

July 2023

The Historic

Mesilla Valley

Tips from a Socialite

Small Gems:
Visit Local Native
Plant Gardens

Bourbon N' Business

Hidden Gems:
A Summer Getaway

Letter from the Publisher



The Historic Mesilla Valley magazine looks forward to bringing you on a summer adventure with us as we explore Northern New Mexico in a car. Come with us as we take a 12-hour trip starting in the Taos Ski Valley and ending in Jemez Springs all while stimulating our senses through the natural wonders of our great state. We can't wait

for you to experience our community's commitment to student outcomes through the showcase of Bourbon N' Business as our leading Aggie boosters sit down with us and examine what it looks like to advance athlete health, taking them from rags to enrichment. We have a great read written by a local professor which highlights the effects of poverty and how these circumstances play a part in literacy.

The Historic Mesilla Valley magazine's publisher is excited to announce his candidacy for city council in District 1. I look forward to improving our quality of life through economic diversification, strategic partnerships which focus on housing initiatives aimed at mitigating our community housing shortage and ensuring we have successful outcomes through conditions, and ensuring we expand the expense opportunities attached to the current impact fee account which totals over \$7,000,000 in opportunity funds currently benchmarked for new parks. As a business owner, resident, and fiscal steward, I understand what a

disciplined approach can do for our great community. I have spent my career in the private-public sector focusing on economic growth in the state of New Mexico, chartering business amplification and developing municipal relations by creating PUDs (Planned Unit Developments) which stimulate below market acquisitions for renters and home buyers. Recently the City of Las Cruces has passed a TIDD and an MRA for the El Paseo commercial corridor. To realize the full potential of both economic structures the deteriorated zones initial cause of fragmentation must be resolved to reach their full aggrandizement in the designated areas. Causes of fragmentation include issues such as crime, business survival rates due to commerce traffic, and a lack of diversified development which focuses on creating a live, work, play populace. This ensures we can blaze a new trail in our great community and stimulate our economy of District 1.

I'm asking for your #1 vote. Spread the word! Buck for #1.

Correction

In the June, 2023 issue of The Historic Mesilla Valley, the author did not receive a byline credit in "Living Legacy". The author is: Irene Oliver Lewis, Theatre Artist, Writer, Arts/Cultural Producer and Advocate.

Submissions

The views presented in the Politico column are not those of the publisher or editor of this magazine. If you would like to submit or respond to an opinion, send your submission of no more than 600 words to jackye@thehistoricmagazine.com. The publisher reserves the right to edit, cut or publish any submissions.

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Featured on the Cover:

Daniel G. Buck, photographed at Spence Hot Springs in the Jemez Mountains

Letter to the Publisher:

Congratulations on the publication of the first Edition of the Mesilla Valley Historic Magazine. Page by page I was in awe of even the beauty of the advertisements. But what I found most compelling was the high quality in style and substance of the articles. Having loved and lived in the Mesquite Street Historic District for the past 20 years, reading about its history was both a pleasure and a source of sadness for me. I was particularly drawn in by the Article "The Price of Urban Renewal - A Living Legacy" by Irene Oliver Lewis. It was so vivid that honestly it almost made me cry when reading about the destruction of so many of the historic homes and of course Saint Genevieve's Church. I could easily imagine the great sadness of the residents and particularly the author, then a youngster, in being forced to live through this period of, not 'urban renewal' but rather 'historic removal,' having grown up through such joyful prior times. And I was floored to learn from the article "Inspired to Activism" by David G. Chavez about the collusion of business and political leaders with the Bishop of the Catholic Church in El Paso to destroy Saint Genevieve's Catholic Church.

When will we ever learn? I complicated you and your entire staff and publisher G. Buck and am very much looking forward to the next edition.

Nancy Akbari
Mesquite Street Historic District
Las Cruces, New Mexico

P.S. I am going to send this first edition of "Historic Mesilla Valley Magazine" to my many friends now living in various places around the country to show them a thing or two about the little largely unknown town in which I live.



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How a Southern Socialite survives the Desert

by G. Buck, Publisher-Owner

We left off in Naples, Florida in our inaugural issue, so we'll continue with that time in my life. Naples shaped me into the person I am today.

My fondest memories as a child were spent along the Cocohatchee River at Riverbend with my papa and grandma boarding the boat to go fishing during the last hours of the day heading into dusk. I was hoping those evenings would never end.

Riverbend is famous amongst the wealthy in North Naples. It is preserved by the community members who are elated to call this palm tree lined, shiny blacktop driveway and waterfront paradise their second homes; only three people lived at Riverbend full-time while we were growing up.

Riverbend started as a fishing camp along the Cocohatchee River at the mouth of the Gulf of Mexico. It consisted of a manager's dwelling and an owner's house. During my lifetime, the fight between the homeowners of Riverbed and The Old Collier Golf Club members has perilously never ended.

North America's most expensive country club — The Old Collier Golf Club — just happens to be in Naples and just happens to back up to this section of the river — the only barrier, Riverbend. Old Collier continues to attempt to entice the owners to sell their shares of the land at Riverbend to allow them to develop the community into a yacht club.

The only thing stopping Old Collier from creating a yacht club is the depth of the river because when the water begins to siphon back to the Gulf it becomes an almost waterless bed of mud and oysters where boats lay on their side. At low tide, it's a gauntlet.

The Old Collier continually lobbies the city to install a drawbridge across the river because modern mega yachts are currently restricted by height. The last overpass which curves over the warm waters of the Gulf and casts a mighty shadow over the mangroves also blocks the passage of exuberantly large vessels.

For me, Riverbend is more than a place; it's the last true piece of Naples. As a child, my mother used to say, "Naples isn't the Naples I once knew." My mother's powerful words held no impact on my and my sister's adolescent minds. To us, Naples was still exclusive and had fewer than 20,000 people within the city proper.

As a dedicated preservationist, I now see what my mother meant. Along Gordon Dr. in Old Naples only two

of the original cottages stand on the sugar sand beaches of 5th Ave. South. The same can be said for my childhood paradise in North Naples. Only two original cottages still stand — one a resident groundskeeper inhabits, and the other is held privately by a snowbird who has fought tirelessly to ensure the dwelling continues to stand — expending more than \$350,000 in termite and mold remediation.

Riverbend is more than the home where my family shared some of their fondest memories. It's a place that has risen above all odds. This last year when Hurricane Ian hit, seven feet of water flooded the homes along the perfectly groomed driveways of Riverbend. The memories of our life are still intact as the resilient property owners refuse to sell out — and are now restoring their homes.

The Cocohatchee River is more than a body of water.

It's me at four years old with my papa, laying on my tummy learning to fish while he drank a whiskey and coke.

