



Report from the Front Lines of the Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon Fire

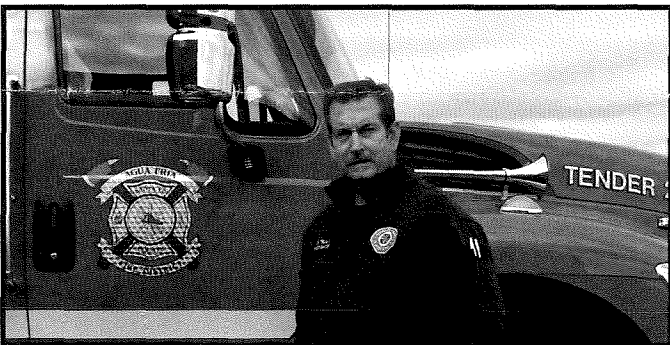
Don Truax, Lieutenant in the Galisteo Volunteer Fire & Rescue, was deployed as one of some 3,000 firefighters facing the biggest wildfire in New Mexico history. On his return he told El Puente:

It was a valuable experience. Long days and some hard work. I was part of the Santa Fe Task Force, assigned to the Route 63 corridor, Pecos Canyon and National Forest, for 21 days.

Our primary mission was structure triage with the goal to make as many homes and camps survivable in the event that the fire makes its way into the canyon. Triage included setting up water supplies and sprinklers, hose lays, digging line, wrapping structures and removing combustibles from around the structure.

I had the opportunity to work with Santa Fe City firefighters including their Wildland division Atalaya, as well as personnel from Valencia County, the city of Santa Rosa, and Santa Fe County's Wildland division Black Canyon. This small group was part of over 3000 firefighters from all across the US, Canada and Mexico.

My name remains on the deployment list, and I would go back if they need me.



SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO?

From the SF County Fire Department: Rapid onset of flash flooding is possible with little or no notice, even for storms producing less than 0.25 inch per hour rainfall. Debris flows are fast and unpredictable. The force of the rushing water and debris can damage or destroy culverts, bridges, roadways, and buildings even miles away from the burned area. Large hail and damaging winds from the stronger storms may result in property damage.

Those of us living on or near the bosque or Arroyo Los Angeles can add yet another concern to drought, fires, inflation, heat, capitalism, etc. Good luck, everybody!

WATER: THINKING BIGGER

Paul Davis

In Parts 1/ 2 (*El Puente* Summer/Oct. 2021) I summarized the history of moisture in the region, and some basic facts about water use. Arguably the most important point is that residential usage accounts for only 7% of all water use in NM. This means that even if we had a magic wand that somehow reduced all our use of water at home to zero, the overall usage would remain at 93% of what it is today. Even that imaginary level of individual "conservation" is not really sufficient to address the water situation we face in the southwest today (and likely tomorrow).

While domestic conservation is obviously valuable and the right thing to do, it is clear that we need a broader focused public policy and large-scale patterns of use. Applying pressure to state, regional and federal authorities is likely to have more impact than the changes we can make around our homes. What are the sorts of things we could (or should) be lobbying for?

Large-scale commercial agriculture uses 75-80% of all state water, by far the largest usage, despite representing only single-digit percentage of the state economy and food supply. Water use will only drop significantly if we change the practice of agriculture in NM. One excellent idea that could enjoy broad support is for municipalities that transfer water rights from farmers to invest in the capital-intensive installation of drip irrigation systems. Everybody wins from such changes: Farmers keep their farms, livelihoods, and culture, but use less water. Residential areas get access to more water as populations grow. The first step in water-wise agriculture is both the hardest and most expensive and we should all help farmers to accomplish it.

However, much of the agriculture practiced in NM is simply inappropriate for this part of the world. Water-heavy crops like alfalfa and feed-lot cattle production are the result of the fever dreams of the Bureau of Reclamation in the early 1940s and are utterly inappropriate in our climate and landscape. We need to lobby for a move away from this type of food production, even though that may hurt a few of the wealthiest ranchers the most. Pistachio and pecans are similarly absurd crops to raise in a climate as dry as ours, even if there are a few wet (*Cont.p.2*)

decades here and there that make it seem possible. We need to discourage new acreage of such crops and encourage transfer of existing acreage to other water-free purposes (solar generation is one idea).

