

NEW MEXICO GENERATIONS

WINTER 2025/2026

THE INTERVIEW

Route 66's Enduring Spirit

For 37 years, Vickie Ashcraft has watched generations chase the same blacktop magic along America's Mother Road

Strength and Wellness

At-Home Exercises to
Boost Heart Health

Excursions

A Chocolate Lover's
Dream Weekend

Food

A Wild-Rice Soup
to Beat Any
Wintertime Chill

Winter Events

With 250 senior centers across the state, there's a location—and community—near you.

A Legacy on the Loom

Irvin and Lisa Trujillo have spent a lifetime keeping their family's weaving tradition alive. Now they're helping pass it on.

NEW MEXICO GENERATIONS

A new magazine dedicated to enhancing life for New Mexicans as they age.



Offering resources, inspiration, and a sense of community to those 55+

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New Mexico Generations magazine is a quarterly publication published by the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department, whose mission is to serve and inspire the state's older adult community to live active, healthy lives and enhance their connections within their community.

NEW MEXICO GENERATIONS

WINTER 2025/2026

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Honoring Tradition, Investing in Tomorrow

As the days grow shorter and the air turns crisp, winter in New Mexico reminds us of the power of warm connections and traditions that anchor us to one another and to those who came before us.

In this issue of *New Mexico Generations*, you'll find stories that celebrate that spirit: the artistry of weavers Irvin and Lisa Trujillo, the strength of kinship caregivers stepping up for loved ones, and the advocacy of our new state ombudsman. You'll also find guidance on recognizing the early signs of movement disorders and exciting news about the expansion of the Mary Esther Gonzales Senior Center in Santa Fe. There's an inspiring story about artist Lynn Garlick, who's been making retablos for nearly 50 years, and a great interview with one of the dedicated keepers of Route 66 history (and its mythology).

These stories are reminders of what's possible when we center aging in our state's priorities. As we enter the 2026 legislative session, our department is focused on strengthening the systems that allow older adults to remain independent, connected, and supported in their communities.

To make that vision real, we're asking the legislature for investments that strengthen safety, stability, and support for older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers. This includes \$1.5 million to add ten to thirteen new Adult Protective Services workers and to expand our ability to respond to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It also includes \$5.5 million to grow community-based programs such as transportation, meals, respite care, health-promotion services, and the Senior Employment Program in urban and rural communities. Additionally, we are requesting \$1 million to support the 48th annual Conference on Aging, along with another \$1 million to expand statewide outreach and public education so more New Mexicans can connect with available services.

These investments are more than numbers on a page. Each dollar represents a commitment

to real people: the caregivers who make independence possible, the advocates who protect our vulnerable adults, and the older New Mexicans who built the foundations of our communities.

We know that the challenges ahead are real. There are housing and transportation barriers, workforce shortages, and federal constraints. But our greatest strength amid these challenges has always been our people. Across state and local governments, tribal communities, and local organizations, New Mexicans continue to show up for one another in meaningful and powerful ways.

I want to thank you all for being part of this shared effort. Our work together and as a state depends on partnership. Whether you are a caregiver, an advocate, a service provider, or a community member, I encourage you to stay engaged. Reach out to your local senior or multigenerational center, volunteer your time in your community, or share your story on social media. Together we can make sure that every generation has the opportunity to thrive.



Emily Kaltenbach,
Cabinet Secretary
*New Mexico Aging & Long-Term Services
Department*



New Mexico Aging Services

Helping New Mexicans achieve lifelong independence and health.

About New Mexico Aging Services*

Our mission is to serve and inspire the state's older adult community to live active, healthy lives and enhance their connections within their community. The department is a leader in developing programs and building partnerships that support lifelong independence and healthy aging, providing advocacy, support, and resources for seniors and for adults with disabilities.

● For more information about NMAS, visit aging.nm.gov or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and X [@NewMexicoAging](#).

About New Mexico Generations

New Mexico Generations is dedicated to enriching the lives of every generation of New Mexican by offering inspiration, resources, and community connection.

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*New Mexico Aging Services is the forward-facing name for the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department. We use the Aging Services name in external communications and with constituents in order to better represent the full breadth of work we do and the people we provide services for across the state.

NM Aging Services Division Overviews

Adult Protective Services: APS is committed to protecting the safety of adults who are not able to protect themselves and to promote personal choice and self-determination among the aging. There are five Adult Protective Services regions serving all 33 counties of New Mexico. Its services include investigation of reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults.

● If you suspect an adult is being abused, neglected, or exploited, call Adult Protective Services toll-free at (866) 654-3219.

Aging Network: New Mexico's four Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) provide in-home and community-based services that allow older individuals to remain in their homes and receive support as they get older. Services include home-delivered meals, employment, transportation, healthy aging and prevention programs, and access to the department's network of over 250 senior centers statewide.

Office of Indian Elder Affairs: The OIEA's mission is to coordinate and enhance a system of services that empower American Indian Elders with support and resources to live a healthy lifestyle with joy, respect, and dignity in their tribal communities. Support and assistance offered by the division include meals at Tribal Senior Centers, home-delivered meals, transportation, homemaking services, and exercise and physical fitness opportunities.

● For more information about

the OIEA's services, email [oiea.info@altsd.nm.gov](mailto:info@altsd.nm.gov).

Consumer Elder Rights Division and the Aging & Disabilities Resource Center:

Together, these divisions help elders, persons with disabilities, and caregivers find services and information to help aging New Mexicans live well and independently. This includes assistance with registering for Medicare and Medicaid, paying for prescriptions drugs, assessing long-term care programs and services, and more.

Ombudsman Program: The program's public advocates, all of whom are volunteers, visit assisted-living facilities and nursing homes on a regular basis, advocating for residents' rights, investigating complaints or concerns with staff, exploring solutions, and ensuring quality of care.

● To report abuse, neglect, or other concerns, call (866) 451-2901.

Long-Term Care Division: The department provides community and caregiver-focused services to New Mexicans. It manages five programs: the Veteran-Directed Care Program, New MexiCare, Care Transition, the Office of Alzheimer's and Dementia, and the Kinship Caregiver Pilot Program.

Contact NMAS

(800) 432-2080
help@altsd.nm.gov
aging.nm.gov
[@NewMexicoAging](#)

Honrar las tradiciones apostando al mañana

Con los días cada vez más cortos y el aire cada vez más fresco, el invierno en Nuevo México nos recuerda el poder de las relaciones cálidas y las tradiciones que nos unen entre nosotros y con quienes nos preceden en el camino.

En esta nueva edición de *New Mexico Generations* les traemos historias que celebran ese espíritu: el arte de los tejedores Irvin y Lisa Trujillo, la fortaleza de quienes cuidan a sus seres queridos cuando más lo necesitan y el compromiso del nuevo defensor del pueblo de nuestro estado. También encontrarán pautas para reconocer los primeros indicios de los trastornos del movimiento, así como importantes novedades sobre la ampliación del Centro para Personas Mayores Mary Esther Gonzales, en Santa Fe. La artista Lynn Garlick nos inspira con su historia tras casi 50 años creando retablos, y uno de los guardianes de la historia (y la mitología) de la Ruta 66 nos ofrece una entrevista fascinante.

Estos relatos nos recuerdan todo lo que se puede lograr cuando la atención a los adultos mayores ocupa un lugar central entre las prioridades del estado. Con el inicio de las sesiones legislativas de 2026, nuestro departamento centrará sus esfuerzos en fortalecer los sistemas que permiten que nuestros mayores mantengan su independencia, sus vínculos sociales y el apoyo de sus comunidades.

Para que esto sea una realidad, le estamos solicitando a la legislatura inversiones que refuercen la seguridad, la estabilidad y la asistencia para las personas mayores, para los adultos con discapacidad y para quienes cuidan de ellos. Entre estas inversiones, pedimos un millón y medio de dólares para

incorporar entre diez y trece personas a los Servicios de Protección para Adultos y para ampliar nuestra capacidad de respuesta ante casos de abuso, abandono y explotación. Además, pedimos cinco millones y medio para ampliar programas comunitarios de transporte, comidas, cuidados de relevo, servicios de promoción de la salud y el Programa de Empleo para Personas Mayores en comunidades urbanas y rurales. También buscamos obtener un millón de dólares para patrocinar la 48.^a Conferencia Anual para Personas Mayores, junto con otro millón de dólares para ampliar la divulgación y la educación pública en todo el estado, de modo que más habitantes de Nuevo México puedan acceder a los servicios que se encuentran a su disposición.

Estas inversiones no son solo

números en un papel. Cada dólar representa un compromiso con gente real: las personas que cuidan a otros y hacen posible su independencia, los defensores que protegen a nuestros adultos vulnerables y las personas mayores de Nuevo México que construyeron los cimientos de nuestras comunidades.

