

ISSUE #108

NOVEMBER 2007

OCTOBER 20-21st: GALISTEO STUDIO TOUR, SAT-SUN., 10-5. In addition to all the *Great Art*, there are 5 *Food Stops*, each with *Live Music*. Pick up a map or check in at galisteostudiostour.org.

This is the tour's 20th anniversary...

COME ON OUT. SUPPORT OUR ARTISTS. BUY ART!

OPEN LETTER TO GALISTEO RESIDENTS

The gas and oil companies are at our front door. They are awaiting approval for permits from the County to drill for oil and gas in the Galisteo Basin. I attended a meeting held by Tecton Oil and Gas at the Turquoise Trail Elementary School on Oct. 4th. Tecton means business and wants to drill at whatever the cost to our community. We have to stop them from ruining our lands and our precious aquifer. They do not care about preserving our natural resources. Mike Anaya, Rhonda King and Jack Sullivan were present at the meeting and showed concern. Our local representatives must stop this from happening and they do have the power.

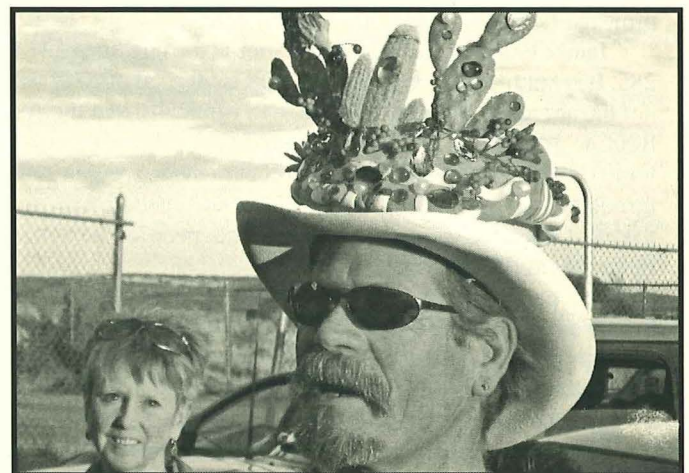
An environmental disaster has occurred in San Juan County in northern New Mexico. Tweeti Blancett, a rancher from that area, spoke to a group at the Galisteo Community Center on Oct. 7th about the environmental disaster created on her land. The oil and gas companies have poisoned the water, killed livestock, birds, and other wildlife. There was no reproach from local officials, who claimed that they haven't the manpower. The BLM employee said they have no control over what oil and gas does on BLM land.

We need everyone's support from Galisteo at the Thursday Nov. 1st meeting at the Chavez Center on Rodeo Road from 5:30 to 8PM, when Tecton will present its case again. Our voices matter. Never in our history have they meant more. It is up to us to sustain our quality of life. The oil companies will destroy our aquifer, our water source, our life support. They will leave this beautiful Galisteo Basin in ruins.—*Muriel Fariello*

HOT STUFF- CHILE COOK OFF A WINNER

The Annual Galisteo Chile Cook-off is becoming a tradition. This year's event was a great success, attended by a large crowd, including children and dogs, on a beautiful September evening. MC Freddie Cardenas, GCA President, handed out the prizes decided by Judges Jean Moya, Frankie Sandoval and Grant

Mitchell. The coveted first prize for Chile went to **Priscilla Montoya Garcia (top)**, followed by Steve Moya, Sina Brush, Mela Montoya, Shelley Carlisle, and Wayne King. The gorgeous tumbleweed crown placed on each winner for a photo op was made by Trisha Tusa. The Margarita prize was taken away by **Charlie Holloway (below)** with Barbara Pfeiffer second, both sporting a cactus crown, Clarita Anaya got "crowned" for being herself, a beloved community elder.



The winners (and admirer): (photo Phil Tuwaletstiwa)

ROAD RAGE

At the Oct. 4th community meeting about speed limits and truck traffic on NM 41, visiting officials from NMDOT shared the stage with a Galisteo Road Committee in attack mode. Amy Tremper, Denice Pruett, and Amber Haskell confronted Richard Mobarak, David Martinez, Phil Gallegos and other staff from the DOT concerning the now familiar and continually exasperating issues of volume, weight, and speeds of truck traffic through Galisteo, especially the tankers and gravel trucks.

