



OPEN SPACE newsletter



Mayor Martín J. Chávez

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

Volume 8, Issue 4, October- December 2007

FALL COMES TO NEW MEXICO A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR MARTIN J. CHÁVEZ



The hot days of summer are coming to an end. Cottonwood trees will soon turn golden and flutter in gently blowing breezes.

Fall means harvesting summer's gift of green chiles and other New Mexican specialty

crops grown with acequia waters. The cool morning air also reminds Albuquerque residents that colorful hot air balloons will soon fill the skies above the Rio Grande Valley and surrounding Mesas.

The ascension of hot air balloons during this festive time also means that thousands of people from around the world will soon be coming to Albuquerque to enjoy the International Balloon Fiesta in October. This year's Balloon Fiesta kicks off October 6th and ends on October 14th.

In between Balloon Fiesta events, many people coming from out of town enjoy visiting our Major Public Open Space properties such as the Petroglyph National Monument, the Rio Grande Bosque, and the Sandia Foothills.

Boca Negra Canyon in particular receives an influx of crowds wishing to see the stunning array of ancient petroglyphs found there.

The Balloon Fiesta season is a great time to get out and help support Open Space. Volunteers are needed to help with parking and other activities at Boca Negra.

Volunteering during this time is also a great way to meet people from all around the world and illustrate the fun things to do around Albuquerque.

To volunteer and help keep Albuquerque beautiful and safe for people and animals, visit www.cabq.gov/move or www.cabq.gov/openspace.

You can also call the Open Space offices at (505) 452-5200

For more information about the Balloon Fiesta see www.balloonfiesta.com or call (505) 821-1000.

Enjoy this special time of year and all that it brings!

Martin J. Chávez



Attention: All Open Space Volunteers!

An Important Message from Jodi Hedderig

In early August, the City of Albuquerque's e-mail system crashed and all its contents were lost, *including all e-mail, folders and contact information*. The City's technical department has been working tirelessly to restore as much of the information as possible for each of its e-mail users. Unfortunately, as of publication, Jodi Hedderig's contents have not been restored.

cont'd on page 4...

NEW FACES AT OPEN SPACE: New Employees Bring Energy and Enthusiam



The Open Space Division is slowly but surely getting up to a full staff this year! Three positions have recently been filled in the section of Visitor Services and Resource Management. We're also very happy to announce that we now have a new Director for our Open Space Visitor Center, and a new Open Space Coordinator there, too! That means the Visitor Center will start to become the place that we always dreamed it would be. Namely, a beautiful facility where people can learn about the Open Space program, stroll through spacious art galleries and gaze out upon the Rio Grande bosque, groomed farmlands, the West Mesa, and the Sandia Mountains. This fall, come see the Visitor Center and talk to Jodi and Joshua about all the exciting things we're planning! On that note, let's introduce our new staff:

Bill Pentler- *Open Space Education Coordinator*

Bill has worked in a variety of positions during his career. He was a Law Enforcement Ranger at Fenton Lake and also worked as a zoo and exotic animal handler. His knowledge of wildlife and nature has made the transition from a job at Albuquerque's animal shelter to Open Space easy. His enthusiasm is perfect for educating groups throughout the diverse Open Space properties. Bill always seems to have his camera with him, so great pictures are inevitable.

Kent Swanson- *Associate Planner*

Kent is the newest face at Open Space. He is a former Open Space Intern (1999-2001) and already has a good idea of what he is getting himself into. Kent graduated from UNM with a Master's degree in Community and Regional Planning in 2001. From there he went on to become a Peace Corps Municipal Development volunteer in Honduras, Central America. He has also worked in watershed restoration projects in central Mexico. Kent is getting involved in a variety of Open Space projects and has taken over duties as webmaster for the Open Space website from Jodi Hedderig. Kent is also the new editor of the Open Space News.

James Lewis- *Associate Planner*

James has been an Open Space intern since April of 2006 and has already written the Resource Management Plan for the newly acquired Tijeras Canyon Open Space. James has a real passion for the environment and advocating for Public Open Space. After graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Geography and Environmental Studies from California State University San Bernardino, he completed a Master's degree in Community and Regional Planning at UNM in May of 2007. James is excited to permanently join the Open Space team and use his skills for continuing the tradition that there is "no place better than Open Space."