Sabemos que lo que nos espera no es menor. Hay barreras en materia de vivienda y transporte, escasez de mano de obra y restricciones a nivel federal, pero nuestra mayor fortaleza frente a estos desafíos siempre ha sido nuestra gente. Tanto en los gobiernos estatales y locales como en las comunidades tribales y las organizaciones locales, la población de Nuevo México sigue ayudándose mutuamente de formas profundas y sólidas.

Quiero expresar mi agradecimiento a cada persona que forma parte de este esfuerzo compartido. Nuestro trabajo, como estado y como comunidad, se sostiene en la colaboración. Sean ustedes personas que cuidan a otras, defensores, prestadores de servicios o integrantes de la comunidad, los animo a que sigan involucrándose. Tomen contacto con su centro comunitario local para personas mayores o con su centro multigeneracional y ofrezcan allí su tiempo como voluntarios o compartan sus historias en las redes sociales. Juntos podemos lograr que todas las generaciones tengan la posibilidad de desarrollarse plenamente.

Cordiales saludos,



Emily Kaltenbach,
secretaria del gabinete

Departamento de Servicios para Personas Mayores y a Largo Plazo de Nuevo México



Servicios para Personas Mayores de Nuevo México

Acompañamos a las personas de Nuevo México para que puedan gozar de independencia y buena salud durante toda la vida.

Acerca de los Servicios para Personas Mayores de Nuevo México*

Nuestra misión es servir e inspirar a las personas mayores del estado para que lleven una vida activa y saludable y para que establezcan vínculos sólidos con la comunidad. El departamento es pionero en la creación de programas y de alianzas que favorecen la independencia a lo largo de toda la vida y el envejecimiento de forma saludable, ofreciendo protección, asistencia y recursos para personas mayores y adultos con discapacidades.

● Para obtener más información sobre estos servicios, consulte el portal aging.nm.gov o siganos en Facebook, Instagram y X (@NewMexicoAging).

Acerca de la revista New Mexico Generations

New Mexico Generations busca enriquecer la vida de todas y cada una de las generaciones de Nuevo México, ofreciéndoles inspiración, recursos y oportunidades para conectar con la comunidad.

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*Servicios para Personas Mayores de Nuevo México es el nombre que utilizamos para referirnos al Departamento de Servicios para Personas Mayores y a Largo Plazo de Nuevo México. Usamos este nombre en las comunicaciones externas y con la población en general para reflejar completamente el alcance de nuestro trabajo y representar mejor a quienes prestamos servicios en todo el estado.

Información general sobre el Departamento de Servicios para Personas Mayores de Nuevo México

Red para Personas Mayores:

Las cuatro Agencias de Área para Personas Mayores de Nuevo México prestan servicios domiciliarios y comunitarios que permiten que las personas mayores puedan permanecer en sus hogares y recibir asistencia durante la vejez. Estos servicios comprenden comidas a domicilio, empleo, transporte, programas para el envejecimiento saludable, programas de prevención y acceso a una red con más de 250 centros para la tercera edad en todo el estado.

Oficina de Asuntos de Personas Mayores Indígenas (OIEA, sigla en inglés):

La misión de la OIEA es coordinar y potenciar un sistema de servicios que empodere a las personas mayores de la comunidad indígena estadounidense, brindándoles asistencia y recursos para llevar una vida saludable con alegría, respeto y dignidad en sus comunidades tribales. Estos servicios comprenden comidas en los Centros Tribales para Personas Mayores, comidas a domicilio, transporte, tareas domésticas y oportunidades de ejercicio físico para mantenerse en forma.

● Para obtener más información sobre los servicios de la OIEA, escriba a oiea.info@altsd.nm.gov.

Departamento de Derechos del Consumidor para la Tercera Edad y Centro de Recursos para Personas Mayores y Adultos con Discapacidades:

Estos dos departamentos trabajan de forma conjunta para ayudar a los adultos mayores, a las personas con discapacidad y a quienes los asisten a encontrar

servicios e información para que puedan llevar una vida saludable e independiente. Entre otras cosas, los ayudan con los trámites de inscripción en Medicare y Medicaid, a pagar los medicamentos recetados y a evaluar los programas y servicios de atención a largo plazo.

Programa de Defensoría del Pueblo:

Este programa cuenta con defensores públicos, todos voluntarios, que visitan periódicamente los centros geriátricos y las residencias para personas mayores con el fin de defender los derechos de quienes residen en ellos, investigar denuncias o problemas con el personal, buscar soluciones y garantizar la calidad de la atención.

● Para denunciar maltrato, abandono u otros asuntos, llame al 866-451-2901.

División de Cuidado a Largo Plazo:

el departamento brinda servicios centrados en la comunidad y en los cuidadores para habitantes de Nuevo México. Administra cinco programas: el Programa de Cuidado para Veteranos, New MexiCare, el Programa de Transición de Cuidados, la Oficina de Alzheimer y Demencia y el Programa Piloto para Familiares que Prestan Cuidados.

Póngase en contacto con los Servicios para Personas Mayores de Nuevo México

800-432-2080

help@altsd.nm.gov

aging.nm.gov

@NewMexicoAging



Native Elders Lead the Conversation in Santa Fe

American Indian Day at the capitol returns to Santa Fe on February 6. Like Senior Day at the capitol, American Indian Day is a chance for Native seniors to meet directly with legislators, highlight community needs, and engage in conversations that shape policy statewide. As in the past, this year's event will include plenty of activities, including traditional dances, art displays, and speakers addressing priorities such as elder services and health equity. For Native elders—and all New Mexicans—it's a powerful opportunity to witness sovereignty in action.

● Senior Day at the capitol, this February 13, is a rare opportunity to shape policy statewide. Don't miss out.

Your Chance to Make a Difference at the Roundhouse

Every January, the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department invites seniors to visit the capitol building in Santa Fe so their voices can be heard—a special tradition known as Senior Day. The event coincides with the yearly legislative session, and it's a way for seniors, caregivers, and others to have a say in policy discussions. The legislature makes appropriations to the department, which in turn funds senior services statewide, including meals, transportation, and communal

events, as well as construction and renovations of senior centers. Today this type of advocacy is more important than ever, as federal funding is uncertain for some services.

This year's budget requests include priorities to fund additional Adult Protective Services workers and bolster community-based aging programs like transportation, meals, respite care, and the Senior Employment Program. They also include money to expand statewide outreach and public education efforts, helping more New Mexicans connect with

programs and support.

This year, Senior Day is being held on February 13—and New Mexico Aging Services is inviting all seniors and those willing to advocate for them to attend. It's a fun event where people can learn about resources in their community, connect with peers from around the state, and meet with elected officials to advocate for high-quality aging services.

Join other older adults, advocates, and providers in Santa Fe, and let legislators know how your tax dollars should be used to support seniors.

Celebrate National Caregivers Day

On February 20, 2026, New Mexico will join the nation in celebrating National Caregivers Day, a moment to spotlight the quiet heroes who keep families, communities, and elders thriving.

Across the state, 419,000 caregivers provide more than 274 million hours of unpaid family care each year. This is essential support for aging adults, from meal prep and medication management to transportation, companionship, and navigating health care concerns. Their work saves New Mexico millions in long-term-care costs, but

more importantly it keeps seniors living with dignity and connection.

Whether it's a spouse, an adult child, a neighbor, or a friend, caregivers make aging possible. On February 20, take time to thank the person who makes independence feel a little more achievable every day. And if you are a caregiver, there are a variety of support services that may be of assistance to you.

Find out more through ALTSD's Aging and Disability Resource Center at (800) 432-2080.

● Wild rice adds even more protein to a cold-weather classic: chicken soup.



A Warming Winter Soup

A wild (rice) twist on chicken and vegetables.

New Mexico State Nutritionist Ophelia Steppe knows the power of simple, nourishing ingredients, especially ones that will give your immune system a boost come winter. She recommends the following recipe for its combination of wholesome ingredients and easy preparation. “What I appreciate about this soup is its simplicity and versatility,” Steppe says. “It allows for the use of leftover ingredients, making it a cost-effective option, since the necessary ingredients

are available in most households.” The soup blends protein-rich wild rice, antioxidant-packed mushrooms, and vegetables to support immunity while warming the soul. Steppe recommends adding legumes such as kidney, pinto, or northern beans to replace the meat or for extra protein, and swapping in plant milk for a lighter twist.

Whether you make it with leftover turkey or chicken or go plant-based, this creamy soup is a nourishing way to stay healthy and cozy throughout the season.

