



CULTURA DE LAS MONTAÑAS

Newsletter

EAST MOUNTAIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

'Garden Traditions' Highlights Week of Community Events

The East Mountain Historical Society will be busy the first week of May, with three events involving the public.

On **Sunday, May 1**, EMHS will have an information table at the East Mountain Celebration, to be held from 12 noon to 4 p.m. at Vista Grande Community Center. *Please take a look at some of our historical archives and, if you can, stay for a few moments so our volunteers can take a break.*

On **Tuesday, May 3**, EMHS will host students from San Antonito Elementary School who will be viewing our historical photographs exhibit at the historic church in Tijeras. Anabel Sanchez arranged this event.

And on **Saturday, May 7**, the East Mountain Historical Society has teamed up with the Friends of Tijeras Pueblo to present "**Garden Traditions of the East Mountains**," a family event at the Tijeras Ranger Station and Tijeras Pueblo site adjacent to the Ranger Station from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. It will include the following:

At 10:30 a.m., "Seed Saving" will be presented by Isaura Andaluz, organizer of Cuatro Puertas, whose mission is to connect New Mexico's urban and rural agricultural economies, with a focus on seed-saving workshops to help farmers rebuild the traditional industry. Andaluz helped create the Save New Mexico Seeds Coalition.

At 11:30, Jean Brody, an ethnobotanist, will talk about gardening from an anthropological standpoint. She is an expert on the human ecology of the Southwest.

"Conversations With Mountain Gardeners" is the topic at 12:30 p.m., when a panel of local gardeners and historians will talk about his-



Native-plant gardens, like this one cultivated by EMHS member Kris Thacher, will be the topic on May 7. Photo by Becky Schnelker

torical gardening methods, including the use of acequia systems. Attendees are invited to share their gardening experiences during the discussion, moderated by EMHS Vice President Anabel Sanchez.

In addition, information tables will be hosted from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. by groups including beekeepers, the East Mountain Garden Club, the East Mountain Historical Society, Friends of Tijeras Pueblo, Master Gardeners of Albuquerque, Mountain Gardens, Sandia Mountain Bear Watch, the Seed Saving & Exchange Project (Kris Thacher), the U.S. Forest Service and water conservation groups. Information will also be available on Bernalillo County Open Space programs and backyard tree farming. There will be activities for children.

EAST MOUNTAIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

News and Notes

Welcome to new member Marge Larson of Sandia Park.

Anabel Sanchez gave a well-received presentation about EMHS at the new Tijeras Senior Center on April 4.

Schoolchildren from San Antonito Elementary School will view EMHS's photographic panels of the history of the East Mountains during a field trip to the historic church in Tijeras on May 3.

For those who missed the presentation in March, EMHS President Denise Tessier will give an expanded version of her talk on the history of New Mexico district courthouses as a University of New Mexico Continuing

Education lecture from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on June 29. For more information, visit <http://dce.unm.edu/courses.htm>.

Thanks to Becky Schnelker and Anne Dacey-Lucas, who are getting paperwork in order so EMHS can donate to the Center for Southwest Research the oral histories of East Mountain residents that were done by EMHS co-founder Joyce Mendel. EMHS will retain copies of transcripts of the interviews, while the CSWR will preserve transcripts and the original tapes in perpetuity and for general public access. The histories are listed with CSWR as part of the East Mountain Historical Society Collection.

Historical Society To Meet in Lincoln County May 5—8



The historic Lincoln County Courthouse, scene of Billy the Kid's famous escape, is open to visitors. Photo by Denise Tessier

The Historical Society of New Mexico, with its partners, the Lincoln County Historical Society, New Mexico State Monuments, Fort Stanton, Inc., ENMU-Ruidoso, and the Hubbard Museum, will hold the 2011 New Mexico History Conference in Lincoln County May 5—8.

An opening reception and conference registration will be held at the Hubbard Museum on May 5 from 4 to 6 p.m. Program sessions will be at the Ruidoso Convention Center from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. May 6 and 8:30 a.m. to noon May 7.

The program includes four parallel sessions at the Convention Center. A highlight is a session, starting at 8:30 on May 6, on "Lincoln County

Warriors," presented by Lincoln County Historical Society President Gary Cozzens and past president Herb Marsh. There will also be three sessions later on the history of Fort Stanton.

Conference registration is open to all, with registration fees for the full conference starting at \$35 for a single session and \$75 for the full conference. In addition to the opening reception, registration will be available at the Ruidoso Convention Center. Full-time students may register for \$10 and New Mexico K—12 teachers can attend for free.

A full program for can be found at www.hsnm.org.