Jodi Hedderig- *Open Space Visitor Center Manager*

For over 10 years Jodi has enjoyed a variety of opportunities at Open Space including volunteer coordination, Elena Gallegos and Boca Negra Canyon manager, conservation project management, environmental interpretation, newsletter editor and website coordinator. And all those roads have led to the Visitor Center. Jodi is excited to continue development of this extraordinary facility. She looks forward to creating a thriving volunteer program, thought provoking educational programs, intriguing exhibits and essentially continue to build on this premier destination in Albuquerque.

Joshua Willis- *Open Space Visitor Center Coordinator*

Joshua's experience with Art, Teaching and Land Management suit him well in his new Open Space position. Joshua possesses a BFA and a BE. He was fortunate to study abroad at the Glasgow School of Art and Architecture as an exchange student through UNM. He continues to make and sell his artwork. He has worked as an environmental educator for seven years, during which time he honed his teaching skills and became fully involved with the Open Space system. Joshua's duties at the Open Space Visitor Center include coordinating educational programs, managing the Visitor Center gallery and permanent exhibits, and articulating the City of Albuquerque's Open Space Mission.

THE WILLIS WARBLER

Bird News from Open Space

~by Joshua Willis



Photo courtesy of flickr.com

Most readers already know that Open Space concerns itself with, among other things, wildlife habitat. We have many ways of creating and encouraging habitat. For example, we build wetlands; we create wildlife corridors which pass through urban environments;

we install bird and bat boxes; and we grow wildlife crops, which is one of our largest operations. In a sense, we create comfort zones for many creatures. So what happens when these animals get too comfortable?

Throughout the United States, hundreds of thousands of Canada geese that were once regular migratory populations are creating permanent homes far south of where they used to spend the summer. These geese can cause problems for farmers because they use tender spring crops for feed during their nesting and molting season.

The reasons why these geese are not migrating are complex. Studies of Canada goose biology show that they have a strong instinct to return to where they were born. Once a population establishes a nesting ground, the geese return there year after year to feed and raise their young. The reasons some Canada geese start to nest in an area outside of their northern summer homes in the first place are still uncertain.

Those who enjoy bird watching at Open Space's agricultural properties such as Los Poblanos Fields and Candelaria Farm may have noticed changes in migratory bird populations over the last few years. Some residents we've spoken to who live in the North Valley have recently noted a decline of sandhill cranes in some areas. These cranes are a consistent fall and winter migratory bird which people look forward to seeing each year in places like Candelaria Farm. Residents have inquired why there has been such a decline in their annual attendance..... An answer came to us from someone who knows the North Valley and Open Space intimately.

To work the land at the Candelaria Farm Open Space, the City of Albuquerque contracts Scott Rasband, owner of Rasband Dairy. Scott's dairy is known locally for rgBH-free milk products. At Candelaria he grows crops for visiting wildlife such as sandhill cranes and Canada geese. He also grows a small amount of crops for his dairy cows. Scott too has noticed a change in the local ecology of the farm.

Canada geese have been eating many of his young crops in the spring and summer when they should be migrating north. These birds can be found near the Rio Grande periodically throughout the course of a day, then they meander back to the safety of a farm for Sorghum snacks and nesting.

Because of the damage by these resident geese, many of Scott's spring crops don't reach maturity and therefore there is less food for birds that migrate here in the fall. That would explain why cranes haven't been showing up in the numbers we're used to at places like Candelaria Farm. Someone else is eating their food before they even have a chance to!

It would seem that our feathered friend the Canada goose has found a year-round source of food. One may put themselves in the goose's webbed feet and ask... "Why fly all the way to Canada if I have all I need here at Candelaria Farm?"

Albuquerque is not unique in this problem. It has been noted across the country that Canada geese are not making their epic journey north during the summer months. A few areas that the geese target are farms, golf courses, and country clubs. A Google search on "resident Canada geese" will provide much more information about this growing shift in migration patterns.

Thankfully, New Mexico is not experiencing this problem to the degree that other states in the U.S. have seen. However, that may not always be the case.

Open Space is currently studying the phenomenon of resident Canada geese populations in order to plan for future management of our agricultural properties.

We hope to understand the issue and develop a strategy that will help our farmers, protect wildlife, and ensure a robust and diverse population of migratory birds on our Open Space farms.

THE GEOCACHE FAQ

A modern treasure hunt using GPS comes to Open Space

~by Erik Zsemlye

The first of what we hope to be many Geocaching Special Events was held Saturday September the 29th at the Elena Gallegos Open Space. For those who are new to Geocaching, we present a brief description of the sport and how you can get involved.