Wild Rice with Chicken and Vegetables Soup

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

Ingredients

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 small onion, chopped
2 medium carrots, chopped
2 medium celery stalks, chopped
8 ounces cremini or white button mushrooms (3 cups), chopped
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground pepper
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
2 cups water
1 cup wild rice
1 cup green beans, chopped
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups shredded cooked turkey or chicken (about 10 ounces)
2 cups whole milk
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 teaspoons fresh thyme, chopped (or $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried)

Directions

1. Place the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the onion, carrots, celery, mushrooms, salt, and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, for about six minutes, until the vegetables soften and the mushrooms begin to release their liquid.
2. Sprinkle the flour over vegetables and stir to incorporate. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin to brown, about one minute more.
3. Add the broth and water. Cook for another minute or two while scraping up any browned bits.
4. Add the wild rice and bring to a boil. Once it's boiling, cover, reduce the heat to a simmer, and cook for 40 minutes. Stir occasionally.
5. Add the green beans. Keep covered and continue cooking until beans are soft and rice is tender, about ten minutes more.
6. Add the chicken or turkey, milk, lemon juice, and thyme. Cook until all ingredients are warmed through.

● Nearly 90,000 people are diagnosed with Parkinson's disease each year. Detecting it early can help.



Looking Out for Warning Signs of Parkinson's

The earliest symptoms of Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders are subtle, but if you know what they are, you can help your loved ones get care faster.

During the winter holidays, you may have spent time with family and friends you don't see very often. And while reconnecting with loved ones is usually a joyous occasion, there's a chance you noticed a loved one struggling more than usual.

We all slow down a little as we get older, but there are some movement disorders that tend to appear later in life, with Parkinson's disease (PD) being the main one. Nearly 90,000 people are diagnosed each year in the U.S. Most receive the diagnosis in their sixties, but PD often shows up in those

in their fifties and even younger. In these cases, it's called early-onset PD. If you can detect the first signs, you may be able to help someone in your life get help early.

"Once they get on medicines, people feel better and they're able to do so much more," says Diksha Mohanty, MD, a movement-disorder specialist at the University of New Mexico. "The difference can be night and day, so it's worth identifying early."

While we know that PD can cause things like tremors, loss of balance, and stiffness, it doesn't typically start out that way. "Prodromal features,

which are the earliest signs of PD, can be present for years, sometimes decades," Dr. Mohanty says. The four most common initial symptoms are:

1. **Hyposmia**, or partial loss of smell. This usually happens slowly over time.
2. **Constipation**, a result of changes in the nervous system. Cramping and bloating may also occur.
3. **REM sleep behavior disorder (RBD)**, often diagnosed when people start acting out their dreams—moving their limbs, shouting, or even punching or kicking their sleep partner.

“If things are getting worse, that is something I would pay attention to. Think back to last holiday season. Are they doing better or getting progressively worse?”

—DIKSHA MOHANTY, MD

4. Mood changes, particularly a person becoming unusually anxious, fearful, or worried.

Other symptoms, Dr. Mohanty says, can include changes in movement, such as walking more slowly or having a different gait; stooping or other muscle stiffness, tightness, or rigidity; insomnia or other sleep issues; urinary changes, such as urgency; and nonmotor signals, like slowness in thinking and trouble finding words. Looking at this list, it makes sense that it can take years for some people to get a PD diagnosis. Is Aunt Elaine a little down because of PD, or is it because she just retired from a 50-year career? And why are Cousin Lester's stories taking so much longer?

Distinguishing between the earliest signs of PD and general aging can be a challenge, even for professionals.

“You have to take in the whole picture, looking for associated symptoms and not just a little bit of trouble finding words,” Dr. Mohanty says. “If things are getting worse, that is something I would pay attention to. Think back to last holiday season. Are they doing better or getting progressively worse?”

If you notice symptoms, including movement difficulties, it's important to speak up. “Having that difficult conversation, like asking, ‘Do you notice a change in your mobility or gait?’ can be important, because it's critical to prevent falls,” Dr. Mohanty says. “PD falls bring in complications that are preventable.” Same goes for complications like choking, aspiration, or pneumonia—things that could put a person in the hospital.

It's scary to think of someone you

care about being diagnosed with a progressive neurological disorder. While there aren't any cures for PD, there are effective medicines and procedures for managing symptoms. There is also promising research suggesting that exercise may slow the disease's progression. Early diagnosis can help loved ones make lifestyle changes and get the medications they need to continue living an enriching life.

A simple but crucial part of a doctor's diagnosis might be exercise. The recommendation is 150 minutes per week, with workouts that include cardio, strength training, stretching, and balance work.

For Gordon Woods, a 73-year-old retired physician and medical educator, boxing has been a savior for the PD he was diagnosed with at age 58. “Boxing works well for PD, because PD causes you to slow down while boxing forces you to move fast,” he says.

All those jabs, crosses, and bobbing and weaving involve extending the arms fully, staying balanced, and not stooping. He works out at a boxing class in Santa Fe. For Woods, the sweat-inducing workout is good for the body and the mind.

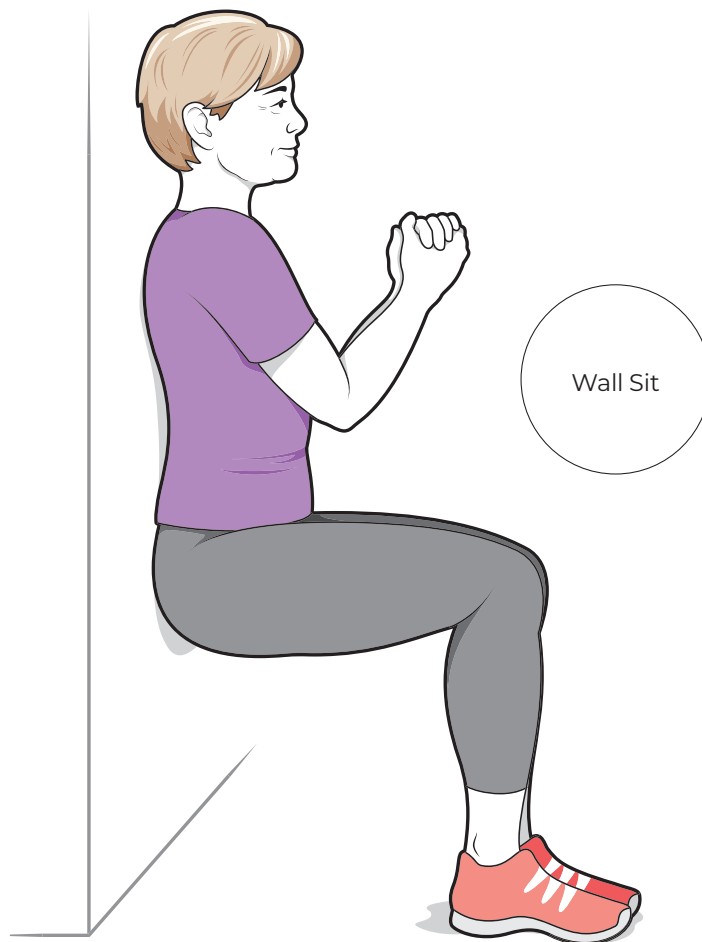
“Boxing comes with a mindset and a devil-may-care attitude,” Woods says. “People who are boxing are determined and a little proud that they can defend themselves. In this case we're defending against the progression of Parkinson's.”

Of course, defending against Parkinson's means recognizing that you or a loved one may have developed it—which means looking out for early-warning signs. It may not be a fun thing to think about when visiting friends and relatives, but it may also be what keeps you laughing and smiling with them for a long time to come.

If you suspect that you or a loved one are showing signs of Parkinson's or other movement disorders, reach out to a doctor right away for an appointment. The Parkinson's Foundation offers support groups in New Mexico for those who have already been diagnosed; find out more at parkinson.org.



● Some people with Parkinson's appreciate how activities like boxing can help keep their muscles and mind engaged.



Heart-Healthy Home Exercises

Simple bodyweight moves can have big cardiac benefits.

By Marjorie Korn

Conventional wisdom holds that if you want to keep your heart in good health, you need to move your body. And while that's generally true, new research reveals that one of the best ways to give your heart a workout may require no significant movement at all. Isometric exercises, a kind of static training in which you focus on contracting your muscles, can be beneficial, too.

