floor. I have seen these birds lately as I stumble through the Bosque in daylight. They will emerge from their roosting sites in order to avoid my clumsy human footsteps.

A common time to see these birds is at dusk. The Nighthawk will take flight in order to peruse the choicest winged insects. Yet food is not its only nocturnal pursuit. The male of the species can often be seen high in the air swooping. He does this in courtship. The ritual entails the bird diving at high speed and quickly turning upward in order to produce a booming sound. This sound is strictly mechanical and is produced by the wing. If you are fortunate to witness one of these rituals it is thoroughly entertaining.

Nocturnal creatures often get a bad rap in human folklore. Bird families such as Nightjars or Owls maintain an element of mystery as they are cloaked by the night. These animals are fascinating due to their nocturnal differences. They are evidence of a world that exists when we lay asleep in bed. The night is alive, and it has its own agenda. Let’s just hope our goats are safe tomorrow morning.

## Birdwatching at the Open Space Visitor Center

The Open Space Visitor Center is a fantastic place to see migrating and local birds feasting in the agricultural fields. You may even see a coyote or two. Visitor Center hours are:

**Tuesday through Saturday**  
**9:00am - 5:00pm.**



*Welcome back our old friends the sandhill cranes*

## 2005 OUTSTANDING ADOPTOR

### Four Hills Village Homeowners Assoc.

Nestled in the Four Hills neighborhood of Albuquerque is a beautiful 266-acre parcel of Open Space that features magnificent granite outcrops, mule deer, jackrabbits, mountain mahogany, perfectly symmetrical parties of hedgehog cactus, and many trails that meander throughout the property. This property is Manzano Open Space (MOS).

Manzano Open Space is a unique management challenge. In 2002, the gate into the property was removed by order of the court and a prescriptive easement built leading from the end of Stagecoach Rd. to the privately owned property to the east. This provides uninterrupted access for the owner of the private tract. In addition, the court also designated several trails throughout MOS as easements. The web of easements makes it difficult to fence; therefore, it is vulnerable to vehicle traffic and unsavory recreation. Needless to say, the integrity of the property has suffered. This story isn't all doom and gloom, however.

During litigation, the Four Hills Village Homeowner's Association (FHVHA) was active in preventing the gate from being removed and remains active in the fight to have it reinstalled. Their efforts moved to the field in 2003 when the FHVHA adopted the entire 266-acre parcel. The projects they have completed since then is impressive. Early projects were modest and involved a lot of trash clean up, but they soon gained momentum and have reclaimed an unofficial extreme bicycling course, removed graffiti applied to granite boulders, installed 3 benches for which they had to chop holes through solid granite with a rock bar (I'm not kidding, check out the photo), landscaped the entry and most recently, trail maintenance. The most astonishing feat was when they secured \$150,000 from former City Councilor Tina Cummins for the conservation and protection of Manzano Open Space. This money will be applied to security measures, a parking area and restoration materials.

The Open Space Division is grateful for the efforts of FHVHA. We would, however, like to recognize the extraordinary contributions by Gwen Edmunds, Alfred and Darla Lorber, and Connie and Richard Schlimme. At the 2006 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, the Schlimme's accepted the "Outstanding Adoption Group of 2005" award.



*FHVHA volunteers digging holes through granite*



*Completed bench atop Kite Flying Hill*



---

## 2007 ANNUAL EVENTS

### APRIL

---

7, 14, 21 & 28      **SPRING CLEAN UP IN THE FOOTHILLS**

**Saturday ● 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

The past six Clean Ups have been so successful we are able to include more conservation projects at the 7th annual Spring Clean Up in the Foothills. Projects will include trail work, graffiti removal, and, yes, trash clean up.

**Calendar for Clean Up:**

- April 7 ~ Copper
- April 14 ~ Indian School
- April 21 ~ Menaul
- April 28 ~ Piedra Lisa Open Space

### MAY

---

19      **NATIONAL RIVER CLEAN~UP**

**Saturday ● 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

Our Rio Grande and bosque needs our attention and care to keep it healthy. Bring the family, friends or dog (on a leash, of course). *All are encouraged to organize a clean up in their favorite area of the bosque during the clean up week.*

### 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.

### OCTOBER

---

20      13TH ANNUAL **DIA DEL RIO**

**Saturday ● 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

A local day of celebration for the Rio Grande and bosque with hands-on conservation projects and information tables by groups working toward its conservation.

27      **MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY**

**Piedra Lisa Open Space ● 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

The Nicodemus Wilderness project partners with the Open Space Division each year on this national volunteering day to accomplish important conservation efforts in the Piedra Lisa Canyon.

## Feeling Under The Weather?

~ by Jim Sattler

When was the last time you saw the Pino Arroyo flow during the summer time? When do you remember it being gray all day and for almost a week? How about a high temperature of 74 in July?