Sadly, even our state emblem, the chile plant, when grown commercially at scale, can consume up to fifty gallons *per plant*. Home/small-scale growers can raise these plants with notably less water. This points to another transformation we need to work for and support: the move towards smaller scale, more traditional agriculture that uses less water (and more labor) to grow more crops that can be sold locally. Similarly, we should lobby hard to prevent the export of “embodied” water out of state, as happens with beef and alfalfa.

The agencies involved in these decisions include the NM Environment Department, the Office of State Engineer, our state legislature, the US Bureau of Land Management, US Department of Agriculture, and the US legislature and administration. All need to be contacted and lobbied about changes in agricultural water usage in our state. Above all NM itself needs to move from a conception in which all water usage is equivalent to a system allowing our political processes to identify and implement priorities for water usage. Such changes will upset people who rely on the historically new US-imposed, first-in-time, first-in-right water rights concept. But without such changes, we will be unable to alter the way water is used in our state that makes more sense for all of us.

RETURNING GIFT OF GENUS LOCI

Denise Lynch

I reach into a private place. It sounds begin with a light breeze created by an eclipse. Doves haunting morning sighs remind me of her knowledge of maidens and crones. There is my Galisteo underneath the layers. Beneath the Tsunami of newcomers dreams and the waves of construction noises. Trucks and trailers rushing by, I reinvent them as the in and out of breathing waves. There is my open space umbrella-like within the tall expressive embrace of thirsty cottonwoods. The deep dread and ache of the modern world lies still for several heartbeats while the new season floats in on the puffs of cotton in the air. The desert dirt swirls into various sized devils and this blows away winters tired crusts. My electrical cravings to share the quiet description of sound is momentary. I know the rose gold light that distant fires provide and it pools



like familiar fools gold outside my bedroom door. My reluctance prevents me from stepping in it but I enjoy the Salukis splashing into the delicacy of its fleeting visit. I think of artists and writers and dreamers who are sharing this Monday. Elbowing out everything they can to get to the place of creative courtship within the glorious mystical environment that is Galisteo waiting to be received.



BEAR NECESSITIES

Jan Saunders, drawing by Catherine Ferguson

“Bears not only make the habitat rich, they enrich us just by being.” (Linda Jo Hunter, author, artist and bear appreciator)

As the sun comes up on Memorial Day morning 2022, a pair of Say’s Phoebes dart under the portal bringing insects to their nestlings, smart-eyed Ravens call from the corral fence, and a Curved-Billed Thrasher sings a non-stop mimicry of his own creation as an aerodynamically challenged Bumblebee bumps in and out of my hollyhock blooms. What seems like the beginning of a tranquil spring day is troubled by the worrisome smell of smoke. Just thirty crow-flown miles east/northeast of our village, the Pecos Wilderness is on fire.

It’s our longest spell of dry weather in years and fire season is two months early. The flames, chewing up well over 300,000 acres, show no signs of running out of dry timber or structures. We take clothing and essentials to evacuees hunkered down in shelters worrying about their livestock. Someone calls to locate shelter for their horses. We offer what we can and think about wildlife habitat going up in smoke. Mostly I worry that spring cubs aren’t yet strong enough to keep up with momma bear. So I call a friend at the NM Department of Game and Fish where the Bear Biologist offers information that makes me feel better about charred wildlife habitat...sort of.

The answer to my first innocent lay-person question of whether the NMDGF has plans to mitigate the chance of bear starvation by distributing food, is a decided No! Bringing bears together in one place, risking disease, conflicts, and developing an abnormal dependency on free food is never in the bears’ best interest. It seems our New Mexico Black Bears are quite resilient during fires as they move out ahead of the flames, later returning to their original habitat. I was encouraged to hear that recent inspection of the burned areas revealed many isolated patches skipped over by the fire where bears can find respite.

