

EL PUENTE DE GALISTEO

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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024



LOOKING FOR JESSIE*

Ann Senuta

On Dec. 28, my 9-year-old dog, Jessie, was in a car accident at the intersection of highways 285 and 41 while I was away visiting family. She took off towards Saddleback Ranch still dragging her leash. By that evening, a group of Galisteans had combed the ranchlands, arroyos, and dirt roads along the east side of Highway 41, but found no sign of her.

By the time I arrived home the next afternoon, many of my neighbors were out there again, driving slowly or walking on foot, calling her. My partner, John, flew in to join me. We searched and called until my voice was hoarse. We posted information on NextDoor and Santa Fe Lost Pets Facebook page. People are sympathetic and supportive with the best of intentions, but we chased down some discouraging leads, like a dog who looked like Jessie near Madrid.

I learned—much to my surprise—that calling a lost dog in survival mode can have the unintended effect of pushing her further away. We began working closely with Conrad Mahaffey, owner of CMM Lost Pet Recovery and Humane Trapping, who explained that a traumatized dog doesn't hear its name being called. It just sees people calling and yelling as threats.

Conrad advised us to set up "comfort stations" between the accident site and Galisteo that held a dog blanket from home, a dirty article of my clothing, some food that is removed each evening so as not to attract predators, and a bowl of water. If the food was eaten, we would then set up a motion-activated camera

on a nearby tree to confirm who was eating it. If it was Jessie, Conrad would set up a humane trap. This process of luring a dog is what Conrad has used successfully in numerous cases.

Monitoring the comfort stations gave us purpose and hope each morning. We'd hike down to the one in the arroyo behind the Chi Center, another near a construction site on Saddleback, and one near the accident location in case Jessie looped back. The evening checks grew more and more discouraging when no food was eaten and the cold air was settling in.

John and Conrad helped keep my spirits up. This was a marathon, not a sprint. Dogs can be lost for weeks, even months. They can live without food for extended periods before their hunger pushes them towards people or houses. An animal psychic told me that Jessie was "steady and sure and trying to solve the problem. She just may just show up at home on her own." So we kept both my front and back gates ajar, just in case.

On January 4th, Jessie was seen by a construction foreman on the Saddleback property, still dragging her leash. With that fresh lead, Conrad came out to set up the trap. He told us to make big, colorful signs with the word "Lost," a large photo or two of Jessie, and my phone number, not signs with too much written detail. This area is filled with dog lovers who let us post signs on their property, in their stores and restaurants, on fences where highway workers and construction workers gather.

Conrad reiterated that when we spotted her—he never said "if"—we were not to call her but drop low, crackle a plastic bag as if we had yummy food in it, and not to look directly at her. A dog will tentatively approach and sniff its owner and then, like a switch being flipped, will click out of survival mode and back into being a pet.

The evening of Jan. 10, Jessie's tracks were spotted in fresh snow on the Cottonwood Trail at the Galisteo Basin Preserve. She had crossed the highway. Early the next morning, when it was about 9 degrees, John and I were hiking there, desperate for fresh tracks but finding only those by coyotes.

The next morning, after a fresh snowfall, we got a call from a young man who'd seen Jessie's sign at the Cowboy Shack Trailhead in the Preserve. "I just saw your dog running north alongside Highway 285, up the big hill past Lamy." We raced up and along the shoulder found tracks so fresh I could see the side edges of the leash. I followed them in deep snow into the woody area along Old Road. A woman came out when (Cont.p.2)

she saw me circling in the snow on her property. She had seen Jessie's puzzling tracks around her empty chicken coop. I took photos of them and texted them to Conrad. "She's up there," he replied. "Make more signs. Plaster them around the area. And set up a comfort station there near that house." We rushed off to make more signs in town and returned to the Ranch Road area with them. By dusk we were exhausted, and my feet were freezing.

The next morning, Jan. 14th, Gwen Feisst and I were out early, searching for tracks, while I dragged dog blankets near the comfort station and spit (saliva has the strongest scent, according to Conrad). While we were there, I got a call from a man on Camino Acote Road who seen a dog on his Ring doorbell camera at 3AM the night before. His wife had just seen one of our signs at her horse barn and thought it might be the same dog. We rushed over there, and when I saw the video, I felt my knees weaken. It was Jessie, so thin and so tired. She walked slowly to their front door, snowflakes swirling behind her, and then turned back out into the darkness. Her blue leash and collar were finally gone. John and I went back up to move the comfort station yet again. As we set it up, I circled it dragging her blankets in the snow. This felt like a shot in the dark if she kept moving. I felt so close to her, but the doorbell video was heartbreaking.