In 2023, scientists set out to determine which exercise routines were best for blood pressure. They reviewed studies that looked at various workouts, including aerobic activities, high-intensity interval training, resistance training, isometric workouts,

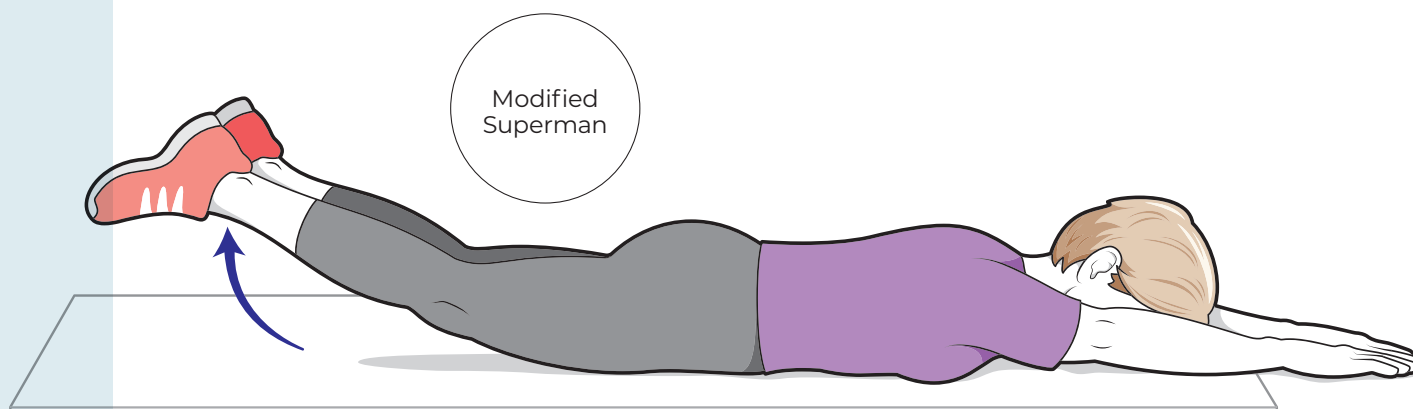
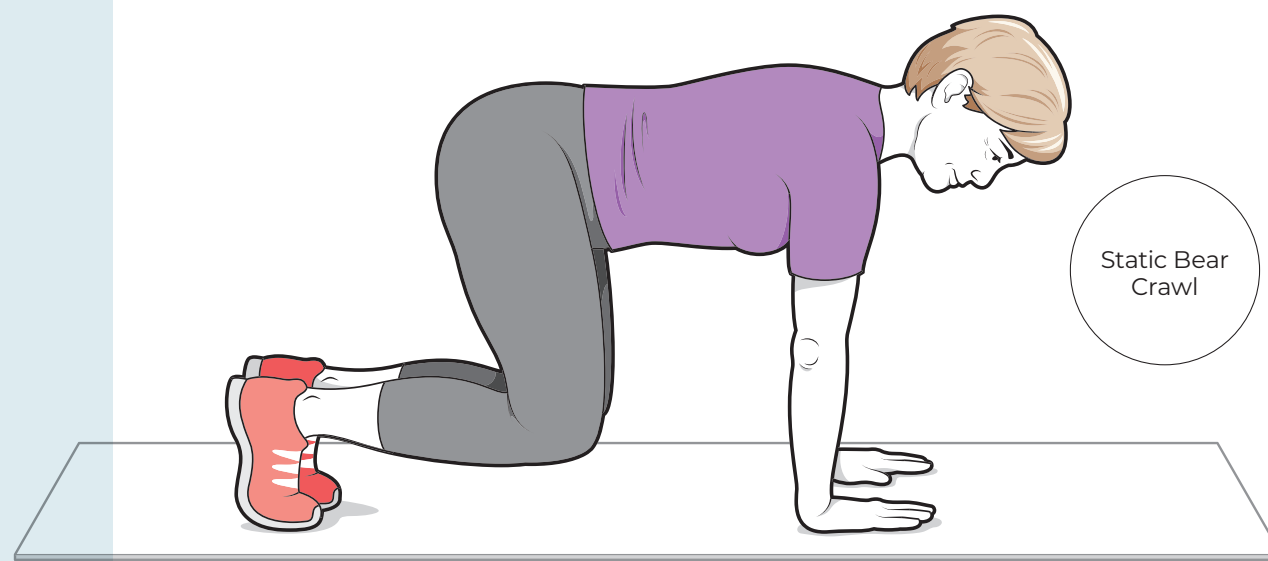
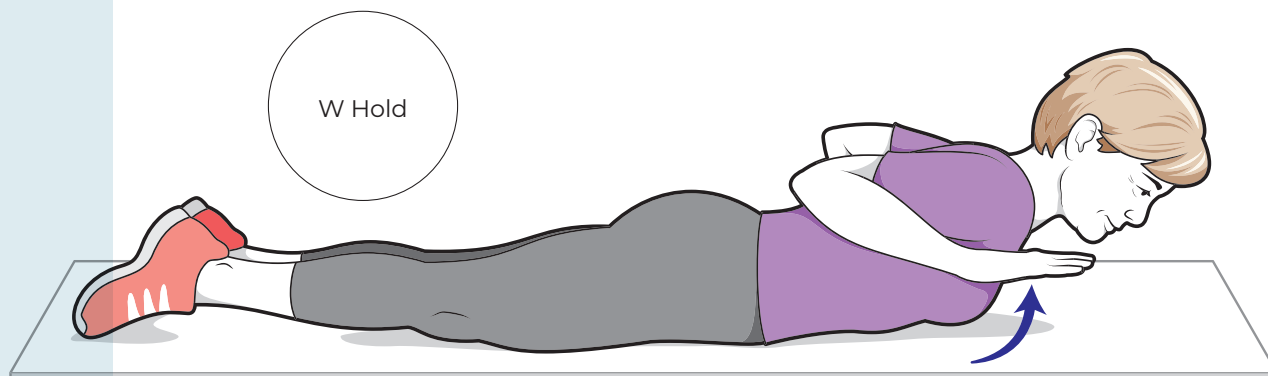
and a combination of those approaches. In total, they reviewed 270 studies involving nearly 16,000 participants. The results, published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, were surprising: The biggest reduction in systolic and diastolic blood pressure came not from intense workouts, but from no-movement isometric exercises.

Of course, anyone who regularly incorporates these static exercises into their routine knows that they're not necessarily easy. Isometric exercises are done by holding the muscles in a contracted state, which can quickly get your heart pumping—and your muscles straining. This is why the exercises are also great for building

muscle tissue, helping you get stronger and more confident overall.

“When I train older people using isometric exercises, you see this aha moment where they feel empowered,” says Enita Pendleton, an ACE-certified trainer and an assistant professor in the School of Fitness Education at Santa Fe Community College. “With this training, they have the fundamental strength to perform better in their daily activities.”

Pendleton recommends the following routine twice a week. Do each move for approximately 20 to 30 seconds, and repeat two or three times. As you feel stronger over time, increase the duration.



Wall Sit

Stand with your back against a flat surface and slide your torso down until your knees and hips are at right angles. Hold. If that's too difficult, don't sink down as far. To help you return to a standing position, press your palms against the wall or set a chair next to you for leverage.

W Hold

Lie on your back with your legs outstretched and your elbows bent

so your hands are near your face. Tighten your core and lift your shoulders slightly off the floor. Stay in that position, keeping your upper torso a few inches from the ground.

Static Bear Crawl

Start in a tabletop position on the floor, with your body supported by your hands and knees, head facing down and hands aligned with your shoulders. Shift your weight back onto your toes while lifting your

knees so they hover a few inches off the floor. Your back should be straight. Hold. If it's too difficult to reach 20 seconds, start with five or ten.

Modified Superman

Lie face-down with your legs outstretched. Rest your hands near your shoulders, palms down. Tighten your core and press your hands into the floor while lifting your feet and legs slightly. Your knees should be just barely off the ground. Hold.



A Chocolate Festival with Heart

With a bold new vision, Silver City's Chocolate Fantasia is becoming a destination event—one that keeps its small-town warmth intact. **By Ryan Krogh**

Ganache-filled truffles. Nut pralines. Marbled bonbons and white peppermint bark.

For those of us with a sweet tooth, it's nearly impossible to resist good chocolate—and it's even harder when giving in is for a good cause. That's the idea behind Silver City's Chocolate Fantasia, a long-running arts fundraiser that has grown into a weekend-long celebration of cacao, community, and creativity.

Founded some 25 years ago, the festival began as a modest one-day fundraiser for the Mimbres Region

Arts Council, which helps support community programs. The event has always been held on or around Valentine's Day, which is where the chocolate theme came from. But it remained a small event, attended mostly by those with a connection to Silver City's creative community. Three years ago, however, the festival morphed into a two-day affair, with dinner, live music, and an expanded Saturday "chocolate crawl."