Additionally in the bears’ favor is the fact that their favorite snack is still available because insects, such as grubs, beetles, and ants, survive fires by living under ground or deep within the bark of trees and stumps. However, burned areas will be short of the vegetative matter that comprises 90% of bears’ food. (Cont. p.3)

As the summer drags on and the temperature rises, bears may begin to move out in search of food. Understanding that the drainage from the Pecos area, through the Galisteo Basin, and eventually down to the Rio Grande is a recognized Wildlife Pathway, we may be in for some bear visits. I found food for thought on the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish website: “Bears have adapted to live near people. Are you willing to adapt to living with bears?”

As I write this, that fire is c. 70% contained, but officials are bracing themselves for the aftereffects of flash floods and erosion that will make life more difficult for all wildlife.

Here are a few reminders to keep *Bears* alive and *You* safe: *Never feed, approach or corner a bear. Secure household garbage. Clean and store outdoor grills. Bring in pets and pet food at night. When bears are around, remove bird/hummingbird feeders.*

EPILOGUE: On 6/14 an unknown hit-and-run motorist killed a mother bear near Glorieta Pass. Her two orphaned cubs, found up a nearby tree, were taken to a rehabilitation clinic in Espanola and will eventually be released into the wild. As part of standard procedure, the momma’s carcass was sold to a local buyer for meat and fur so nothing is wasted.

PEDACITOS/BITS AND PIECES

Corey McGillicuddy will show her “Quarantine Diary” photos of Galisteans at the Community Center, Sat. June 25th, 10-5.

Three Galisteo Artists were represented on May 28 at the 7th Annual Art in the Park (Cerrillos Hills State Park, that is): **Deirdre Africa** with her Button Box Aprons, **Julie Deery** with a mosaic sculpture and **Jessica Spring** with miniature landscapes -- “Little Views, Large Places.” Deirdre was also pictured in the *New Mexican* (6/5) with her aprons modeled by Galisteoan **Dennison Smith** at a Las Golondrinas event.

El Puente seems to have missed publishing the fact that a detail of one of **Jean Anaya Moya’s** retablos was on the cover of last year’s Traditional Spanish Market special edition; she was also featured in *Santa Fe Magazine*, # 2.

Andrew Lustig is quoted by the Modern Elders Association on a workshop of theirs; “This couldn’t have come at a more pivotal time. I have a new purpose now.”

Loose dogs and loose cattle were noted in the Community emails recently. Spring scratching the freedom itch?

A ban on certain **fireworks** lasts until at least July 7th.

The former **Cerro Pelon Ranch** has been renamed **Campo M** by the new owner, who prefers to remain private for the time being but plans eventually to contact the community, according to Ranch Manager Clint Mortenson of Lone Butte.

Liz Rose is one of 24 New Mexico poets featured in the haiku trail at the Randall Davy Audubon Center. She also participated in the Eldorado Library’s Third Annual Poetry Reading.

At the GVFR’s Holiday dinner, service awards were given to **Gwen Feisst** (10 years), Clive Smith (1 year) and Jessica Spring (1 year). At the June Business meeting, **John Watson Jones** and **Lucy Lippard** were given pins for their 5-year and 26-year service, respectively.



Smith and Spring; Lippard and Watson-Jones; Kruse and Moya; Laurie and Bill Mitchell with the Chief. Photos: A.Kruse and C. McGillicuddy.

A WIN FOR BUSTAMANTE...AND FOR US

Camilla Bustamante was the only candidate in the Democratic primary for District 3 County Commissioner to show up in Galisteo for a meet and greet. The small audience liked what she had to say, noting that she spent a good amount of time with us and showed her sensitivity to rural and traditional village issues. Mare Tomaski writes, “She really seems sincere and eager to build relationships with her constituents. It was refreshing!” John Watson-Jones noted that “Camilla takes sustainability seriously, including water and land-use issues. Her local family roots seem to motivate her. She’s articulate and fluent, (Cont. p.4)



Anaya and Bustamante

and could work well politically as a commissioner.” John, Ed Epping, and former County Commissioner Mike Anaya brought up the need for additional, younger members and the idea of having paid staff.

From organizer Corey McGillicuddy: “Was it Woody Allen who said something to the effect of ‘a big part of getting the job is showing up’”? Bustamante handily won the primary and with no Republican opponent, she’ll take office next January.