It's my grandma decked out in her turn-of-the-20th Century-heavy velvet millinery adorned with ostrich feathers, pulled down out of storage just for the occasion of taking my sister to her first high tea at Naples Country Club.

It's my dad's 45th birthday at Betty's Place, where his bosses, subordinates, family, and friends were taken by golf cart to hide their cars and surprise him.

It's the last summer I would see my Papa alive. Morgan and I wheeled him out in his dinner chair and down the street to the dock to watch the fireworks. My sister and I nearly throwing him off his chair, and him saying "minor details, keep going".

It's my sister and me playing survivor on their rotten boat and finding Papa's clandestine whiskey

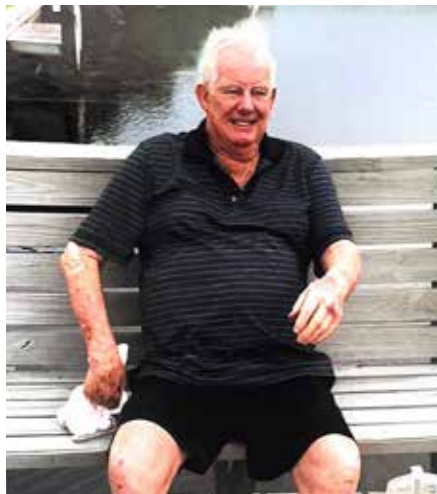
bottles.

It's that last summer with Papa as he told my sister and me we wouldn't be seeing him again. It was his time to go, as he told us it was time for my grandma to stop struggling.

It is my mom wiping my papa's mouth with an oral sponge as she whispered "I love you".

It's my papa at Riverbend as he awoke from being brain dead and looked up taking his last breath in the sunroom saying oh so faintly "I love you".

These are the memories of Riverbend and the imprint it has had on my life as a socialite and a preservationist.



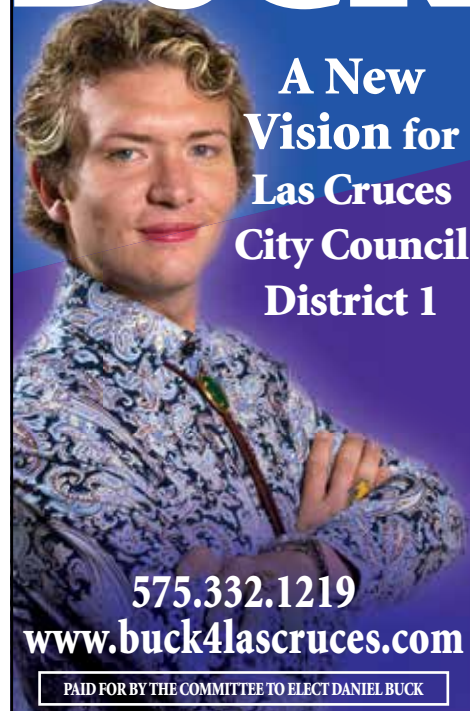
Papa (Ronald Hebel) fishing at Riverbend Naples, FL



Daniel G. Buck, Riverbend Naples, FL

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Socialite Tip:

When dressing the part of old money (vieux riche), remember never to plaster yourself in labels. It's not infrequent, unfortunately, that one seeking status in the valley plasters double G's across their upper torso and down both legs while toting a satchel painted in LV. Nouveau riche finds pleasure in showcasing their cheap investments, which have driven once luxury brands into the exclusive Walmart category. Investing in well-fitted quality materials is the way you showcase elegance and status; clothing is made to be a bespoke investment which is both subtle and showcasing. For the gentlemen, remember a nice chapeau will elevate even the most basic of outfits. As for the ladies, please don't borrow clothing from your daughter's teenage closet or share that MK summer frock. Clothing that fits one's age will showcase your class.



Hidden Gems: A Summer Getaway

Join us as we take a 12-hour luxury car trip through Northern New Mexico

by G. Buck, Publisher-Owner

We begin our journey at the uppermost alpine levels of the Taos Ski Valley, a place renowned for some of North America's best skiing in the winter and a fabulous cool summer getaway.

You'll find yourself tranquilized by the raging waters of Wheeler and Kachina Peak during run off season as the glacial pack begins to slide off the steep folds of the New Mexico alpine, like buttercream falling off a cake in the hot summer sun. Rio Hondo begins to resurrect itself from a dormant state battered by the extreme climate found at over 13,000 feet in elevation where mother nature smother her flow below the ice.

Life for all creatures seems to come back during the runoff while the resort and the private investment homes of families at The Blake remain vacant until the first frosts of the next season. The valley appears to be a ghost town for those taking advantage of beating the summer heat of New Mexico.

You will find your utmost peace.

You take the last right out of Taos onto New Mexico 150 and begin your ascent — traveling through the lush territories of Arroyo Seco, passing a beautiful village filled with artists, farm to table restaurants, preserved adobes, and gorgeous boutiques. Once you've completed your 30 minute and some change journey, you are greeted by a large mouthed road where the Rio Hondo rages and cuts through the landscape with giant green pine trees, elk, and other wildlife. Don't be confused by the four-way entrance; keep going straight towards the cream colored Swiss inspired architecture of The Blake and crevice known as the Taos Ski Valley.

By now, hopefully, you made lodging accommodations since most homes are owned by winter sports enthusiasts and people from out of town. Securing a luxury spot to rest your head isn't hard to come by — ahead of time that is. It's my recommendation for newcomers to the valley to arrive before night engulfs the terrain. After sunset, it's both challenging to navigate the thoroughfares of the Alpine and difficult to see the spot you have chosen for your stay. The valley is a place where light pollution and fully developed infrastructure is limited. Unload your belongings and get comfortable. It's my suggestion you bring basic commodities for your first evening — wine or a cocktail of choice and coffee being top of the list.

In the morning, you can make a quick run to acquire necessities at Cid's Mountain Market and Bumps Market. Both are found at what I call basecamp, where the boutiques, winter and hiking gear stores and restaurants are found in the valley. A tip from a pro traveler of this region: before you begin your luxury car trip, take a gap day to prepare yourself, gather essentials and get comfortable in your getaway gem.

For anyone driving a recreational vehicle along New Mexico 150, a plethora of pull offs, designated

campgrounds and out-of-this-world stops exist. Back to preparing. You want to head back to Arroyo Seco and wander the spiritual grounds of the village. This is the place where I've acquired most of my New Mexico artwork and pottery as well as the best-of-the-best jewelry handmade by local artisans.