"It has always been a great event, but it never really grew beyond what it had been," says Simon Sotelo, who took over coordinating the festival in

2023. His vision was to transform it from a cozy fundraiser into a robust celebration that would pull in more area residents. He also wanted to attract regional visitors at a time of the year when business was slow.

"We were always selling out the tickets," says Sotelo, "so I knew the event had a really good foundation, and I knew we could build on that."

This year, Chocolate Fantasia adds another day to the schedule—it now runs the entire weekend, February 13–15. Activities include free music, a Friday night dinner at the Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery (on



● **Chocolate Fantasia:** Thirty shops now participate in the event, helping distribute handmade delicacies to ticket holders.

the menu is Cornish hen with a dark chocolate and red wine reduction), and Sunday brunch.

The heart of the festival, however, remains the Saturday stroll through Silver City's historic downtown. Ticket holders wander from store to store, sampling dozens of imaginative chocolates—everything from chile-spiked truffles to raspberry mousse tarts. The sweets are created by local chocolatiers, some of whom work for prominent businesses in town, like Breadbox Bakery and Diane's Bakery and Deli. Others are made by dedicated locals who want to support the fundraiser. One confectioner, who crafted elaborate bonbon-like delicacies last year, is a 14-year-old who simply loves to bake.

"She made these really beautiful chocolate marbles, with different colors and swirls around them," says Sotelo. "The last two years she's been the number one chocolatier for us."

With the number of tickets increasing from 300 to 400 this year, each chocolatier will craft roughly 400 to 450 chocolates. Participating shops and locations are up too, from 25 to 30. Previously, locations were asked to pay a fee to help support the chocolatiers, but with the success of the festival over the past two years,

Sotelo is waiving that this year.

In the future, Sotelo hopes the fundraiser will bring in even more money to help support local arts education. He also hopes to sponsor other creative events in Silver City throughout the year.

"My background is in community organizing, and I've always wanted

If You're Going

When: Chocolate Fantasia 2026 takes place February 13–15.

Where: Downtown Silver City.

Highlights: Events include a Friday dinner, with music and local brews, at Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery. Saturday is the chocolate crawl, and Sunday wraps things up with brunch at Mick's 33 Lounge.

Cost: Tickets are \$25 for the Saturday chocolate crawl (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.) and \$75 for the whole weekend of activities. More info and tickets are available at chocolatefantasia.org.



● The chocolates, everything from truffles to pralines, are made by dedicated locals.

this to be an event for the community, but also have it give back to the community, too.”

While Sotelo’s future goals are ambitious, the impact is already real for local businesses. Participating stores have seen an uptick in foot traffic and sales during February, a notoriously slow month. Some attendees are coming from out of state, including a group from Colorado last year.

Chocolate Fantasia may not be new, but it’s becoming a real destination event, and the community is rallying behind Sotelo’s vision. He has intentionally broadened the festival to bring in all ages and more diverse participants. At the same time, he’s kept the heart of Chocolate Fantasia: a welcoming, walkable downtown event where people can experience the small-town charms of Silver City—and sample enough chocolate to satisfy any sweet tooth.

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● From her workshop in Taos, Lynn Garlick and her team produce thousands of retablos a year.

The Saints' Painter

Lynn Garlick began making retablos as a business, but creating portraits of saints for decades has created some surprising blessings.

By Elizabeth Miller

The smoke and dust clouding Lynn Garlick's Taos workshop had hardly settled before salvation arrived.

That dust was the by-product of Garlick and her staff creating hundreds of retablos, paintings of saints on small wood panels. While the paintings are what people notice, the process of creating starts by bandsawing hundreds of pieces of wood—Baltic birch for the “pocket saints” and ornaments, pine for the larger wall hangings—into the correct shapes for each image.

Without being asked, a friend's husband offered to help her with the ventilation system. But he didn't want

● **From left:** Many of the saints that Garlick paints originate from requests. After replicating the image, they're glued onto decorated wood planks.



money—instead, he wanted Garlick, 71, to paint him Saint Caleticus of Chartres. He had seen the saint in a stained-glass window at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Chartres outside Paris, and the glass portrait included a wood lathe in homage to the craftspeople who'd built the cathedral. The friend's husband, a hobbyist woodturner, was thrilled at the idea of a patron saint of woodturners. So this past fall, Garlick added one more saint to the dozens of depictions she has created during three decades of making retablos.

Many of the roughly 300 portraits of saints she's painted came about this way—as special requests. The project began when her son was three years old and Garlick was looking for a way to boost her income to buy Christmas presents. Inspired in part by an Italian altar screen a friend had received, she decided to paint some retablos for a Christmas craft fair. They sold well and sparked a business that has sustained her for three decades.

"Initially, it was about money," Garlick says. "Later it became about prayer."

A lifelong artist, Garlick has been a member of a weekly figure-drawing group for almost 50 years, long enough to see it shift among many locations and organizers. She likes it because the practice keeps her eye and hand sharp for crafting figures. She began plein air painting—setting up a canvas outdoors to paint landscapes—when she moved to Taos in 1977. Her artwork tends toward the classical and finely detailed. But for the retablos, she adopted a folk-art style, a simpler aesthetic that echoes Byzantine icons and the paintings the santeros, traditional "saint makers," began creating in New Mexico more than four centuries ago.

"I really shifted gears," she says. "I'm glad I did what I did, because it's been a benefit to me and to other people."

At first, she hand-painted retablos in watercolor on flat pieces of wood. As she scaled up the business, she began printing copies of her paintings to glue onto wood planks with hand-carved embellishments, a technique called decoupage. Soon she had dozens of saints that she sold as part of her prod-

uct line—each new painting transformed into hundreds or thousands of retablos.

She started with saints traditionally featured on retablos in New Mexico, like Our Lady of Guadalupe, Saint Francis, Saint Joseph, San Isidro (for farmers and gardeners), and San Miguel (for soldiers and police). As people began asking for specific saints, often based on their patronage as protector of a certain profession or to heal a particular ailment, her line grew. The back of the retable is engraved with a short account of the saint's life and a prayer. Some of the prayers draw from the saints' own words, but others Garlick wrote herself. She didn't grow up knowing these saints but has since studied them in depth.

"I felt a real responsibility to learn as much as I could both about icons and the history and lives of the saints, because it was so meaningful to people," Garlick says.

Traces of Garlick's life and her time in New Mexico also mark the artwork. Saint Lydwina, patron saint of ice

skaters, honors Garlick's ice-skating club. Saint Dunstan, patron saint of jewelers and blacksmiths, lingers from the blacksmithing classes her son took. She painted Saint Joseph of Cupertino, the patron saint of flight, among hot-air balloons; it was a hold-over from when she was selling at the Rio Grande Arts and Crafts Festival, held during the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. San Pasqual, patron saint of cooks, is shown reaching for a ristra. Santo Nino de Atocha, patron saint of travelers, stands before the Santuario de Chimayó. Garlick has since compiled many of her drawings and brief accounts of saints' lives into a colorful volume, *The Little Book of Saints*.

"I'm very grateful to them," she says. "They focused me."

Over the years, Garlick has stacked up thank-you notes from customers, many of whom remarked on her vivid and detailed depictions and on the pleasure of carrying a pocket saint. Others thanked her and the saint she painted for help they received. Often that gratitude goes to Saint Anthony, patron saint of lost things, for helping to locate missing jewelry, car keys, or pets. Once, she gifted a Saint Dymphna—who began a tradition of care for the mentally ill in Geel, Belgium, that continues today—to a woman at a craft fair who had talked about her daughter suffering with bipolar disorder. When that woman pulled the saint from her purse during the flight home, it sparked a conversation with the passenger next to her, who happened to be a leading authority in treating bipolar disorder and took on the woman's daughter as a patient.

For years, Garlick carved and painted the wood herself. In 2011, she bought laser cutters for engraving text—then fought back tears of frustration for two years straight as she learned the software to run them. Now her company, Lynn Garlick's Retablos, employs five people, three of whom run the production line. After cutting wood for the backing, the printed images are decoupaged onto boards for a smooth, glossy finish. Her

staff have fine-tuned a Xerox machine to match her paintings' colors, making the process go much smoother.

After years working the craft fair circuit, she moved into the wholesale market via a website that connects her line with shops around the world. Most of her sales now come through that online market, although shops in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Taos still carry her retablos, as they have for years. Some retablos even made their way to the pope; a cousin who's on a committee for social justice requested a few to take to the Vatican in 2017, then sent back photos of Pope Francis beaming over her images of Saint Francis, Thomas Aquinas, and Saint Joseph.

