

# OPEN SPACE newsletter



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

Volume 22, Issue 2, Aug-Oct 2020

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### Meet Christine Vasquez, the new Open Space Division Visitor Center Manager!

I have been fortunate to have worked, volunteered, and participated in as many areas as my interests. My professional experience ranges from working as a seasonal aide, with the California Department of Fish and Game, to overseeing an Anthropological museum in a higher learning institution -- with a few stops in engineering and community service along the way.



With a BA in History and MA in Public Administration, I immersed myself in K-16 education through art, history, resource management, and cultural awareness/diversity by developing programming that raised an understanding of material culture. I also worked tirelessly to build bridges in the community through major event planning, fundraising, and business. As a Board of Directors member of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, I was able to serve in a way that helped raise business interest in community education and cultural awareness.

My hobbies have also played an important part on the path of professional development. As the youngest daughter of a carpenter, I was raised working with my father on job sites, working on cars, fishing, and so much more. This helped develop skills that were useful in many of my former positions and I am sure will contribute as the OSVC manager.

New Mexico has always been a part of my life from an early age. It is the place where I began the path of cultural self-discovery and where I learned that I am truly the “geek” that my friends all say I am. It was a woman at Taos Pueblo that first asked where my family was from and reading through a Parks Service booklet about local geology that made me realize that I loved the state of New Mexico and would eventually make it my home.

Cheers to you Christine and welcome to the CABQ



Want to go paperless and full color?

E-Mail Dionne at [depps@cabq.gov](mailto:depps@cabq.gov)

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

Follow the Open Space

Visitor Center online!



## New Associate Planner: Adryana Montoya

My name is Adryana Montoya and I am the new Associate Planner for the Open Space Division. I was born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I attended the University of New Mexico and received my BA in Environmental Planning and Design from the School of Architecture and Community Regional Planning. As a child I had always dreamed of being an architect, however once I started the program at the university I became very interested in planning. Since graduating I have put my efforts in becoming part of a team that involves themselves in the community and helps me to fulfill the dreams that I aim to accomplish.

There are so many people in my life that I have to thank for helping me get to where I am today. I have a son named Edward that has been so much of my motivation to keep striving in my career and other aspects of my life. He is my world and I want to be someone he can look up to and admire. I also have very supportive family and friends that are very happy to see me take the next step in my planning career. The Open Space Division has given me that opportunity and I am so excited and grateful to be a part of such an amazing team. I am looking forward to meeting new people, learning new things about this amazing city I grew up in, being part of the volunteer projects and taking on all the new challenges this job entails.



Photo Credit to: Her Parents

Theresa & Edward

**Welcome to the team Adryana!**



## Update on the Common Edge Habitat Field at the Open Space Center (OSVC)

By: Peter Callen

Hello all,

Thank you so much for keeping the Common Edge field going during these hot, Covid times. We had our last flood irrigation from the ditch on July 4th, and with the help of volunteers and more recently, some monsoon rain, the soil moisture has been kept up through these hot times. We may not have any more water available from the river this season, so we'll have to make do with the rain water catchment and ground water from the visitor center. Michael L. made us some nifty irrigating pipes that hook to the hose and make watering the beds much easier, thank you Michael !

Charlotte and Kate have been really helping keep the bindweed at bay around the beds, and now we have Johnson grass to pull too! Thank you to Kerry and Marie and everyone who has helped out this spring and summer as we deal with the pandemic and try to keep our lives healthy and sane. I know this work at the OSVC helps me with that, and I hear how its helping others too.

We haven't been able to do the public workshops we have planned, but you are still welcome to come and volunteer here at the Common Edge Habitat Field, just let me know and we'll have a place and time you can come and help out while observing Covid safety protocols.

We've been able to feed, water and care for the plants we planted back in May, and now they are growing and blooming, along with "volunteer" plants like milkweed that attract lots of butterflies and other insects. The ladybugs have been nesting here in the field all summer, they really love hiding the tall fescue bunch grasses:



Photo By: Peter Callen

## A letter from your Volunteer Coordinator

Dionne L. Epps

### Greetings Volunteer Community:

Thank you so much for the immeasurably valuable work you have done for the Open Space Division! I can only imagine that we can not thank you enough, and want to let you know that your dedication is essential to the work that we do. We cannot do it without you. We would not want to do it without you.