Q. What is geocaching?

A. Geocaching is a modern day treasure hunt. There are literally thousands of caches all over the United States and the rest of the world. Geocaching is the act of finding and/or hiding these items.

Q. What will I find when I discover a cache?

A. The sky's the limit! The caches themselves can be almost anything, and what's inside will depend on who placed the cache. One thing you will almost always find is some sort of logbook, so you can prove that you actually found it. Beyond that, if the cache is large enough, it will usually contain some small, inexpensive items (toys, coins, souvenirs, etc.). The general protocol is to bring something along with you to trade out with whatever is in the cache. That way, everyone has a unique experience.

Q. How will I find a cache?

A. The person who places a cache will post the coordinates of the cache's location online, usually at www.geocaching.com. To find a cache, you will need to know how to use a GPS receiver. These units receive signals from satellites up in space and relay information back to the user as to where he/she is. It also helps guide the user to the destination(s) of his/her choice, including geocaches. This is the same technology that automobile navigation systems use, except the unit fits in the palm of your hand.

Q. Is geocaching permitted on Major Public Open Space Lands?

A. Most Open Space lands that are open to the public are also open to geocaching. *The exception is Petroglyph National Monument.* This park is co-managed with the National Parks Service, which does not allow geocaching in any of its parks. If you want to place a cache in any of the other Open Space areas, please keep in mind that geocachers are subject to the same rules and regulations that all park visitors are. This means that travelling off designated trails, removing or disturbing any natural or cultural resources, or any other behaviors proscribed by the Open Space Division are not allowed.

Q. Where can I find more information?

A. The online geocacher's bible is at www.geocaching.com. There is a wealth of information there, and a little bit of poking around all of their resources should have you ready to get started in no time. Happy caching!

Attention All Volunteers.. (Continued from Page 1)

What Does This Mean to You?

It means that all E-MAILED logsheets have been lost to the ether. If you have a copy of your e-mailed logsheets January through August 13 in 2007, please resend them to Jodi Hedderig at jhedderig@cabq.gov

If you did not save a copy, just reconstruct your total hours for 2007 through the end of August.

Your understanding is appreciated. This experience has served to remind us how fragile our relationship is with technology. So, always remember to back up your computer files!

Thanks again to all our Open Space Volunteers for your continued dedication!

OCTOBER, 2007

ONGOING through October 31st

MAZE IN THE MAIZE

Rio Grande Community Farm and the Open Space Division bring you the exciting and popular **Maze in the Maize** at the Los Poblanos Fields Open Space. This year's theme is "Branching Out," in celebration of Rio Grande Community Farm's 10th anniversary as a non-profit community farm organization. See www.riograndefarm.org for more information on Maize Maze hours and prices. To schedule a weekday visit or for more information on the maze call Rio Grande Community Farm at 345-4580.

The Los Poblanos Fields Open Space is located West of 4th St on Montañó Rd. and north on Tierra Viva Rd.

ONGOING through December 15th

SECOND ANNUAL "VIEW WITH ROOM" ART EXHIBITION AND SALE

The Open Space Alliance and the Open Space Division present the Second Annual "A View with Room Art Exhibit and Sale." Enjoy and support art *and* Open Space at this unique event. A number of award winning artists are represented in this exhibit, featuring interpretations of Albuquerque's beautiful Open Space properties. Please call the Open Space Visitor Center at 897-8831 for more information. There is no charge for admission to the Visitor Center or the exhibition. *The Open Space Visitor Center is located at 6500 Coors Blvd. NW Albuquerque, NM 87120.* Hours of operation: Tuesday - Saturday, 9:00am - 5:00pm

OCTOBER 20, DIA DEL RIO, 9:00am to 1:00pm

Join us for a celebration of the river and its precious bosque at the **13th Annual Día del Río** celebration. This year's Dia del Rio event includes educational tables from organizations working to protect the Rio Grande and bosque, and a variety of conservation activities, all taking place at the Open Space Visitor Center located at 6500 Coors Blvd. NW between Paseo del Norte and Montañó Rd. NW at the end of Bosque Meadows Rd. There will be activities for all ages, from trail work to trash pickup.

Help us honor and nurture the vital Rio Grande and its bosque. **Registration for Dia del Rio begins September 21 at the REI** located at 1550 Mercantile Ave NE or call 247-1191. For more information about Día del Río or to arrange your own clean up, call 897-8831.