Now in her seventies, Garlick has largely handed off day-to-day operations of the business, making space for creative projects like illustrating a children's book. She's also spending more time painting for pleasure. Often she's out in the landscape, capturing red mesas, heaped clouds, river canyons, and, on an annual fishing trip with her brother, beachside views from Ocracoke, North Carolina, in oils and watercolors.

She credits the saints for building

a business that has sustained her for more than three decades, allowing her to make a living the way her landscape and portrait work might not have. The saints also compelled Garlick, once a shy artist, to put herself out there, connecting with countless people while working at craft fairs. Those people shared their stories and their suffering.

"I think I broadened and became more compassionate and kind," she says, "but I think maybe we do that as we age anyway."

The prayers she writes for the saints often center on her hope for reaching clarity or finding strength or courage. She takes an expansive view of spirituality, preferring the mystics, like Teresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross, and prayers—like Saint Francis's "make me an instrument of your peace"—that could spring from any number of traditions.

Perhaps the miracles the saints work are less in manifesting someone's missing car keys and more in helping them find focus and move forward with their lives.

After all, that's what they've done for Garlick. ●



Woven Through Time

A Chimayó family preserves a centuries-old craft—and works to pass it on.

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY UNGELBAH DÁVILA



● Irvin and Lisa Trujillo in their Chimayó studio.

In the quiet village of Chimayó, where piñon smoke lingers in the fall air and adobe walls compress under centuries of memory, Irvin and Lisa Trujillo continue a tradition as old as the town itself. Inside their studio, Centinela Traditional Arts, the scent of wool, plant dyes, and woodsmoke sets the mood for the rhythmic sound of looms that fill the space, a sound that has echoed through the decades.

“I’m a seventh-generation weaver here in Chimayó,” says Irvin, adding that he was around five or six when he started to learn the practice from his father.

At their studio-gallery along NM 76, Irvin, 71, sits in front of a woodstove beside his wife, Lisa, 64. She motions to an adjacent room, where the walls are covered in naturally dyed yarn skeins colored by indigo, marigold, and cochineal—a process she oversees. The room is a rainbow of color.

Lisa never intended to become a weaver in the tradition of her husband’s family, but like many people exposed to the craft, it was soon a passion. The two married shortly after she earned a business degree from UNM, and then they combined forces.

“When I graduated in 1982, there weren’t a lot of jobs,” she recalls. “So I thought, Well, I’ll use this business plan I wrote in school and see if we can make something of it.” A few decades later, Lisa is one of the few who still spin yarn by hand and dye it on-site. “I tell people I was a professional weaver before I learned how to weave,” she says.

With Irvin’s inherited weaving skills and Lisa’s business prowess, it seems they were destined to be successful. But it didn’t feel that way to the couple when they set up shop in Irvin’s father’s garage. “We kicked out the horse trailer and tractor, put up some walls and carpet, and hung a little sign on the road

that said ‘Weaving,’” says Irvin.

In just a few years, however, the couple was already earning national recognition. Their first notable show happened in 1985, at the Millicent Rogers Museum in Taos. Soon their work began to attract both collectors and aspiring weavers who wanted a place to learn the art and also shop for supplies.

In 1987, five years after starting their business, the Trujillos built their current studio, a space large enough to house Irvin’s sprawling tapestries and showcase the evolving legacy of Chimayó weaving.

Currently, the studio houses a loom that Irvin’s father, master weaver Jake Trujillo, built in 1927, while outside along the road are signs directing visitors to the galleries of various Chimayó weavers, many of whom are Irvin’s relatives, including the Ortega family, whom he’s related to on his mother’s side.

“It’s a way of life,” says Lisa. “It’s beautiful and I wouldn’t trade it for anything in the world.”

The Trujillos’ weaving connection reaches back to the early 1700s, when Irvin’s ancestor Juan Diego Trujillo was granted land by the Spanish government at El Centinela, a post meant to guard against raids. “He supposedly had six looms working,” Irvin says. “That’s how far back this goes.”

The Trujillos employ what is known as a plain weave, which uses two harnesses to pass the weft yarn over one



warp thread and under the next. Specifically, they specialize in a “weft-faced” approach, meaning that the visible face of the weave is composed of weft yarn, and the warp—which holds the textile together—isn’t visible from the surface. From the Trujillo family’s early looms came a living tradition that combined Spanish, Moorish, and Indigenous influences. “Some designs, like the Saltillo style, probably came from Mexico, but you can see the North African influence, too,” Irvin says of the patterns he and Lisa were able to study in museums around the Southwest, from which they draw inspiration today.

Through centuries of change, from Spanish colonial rule to Mexican independence to American annexation, the Trujillos’ ancestors continued to work



● Lisa is one of the few weavers who still spin yarn by hand and dye it on-site.

on the loom. “In the winter they’d weave,” Irvin says. “In the summer they’d plant chile, corn, and alfalfa. It was just the Hispanic way of life here.”

Today, Irvin and Lisa preserve and reinterpret those practices, while also providing a space for other weavers in the areas to create and sell their work. The geometric precision of the Saltillo and Rio Grande designs coexist in their gallery with Irvin’s abstract contemporary works—vivid, curved compositions that stretch the boundaries of what Chimayó weaving can be.

The Chimayó weaving tradition is unique to the area, and at the heart of it, Lisa believes, is a connection to the land, from the wild plant dyes they use to the animals providing the wool.

Traditionally, wool was harvested

“Weaving is good for your body and your brain. You’re standing, moving gently, counting threads, solving puzzles. Every piece has its own logic, so you’re always learning.”

—LISA TRUJILLO

from local flocks, which in the early days of settlement included Churro sheep. Churro is a heritage breed introduced from Spain by the early conquistadors. The breed provided wool to both Hispano and Native American weavers and survives to this day. Still, the majority of wool used by Chimayó’s weavers must be sourced from other parts of the country.

“I use indigo for blues, chamisa and

marigold for yellows, cochineal for reds, and madder root from Turkey for oranges,” Lisa says. “Everything here is natural—wool, silk, or plant dye.”

Some yarns Lisa spins herself or are sourced from fellow artisans whose work the Trujillos carry in their gallery. Others come from long-established mills in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, replacements for a New Mexico supplier that until last year had provided yarn to



● Irvin still works at the loom regularly to produce his art. The Trujillos also sell yarn and supplies to local weavers.

Chimayó's weaving families since 1898.

Lisa points to a large tapestry shimmering with subtle hues. "That one took about a year," she says. "It's half silk, half merino. The finer the wool and the more colors you use, the longer it takes."

For the Trujillos, weaving is more than a livelihood—it's a philosophy of health and mindfulness. "Weaving is good for your body and your brain," Lisa says. "You're standing, moving gently, counting threads, solving puzzles. Every piece has its own logic, so you're always learning."

Irvin nods. "It keeps you sharp. You have to focus, especially on designs. You're thinking in patterns, in numbers. It's like math and meditation at the same time."

That focus and discipline, Lisa believes, are part of what makes the tra-

"It's not just about beauty. It's about discipline, productivity, and respect for the craft. You get better the more you do it. Every piece teaches you something new."

—IRVIN TRUJILLO

dition so enduring. "When I first started, there were several weavers in their nineties and even a few over 100," she says. "It's not just art, it's a way of living that keeps you strong."

Their daughter Emily, who lives in Albuquerque, is now the eighth generation of Trujillo weavers. She teaches children through workshops at the Albuquerque Museum and programs like Moving Arts Española, a youth initia-

tive that's expanding into job training and cultural preservation.

"We're trying to keep it alive by teaching kids who might actually stick with it," Lisa says. "Most of the people we've taught over the years go on to other things. That's the challenge—it's hard to sustain a tradition like this."

To reach a wider audience, Lisa wrote a book and created instructional videos on Chimayó weaving. She and Emily

also teach classes at the studio, introducing students—most often older women—to the fundamentals of warp, weft, and pattern. “Teaching is its own challenge,” Lisa says. “Every student learns differently. You have to figure out what’s hard for them and how to help them overcome it.”

In 2007, Irvin received a National Heritage Fellowship, the highest honor for a folk artist in the United States, from the National Endowment for the Arts. “It’s given to 12 artists each year,” he explains. “It’s the top recognition you can get in traditional arts.” He is also the recipient of a New Mexico Governor’s Award for Excellence in the Arts and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Spanish Colonial Arts Society.

His work is represented in major collections, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Museum of International Folk Art, the Albuquerque Museum, the Millicent Rogers Museum, and the Heard Museum in Phoenix. “The last piece I sold went to the Denver Art Museum,” he says, smiling softly. “It’s one of my best.”

A piece from Irvin can go for \$40,000 and up.