Up until June 26<sup>th</sup> the Albuquerque Sunport had recorded a little over a ½” of precipitation since November of 2005, making those 8 months the 4<sup>th</sup> driest on record. Even the cacti in the foothills were starting to wilt. But all of that changed as rain began falling during the last few days of June and didn't stop until the middle of September making the summer of 2006 one of the coolest and wettest on record.

Some of the summer highlights include 5 flash floods in the Albuquerque area, a 2.73” down pour in the foothills, and the Pino Arroyo flowing through the Elena Gallegos for over 3 months! Wildflowers seemed to sprout and bloom over night and grass grew waist high. There were flowers sprouting that hadn't been seen in years. We all breathed a sigh of relief as fire restrictions were lowered and the closures and danger signs disappeared.

The foothills received 9.36” of precipitation in August alone, more than 3 times their normal amount, making it the wettest month on record since records have been kept for this part of Albuquerque. To date the foothills have received over 16” of precipitation for the year and still counting.

Of course as green as the Open Space was, it was easy for many to look past the damaging effects of the rain. Not so for staff and volunteers who have been trying to repair and maintain the trails, roads and parking areas throughout Open Space. On several occasions parts of the Elena Gallegos were closed due to a raging Pino Arroyo, while out at Boca Negra Canyon an overflowing arroyo threatened to take out the park's entry road.

It may be a while before things return to normal around here; in the mean time we can share memories of our crazy wet--very wet-- summer of 2006 and look forward to the prediction of a colder, wetter winter.

## THE HUNDRED YEAR STORM

### *What is it?*

Is it really a storm that we can expect every hundred years? Actually the name is a little misleading. The 100 Year Storm really refers to a 1% probability of a storm of a certain intensity happening at a particular location within any year. In Albuquerque the 100 Year Storm is equal to 2.2 – 2.9” of rain (depending on the location within the city) in a 6 hour period. This is also known as a *design storm*. A design storm is an amount of rain that drainage structures must be designed to accommodate.

So, if a 100 Year Storm has a 1% chance of occurring in any year, than a 50 Year Storm has a 2% chance of occurring in any year and a 10 Year Storm has a 10% chance of occurring in any year.

Clear as mud, right?



Road damage from summer rains in Boca Negra Canyon

\* Information for “Feeling Under the Weather?” from the National Weather Service’s web site at [www.srh.noaa.gov/abq/climate/monthlyreports](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/abq/climate/monthlyreports)

\* Information for “The Hundred Year Storm” from the Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority’s web site at [www.amafca.org/faq.htm](http://www.amafca.org/faq.htm)



## WEATHERING THE STORM

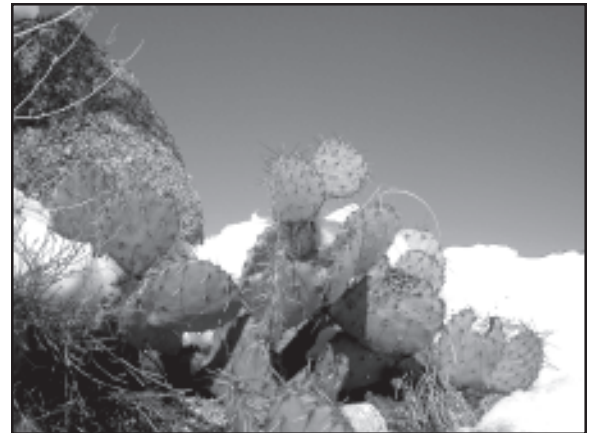
As we found out during the summer, when it rains it pours. Now that it's winter we find that when it snows it...keeps on snowing until you can't get out of your house! In case you're wondering how much snow fell on Open Space between December 29 and December 30, the totals are in:

*Elena Gallegos Picnic Area Pino Trailhead – 24”*

*Boca Negra Canyon - 12”*

The official gauge at the Sunport recorded 14.2”. No matter where you were in the city this storm set an all time record for snow accumulation in Albuquerque in a 24-hour period.

Four days after the storm Open Space crews continued digging and plowing at our facilities to make them accessible for visitors. While we strive to keep our facilities open during “normal” snow storms we can't guarantee access to our facilities during storms of this magnitude. If you were inconvenienced by any closures *we apologize*; but please understand closures may occur during the winter if the safety of our employees and visitors, and the protection of our natural resources is in question.




---

## City to Acquire 67 Acres...cont'd from page 1

tively funnel the wildlife movement under an existing bridge where Route 66 crosses under I-40. This temporary solution would also entail wildlife motion sensors. When activated by wildlife crossing the roadway, the sensors would trigger warning lights for motorists to observe. A long-range goal would be to create defined wildlife easements beneath I-40. This goal is moving towards fruition as NMDOT rebuilds this section of I-40 with the safety of wildlife as well as motorists in mind.