At 4:45 that afternoon, we returned home. When I pulled the back driveway gate fully open, I saw something out of the corner of my eye. It took me a moment to register that it was an animal, and another moment to realize it was Jessie. I did what Conrad said to do: dropped to the ground, didn't look at her, and let her come to me. And, just as he said, she sniffed tentatively, then started whimpering and nosing my hands. She was my Jessie girl again, and she was home after 18 cold days. Jessie has lost 25% percent of her body weight, and she is slowly gaining it back. She gets into the car willingly but is happiest to be warm and home with us. The community's support and love is as big and powerful as one of Alice Kruse's hugs.

**Ed. note: This is long for an El Puente article but we decided to publish it because we're a village of dog lovers and this includes a lot of advice... and hope.*

SAVING GALISTEO FROM NMDOT: THE LATEST

Thanks to various extenuating circumstances (icy roads, previous commitments, broken shoulder, lost dog, etc.), no one on the unofficial GCA subcommittee dealing with the NMDOT/NM 41 was able to make it to the **January 11th meeting in Moriarty**. The weather guaranteed that the gathering was poorly attended. However, our former County Commissioner and St. Joseph's Society member Mike Anaya made it and so did new part-time resident Teri Rueb. After establishing his family's connections to the DOT, Anaya touched on the church and La Sala, noting that the protests came from Galisteo people "who just moved in." (Two members of the subcommittee are from old local families and others have been here from about ten to thirty years.)

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The **February 4th meeting at the GCC**, led by Ana Cárdenas and Jennifer Martin, was efficient, informative, and very well attended. (Could it have been the delicious pies?) There was plenty of audience participation. Here is the latest information.

Completion of **Phase 3** (to the north) involves a coating on the highway and hopefully a better solution to drainage issues, lost trees, and the cleanup of all construction sites. This should take two months, starting in March. We were told that **Phase 4** (through the village from La Vega to the southern bridge) would begin in a year, but now it might start in May. We have the option of leaving the road in the village center as is, but given its bad condition, there was no enthusiasm for this solution. We hope to get a historical engineer to check out the Church, La Sala, and old homes. Supposedly there will be no elevation gain, no vegetation will come down, and the church parking lot will be restored. Highway lanes will be 11' instead of 12'. Bike lanes will be on both sides, maybe gravel.

Speeding was the most pressing issue. DOT did a survey showing that 50% of vehicles go at least 55 mph. (which seems reasonable on a brand new shiny highway). But it is the County's, not a DOT's purview, except when the speed limit protects their workers. There were many suggestions. Speed cameras is a controversial but perhaps most effective remedy. Representative Matthew McQueen said that cameras do slow people down; they record and send tickets which but are not enforceable, though some do pay.

Thanks to Camilla Bustamante, our County Commissioner, jake brake signs will be posted at each end of the village. But she is not behind the speed cameras -- perhaps because the County bears the expenses (and income), so we should try to convince her. Safety is a major issue. School buses also came up.

Should we ask for curbs on the side or center? A newish resident from Chicago spoke against curbs and too many signs because "we are rural, not suburban." Speed bumps are not allowed because they slow down emergency vehicles. Rumble strips are noisy. A four-way stop or light at the church/CR 42 was deemed dangerous; if someone ignored it and a crash ensued, the State would be liable. (Huh? Aren't they liable for violations at all lights and stop signs?) Someone suggested we revive Dave the mannequin cop of yesteryear.

The multiple low medians (two of them too far away to "calm" village speeding) came in for a lot of criticism and ideas for making them more visible, including a big cat sculpture! McQueen said we should tell them what we want...

Alex Finlayson did some national research that seemed to prove nothing worked except a real live cop issuing a real enforceable ticket, and she suggested that we might hire our own. Rachel Darnell also researched and found that different companies can be hired to run speed cameras so we could do it ourselves, though it would be expensive. She also noted that the noise when a truck goes over the south bridge she can hear the bump caused by the settling of the bridge, from her house (your editor lives right beside it.) GCA Board member Judy Tuwaletsiwa urged that we be nice and advocated for signs reading "Drive Gently." Jennifer was told by the Sheriff to try everything: "We should act like a storm of insects!"