Working with you, has given me even more understanding in regards to volunteering and what it is truly about. The way you care so deeply about the community is an inspiration to me and to us all.

While others work their way towards being different, you strive towards making a difference. Your passion and energy are unparalleled, and I respect your spirit of volunteerism . Thank you for being so selfless with us and for so many in whose lives and community you make a tangible difference.

We miss those who have been ill and we more than understand juxtaposition of wanting to volunteer but not wanting to put yourselves at risk. We want you to know that we look forward to the day we can all operate at full capacity and enjoy each others company again.

Special “Thank you” to those who helped with Trail Presence, surveys, poop patrol, reporting homeless camps and collecting the number of visitors in and out of compliance during COVID. You all rock and our division can only hope that we continue this momentum as we navigate our new normal.



Richard Shackley and Colleen Hartwell at Pueblo Montano

## Adopt an Open Space

As an extension of the Trail Watch Volunteer program, the Adopt-an-Open Space program was formed to concentrate stewardship in a targeted area. TWV duties are applied, but adoptors also agree to organize at least one group project per year. Some areas may require more scheduled projects within a year. In the foothills, individuals or groups can adopt trails and assist with the essential maintenance of these visitor corridors. In the bosque, groups of 10 or more can adopt restoration areas and help with non-native plant control and trail maintenance. At the City's expense, a sign is installed in the adopted area recognizing the adoptors efforts. To inquire about adopting an OSD trail or area please contact Dionne L. Epps at (505) 768-4960 or [depps@cabq.gov](mailto:depps@cabq.gov)

### Trail Watch Trainings

Trail Watch Volunteers are the foundation of the volunteer program. Trail Watch is ideal for those volunteers who enjoy using the trails. These volunteers patrol areas of their choice and record observations, report problems and needs, and educate the public on proper resource use. During COVID the below trainings will be virtual.

August 29, 2020

September 29, 2020

9:00 AM –11:00 AM

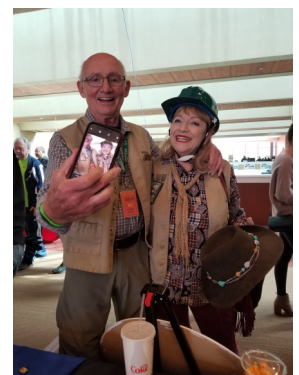
### OSVC Front Desk Training

OSVC Front desk volunteers are the first impression of the Open Space Visitor Center. Of course the task of answering the phones are incorporated in the two hour shift duties, but greeting visitors who come from all over the world in hopes to find a great hiking trail is a part of those duties. If you are not familiar with the History of Open Space Division your training will be helpful. If you are looking for a beautiful place to spend a few hours a week greeting people try one of the upcoming trainings.

September 1, 2020

October 6, 2020

10:00 AM –12:00 PM



To Register for any of the above programs, please call (505) 897-8831



## BOSQUE WILD: GUIDED NATURE WALK

By Richard Shackley

Late in 2008, under the watchful eye of Jodi Hedderig, former Open Space Visitor Center manager, the first guests on the Bosque Wild: Guided Nature Walk set out to experience the wonders of the Bosque. Elsa Bumstead, Biologist, naturalist, and avid birder was the first guide, followed by Verne Huser, and Charlie Wood. These first guides passed on their binoculars, walking sticks, and a treasure-trove of information to the current group of dedicated Nature Guides.



The Middle Rio Grande Valley is a natural wonder that has something different to offer any time of day, and every season of the year. Along the banks of the Rio Grande, the fourth longest river in the United States, lives one of the largest riparian cottonwood forests in the world. More commonly known as “The Bosque”, this extraordinary gem offers a quiet refuge away from the fast-paced world of Albuquerque city life.