Breakfast can be found at Sol Food Market and Café. Here you find a locally curated menu of refreshing daily squeezed and pressed juices and out-of-this-world baked goods. Take a stroll through the village streets to do some shopping at Arroyo Seco Mercantile, Santos Y Mas, and Logan Wannamaker Pottery. If you're looking for locally grown produce, remember to circle back to Sol Food Market on the return trip. In the meantime, we head down to Taos proper, as I call it, to Cid's Food Market, a larger boutique chain that carries a variety of organic, allergen sensitive products and local goods. By now I hope you've made your shopping list. Mine is usually for the priority goods we will need while in the valley. It's my suggestion you grab the locally baked sourdough bread, a variety of seafood, plant-based proteins, a myriad of produce, animal-based proteins, Kombucha and a case of water.

We've found ourselves heading into the evening and worn out from our adventure preparations of this first day. Treat yourself to light hors d'oeuvres and a nice wine or cocktail on the deck as you witness the raging waters and enjoy the sunset.

Let's head into the kitchen. By now, you've done some prepping for dinner — or at least put some thought into what you might cook — and, in my experience, prepping enough for dinner and tomorrow's car travel works best. I always make a dinner menu that also provides the base for a luxury sandwich. Chicken with a lemon curd reduction works great, packed in separate containers so you're not dealing with sog.

Everyone has to be up early for tomorrow, so prepare tomorrow's must haves. Thinly slice the

chicken breasts from dinner (a much healthier stand-in for lunch meat). Pack a container with at least two varieties of cheese, mustard, mayonnaise and bread. Complete the menu with pretzels, chips, hummus, bell peppers, cucumbers, carrots, apples and grapes. Put everything in the fridge. Now relax and unwind.

Set your alarm for 5:45 a.m. Place the cooler close to the fridge and have the dry goods packed and ready to load for the expedition. Remember to take a variety of shoes for activities from hiking to swimming; multiple layers of clothing; a dinner outfit; and towels and something to soak in. Fill the cooler with ice and food, and please don't forget to load a case of water along with a roll of paper towels.

Depart the valley by 7:15 and begin the descent; then hop on New Mexico 68. Our first stop is Banderlier National Monument, which has had human inhabitants dating back more than 10,000 years. The nomadic population followed the wildlife during migration over the expansive mesas

Spending time with culture.

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and canyons. The preservation of Puebloan ancestry and dwellings, which date back to 1150 and 1600 A.D., can be seen and explored throughout your journey within the monument.

The best trail for meandering through the 33,677-acre expanse is the Pueblo Loop Trail.

You step back in time to enjoy archeological gems such as Big Kiva, Tyuonyi, Talus House and Long House, where you find wood ladders providing access through cavates.

By now we've ridden in our car for two hours; checked into the monument; hiked for about 90 minutes; and stopped for some scenic pull overs along our excursion. WE ARE hungry! Don't fret. You've hopefully remembered the cooler, snacks, extra water and a change of shoes. Put down a middle seat or if you have a rear center console even better. Lay out a towel and unload your luxury sandwich fixins'. BYLS (Build Your Own Luxury Sandwich) while enjoying the vast collection of ancient pueblos and converse about the newfound wonders of Bandelier.

Once your meal is complete, enjoy Bandelier National Monument Visitor Center, where you can purchase commemorative souvenirs and luxury gifts. They carry world class hand painted ornaments of the monument which are worth the investment to enjoy year after year. Bandelier has a special feature not found at many monuments or national parks. Sirphey at Bandelier is a full-service restaurant set in the original pioneer building. If freshly cooked food and soft hot cookies are your weakness, then look no further.

Onward we go. Our next stop is the Valles Caldera. As you enjoy traversing this diverse topography and enter the Los Alamos region, enjoy the scenic views of the switch back road and wonder at the magic of the marred

terrain once decimated by a wildfire and now regenerating new growth. There are plenty of photo opportunities on this highway, so pull to the side and enjoy the overlook.

Valles Caldera is a 13.7-mile-wide volcanic caldera within the Jemez Mountains of Northern New Mexico. Enjoy easy access off the highway to the front country experience as you pass the ranger station. Hike to Sulphur Springs — a short, leisurely stroll through heavy forests.

Once used for mining and geothermic energy experimentation, Sulphur Springs is now protected for us to enjoy for generations to come. Sulphur Canyon is filled with volcanic activity such as the sulphuric acid hot springs. Don't touch! Volcanic fumaroles and steaming mudspots give life to extremophile algae and bacteria. A site such as this is found nowhere else in New Mexico and is extremely rare in the Western United States.

Explore the century-old Cabin District. A series of three log cabins overlook the lower valle of Valle Grande, which has played an integral role in the operations of the Valles Caldera under previously held private ownership. As you gaze upon the Jemez Mountains, enjoy the elk and their offspring frolicking in the lower basin as coyotes bolt across the tall grasses of the plains. A fun fact for our television viewers: These cabins were the sheriff's home in the series Longmire.

We still have much to see, as we roll down the mountain for our next adventure. Jemez Falls is a short jaunt from our last point of interest.

Once within the ponderosa pine forest, enjoy the whisper of a cool breeze tossing the towering canopies on



this lush

river trail. Bring a small backpack or plan to carry sandals, but wear tennis shoes or hiking boots for the quarter mile trek down to the Jemez Falls overlook viewing platform. The trail itself isn't treacherous; although you will find segments of loose gravel. Just know my 88-year-old GG did walk these trails. This is a hike everyone in your family can enjoy with extra precaution and preparation.

In no time, you arrive at the upper falls viewing platform. From this stunning vantage point, admire the 70-foot drop and its small upper tributaries rolling over boulders in a high-powered push to splatter the lower

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caves. The platform appears to be impenetrable given the security fencing that has been installed. However, one can access all portions of the falls, both upper and lower. With a little agility and some steady footing, you will get to the lower pools and inside the caves in no time.

The upper falls offer an extraordinary opportunity to watch the raging waters get sucked into an erosion between the sediment as it spills over.

Put your feet in, swim around and enjoy the view.

We've enjoyed the cool crisp water of Jemez, and we have three more stops ahead of us. Let's head back to the car, dry, off and crank up that gas guzzler as we head for Spence Hot Springs. Barrel on. Your engine is getting hotter with every mile you roll; your gas gauge is getting lower with every push of the pedal; and excitement continues to build. Everyone by now is at their maximum energy expense and, although enthralled, is ready to do something a bit more relaxing.

We've made it to the showstopper: Spence Hot Springs. I hope you remembered that bottle of wine and those soaking clothes. You'll find yourself doing some inventive clothing exchanges and assisting each other so as not to showcase your bare flesh for traffic and hikers. Everyone has donned their swimming clothing and hiking cover ups.

Bring a small bag, some towels, water and that secret wine. It's a slippery hike. The pools are overflowing, and mud has inundated the trail but that's okay. It's nothing impassable. We cross the Jemez River and head up the mountain to pool number one.