Finally, Enterprise (the fuel depot near I-40) has *suggested* to its drivers that "if they *must* drive NM41..." implying that the 285 route is an option. Tankers' routes are regulated not by DOT but by Enterprise's individual customers. We will have to contact them separately. A tanker driver told one villager that they were fined by his company if caught speeding. The number of tankers passing through the village is so far unknown; the community is advised to notice if the traffic increases.

MORE TO COME as plans take shape.

CONTROVERSIAL SOLAR PROJECT: PART I

Paul Davis

There's a project to build a large solar electricity generation and storage facility just east of the Turquoise Trail Charter School on NM14, south of Rancho Viejo, north of San Marcos, and west of Eldorado. Proposed by AES, a Fortune 500 company, the project has raised hackles among some residents of neighboring communities and support among others.

Here are the basic facts of the proposed facility: Generating capacity: 96MW with 48MW of lithium ion battery storage (in about 40' metal containers): enough power for 30k homes in/ around Santa Fe (more than 50% of all domestic electricity use in the city). Land use: 680 acres of private land. Tax revenue: AES claims \$7M a year to Santa Fe County. Lifetime: about 35 years. Noise: battery containers, 70dB of noise each (equivalent to driving in a typical car at 60 mph); Inverters: 45dB each, roughly the equivalent of a quiet library.

The approval process for the project is still ongoing. The County is in the process of hiring a 3rd party consultant to review the battery storage system. One Eldorado resident has claimed that the County violated the Open Meetings Act when it altered regulations to include energy storage as a part of solar generation facilities, but the County has denied this.

The County fire department gave preliminary approval with conditions in September 2023. After issues raised by the same resident, County commissioners voted for more stringent standards in December 2023 after a prior vote on the same in August 2023.

We must note that the land involved has already been approved for further expansion of Rancho Viejo, so any objections to the proposal should really take into account the most likely alternative use: 2000+ homes, generating more noise, pollution and significant public risks. We should also note that the PRC has rejected three other solar projects in the NM14/ Bonanza Creek area.

Here are various objections to the proposal, and counter-arguments. My goal is to be as fair as possible, and I should acknowledge that I favor the proposal, with some provisos.

Concerns raised: (1) *Battery storage fires*. These do happen, but almost without exception, worldwide, the fires never escape the battery storage containers. Despite repeatedly being asked on social media and in the *New Mexican*, opponents seem unable to cite any examples where this is not true other than an explosion in Manila that was rapidly contained. (2) *Fire caused by a 2.5 mile above-ground powerline*. This is a genuine risk, which could be reduced by running the line underground. (3) *Habitat destruction*. This will be a fact of construction, but the land will likely revert to its current state within a couple of years, and the damage will be far less than if further Rancho Viejo homes are constructed. (4) *Water use*: 30-50M gallons of water during construction, 65k-1M gallons for annual maintenance. This does seem quite significant, and there's really no counterpoint. (5) Some have complained that the *project should receive "utility scale" rather than "commercial" designation*, which would lead to more public input and oversight; this could still happen.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE.

GVFR NEWS

Corey McGillicuddy, organizer of the New Year's Eve Food Drive, received food donations at the Fire Station Dec. 31st for roughly ten local recipients. Anything unused was passed on to the Eldorado Food Pantry and to clients in the County.

Paul Davis is the newest firefighter to graduate from the rigorous Fire Academy. He was feted at the annual GVFR members' dinner on Jan 19th, catered at the Community Center (pix next issue). **Janice Wall** was honored for fifteen years as GVFR Secretary, as were three members for years of service: **Jerry Kruse** (5 years), **Don Truax** (5 years) and **Kevin Smith** (1 year).

Three new members of the GVFR crew are **Ezra Sage** and **Kobe Jane** (who are, yes, young!) and **Steve Riemer** (not old).

The handsome new GVFR-sponsored 2024-25 Galisteo phone book is out, thanks to **Ed Epping**.

PEDACITOS/BITS AND PIECES

On January 5th, *The New Mexican* ran a column by the usually hyper-critical Milan Simonich headlined "One Brave Lawmaker rises to the top." The subject was our State Representative, Galisteo **Matthew McQueen**, who was praised for his "gutsy principled decisions" in two proposed bills: to "abolish the governor's power to kill legislation through pocket vetos" and stabilization of the State Game Commission, currently paralyzed by understaffing, which was dismissed by pocket veto.

Harmony Hammond is included in the 2024 Whitney Biennial in New York and was featured in the *New York Times* article announcing the participants. She is now in London for the opening of *Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art*.