Tres Pistas Open Space is located on the western border of the new Hawkwatch property; together these two properties effectively restrain development from creeping into these important wildlife habitats. The Hawkwatch property is rugged terrain and at this point is being set aside for the wildlife we are trying to protect. As a management plan is created for the property various issues such as user access and trails will be addressed. At this point our biggest concern will be to

collaborate with NMDOT and Cibola National Forest to create an effective easement for wildlife.

This and other recent purchases will bring the Open Space land inventory to nearly 29,000 acres. This example of collaboration is a wonderful model for future preservation projects. The word multi-use comes to mind. An Open Space definition of multi-use would sound something like “a consideration of all variables that may impact or be impacted by the structures and systems we create.” We here at Open Space try to incorporate the multi-use mentality into everything we do, taking resources and the public into account. This mentality creates a sensitive approach to the important lands we are responsible for. As citizens, what benefits will we experience as government begins to develop infrastructure that makes “multi-use” a focal point? Time will tell... But its gotta be good!

**HUB-BUB**

**Trail 365 is NOT Closing in Embudito Foothills**

*Nothing travels faster than light, with the possible exception of bad news, which follows its own rules.  
~Douglas Adams*

If you visit Embudito Canyon frequently, you may have seen the sign announcing that Trail 365 through Embudito Canyon was closing permanently due to development. E-mails were also circulating warning people about this impending trail closure fueling the excitement and confusion.

**The Truth**

High Desert Residential Owners Association (HDROA) is planning to build 25 new homes in the Embudito Canyon area. The rumor started after the developer’s agent, Bohannan Huston, posted a vague public notice announcing a “vacation of public easement.” The public easement is not the trail, but a public drainage easement; a public waterline easement; and 100 square feet of HDROA owned property.

**More Good News**

Not only is the trail staying put, but the Open Space Division is working with Bohannan Huston to make significant improvements on the existing trail.

---

**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
- \$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**

## ***SKEPTIC OR BELIEVER?***

### ***Hunting Ghosts in Open Space***

The voice came from behind a din of computerish sounds and tones, “Captain McRae.” The voice was responding to a question--*Who is your commanding officer?*-- asked blindly to the historic Civil War Val Verde Battlefield south of Socorro. This voice is possibly a response from an officer killed at this sight--a ghost.

This *Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP)* and others were shared with the Haunted Bosque Tour group led by Southwest Ghost Hunters Association (SGHA) on November 4. As the moon cast the light needed to follow the trail, the Hunters guided 50 participants into the belly of the bosque to reveal its unsavory secrets. The Hunters told stories of hangings, murders and battles. They also shared evidence of possible hauntings in other parts of New Mexico in the form of EVPs, photographs and personal experience. The documentation was, at the least, intriguing and definitely creepy. They also told us *how* to hunt ghosts.

If your interest is piqued and you are sorry you missed the last tour, SGHA will be doing research at a few Open Space properties that are reported to have haunted promise. If they find anything, we’ll be sure to have another tour.

SGHA is comprised of skeptics and believers who scientifically research reportedly haunted places. SGHA members graciously donated their time to promote this fundraiser for the Open Space Alliance (OSA). On February 3rd, the OSA will assist SGHA with their own fundraiser--a tour of the New Mexico State Penitentiary riot site. The SGHA will give approximately 10% of the proceeds to the Open Space Alliance Get on the Bus Program. This program pays for a bus to take students on a fieldtrip to an Open Space area.

To learn more about SGHA and their investigations, including how to conduct your own hunt, visit [www.sgha.net](http://www.sgha.net)



*Datura wrightii*  
*Datura meteloides*  
 Sacred Datura  
 Thornapple  
 Jimsonweed  
 Moonflower

Large white to lavender-stained flowers open to the stars and close at the first glance of a sun ray. Up to 3 feet tall and found in sandy soils, its seed pod is protected by a thorny armor. The sacred datura is toxic, but it has been used by some Native American tribes in ceremony.

# 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](http://www.cabq.gov/openspace)  
and funded by the **OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE**

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



## STAFF & NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

*Mayor Martin J. Chávez*

**Director**  
**Parks & Recreation Department**  
*Jay Hart*

**Deputy Director**  
**Parks and Recreation Department**  
*Jay Evans*

**Superintendent**  
*Matthew Schmader, Ph.D.*  
**Assistant Superintendent**  
*Tony Barron*

**Resource Management & Visitor  
Services Program Manager**  
*Jim F. Sattler*

**Operations & Maintenance  
Manager**  
*Chris Archuleta*  
**Park Specialist**  
*James Marmon*

**Environmental Education  
Coordinator**  
*Vacant*

**Associate Planner I & II**  
*Vacant*

**Open Space Specialist  
& Editor/Layout**  
*Jodi Hedderig*

\*\*\*

**President**  
**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**

Non-Prof. Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #297  
Albuquerque, NM