At the upper most pool, you enjoy a cave where warm water seeps from what seems like out of nowhere. We're de-robing from our hiking coverups and slipping into the warm waters of Spence. Looking southwest, towering ponderosas and the slashes of the canyon disrupt the skyline. After our relaxation, we head back to the car to do our special dance routine for a wardrobe change. Our second to last stop is the Jemez Springs Soda Dam.

We arrive. By now, hopefully, you noticed where Georgia O'keeffe drew her inspiration. Look out the cabin windows and admire the red cliffs that surround the canyon and the interwoven organic colors of its volcanic mass.

The Soda Dam is a 7,000-year-old calcium carbonate formation that has

become a land bridge. We pause to admire Mother Nature's magnificent creation. Just North of Jemez Springs, this land bridge is composed of carbonate and travertine formed by a hot springs deposit. The bridge extends over 300 feet across the Jemez River Valley with a height and width of 50 feet.

As the river flows through the dam, it creates a soda bridge over a stream and waterfall. This spectacular deposit where swiftly moving water flows through the natural formation, allows us to view the magnificent mineral bridge from several vantage points. Be careful in doing this, but touching the cold waters from the lower edges of the mineral bridge makes for a once in a lifetime experience. Don't be shy in climbing the ever changing depositories.

We've made it to our last stop: Los Ojos Restaurant and Saloon, a faded adobe building with a beautiful mural of cowboys around a bar painted on its west side. Built by Moses Abousleman in 1912 as a general store, this tin roofed building stands as strong as it ever did and is ranked as one of the best bars in America. It's a must stop and enjoy spot. Trophy hunts adorn the walls, antique arms hang about and a massive original fireplace heats the building in the winter months. It's a place where everyone comes together to enjoy a hot meal and a beverage after a long day on a tour. Order the enchilada plate. It was recommended to me by a long-time employee of the restaurant upon my first visit, and you can't go wrong with it.

This is a travel guide for everyone to enjoy. If you have questions about the Santa Fe, Albuquerque, or Taos route please email the magazine at daniel@thehistoricmagazine.com as I have taken part in all three of the exploration options and one can enjoy the fascinating sites each way has to offer.

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Small Gems:

Visit Local Native Plant Gardens



by Jackye Meinecke, Editor

I find gardens tucked into many surprising locations. Some are secret gardens that few know exist, while some are magnificent wonders that make international lists. While our local native plant gardens certainly won't make any international lists, they offer an opportunity to learn about native plants and to spend quiet time in nature.

Dripping Springs Natural Area

Dripping Springs located in the Organ Mountains, 10 miles east of Las Cruces, has attracted visitors for centuries from early Native American tribes through today's adventurers. The ruins of the Eugene Van Patten Mountain Camp and stables for tourists, built in the late 1870s, still stand.

I enjoyed the drive toward the Organ Mountains on an asphalt road past Southwest-style homes that tiptoe to the base of the mountains. Along the way, I caught sight of black-throated sparrows and our summer visitor: Western Kingbirds.

Dripping Springs Visitors Center located in the 500,000-acre Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument is entered through a modest native plant garden. The beds are planted with some examples of the more than 176 native plants found throughout the area.

When I arrived on a cloudy morning, I was greeted by

the chitter of hummingbirds visiting feeders hung along the portal at the visitors center. The just-baked brownie aroma of chocolate flower wafted through the garden. I was greeted by a friendly volunteer who provided a plant list brochure.

The garden is shaded by established trees representing those found in the Dripping Springs woodlands. Alligator juniper, piñon and soapberry trees share space with shrubs such as red-blooming

Mexican fire and autumn sage. In one shaded corner of the courtyard, water trickles down a rocky seep for the wildlife and birds.

In December 2018, Friends of Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument received a grant from the Native Plant Society of New Mexico to provide native plant identification signs

for the visitor center garden and along the La Cueva Trail, which starts just outside the garden. Dozens of native plants are identified with signs that include the Spanish common name, the scientific name and the English common name for each plant. The biological diversity of

this area includes rare plants such as the endangered Organ Mountains evening primrose.

This natural environment provides excellent wildlife viewing opportunities:

watch for desert cottontail, collared lizards, desert mule deer and coyote. In addition to the colorful hummingbirds, visitors may view red-tailed hawk, Gambel's quail and golden eagle. Also watch for ladder-backed woodpecker, verdin, black-tailed gnatcatcher, lesser nighthawk, Scott's oriole and cactus wren.

Dripping Springs Natural Area also features handicapped-accessible restrooms and picnic sites. Pets are allowed only on designated trails. It is open to visitors from 7 a.m. to sunset from March through November or 8 a.m. to sunset from November through March.

The native plant garden is small, but educational — and shade is always welcome in the desert by humans and wildlife. Wandering through this garden to study the plants may take no more than half an hour, but it is a welcoming entry to the center.

Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park

I made my way through Mesilla to the Rio Grande River and Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park the day after a summer thunderstorm cleared the air leaving blue skies.





A lizard guarding the gravel road from his perch on a post disappeared when I neared his lookout post. Gambel's quail broke cover near the road and glided further into the bosque as I slowly drove past where they had been enjoying their breakfast under the four-wing salt bushes.

While June temperatures normally reach triple digits, on this day, a breeze whispered through the cottonwoods offering gentle music and cool relief from the rising temperature. Plants in the native garden couldn't have been happier, standing tall and sparkling fresh after their shower.

Plants in the courtyard and garden area practically glowed from the recent rain. Native grasses were lush and green; paperflower and chocolate flower bloomed bright yellow; and the arching stems of red yuccas were covered in blooms.

The native plant garden behind the visitor center — a large stucco building that has elements of a variety of historic styles — invites visitors to look for hummingbirds, butterflies and other nectar-loving creatures while getting acquainted with native flowering shrubs, grasses, trees, and cacti — such as red yucca, white acacia, prickly pear, and Texas beargrass. While some plants are labeled, they may

no longer be accurate as the impacts of winter weather and drought may kill one plant, but another takes its place in this compact ecosystem.

Since the park was dedicated in 2008, the native plant garden has been expanded and improved. Wide gravel paths make this garden accessible to most visitors. Shaded benches invite contemplation and bird watching. Hummingbirds were visiting plants and feeders. The park ranger took the time to point out a cavity in a nearby cottonwood occupied by a woodpecker family.

The park encompasses approximately 305 acres of river woodlands and restored wetlands.

It is used by migratory birds, and is popular for birdwatching, walking and bicycling. It is a day-use only park, and camping is not allowed.

Outside of the native plant garden, the century-old Picacho irrigation drainage ditch (listed on the National Register of Historic Sites) and several excavated ponds still support a variety of native wetland plants including saltgrass, yerba mansa, wolfberry, cattails and reeds — and even a few cottonwoods and willows planted by volunteers.