The DOT announced that they would present their on-site highway safety analysis but would not discuss the highway bridges (which inevitably came up anyway). Their presentation included the NM 41 crash history and studies of speeding from both ends of the village in the 45mph zone. (The Road Committee contended that the study should have been done in the 35mph zone.)

Automatic counters registered the length of the vehicles (39' or longer is a tractor trailer) and volume of traffic. The overall speeds recorded were regularly 20 miles over the limit from both directions, ranging from 61 to 68mph. Around 60 tractor trailers per day go through Galisteo, more heading south than north. No vehicles inspected were overweight. During the 2-day inspection period (4/23-24) there were 39 speeding citations. "Non compliance here – and everywhere else-- is pretty blatant," which was not news to Galisteo residents.

NM 41 is classified as a two-lane "major collector" which can handle 1400-1600 vehicles at peak hours; we are on the low end with c. 1450. If we had wider shoulders the speed limit would be higher. The DOT study concluded that "community safety is not jeopardized by truck traffic on NM41," and no "undue hardship" was caused. (No information was forthcoming on how hardship was measured, except for the trucking industry's economic loss without the shortcut.) NM 41 was classified as "level of Service A," which is the best DOT can offer.

They did acknowledge that more enforcement is necessary. (The Sheriff's Dept. and the State police were also represented at the meeting.) The Motor Transportation Dept. can back up the cops. The DOT will also place permanent digital speed displays at both ends of the village.

One of the major complaints was the DOT's failure to mention that this traffic goes through a residential area. Our small population works against us. Nick Merrick asked why they can't create a bypass. The reply was Madrid would like one too, but as federal funding decreases there's no money for such huge projects. It should be in our long-term plans.

Janice Felty asked about the oil slick at the junction of 41 and 285. It is being monitored, but "asphalt is 60% oil already so it's not hazardous." Beth Foote suggested ironically that the speed limit be 15mph, so the average would be 35. Priscilla Hoback hoped that if we slowed it down enough truckers wouldn't come through here. David Martinez replied that "speed limits aren't the most effective way of restricting speed; people lose faith and ignore them if they are exaggerated."

The people representing the DOT at this meeting were the bricks and mortar folks, who justifiably denied that they had the authority to act on most of our demands. Only the Highway Commission can send trucks to 285 instead of 41, post a bridge, or consider a bypass. We need to plead our case with the Legislature, the State Highway Commission, and the Northern Pueblo regional planning organization.

John O'Connell from Stanley raised the issue of "degradation of quality of life," and toward the end of the meeting, Steve Reed, an environmental staffer for the DOT, offered to do a "community impact assessment" which has never been used in regard to transportation. However, it is an "evaluation," providing only "soft data," and would not be definitive in court.

Frank Hirsch suggests that complaints about trucks speeding or cutting people off on the roads be filed with Corporal McLaughlin, police "traffic supervisor," at 986-2475. If there are enough complaints, and they understand that Galisteo is really up in arms, it could have some effect.

On September 16th, Denice Pruett and Wendy Chase published a very effective commentary -- "Their View: Tankers threaten historic village"-- in *The New Mexican*. Among their many points was that the Holly Corporation in Moriarty (source of the gas tankers blowing through the village-- many from out of state) posted a net profit of \$18 million in the first half of 2007. They save only \$85,000 per year by sending trucks up the NM 41 shortcut. Do the quality-of-life math.

AND COMING DOWN THE PIKE ...

Most certainly connected to all of our road issues (and all our water issues) was the Oct. 7th meeting at the Community Center on gas and oil drilling in the Galisteo Basin, although, sadly, the full house included only a handful of villagers aside from the organizers --Muriel Fariello, Amy and Steve Tremper.

The meeting featured Tweeti Blancett from San Juan County (see Fariello letter, front page), who has for several years now been a powerful advocate for ranchers whose lands have been devastated by drilling. (The Blancetts have been forced to give up their generations-long vocation of running cattle along the Animas River, although they still raise alfalfa.) One of her main points was the contamination not only of land, but of water throughout the drilling area, as well as the influx of noxious weeds and destruction of wildlife and cattle, not to mention visual and noise pollution. Blancett advises local landowners to lock their gates, deny access to the oil companies, wait for a restraining order, then go to court.