### Gazing Into the Bosque

Photo by Liam DeBonis at the Daily Lobo

Plant life abounds along the Rio Grande. The river is the foundation but the Rio Grande Cottonwood is the anchor of the Bosque, and other trees and shrubs live scattered throughout the landscape. There is a host of different species like Russian Olive, Saltcedar (Tamarix), Siberian Elm, Russian Thistle (Tumbleweed), native Goodding, Peachleaf willows, New Mexico olive, Coyote Willow, False Indigo, and Seepwillow. There are various grasses and aquatic plants that provide a seasonally ever-changing habitat and hideaway for the many critters found throughout the Bosque ecosystem.



Sandhill Cranes  
Stock photo

Albuquerque’s Bosque is a home for up to 250 species of birds from the majestic Sandhill Crane (pictured), to the mini powerhouse Black-Chinned Hummingbird. The Bosque harbors a wide variety of mammals: the reclusive Porcupine (pictured), often observed slumbering in the Cottonwood canopy; the skittish Coyote; and even an occasional Beaver leaving trailing wakes on the River’s surface. The list of critters that make the Bosque their home is much too long to be included in this short article. You’ll just have to explore this riverine forest yourself to see the wide variety of flora and fauna...so mark your calendars and join your fellow explorers on the Bosque Wild: Guided Nature Walk.



Porcupine  
Photo by Colleen Hartwell (Shackley)

Let Brian Anderson, Bob Muller, Paul Ordogne, Richard Shackley, Colleen Hartwell (soon to be Shackley), Claude Vallieres, Verma Villegas, and Sarah Wallace, your Bosque Wild Guides, show you the wonders of the Rio Grande Bosque.

The Bosque Wild: Guided Nature Walk leaves the Open Space Visitor Center at 8am on the first Sunday of every month. For those of you who have yet to visit the Visitor Center, it is located at 6500 Coors NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120, just south of Paseo Del Norte. Be prepared to explore the Bosque for 2 to 3 hours over moderately strenuous trails but with frequent stops along the way to observe the sights and sounds. Please leave your pets at home. They can often be a distraction and can scare the forest critters away.

To check when the next Bosque Walk has been scheduled, please click on the link below, or copy the link to your browser.

<http://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/open-space/events>

To make reservations for the walk, call 505-897-8831.

On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, Liam DeBonis, a reporter from the Daily Lobo joined us on the Bosque Walk and then authored a great article about his experience. Just click on the link below, or copy the link to your browser to view the article.

<https://www.dailylobo.com/article/2020/02/bosque-nature-walk-highlights-importance-of-cottonwoods>

A special thanks to Dionne Epps, Bill Pentler, Charlie Wood, Paul Ordogne, Claude Vallieres and Sarah Wallace for providing information and editing skills on this article.



Saying  
Goodbye  
to Willie Keliikuli,  
Open Space Range Master



*Photo Credit: Bill Pentler*

It is with a sad and heavy heart that the Parks and Recreation family has lost one of our own.

William Keliikuli passed away from a battle with cancer. Willie was a Rangemaster at the Open Space Shooting Range. He had over 20 years of service in the United States Armed Forces and after he retired he came to join the Parks and Recreation Department as a passionate and dedicated Rangemaster.

He was a very hard worker. He worked and worked and worked and made sure safety was always number one on the Range. Willie made sure that the Shooting Range staff would win the City's Safety Award and they sure did!

He would come to work, leave to get chemotherapy or radiation, and come back to finish his shift. He loved his job and it showed every day.

While we grieve for Willie and his family, Open Space and Parks and Rec will also discuss and decide as a group, and in consultation with his family, how we can honor his memory at the Shooting Range.

Let us all remember to continue to support each other during all these difficult times.

Willie will be missed.



# El Duende Onion

El Duende shares his favorite movies to binge watch during the COVID 19 crisis!

When El Duende isn't doing zoom meetings or Public Service Announcements, he's been passing the "stay at home" hours by binge watching his favorite movies with a growler of his favorite local beer. El Duende would like to share some of his favorite movies with you. Not many people know this, but El Duende is a big fan of the Harry Uffda series. If you are not familiar with the Harry Uffda series, they are about a boy Duende who is orphaned at a young age and raised by a mean aunt, uncle and cousin who make him live in a closet. On his 11<sup>th</sup> birthday Harry gets an invitation to attend Onionwarts School of Trail Building and Erosion Control. The story follows the boy Duende as he hikes down Trail 140 3/4 to head off to Onionwarts where he meets Hermione Stranger and Ron Ferretly who become his best friends.