EMHS Honors Jinzo With Award Nomination

In February, EMHS honored Ojito de San Antonio mayordomo and preservationist Chris Jinzo by nominating him for the Sí Se Puede award of the *Recuerda a César Chávez* Committee. The committee informed EMHS that it had received several worthy nominations, and so did not select Chris. However, the board thought our nomination was an honor in itself. Below is the main text of the letter President Denise Tessier sent to the committee on behalf of the board:

Chris Jinzo exemplifies the legacy of César Chávez and Dolores Huerta and deserves to be honored with the award because of his role as an activist who revived long-neglected acequia water use traditions in the mountains east of Albuquerque, playing a leading role in an effort to reestablish acequia water rights as law in New Mexico. In 1998, he helped prevent intrusion into the historic Ojito Spring area by thwarting plans for a housing development. He worked with a coalition of Albuquerque land-use professionals and the Trust for Public Lands to protect the area, and since the area's acquisition by Bernalillo County in 1998 as Ojito Spring Open Space he has been generous with his time in educating the public about Ojito, pursuing his dream of introducing young people to the natural world, teaching them the importance of what he calls the "oldest form of government," the acequia system. He is not only caretaker of the acequia system, but of the historic orchards on the property, which provide crucial forage for wildlife, most significantly the largest animal in the mountains, the black bear.

A New Mexico native who can trace his family through Spanish land grant documents to 1789, Jinzo became mayordomo, or caretaker, of the acequia system in 1985, resurrecting the acequia association after 35-year dormancy. Leading that association, he and key members filed papers with the State Engineer's Office to assert their legal role as stewards of the water system, beginning in 1993.

Later in that decade, when it became apparent that a developer's plans for numerous 4,000-square-foot homes would degrade the watershed and intrude on the natural habitat for wildlife, the Acequia Madre de San Antonio opposed the development.

At one critical point, in October 1998, Chris and his brother Steve physically blocked the developer's effort to bring in a front-end loader and backhoe to dig into the spot where the acequia crosses into the proposed development. As acequia historian Stanley Crawford wrote in *The Trust for Public Land*:



"The 1998 standoff between the Jinzo brothers and (developer Mike) Knight ended without violence. By the time the deputies and a county inspector arrived, the shotguns were unloaded—if they had ever been loaded in the first place. The county Development Review Department sided with the acequia, pointing out that Knight did not have the appropriate permits to move earth and work on the road. When the story hit the papers . . . offers of assistance poured in from land grant activists all over northern New Mexico—and even from Old Mexico."

The following month, voters approved a county bond measure that provided funding to purchase the 88 acres from Knight as open space, preserving the area for future generations.

Today, thanks to Jinzo's efforts, a wooden sign next to the San Antonio acequia reads: "The course of ditches or acequias established prior to January 20, 1851 shall not be disturbed." The sign, created by Chris' brother Steve, refers to one of the first acts of the legislative assembly of the then newly created Territory of New Mexico.

Story and photo by Denise Tessier

County Open Space Events Set

Bernalillo County's Parks and Recreation is holding three events this fall related to its open space properties in the East Mountains. The first features former EMHS board member Manuel Garcia y Griego, talking about land grant history. The second will feature current board members Becky Schnelker and Denise Tessier, talking about historic plants and general history of Ojito de San Antonio Open Space. Below is information about the three events.

Land Grants and the History of the East Mountains

Sept. 3, from 9-11 a.m. at Sabino Canyon Open Space - RSVP: 314-0398, Colleen McRoberts

Land Grants are a significant part of New Mexico's history that has shaped the way we continue to manage land today. UNM history professor and member of the Cañón de Carnué Land Grant Board of Directors LM Garcia y Griego will lead this walk at Sabino Canyon painting the picture of the past land holdings, struggles throughout time, and current status of Land Grants in the East Mountains.

EMHS Opposes Bill

The EMHS board voted to send letters opposing two bills on historic preservation during the recent session of the New Mexico Legislature.

President Denise Tessier wrote members of the Senate and House judiciary committee that the bills, which would have changed procedures for designating historic sites and structures, placed a burden on citizens and volunteer organizations, were unfair to the majority, and could hamper local economic development and small business.

Preservation Chairman Andre Larroque brought the issue to the board's attention and drafted the letter.



Photo by Becky Schnelker

Medicinal Walk and the Pueblo Village

September 24 from 10 a.m. to noon at Ojito de San Antonio Open Space

Ojito de San Antonio is the natural backdrop for the oldest village in the East Mountains, a village occupied since prehistory, and it has an enchanting story to tell. Two members of the East Mountain Historical Society will tell us this story while pointing out medicinal plants native to the area and describing their historical use.

Bear Aware!

October 15 from 10 a.m. to noon at Ojito de San Antonio Open Space

Bears are both a source of fascination and fear for many. This session aims to inform participants about the charming characteristics of bears, their importance and place in our ecosystem, and how to minimize the threats and havoc they can play in our community.



East Mountain Historical Society Newsletter

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Mission Statement

The mission of the East Mountain Historical Society is to identify, preserve and present to the public the history and culture of the East Mountain area. EMHS will assist in protecting historical buildings and landscapes, artifacts, records, or any item considered to be of historical significance. EMHS will also identify, collect and archive historical material of significance to the area.

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