This garden and the bosque trails make an excellent stop after a hefty Mexican food lunch in Mesilla or a pleasant spot to have a picnic or packed lunch. Linger under the shade of a tree and watch the woodpecker feed her young or a hummingbird sip at a flower.

Whether stopping at Dripping Springs Natural Area or Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, visitors benefit from the solitude and surrounding nature. As current medical research has established, such spaces improve our state of mind and our general health.

Jackye Meinecke has lived and traveled in New Mexico for more than three decades. She earned a PhD in Rhetoric and Professional Communication from New Mexico State University. Meinecke has been a writer, editor and publisher for a variety of newspapers and magazines in New Mexico and Texas. She created, wrote and edited Getaways, a monthly publication of the Las Cruces Sun-News, that featured travel in southern New Mexico. She is a recognized local and regional author.

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Step into History

and Nature at Dripping Springs Natural Area

We arrived at the Dripping Springs Natural Area Visitors Center on a perfect, golden September morning. Dozens of hummingbirds crowded the feeders on the viewing deck. The views of Las Cruces stretching westward in the valley below and to the east the broken crags of the Organ Mountains soaring 9,000 feet into the cloudless sky were simply spectacular.

The ranger gave us a trail map and a handout about the history of Dripping Springs Canyon. The area's namesake springs are about a mile and a half from the center. The hike is rated as easy, although there is an altitude gain of about 1,500 feet most of which occurs in the first part of the hike. It's along a well-maintained trail with strategically placed benches and picnic tables where hikers can rest and admire the incredible scenery along the way.

Because of the altitude change there is great biodiversity in the area. The flora gradually transitions from cacti and desert scrub to carpets of wildflowers and huge cottonwoods. Observant hikers may see several species of birds including quail, red-tailed hawks and eagles, deer, rattlesnakes, squirrels, chipmunks, rabbits and even the occasional mountain lion.

We headed up the trail in the warm sun with insects buzzing, lizards scampering out of the way and grasshoppers leaping left and right. The natural beauty is more than enough to make Dripping Springs a fun and interesting place to hike. But there's more. There are ruins.

The Dripping Springs ruins complex is not ancient. The buildings, which are clustered in three groups scattered through a narrow canyon, date from the late 1800s and early 1900s. The sites include a stagecoach station, a resort hotel and a tuberculosis sanitarium.

The Bureau of Land Management is attempting to stabilize the historic structures. All the buildings are off limits. You cannot go inside. However, you can walk around the exteriors and peer through the windows and doors some of which are covered with metal mesh.

If you enjoy taking pictures, you will be ecstatic.

The opportunity to capture images of real Old West buildings in a dramatic mountain setting is amazing. Each group offers a distinct atmosphere and appearance. Make sure your phone or camera is fully charged.

The first buildings hikers come upon – just like mountain travelers more than a century ago – is the Butterfield stagecoach stop and livery station. This was not a stop on a main stagecoach line. It was constructed specifically to service the resort, known as Van Patten's Mountain Camp, which is about a quarter of a mile further up the trail.

Resort guests boarded coaches in Las Cruces for the 17-mile journey into the mountains which involved gaining about 2,000 feet of altitude. After they were dropped off at the resort, the coaches

and horses returned to this livery area. At the height of the resort's popularity the station included a barn for coaches, wagons and horses, a general store, a large vegetable garden and a chicken coop. Today, in addition to the buildings, you'll see a watering trough and a corral.

After you leave the Butterfield stage area, you'll encounter a clearly marked loop in the trail. It doesn't matter which direction you go first but make sure you travel the entire loop.

If you take the left-hand loop, your next stop will be the remains of the resort hotel, Van Patten's Mountain Camp. Although the name has a rustic feel, the hotel was anything but. Construction began around 1895 and the resort opened in 1897. It had about 15 guest rooms, a dining hall, a concert hall and a roller-skating rink. The resort, named after its founder and owner Eugene Van Patten, offered guests a refreshing break from the oppressive heat of Las Cruces in the desert below.

Van Patten, who was from upstate New York, led an eventful and adventurous life. By the time he opened his mountain resort, he'd been a stagecoach driver, a stationmaster, a county sheriff, a US Marshall, founded several businesses and fought in the Civil War. He was married to a high ranking Piro Indian woman named Benita Madrid Vargas.

Because of Benita's family and community connections, the resort was staffed by young Piro men and boys. They worked at the hotel and the livery area and helped maintain the roads. The younger boys carried water from the mountain springs to the guest rooms. Sometimes Piro men captivated resort guests by putting on dance performances in the roller-skating rink.

It was all very exotic and incredibly beautiful and by 1900 Van Patten's Mountain Camp was the talk of southwestern New Mexico. It attracted notables such as Pancho Villa and Sherriff Pat Garrett. Rumor has it that Billy the Kid, who was indeed active in the Las Cruces

area, was also a guest.

The resort lost its panache and fell on hard times during the First World War. By 1917 it was all over. Van Patten went bankrupt and sold the property to Dr. Nathan Boyd, a San Francisco physician who renamed it the Dripping Springs Resort.

The next stop along the trail is a natural interlude. An excellent spot to view the rock springs lies along the trail just beyond the resort. Springs emerge several places in the cliff face, in some spots as small waterfalls. The amount of water coming out of the mountainside depends on the season. Even if the water is not rushing, it is still quite a beautiful and peaceful place to take pictures. The sound of the water dripping through the rocks is magical.

The next and final stop on the trail is the Boyd Sanitarium. This is when tuberculosis enters the story.

It's hard to imagine how horrible tuberculosis, or consumption as it was then known, was.

A nearly always fatal wasting disease, its symptoms included uncontrollable bloody coughing, high fever, exhaustion and intense chronic chest pain. Tuberculosis is highly contagious and anyone of any age, including young children, could succumb. Patients suffered greatly and died miserable deaths. There was no cure until the 1950s. Prior to that time the most doctors could do was to keep patients as calm and as comfortable as possible.

During the 1800s, for reasons that are still unclear, tuberculosis became linked with climate. It was felt that the humid atmosphere in big cities along the coasts was making people who already had consumption sicker as well as causing the disease to spread more rapidly. Doctors recommended that patients move to the high mountain deserts of the southwest for the thin, dry air. Thousands upon thousands of them, along with their doctors and nurses, migrated to New Mexico.

Demand for patient housing was high and sanitariums opened across the state. They ranged from modest accommodations that were little more than tents to elaborate facilities that catered to wealthy sufferers from as far away as Europe. Both Presbyterian Healthcare Services and Lovelace Medical Group began as tuberculosis sanitariums.