Three exploratory locations proposed by Tecton are south of the Galisteo Creek in the former Ortiz Mining Grant, one is north of Galisteo Creek and CR 42; one is near the transfer station (See *Rio Grande Sierran*, Sept/Oct., 2007.) Drilling uses immense amounts of water -- lethal in our own arid valley, and contamination of local water sources is common. We should demand that the County return to its residents all the water used by the oil companies.

Among those who spoke from the audience were: Jeff Webb, formerly in the Clinton Department of the Interior, now with a Santa Fe non-profit strategizing on pan-western defenses against drilling; David Bacon, former Green Party gubernatorial candidate; a retired U.S. Marshall; and Pete and Helen McCloskey, who have a second home in Madrid. McCloskey, a former Republican Congressman from California who recently became a Democrat out of disgust with the Bush administration, is known for speaking out. After a scathing denunciation of Dick Cheney's "secret energy policy," he suggested to local activists: "Follow the money. All local politicians are being paid off. It's a dirty business."

Bacon, now working with Break The Grip! said the basic cause was corporate control of government and recommended the CELDEF website. Johnny Micou of Drilling Santa Fe (drillingsantafe@earthlink.com) said Tecton is an LLC, not a corporation, not huge money. It will hurt them if the permitting process is obstructed by public opinion. As Steve Tremper insisted, we have to stop them *before* they start drilling.

Blancett noted sadly that San Juan County, along with Pinedale, Wyoming and Parachute, Colorado, is a "national sacrifice area" and she doesn't want to see that happen here. Archaeological resources were not mentioned in the meeting, but they are the Galisteo Basin's trump card. Archaeological looters in San Juan County, rich in Anasazi and Navajo sites, are often oil workers, who can go anywhere with their rigs and haul out truckloads of artifacts -- a deadly prospect for the ancient pueblos of the Galisteo Basin.

State Land Archaeologist David Eck (who administers Pueblo Blanco among other State tracts) was recently quoted in *High Country News* (4/16/07) about proposals to drill just outside Chaco Canyon: "We're not out to destroy the universe. We're here to make money. And if we can do that with minimal impact, that's my job." However, those opposed to drilling point out that revenues dwindle as resources are depleted and "the tiny percentage of revenue that comes back to the County will be sorely needed to repair infrastructure and handle the influx of temporary labor."

The oil and gas issue is HUGE. Even this one meeting provided far more information than *El Puente* has space to convey. The GCA has already written to the Board of County Commissioners asking for help to stop drilling in Santa Fe County. **TO DO:** State Land Commissioner Patrick Lyons is considering a run for the U.S.Senate; hold his feet to the fire on this one. Read the excellent article by Nancy Seewald in the October *Eldorado Sun*. Stay informed. Write letters. Sponsor ads in the media. Go to Tecton's Nov. 1st meeting in Santa Fe. Sign petitions. Help the Environmental Law Center raise money to fight big oil. We'd better Raise Hell, because that's what we'll get if we don't.

PEDACITOS/BITS AND PIECES

Tim Wilms of the Talus Winds Ranch on Frank Anaya Ranch Rd. has bought the **Tienda de Anaya**. He has not yet announced his plans for it.

Amy Sealove Lynn's jewelry was featured in "Hi Ho Silver!" *Cowboys and Indians*, July '07. Then **Arthur Lynn** was featured in *The New Mexican* (9/26) for the intricate process by which he makes his hand-forged knives of Damascus steel. Asked by Marty Gerber whether the two might collaborate on a "steel knife with a vintage jewelry handle," Arthur replied: We love each other, but not enough to work together."

Our County Commissioner **Mike Anaya** has been appointed chair of the Rural Subcommittee of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Steering Committee for the National Association of Counties, which gives his constituents some national clout.

Caroline W. Singleton, owner with her late husband of the

San Cristobal Ranch, died in July at her home in Los Angeles. She is survived by five children and four grandchildren. Her obituary stated that she "believed that landowners have a responsibility to support the communities in which they live and do business." Mrs. Singleton was committed to protecting the vast archaeological resources on the ranch.