*Local guest contributor to your most reliable source of fake Open Space news*

Gradually hints are revealed about Harry's past and the role that his parents played in the world of trail building and erosion control. Harry learns that as a baby he witnessed his parent's murder by the power obsessed, social trail building, evil Lord Moldywort. Harry also learns that the lightning bolt shaped scar on his forehead is the result of this deadly attack. The world of Harry Uffda explores numerous themes and includes many cultural meanings and references. The stories combine many genres including fantasy, drama, and coming of age, along with elements of mystery, thriller, adventure, horror and romance. El Duende doesn't want to give too much of the plot away, but he encourages everyone to binge watch the entire series. Here's a list of the movies in case you are not familiar with them:

- Harry Uffda and the Philosopher's Pulaski
- Harry Uffda and the Chamber of Graffiti
- Harry Uffda and the Park Attendant from Azkaban
- Harry Uffda and the Ceremonial Goblet of Beer
- Harry Uffda and the Order of the Il Duendenati
- Harry Uffda and the Half-Rule Prince
- Harry Uffda and the Deathly 311's, Part 1 and Part 2

And don't forget the spin-offs:

- Fantastic Beers and Where to Find Them



## Community Partnerships with REI

One of our most consistent and long-term community partners is REI. Over the years, they have approved grants for a variety of projects. We thought we'd devote this newsletter insert to describing the last three grants as they're all part of ongoing projects.

### 2018 REI Grant | Trail Counters

It took some time and a lot of hard work by the OSD to install the trail counters from our 2018 REI grant. The OSA split the cost of 18 trail counters with REI. All of the REI grant-funded counters are installed in the Foothills. A special thanks to the National Park Service folks over at Petroglyphs for their help with the counter housings.



*Trail counter in protective metal encasing.*

These trail counters are helping the OSD gather some hard data on trail use in areas where they've been placed.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and shelter-in-place, for example, trail use in the Foothills has risen dramatically. Between February and June of 2020, the number of visitors has more than doubled (from 105,000 to 242,000!) over what was recorded between August and December of 2019.

### 2019 REI Grant | ABQ Open Space Messaging & Signage Plan

The OSD manages 60 trailheads or entrance points into Albuquerque's Open Spaces. Information about trails, area descriptions, restrictions and outreach is inconsistent or missing for many of these access points. This grant will be used as a first step to develop an integrated signage, communication and messaging plan.

This spring the OSA put out a request for proposals to do an assessment of the current state of signage, meet with OSD and others to better determine what is needed, and develop a template for consistent signage and messaging. Design Office in Santa Fe was awarded the contract. They are currently in the assessment phase.

### 2020 REI Grant | Trail Rehab & Development

While the OSA loves to see more people heading to Albuquerque's Open Spaces, there is a price associated with that in terms of trail damage, which often results in erosion.

The OSA and OSD are collaborating with the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, that provides workforce development and training to New Mexican youth, to do trail work, particularly in hard-hit areas. The OSD, with its expertise in trail maintenance and repair, is providing guidance. This is a big win-win for all of us as we're supporting young adults in New Mexico and much-needed work is getting done.

*The Open Space Alliance Board*

*Steve Glass  
Monica Yaple  
David Belford  
Marsha Dunlap*





*Golden Open Space*

**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 the experience of all users of Albuquerque Open Space lands by providing financial support for Open Space Division programs, advocating for sustainability and expansion, and encouraging increased public involvement and use.

To become a member, please visit us at the [openspacealliance.org](http://openspacealliance.org) or fill out the form below.

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

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|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> NEW MEMBER | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 STUDENT (18 & UNDER) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 FAMILY        | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 SUSTAINING   |
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**Open Space Division**  
P.O. Box 1293  
Albuquerque, NM 87103



**OR CURRENT RESIDENT**

# Open Space News

is a quarterly publication of the  
City of Albuquerque, Parks & Recreation Department, **Open Space Division**  
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Tuesday - Saturday

**TO REPORT VIOLATIONS**

**242-COPS**

**\*ANNUAL PARKING PASS**

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