"Treatments" included having patients sleep outside in the cold night air, even during winter. If that was not possible, sleeping with all the windows open was an acceptable alternative. Patients who were strong enough were encouraged to walk outdoors each day. Those



STORY AND PHOTOS
by Lynne Sturtevant





who were too weak spent much of their time wrapped in blankets, lying on chaise lounges outside.

And this brings us back to Dr. Nathan Boyd, the new owner of the Dripping Springs Resort. Dr. Boyd's wife had contracted tuberculosis and he was desperate to help her. He not only planned to convert the Dripping Springs Resort into a sanitarium, his goal was to create a huge state-of-the-art mountainside health complex for consumptives.

The large frame building on stilts that dominates the site today was the sanitarium dining hall. A few other structures, including the Boyds' residence and housing for the staff were completed, but the grand plan for a major facility never came together.

Less than three years after buying the property, the Boyds sold it to Dr. Sexton, a Las Cruces physician. He operated the sanitarium for a few more years then closed it for good. According to local residents the buildings were in fairly good shape as late as 1946. Most of the damage we see occurred since then.

Not all the destruction was due to

vandals, however. Some portions of the sanitarium simply disappeared on their own. Units known as ephemeral patient housing, basically lean-tos, were placed around the area. No evidence of these units remains but several were situated in the cliffs above the dining hall. In the thinking of the day, higher locations had healthier air, especially on cold, clear nights.

And it is with the approach of sunset as the Dripping Springs Natural Area prepares to close for the day that visitors report having strange experiences near the sanitarium. Some swear they hear deep, rasping sighs. Others report being engulfed by sudden waves of sadness. Still others describe feeling agitated as if something awful is about to happen.

The weird shadows cast by boulders and the eerie late afternoon sounds of the mountains could cause anyone to feel a little edgy. It's perfectly normal. What some people think are sighs is nothing more than birds rustling their wings as they settle into the treetops for the evening. Surely that's all it is. Isn't it?

About the Author: In addition to countless blog posts and articles, Lynne Sturtevant is the author of five nonfiction books and two contemporary fantasy novels. Before moving to New Mexico, she owned a travel agency, a consulting service for local historians, and a ghost tour company. She lives in Albuquerque. Find out more by visiting HiddenNewMexico.com or LynneSturtevant.com. Her mailing address is 604 Autumnwood Pl SE, Albuquerque, NM 87123.



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Literacy vs Poverty

by Lisa Lewis, Editorial Contributor

As a lifelong educator, it warms my heart when I witness a child wholeheartedly engrossed in a book, thumbing through pages to get to the end of the story. They have not a care in the world, and they are even unable to glance up when called by mom from the other room. Or when I glance at the car next to me at a stoplight, and there is a child in the back seat buried in a book. What a glorious sight that is to me.

Why, you may ask, is this so heartwarming? Because those children have been afforded the opportunity to own or borrow books; also, because they apparently don't have any literacy issues, from what I can tell. Not all children, or adults for that matter, have access to books or are able to read.

The ability to read, write, speak and listen lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world. And that's literacy! It sounds so simple. However, for some people, especially those living in poverty, it is not simple at all. The statistics on literacy, or lack thereof, are staggering. There are 45 million adults in the United States alone who cannot read. That is more than five times the population of New York City. Literacy impacts every aspect of life from jobs to healthcare. Some 60% of low-income families have no children's books in the home because they must decide between feeding their children and buying books. About 70% of children whose parents have low literacy will likely be the lowest reading levels in their grade. Literacy or illiteracy is a multi-generational issue that begins at home. Children who are not reading well by fourth grade are three times more likely to end up in the criminal justice system than their literate peers. I believe by absorbing this data, that this is why literacy affects poverty.

The single most significant factor influencing a child's early educational success is an introduction to books and being read to at home prior to beginning school. This preferably should occur once a baby is born. Families need to create these literate environments from the moment children are born. I, personally, have fond memories of my dad reading to me every night before bed and it was something I looked forward to. I carried on this tradition with my own sons and now they are reading to my grandbabies as well.

I believe there are six benefits of literacy as a tool to break the cycle of poverty.

First of all, literacy can improve health. Recent research proves that there is a positive correlation between adult literacy and lower infant mortality rates. Also, literate patients have an easier time following instruction from their doctors and as we saw with the COVID-19 Pandemic, the dissemination of information such as leaflets and posters, means that literacy is a key tool to keeping our communities safe and healthy. We often heard about COVID situations that could have been avoided, if literacy was first and foremost.

Secondly, literacy promotes lifelong learning. The more we learn, the more we are able to keep up with our fast-changing world. Literacy is a prerequisite for a broader education. Students who struggle to read are more likely to drop out of school and thus begins a vicious cycle.

When was the last time you learned a new skill?

Chances are you learned that skill because you could read. I recently learned how to use a new Learning Management System (LMS) and I certainly couldn't access the system without being literate. This helped build my confidence on using the new LMS. When we develop the confidence to read, we then have the confidence to learn, both in and out of school.

Next, literacy is a powerful tool against poverty. If students in low income areas had basic literacy skills, they could escape extreme poverty. Illiteracy comes at a very high price — it costs the economy \$1.5 trillion annually. Literacy skills don't just mean better opportunities, they also mean setting people up for success in the future.

Fourth, literacy promotes gender equality because women are the most powerful change agents in their communities, and that power is much greater when they can read. Literate women tend to be more independent and engaged in their communities. So, a literate generation will definitely benefit an entire community. To become an independent woman, I needed to read any and everything I could get my hands on. When I left home to go to college, was when I realized that I had the power to change the world.

Fifth, literacy promotes democracy and peace. Illiteracy weakens communities and undermines the democratic process. This then destabilizes societies. When citizens are literate, they are more able to follow local politics and be informed about issues that matter to them and they are more likely to vote. Literacy is also key to post-conflict situations. People are more apt to write down their experiences and share them with others. Many people I know opt to keep journals about life and its issues and successes. These journals are created for personal reasons, as well as carrying down traditions and sharing them with generations to come.

Finally, literacy builds self-esteem and a better quality of life. People who struggle to read are more likely to have difficulty expressing themselves verbally and this can lead to anxiety which can impact the overall quality of life.

There is indeed a cycle of poverty in our society and how it is intertwined with a cycle of literacy. Both can describe how one's circumstances at birth can influence future life outcomes. Children born into low-income families have fewer opportunities and experience more difficulty in obtaining literacy skills. They therefore lack a strong foundation for literacy even before they enter school, and this leaves them more likely to fall behind. It is indeed quite a dilemma when we think of it this way. Those born into poverty have a stronger likelihood of remaining impoverished, and those born into a family with low literacy levels are very likely to have weak literacy skills.