A **Farmer's Market** will be held at Eldorado, 4-7PM on Fridays, "as long as the weather cooperates." Call Susan Tarvar, 820-1117 for information.

Deborah Madison, "who put vegetarian cuisine on the destination-dining map as founding chef of Greens," was featured in *The New Mexican's* coverage of the Santa Fe Wine & Chile Fiesta (run by **Greg O'Byrne**).

Pasatiempo (10/5) ran an enthusiastic review of **La Mancha Restaurant** and new "slow food" chef Kim Muller, with the myth of the 300-year old building firmly intact. Included in the kudos for local sourcing was a lump crab tostada. (Ah yes, but Galisteo crabs tend to be more human than crustacean.)

Keep an eye out for two of **Liz Rose's** sculptures, loaned to the City Arts Council for Entrada Park at Cerrillos and Don Diego.

Since late May, 2007, **Bob Keeton** has been living in Galisteo and producing his "Living Successfully" radio show (www.LivingSuccessfully.com) here. The program is aired three times a week on Sirius Satellite and has won a national "Spirit Search" award. On September 9th he interviewed former NM Asst. Attorney General Victor Moss at the Community Center about his book *Beware the Wolves: A Soviet WWII Story*. Keeton moved to Galisteo on the advice of a "relocation astrologer" and a "medical intuitive," and hopes to produce more shows open to the public at the Community Center. He focuses on topics around work, money, and relationships. For information call 466-4101.

GCA MEETING SEPTEMBER 13th

Linda Braun, Secretary

Have you noticed the wildly painted mailboxes south of the church? Thanks to Kevan and Jan Saunders for coming up with the great idea of painting them. Lots of kids and adults gathered on Saturday Sept. 22nd; the GCA supplied paints and brushes, and the fun began. After a few hours of creative painting we shared a GCA-provided lunch in the park. Many folks have asked if we could paint the mailboxes east of the church on 41; the Board will discuss this.

As far as river protection goes, the GCA will need to have the Bosque surveyed before restoration efforts can move forward. Earth Works Institute proposes to place a V-shaped form in the creek to divert the water into two pathways, in order to replenish the wetlands on the other side of the highway bridge. The GCA does not currently have the funds for the survey and the Board discussed doing a fundraiser for this purpose.

The Community Park Committee met with the County on Sept. 12th. The first step is to find the paperwork stating that Galisteo has leased the park to the County. If it can't be found, a new one will be made. The committee is also meeting with residents whose property is near the park to get their input on the design. **Next meeting: Thursday Oct. 18th, 7PM.**

THE GALISTEO BOSQUE, JULY '07

Jan Saunders

When I enter the Galisteo Bosque, I try to walk softly. Even so, I have startled Starlings from their nest hole, interrupted a Towhee bathing, prevented Blue Grosbeak parents from feeding their young, angered a nesting mother Cooper's Hawk, and caused a resting rabbit to flee at the sound of my footsteps.

I have never been into the bosque as much as I have this past summer, almost every day, sometimes twice a day. And I have never learned so much. I have discovered that I, with my sun screen, bug repellent, binoculars, and heavy boots, do not belong here. I am the interloper, the exotic and invasive species.

I have tried to learn not to poke and peak; tried to learn to leave my ego and agenda behind; tried to allow space that invites the birds to come close. I only want to be here quietly; to wait for the gifts to be revealed.... Gently, slowly.

Gazing high, high in the hot summer sky directly over the river, I passed precious time in the presence of a Red-tailed Hawk, insignificantly small by comparison but immensely brave by boldness, as she mobbed an immature Golden Eagle. When the hawk dove screaming out of the sky, the great eagle rolled onto its back and thrust out thick legs and scythe-like talons. Determination won out over size as the hawk soon chased the eagle away from my view and, I assume, from her nesting territory.

As grateful as I am for the gift from the hawk and eagle, I am even more apologetic for my intrusions.

EL PUENTE SPONSORS: ROBERT HARTE & VICTORIA PREWITT

GALISTEO CLASSIFIED

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+++ EL PUENTE DE GALISTEO+++

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