Vernon Anaya is now in charge of scheduling rentals for the Galisteo Community Center (GCC). He can be reached at 505-570-9099 (text or leave a phone message)

Julie Deery is getting the word out about her collaborative mural for the Santa Fe Rail Trail, looking for donations, places to do workshops, etc. On 6/18 she was at Vital Spaces Community Art Closet making mandalas with volunteers. See website below or call her at 610-348-1513. On 7/9 Big Brothers Big Sisters will come to Galisteo to make mosaic mandalas to add to the mural.



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GALISTEO CLASSIFIED

ADS ARE FREE, AND FOR GALISTEO RESIDENTS ONLY. PLEASE email flip14@centurylink.net TO UPDATE OR DELETE YOUR ADS. Next deadline: September 5.

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FOR SALE

Quartermill Gallery, 10 Via La Puente. Open Weekends by appt. 505-466-2255. Estate pieces and Regional collectables.

Amanecer Gallery offers oil paintings by Freddie Cárdenas and micaceous pottery by Anna Cárdenas, 505-466-8967.

Talus Wind Heritage Meats. Local New Mexico lamb and pork. Contact info@taluswindranch.com.

Button Box Aprons by Deirdre Africa of Rancho Bueno: call or email if you are interested in aprons, napkins, and potholders: 505-670-5198, www.buttonboxaprons.com, or africadeirdre@gmail.com.

SERVICES

Radio Free Galisteo @ www.radiofreegalisteo.com Music and Information from the Galisteo Basin. Support the Station: <https://www.patreon.com/radiofreegalisteo>.

Dave's Auto Repair: restoring, minor repairs, painting. Local references. Free estimates: David Montoya, 505-577-1720.

Exciting **Adventure Travel** around the world with professional wildlife photographers Jami Tarris and Theo Allofs of Wild Focus Expeditions. For more information: 466-3640 or www.wildfocusexpeditions.com. Come with Us!

Common sense, gentle dog-training: house manners, management problem-solving at your home, and limited boarding. 20+ yrs. experience. Call Evelyn, 466-1875.

Orchard Full-Service Catering: Personal chef, experience with special needs and dietary issues. Corey McGillicuddy, 466-1831, mcgillicuddycorey3@gmail.com.

Galisteo Woodworks: for your custom woodworking needs. Furniture and furniture repair. Antonio Chavez, 466-3601.

Intern will travel: Need help during parties, snow shoveling, yard cleaning, housekeeping or pet sitting on weekends? Call John Garcia at 505-310-3812.

Welding, flagstone, moss rock, fountains, plumbing, sprinkler, drip systems, plus Gopher Control. David Maestas, 670-8608 or 660-9715.

Linda Vista Stables: Local horse owners: I can take care of your horses when you're away, in the comfort of their own barn. Call Maria, 466-8930

Pet, House, and Garden Care. Janet Pfeiffer, 399-9238.

Galisteo Yoga: Virtual yoga with Mare! Zoom Yoga Weds. 12:30. Sunday noon. \$12.00 per class pay pal or check options. Contact Mare at profundus@aol.com for the Zoom Room Link. **Yoga Zoom** classes with Julia: Every Mon., Wed., and Fri. Gentle Yin, Vinyasa Flow and Yin Yang. Contact 505-466-1935 or julia.c.cairns@gmail.com for more information.

Grow Y'own hooped and covered raised beds for year-round gardening! Ken 490-1849.

JVS will remove (live) rattlesnakes. Call 466-1064.

We build and repair coyote fences; haul trash; yard work & other odd jobs. Fair prices, local references, Michael J. Anaya, 660-2275.

Barbara Holloway Fine Handweaving: scarves, shawls, vests, jackets, handwoven of luxurious chenille. 466-2118.

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Passive Solar Builders: Locally owned general contractor since 1980. Quality home construction, renovations: 466-2118.

Meditation & Knowings with Chris Griscom via video Sundays, free on YouTube: 466-1975 thelight@lightinstitute.com

+++EL PUENTE DE GALISTEO+++

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