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Ingredients

- 2 medium-sized limes
- 1 lb. linguini pasta
- 3 tbsp. butter
- 1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 lb. or 20 medium shrimp, peeled and deveined with tail
- 1-2 tsp. La Posta Hatch Red Chile Seasoning
- 1 16 oz jar of La Posta Tequila Lime Salsa
- 2 tsp. parmesan cheese, freshly grated
- 1/2 tsp. minced Italian parsley
- Pinch of salt and pepper

Directions

- (1) Zest and juice one lime. Set zest and juice aside. Discard remaining peel. Cut second lime into thin slices for garnish.
- (2) In a large stock pot cook linguini as directed, bringing lightly salted water to a rolling boil. Add linguini pasta, stirring occasionally. Cook for 8 to 12 minutes until al dente. Remove pasta from stove draining most of the water to keep pasta warm.
- (3) In a large skillet over medium heat, melt butter and olive oil. Add garlic, saute until soft, 1 to 2 minutes. (4) Increase heat to medium high and add shrimp; cook until shrimp turns pink, 3 to 4 minutes. Sprinkle with La Posta Hatch Red Chile Seasoning and lime juice. Stir until well coated, but do not overcook. Remove from heat. (5) In stock pot of pasta, drain remaining water. Add sauteed shrimp to pasta, gently mixing well. Fold in wLime Salsa. Mix well over medium low heat until well coated. Transfer to serving dish and garnish with lime slices. Dust with lime zest, parmesan cheese and parsley. Salt and pepper to taste. (Serves 6-8)

Bourbon N' Business

by Jackye Meinecke, Editor

New Goal Line Club Director Connects His Passions for Football and Community

Scott Schroeder, director of sales for Samson Equipment, Inc. and a passionate football supporter, has taken a leadership role as director of operations in the New Mexico State University Goal Line Club, which had become defunct in the past few years.

The Goal Line Club is the official fundraising organization for New Mexico State Football. The sole purpose of the booster club is to provide the football program and Head Coach Jerry Kill the necessary funding to be successful on-and-off the field.

Schroeder has taken on this role to give back to the community. He feeds his passion for football through fundraising for the NMSU football program.

"It's the most daunting thing I've taken on, but the most rewarding," Schroeder said.

He is positive and enthusiastic about the future of the program under NMSU Head Coach Jerry Kill, who in his first year succeeded in increasing the number of winning games and taking the NMSU team to a Quick Lane Bowl game in Detroit, MI. It was one of the biggest turn arounds in NCAA football last year, on any level.

Ironically enough, Scott stepped up when one of the ball boys didn't show at the Quick Lane Bowl, and filled the spot.

"I had to be the oldest ball boy in college game bowl history, it was glorious! My phone was blowing up after that one. Loved every second of it," the 44-year-old Schroeder said of his sideline participation at the bowl game.

Schroeder's goal is to raise awareness of the needs of the football athletic program. The club is planning an event every couple of weeks throughout the summer in collaboration with local restaurants to build community support for the team. In addition, one of several benefits of the Goal Line Club is a special tailgate event at each game for members, which is fully paid for

out of Samson Equipment's marketing budget.

"Best tailgate in the country. I challenge anyone to argue that!" says Scott.

His post at Samson Equipment allows him and his family to show their appreciation to the Las Cruces community — to engage in a project "bigger than yourself" in Schroeder's view.

"Good or bad, it's all on you," Scott says about his management position in the business. Our success all depends on the quality of people we hire and us allowing them to flourish in their roles. We have been very fortunate to hire local talent, which feeds our collective success at Samson.

"His parents met at NMSU. His mother was head cheerleader, and was the head cheerleader for the NMSU Basketball's final 4 team in 1970. His father, Dave Schroeder, was a football player and graduate assistant coach for the Aggies. They both went on to pursue coaching careers with Linda Schroeder working in the NMSU Athletic Department, where she established the swim team, prior to Dave founding the business in 1976." Both sons, Scott and Brian Schroeder, also pursued coaching careers in the college ranks as strength and conditioning coaches.

Having both been former coaches themselves, Dave and Linda knew firsthand the importance of affordable, yet quality equipment. They identified a need for manufacturing long-lasting weight equipment. Dave contacted a NASA engineering buddy to provide direction on materials and designs for making top-line equipment, thus, Samson Equipment was born. Over the years, the equipment designs have changed and continued to evolve, but the basic materials that were identified in 1976 haven't changed, and are still the top of the line in terms of quality.

The sons both returned home to help with business just over 20 years ago.

"We were not in a great place business wise," Scott said. He was more comfortable in sales; his

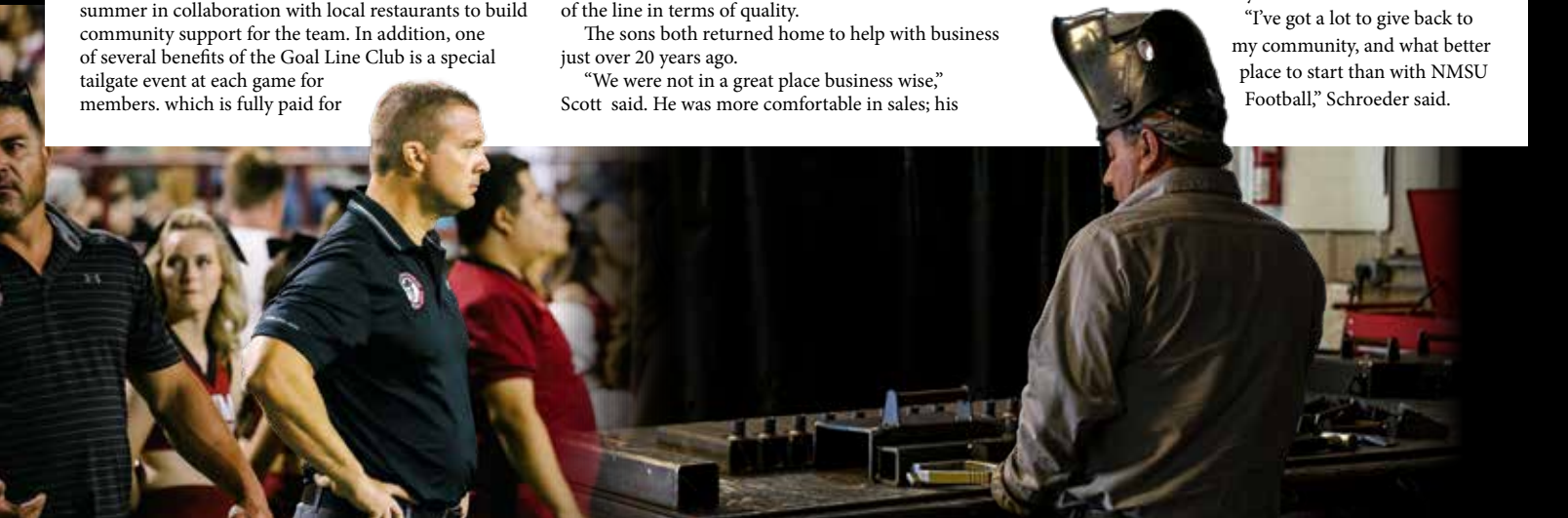
brother found a better fit with production operations. They joined forces with their parents in the manufacturing business.