Yet for both Irvin and Lisa, the true measure of success lies not in accolades or financial rewards, but in continuity. “Our hope is that people will embrace the process,” Lisa says. “That they’ll learn how to weave, learn from those who came before, and understand the value in both the artistry and the work.”

Irvin concurs. “It’s not just about beauty,” he says. “It’s about discipline, productivity, and respect for the craft. You get better the more you do it. Every piece teaches you something new.”

Outside their studio, the Trujillos tend an orchard and heat their home with the wood it provides. Inside, the looms hum with the patient rhythm of centuries. For them, weaving is as much about living as it is about creating.

“Weaving connects us to everything—our history, our culture, the land,” Lisa says. “It’s all there in the wool and the colors and the designs.”

Irvin runs his hand across a finished tapestry. “Each piece is a story,” he says. “It’s our story, woven through time.” ●



Keeping the **KICKS** Alive

**Vickie Ashcraft is proof that Route 66
isn't just a roadway—it's a way of life.**

By Dorothy E. Noe

Photographs by
STEVEN ST. JOHN



● Ashcraft's Enchanted Trails RV park includes vintage cars and trailers, die-cast models, and even a hubcap Christmas tree.

Not everyone's livelihood is a slice of Americana, but such is the case for Vickie Ashcraft, who has lived and worked along Route 66 for the past 37 years. As the owner of the Enchanted Trails RV Park and Trading Post, nine miles west of Albuquerque, Ashcraft has catered to a generation (or two) of travelers passing through central New Mexico, many of them looking for a taste of the Route 66 mystique. Her trading post is one of many businesses that sprang up along its path to entice weary travelers with trinkets, thrills, and oddities—including snake pits, towering Muffler Men statues, and key chains and charms—after the road was designated in 1926. Enchanted Trails now overlooks cars and trucks zipping along I-40, the interstate that replaced the more tranquil Route 66. But time has not forgotten the Mother Road.

With the centennial of Route 66 being celebrated across the West in 2026, the flow of American and international tourists seeking the remnants of the two-lane road that connected Chicago to San Diego will reach a crescendo. Ashcraft happily shares her knowledge of the roadway and its history with a daily parade of folks who want their Route 66 Passports stamped and to purchase a commemorative New Mexico Route 66 coin. She is also the president of the New Mexico Route 66 Alliance, a nonprofit dedicated to preserving, protecting, and promoting the historic route throughout the state. Ashcraft found time to share her story and what the centennial of America's most iconic roadway has in store for New Mexicans as well as out-of-staters and foreign travelers alike.

NM Generations: Route 66 has been around for 100 years now, and it has been mythologized in countless books and movies. What do you consider its heyday?

Ashcraft: After World War II, in the 1950s, families took to the road in droves for vacations in cars and recreational vehicles. Many of them were inspired by the lyrics of Bobby Troup's popular song, "(Get Your Kicks on) Route 66," sung by Nat King Cole. Troup created the catchy tune while driving to California on the route, and his wife came up with the title. And, of course, there was the 1960s TV show *Route 66*, which kept interest alive even though only one episode was actually shot on the route. On the other

hand, a scene from the movie *The Grapes of Wrath* was filmed there, in Moriarty, depicting the Joad family as they headed west. But they were really driving east!

What is your history with the Enchanted Trails Trading Post?

It was originally called the Hilltop Trading Post, as it sat on the top of Nine Mile Hill and provided water bags for overheating autos when such things were necessary. It was built by L. G. and Lena Hill in 1947. When it became apparent that this stretch of Route 66 was going to be divided by the New Mexico Department of Transportation and would cut off access to their north-facing building, L. G. dismantled and

moved the building to a south-facing location with access to travelers. Ultimately, Interstate 40 replaced Route 66, and we're now on the frontage road. The exterior of the building is the same, but the interior has been modified over the years. I arrived in New Mexico as a 21-year-old. When my father opened a business in Albuquerque in 1977, he didn't trust anyone to transport his vintage car, so I drove his 1967 red convertible Jensen Healey cross-country and stayed on to become his bookkeeper. Later, I took on bookkeeping for Enchanted Trails when my father-in-law purchased it in 1987. His family didn't have much interest in running it, though, so I eventually bought them out in the 1990s.

What makes New Mexico's stretch of Route 66 special?

Unlike in many other states, you can still drive almost all of the original Route 66 in New Mexico. Also, you are driving through spectacular scenery on New Mexico's first road of commerce, not just going from town to town. At one New Mexico Route 66 Commission meeting, a woman from Acoma Pueblo suggested we should wear all our turquoise jewelry for the centennial, because these items were sold at many of the trading posts that dotted New Mexico's stretch of the route, and it would promote the Native American culture.



COURTESY OF VICKIE ASHCRAFT

● Various iterations of the RV park and trading post, which Ashcraft now owns, have been serving Route 66 travelers since 1947.



What's your favorite part of Route 66?

I always direct people to Mesita, on Laguna Pueblo land, so they can go around Owl Rock to Dead Man's Curve. It's so serene out there, and you can imagine the old cars chugging through this incredible scenery.

Are you doing anything special at Enchanted Trails for the centennial?

I'm going to have the zigzag pattern on the front of the building highlighted in neon, which was a typical and colorful feature of the route. In fact, the New Mexico Route 66 Alliance is paying to restore some of the famous Route 66 neon signs in Tucumcari that were damaged by a storm. The Alliance has also applied for a National Trust grant to repair the neon sign on the Odeon Theatre in Tucumcari. I studied art at Endicott College in Massachusetts, where I grew up, and designed and produced a commemorative coin for New Mexico. I then sent it to the eight Route 66 organizations nationally. They loved the idea and created their own coins, so now people can purchase

them as mementos of their adventure as they travel through.

What plans does the New Mexico Route 66 Alliance have for the centennial?

A national commission was established to commemorate the centennial, and each state along the route has a commission. New Mexico has \$2.2 million to distribute as grants for various activities and projects. For example, there will be new shields and signage, restored neon signs, and a series of events in different towns throughout the year. The Alliance, with our historians and grant writers, is planning monthly lectures and a huge birthday bash on November 11, which was the official opening of the highway, with a

vintage-car show. I'm also working on a tourist magazine dedicated to Route 66.

Who stops by Enchanted Trails Trading Post these days?

We get tour groups from all over the world: Australia, Holland, China, New Zealand, France, and England, along with Americans. When I hear a loud rumble, I know it's going to be a group of Germans on Harley-Davidsons following the route. They all take photos of the building, peek into my collection of vintage RVs—like the 1956 homemade teardrop RV—and get their Route 66 Passports stamped. The route is still such a vital part of Americana, and personally I love meeting everyone and can't think of life without Route 66. It's in my DNA. ●

Ashcraft's Top 5 Highlights to See on New Mexico's Route 66

1. Tucumcari's murals, motels, and neon signs.
2. Moriarty's Sunset Motel, which is still owned by the original family.
3. Albuquerque's Central Avenue through downtown, including the Kimo Theatre.
4. Santa Domingo Pueblo's restored trading post.
5. Gallup's El Rancho Hotel, with its movie star connections.



Another Amazing Conference on Aging Is in the Books

In September, the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department once again hosted its annual New Mexico Conference on Aging, this year at the Glorieta Conference Center. It was an uplifting, inspiring affair, full of important information, good food, and plenty of laughs in the most beautiful outdoor setting. There was even a zip line this year, thanks to Glorieta Adventure Camps. (Yes, more than a few brave souls rode down it.)

The Conference on Aging's schedule was packed, with sessions on everything from managing grief to avoiding financial scams, planning for long-term-care expenses, and preparing an advance directive for health care decisions. Other state agencies worked with Aging Services to provide valuable resources and food boxes for all attendees. Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham even addressed the gathering.

The highlight of this year's conference was dancing under the stars

while New Mexico's own Al Hurricane Jr. sang his heart out. It was truly a one-of-a-kind experience, something those in attendance will not soon forget.

Here are a few more highlights from the October event:

The New Mexico Senior Olympics was on hand to lead several outdoor activities for attendees, including pickleball, horseshoes, and fitness walks.

There were so many people wanting to attend the tai chi workshop, led by instructor Dawn Armstrong, that it had to be moved outside to accommodate everyone.

A cooking workshop by dietitian Fallon Bader was also hugely popular, with seniors learning recipes to boost muscle health.

This was the first year we were able to include a workshop on respite care, led by Adrienne Smith of the New Mexico Caregivers Coalition. The state's aging population depends on quality caregivers, so it was rewarding to see how many people

attended to learn about training for paid or volunteer respite-care opportunities across the state.