Corey McGillicuddy is the Ward Chair for the Third District of the Santa Fe County Democratic Party. The Pre-Primary Convention takes place on Sunday, February 18th. It will be available on line: register at partyaffairs@nmdemocrats.org. For further info contact Corey at 505-466-1831

On KUNM's "Women's Focus" in December, **Deborah Madison** was praised to the skies. Also on KUNM: Modern Elders Academy's **Chip Conley** was interviewed about his mission to "navigate change in mid life" (your fifties); a modern elder is "curious and wise," and the majority of MEA's workshops are diverse; the majority receive financial aid. MEA's Santa Fe campus (at the former Immaculate Heart property) will open in March as the one on Saddleback Ranch goes forward.

Frank Hoback III, pilot, musician, "master Mr. Fix-it," and **Denise Lynch's** father, passed away in December.

A GALISTEO TALE

Priscilla Hoback*

For six generations Comanche Indians riding rugged Spanish ponies were the superior force on the southwestern plains. At will they traded with, or terrified, subdued peoples within their territory; the Pueblo Indians, Spanish settlers and American soldiers all feared and suffered their superior presence. Ample records tell of the Comanches' inevitable demise. Tides of history moving west eventually overcame them. It is a brutal story of massacres, starvation, and shameful American genocide. Ultimately, they were weakened by the U.S. Army. When safety from treaties was secured, the western territories and in a few years, the village of Galisteo began to flourish. (*Cont.p.4*)

Little is recorded or remembered about the Comanches who survived. I know something of one who did. The father of my children carries this blood. His mother, Maria, was a Quahada, undoubtedly a daughter of warriors. She spoke very little and never in English. She said a government agency gave her a name, Maria, and her birthday, July 4. Age unknown, orphaned and captured in New Mexico Territory, Maria was shipped to Southern Texas and placed with, or maybe sold to, an Irishman, George Joe Lynch. Pancho Villa's army was creating turmoil in Northern Mexico,

George and Maria settled in Albuquerque, where they built a small house and raised their family. They built a shed behind his house where they brain-tanned and sold leather hides. I was given a beautiful elk hide when I married their son. Made into a wonderful pair of chaps, they lasted for years of hard riding. Joe's parents were very kind to me and proud of their first grandson, Joseph. Maria almost never left her home, This was one of the many things she was not allowed to do. She was always available to babysit. George Joe did all of the shopping. Maria took in ironing to help support their eight children who were raised to be Anglo, leaving the dilemmas of racial integration and tribal recognition to future generations to solve.

A formidable rock wall known as the Southern Creston or Hogback runs east to west and creates the Galisteo Basin's southern boundary. It is miles long, rugged and quite tall. Patches of brilliant chartreuse lichen add technicolor splashes to the petroglyphs carved onto the south side of basalt rocks.

One trail cutting through this volcanic dyke is called Comanche Gap. Petroglyphs of horned creatures wielding shields and kachina figures adorned with feathered headdresses stand beside eagles with sharp beaks. Not quite human figures show their skeleton teeth and threaten with raised skull crackers. A four-pointed star turns round eyes toward a spiral whorl. The crescent moon lies above a serpent who crawls east. There are many claims as to the meaning of these strange images. Intended to be warnings, their message was not understood, or went unheeded.

Comanche Indians ride rough-shod through my dreams at night. Their fierce, tragic spirits come to me from the wildest frontier I can imagine. I see them, still alive, gazing into this world through the uncompromising shiny black eyes of my children.

**This is a chapter from Hoback's book*

A Galisteo Tale that she completed before her death in 2018. Her daughter, Denise Lynch, is looking for a publisher.

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GALISTEO CLASSIFIED

ADS ARE FREE, AND FOR GALISTEO RESIDENTS ONLY. Next deadline, March 1st. PLEASE email flip14@centurylink.net TO UPDATE OR DELETE YOUR ADS.

FOR SALE

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, napkins, and potholders by Deirdre Africa of Rancho Bueno: 505-670-5198, www.buttonboxaprons.com; 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!

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Linda Vista Stables: I can take care of your local horses 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, repair coyote fences; haul trash; yard work, odd jobs. Fair prices, local references, Michael Anaya, 660-2275.

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

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

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Editor: Lucy R. Lippard. **Logo:** Cara Lee. **Printer:** Allegra. **Changes, comments, suggestions, contributions to:** El Puente, 14 Avenida Vieja, or flip14@centurylink.net. **NEXT DEADLINE:** March 1st. **TO SPONSOR:** Check for \$90-\$150 (or more!) **MADE OUT TO GCA** noting "for newsletter," to address above.