"I called my big brother and asked for advice and what his plans were for his future. After that talk, we both decided it was time to get involved directly. The changes and growth we've seen collectively since then reflects our father's initial philosophy: "Make a quality product and never compromise on that quality, then provide the very best customer service. You have to own it. I'd like to think we've delivered on those points over my tenure thus far."

"Whether business is great, or we are struggling, all the pressure is on you. I like that about my position at Samson. It all goes back to who I surround myself with on my team. I lean heavily on my head of Marketing, Andy Zapian (another product of Las Cruces and sits on the Goal Line Club board), who is easily the best hire I've ever made. Together we forge the future of Samson Equipment, and that fills me with great enthusiasm."

Currently, Samson Equipment, Inc. is a family-owned Las Cruces business with a national market as well as internationally. Over time, the business has expanded to provide professional weight room solutions for high schools, colleges, pro teams, private gyms, athletic training and tactical for law enforcement and military. There is not one area of their market they do not touch, all right from their offices/manufacturing facility here in Las Cruces.

"I've got a lot to give back to my community, and what better place to start than with NMSU Football," Schroeder said.



NMSU Head Coach Jerry Kill talked to the Goal Line Club members at a recent event at

the Hacienda de Mesilla where he identified many of the needs of the student athletes and the football program. He proposes that the Goal Line Club boosters can directly fulfill these needs.

The Goal Line Club exists to help fulfill gaps in the football program. Equipment, nutrition and technology are what the program needs and what the Goal Line Club can provide.

Kill also would like to see the football program be able to provide better nutrition and food to help build stronger athletes. Further the program provides laptop computers to the athletes so they can improve academically. Kill points out that some students enter the program having come from poverty — even having experienced homelessness.

The Goal Line Club can provide funds to boost the athletes competitively. The coach notes some of the needs of the program, including funding for a new weight room floor and updated computers and other technology to help athletes track their performance. Coach Kill emphasized the impact of investment in weight strengthening and nutrition for student athletes affects many program outcomes from recruitment to student health to competitive success.

“It only took me one day to be sold on being a Las Cruen,” Coach Kill said.

When he arrived, he looked at the mountains and sunshine and was sold.

“You cant have a great football team without a great community,” Coach Kill said. “Looking forward to next year, we have to capitalize on the bowl game victory.”



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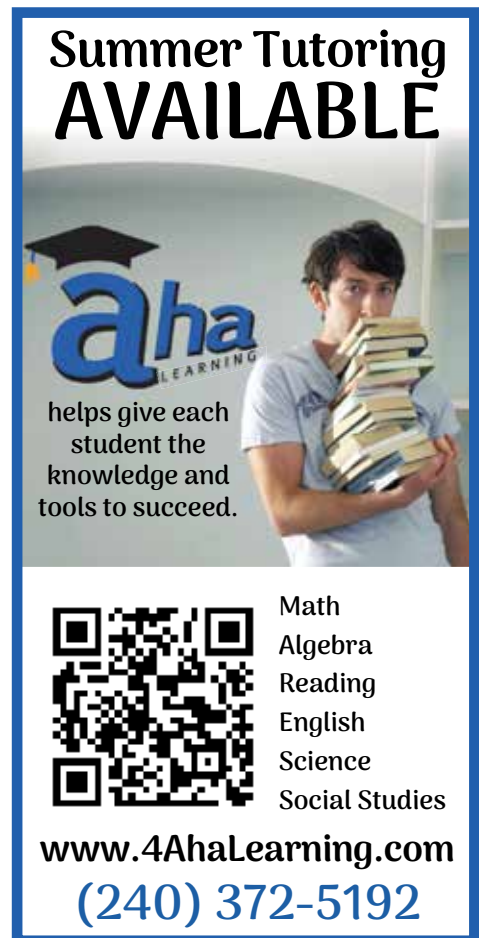


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Amador Heat

by **Melissa Serrano**

23 years experience, Head Mixologist
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Of course I had to create a cocktail with tequila. I feel tequila represents New Mexico, and I chose Tepozan Reposado to create this yummy and spicy cocktail. I hope you all enjoy this creation as much as I do!

AMADOR HEAT

1-1/4 Oz Tepozan
Reposado

1/2 Oz Triple Sec

2-3 slices of fresh
jalapeños

(the more slices used the more
spicier the drink will be)

4 fresh raspberries

1/2 lemon juice of a fresh squeezed lemon

1/2 lime juice of a fresh squeezed lime

3/4 Oz Demerara simple syrup



1/4 Oz Grand
Marnier floater
(use last)
Tajin ricin

Take glass and get a lime slice. Rim it around glass, then into the Tajin. Set aside. Next, put jalapeño slices and raspberries in a shaker and muddle until all broken down. Add the first seven ingredients above. Add ice to shaker and shake very well. Next get the prepared glass and fill all the way with ice. Then double strain into glass (top with more ice if needed). Add the Grand Mariner floater. Garnish with a lime wedge and fresh raspberries.

How to make demerara simple syrup

1 cup Demerara sugar

1 cup boiling hot water

Bring water to boil. Add sugar; stir until completely dissolved. (Don't over cook.) Remove from heat. Let cool; then pour in a container and refrigerate. The syrup can last in the fridge for one month. If wanting to make more just double or triple your portions.



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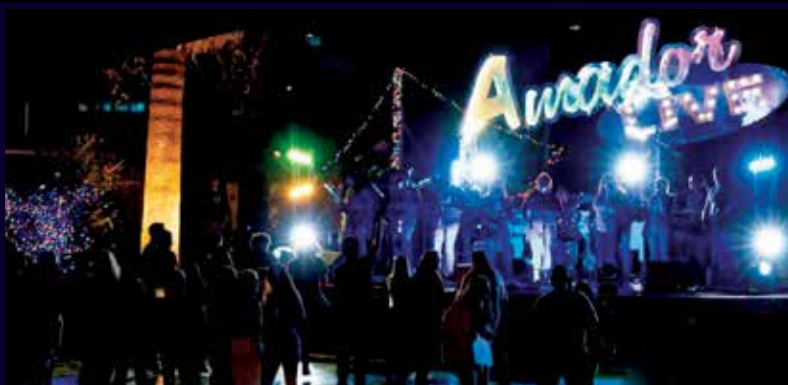
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