OCTOBER 27, MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY, 8:30am - 12:30pm

The Nicodemus Wilderness Project and the City Of Albuquerque, Open Space Division need volunteers at the Piedra Lisa Open Space to work on three main projects:

1. Trail building, rehabilitation, and soil erosion control.
2. Native habitat restoration and side trail closures.
3. Litter cleanup and graffiti removal.

Please RSVP to: mail@wildernessproject.org or call 505-363-0693 by October 15th, 2007

To get to the event, drive to the east end of Candelaria Rd., take a right onto Camino de la Sierra and take your first left. **Free T-Shirts (must RSVP) and refreshments will be provided!** Trail tools, equipment, and water will also be provided. Volunteers should dress in layers, wear sun protection and hiking boots, and bring a pair of work gloves.

Please see www.cabq.gov/openspace for a regularly updated calendar of events

OPEN SPACE IN THE NEWS

Albuquerque's Open Space Program Makes Headlines!

~by Kent Swanson

Over the last few months Albuquerque's Open Space program has been getting mention in both national and international reports. We here in Albuquerque and New Mexico know that we have one of the best Open Space programs in the country. Now, the rest of the world is catching on!

Below you'll find a brief summary of the praise we're getting. Make sure to check out the Open Space website, www.cabq.gov/openspace, for more of "Open Space in the News."

- **Albuquerque rated No. 1 in open space by the Trust for Public Land.** According to a recent study, Albuquerque devotes the most land by percentage to open space and preserves of any large city in the U.S. In the Trust for Public Land's study, Jacksonville, Fla., is listed first in terms of total acreage and on an acres-per-capita basis. However, when parkland is measured as a percent of the total size of the city, Albuquerque takes the lead. *Here, we devote more than one-quarter of our land as public open space.* Note that in the cases of both Jacksonville and Albuquerque, not all the listed parkland is open to the public yet, as management plans are still needed for some areas.
- **The Canada West Foundation praises Albuquerque's Open Space Program in their report "Conscious Cities: International Examples of Urban Land Stewardship."** Open Space was featured as one of fifteen case studies for how cities are protecting and enhancing lands and natural resources within their boundaries. Other Open Space programs featured in the report include Boulder, Colorado, Brisbane, Australia, Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Toronto, Ontario. So we're in good company! You can find a link to their report on the Open Space website.

If you know of any other place where the press has mentioned Albuquerque's Open Space program, please let us know!

SECOND ANNUAL VIEW WITH ROOM OPENING A SMASHING SUCCESS!



On September 14th, 2007 the Open Space Alliance in partnership with the Open Space Division hosted the Second Annual "A View with Room Art Exhibit and Sale" inaugural event. The opening reception included food from the Whisque Mesquite Grill & Bar, live music, and beautiful art for sale.



The inauguration of the exhibit was a rewarding event which brought together community members, the Open Space Alliance, Open Space staff, and many New Mexican artists to celebrate the rich Open Space landscape.

Participants were also treated to

spectacular views of the Sandia Mountains at sunset and a special show by a Cooper's Hawk patrolling the Open Space farmland that surrounds the Visitor Center.

You can continue to enjoy and support a creative perspective on our beloved Open Space lands by visiting the ongoing exhibit until December 15th, 2007. The art will be on sale until that time. A portion of all art sales goes to support the Open Space Alliance. Admission to the Visitor Center and the exhibit is free.

The Open Space Visitor Center is open **Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00am until 5:00pm**. During the week of Balloon Fiesta the Visitor Center will be open additional hours and have a number of special programs. Please call **897-8831** for more information. Visit www.cabq.gov/openspace for more information and directions to the Open Space Visitor Center.

**HELP SUPPORT THE OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE
BY *READING YOUR NEWSLETTER ONLINE!***

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This year, consider canceling your subscription to the Open Space News and view each issue on our website, www.cabq.gov/openspace/news

If you view the newsletter online, you can choose to print out the articles that are of most interest to you, or simply read all the articles on your computer. Canceling your subscription saves trees, and it also saves the Open Space Alliance printing and mailing costs—that much more cash to put toward education and conservation projects on Open Space properties.

To cancel your subscription: Send an email to the new Open Space News editor, Kent Swanson at kswanson@cabq.gov and tell him to cancel your subscription to the Open Space newsletter. Thanks again for supporting the Open Space Alliance and the Open Space Division!

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.

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 (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