Among the attendees who raved about the event was Kathleen Flynn: "Thank you for a wonderful experience at my first NM Conference on Aging. The hard work and careful organization that went into this event was so evident. Everyone was kind and enthusiastic. The presentations and the exhibit area were very informative. I so appreciated Governor Lujan Grisham speaking."

Margaret Mendoza also left thoroughly impressed. "I want to compliment you guys on a great conference," she wrote on the event's website. "The staff was wonderful. This was my first time attending, but hopefully not my last. I wanted to let you know how wonderful it was and thank you so much for including me. Hope to see you next year!"

We hope to see you next year, too, Margaret, along with a host of new attendees!



● **Opposite page:** Secretary Kaltenbach kicked off the conference, which was attended by hundreds of locals. **Clockwise from above:** Governor Grisham spoke to the seniors; exhibitors included the environmental group Conservation Carnivale; musical acts entertained attendees throughout the day; sessions and panels offered insights and advice; and everyone was served breakfast and lunch.





● **Clockwise from top left:** The conference included a gathering of vintage automobiles; lunch was a hit, as it always is after a fun morning of activities; and musical acts entertained attendees throughout the day, including Native American flutist William Clark.

A Strong Voice for Every Senior

Inside the work of New Mexico's state ombudsman and the volunteers who safeguard the rights and well-being of residents.

New Mexico's state ombudsman, Erin Anderson, has spent more than two decades in roles centered on service, advocacy, and justice. But she says that the work she's doing now—championing the rights and well-being of elders in long-term care—is the most fulfilling of her career.

Even though Anderson has been on the job for only a few months, she says that her past experience has set her up for success. Her path to the position began with a long tenure in civil legal services and nonprofit work, followed by time as an administrative law judge for the State of New Mexico. Prior to joining the Aging and Long-Term Services Department, Anderson was an attorney adviser with the U.S. Coast Guard. Across all these roles, the common thread for Anderson has always been a commitment to helping those who need a strong advocate.

"I was referred to the job by a former colleague, because I had worked at a nonprofit in Albuquerque that specifically provided civil legal services to seniors, and I loved working with them," Anderson says. "It was super rewarding and very emotionally fulfilling for me. You knew why you went to work every day."

That sense of purpose is central to the New Mexico Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, which operates under the Aging and Long-Term Services Department and is federally mandated by the Older Americans Act. The program provides resident-driven advocacy for people residing in nursing homes, assisted-living

centers, and small home-based care facilities across the state.

The term *ombudsman* can sound intimidating, Anderson acknowledges, but the job itself is simple at heart.

"It's really just a fancy word for representative," she says. "We're a compassionate voice for New Mexico seniors."

Unlike many professionals working in long-term-care settings, ombudsmen are there to serve the residents solely, not the facilities, which allows them to prioritize the wishes of residents above all others—even when those wishes conflict with the opinions of family members or the policies of the facility.

"Our role is to amplify their preferences and make sure they come through," says Anderson.

With approximately 293 long-term-care facilities statewide, and thousands of New Mexicans living in them, the program stays busy. Nineteen trained ombudsmen, plus volunteers, are spread across regional offices in Albuquerque, Farmington, Las Cruces, and beyond. They visit facilities daily, offering support, education, and hands-on problem-solving.

The issues they encounter range from missing belongings and poor-quality food to more serious concerns involving care plans, therapy access, and abuse or neglect. With a resident's consent, ombudsmen act as intermediaries to address problems early and prevent further harm.

Often, they're simply the only ones who'll listen.

"Fifty to sixty percent of residents don't get a single visitor in a year," Anderson says. "We're really there to be the voice for the residents, and sometimes the friendly ear."

Judy Hart, whose background is as an administrator at an assisted-living facility, is a volunteer with the Southwest Regional Ombudsman Program. Hart has been serving as an ombudsman for ten years and offers a first-hand perspective on the work.

"I find the ombudsman program to be so valuable," she says. "Advocates



● Ombudsman Judy Hart has volunteered with the program for more than a decade.

can make a real difference in someone's life in a care center, whether that's a nursing home or assisted living."

Hart's days vary widely. "When I go in, I walk up and down the hallways, introduce myself, and check in," she says. "It's about building trust with the staff and the residents. You see a lot about the quality of care, things that may otherwise go unnoticed. It could be as simple as someone not being able to reach their water pitcher or as complex as a medication or care-plan issue."

She emphasizes that volunteers come from many backgrounds, not just law or health care. "You just have to have a heart," she says.

Rorick Rivenberg, a volunteer in the Valencia County area, shares a similar sentiment. He joined the program after participating in a pickleball tournament sponsored by New Mexico Aging Services in Albuquerque.

"Many seniors in these facilities don't have anybody advocating for them, or they don't know where to turn if there's a problem," Rivenberg says.

“Being able to help make things right, that’s rewarding.”

Rivenberg’s experience illustrates how approachable the program is for volunteers. “The training isn’t intimidating,” he says. “It’s spread over five or six weeks, with one or two sections per week, and the trainer goes out with you on your first visits. You learn what’s going on.”

The program leans heavily on volunteers like Hart and Rivenberg, and Anderson says that good ombudsmen can come from almost any background. “It’s not a high-status profession,” Anderson says, “but it’s a big-heart profession.”

Anderson also sees room for broader awareness, especially in rural areas, where families may not know that such advocacy exists. “Just because seniors can’t get to the community doesn’t mean the community can’t get to them,” she says.

When asked about what detracts most from elders’ quality of life, Anderson doesn’t hesitate. “Loneliness,” she said. “There’s an epidemic of loneliness.”

She believes that improving quality of life in long-term care must start with community integration—bringing volunteers, artists, musicians, therapy-dog teams, school groups, and other organizations into the facilities.

“New Mexico has so many creative people,” she says. “People love art, music, gardens, and animals. Age isn’t a barrier to those joys.”

The goal, Anderson says, is not just to extend life, but to improve health span: the quality of the years lived.

“There’s so much love and wisdom,” she says. “It’s a privilege. You walk out of a facility and you’ve heard stories, you’ve connected with people. You never have to remind yourself why you do what you do.”

Hart can’t recommend enough the

To learn more and volunteer with the ombudsman program, call (800) 432-2080, or go to aging.nm.gov/volunteer.



Alzheimer’s Knowledge That Makes a Difference

Join the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America’s webinars to gain practical skills and support the ones you love.

Recently, the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department partnered with the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America to offer free monthly interactive training webinars, giving seniors, caregivers, and families the tools they need to better understand dementia and support loved ones living with it. The sessions vary in focus, but each offers expert guidance, real-world caregiving strategies, and live feedback, making it one of the most practical resources available for New Mexicans navigating memory care. To learn more or sign up, go to nm.gov/long-term-care/nmtraining.

benefits of being an ombudsman: “If you have a passion for the people in your community, volunteer. Get to know them. They give back to us every time we go into the building.”

Rivenberg agrees that it’s always important to get involved in your community. “You advocate for seniors who are from your own neighborhood,” he says. “You get a good feeling knowing you’re

taking care of some of their problems.” For Anderson, Hart, and Rivenberg, the work is less about policy or oversight than a way to give back to folks who’ve given so much over the years.

“We don’t see them as beds or numbers,” Anderson says. “We see them as full people with all their rights, and we’re here to make sure they’re not forgotten.”

Supporting Families Who Step Up

New Mexico's Kinship Caregiver Pilot Program brings financial assistance, guidance, and stability to relatives raising children.

Created in the 2025 legislative session, New Mexico's new Kinship Caregiver Pilot Program is designed to support individuals and families raising children whose parents are not able to care for them. The initiative provides guidance on available services, legal resources, and financial support, helping caregivers create stable, nurturing environments where children can thrive in their own homes and communities.

"In New Mexico, we know that families take many forms," says Emily Kaltenbach, cabinet secretary of the Aging and Long-Term Services Department. "Kinship caregivers help keep children connected to their roots and their communities. This pilot program honors that role and ensures they have the tools and stability needed to continue providing safe, loving homes."

The program is led by the Aging and Long-Term Services Department in partnership with private foundations. In its first phase, the LANL Foundation will fund



participants in Rio Arriba County, while the Anchorum Health Foundation will support families in San Juan County. It plans to expand to more counties soon.

"This program shows what's possible when state and community partners unite to meet real needs," says Gwen Perea Warniment of the LANL Foundation.

With monthly stipends and navigation support, the program aims to demonstrate a statewide model that could eventually reach children being raised by relatives and friends in all New Mexico counties.

For more information or to apply, visit aging.nm.gov.

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● Committee member Christina Campos knows firsthand the challenges caregivers face, and she's committed to helping support them.

last year, I left my job to care for my husband, who has cerebral cavernous malformations, a cluster of thin-walled blood vessels in the brain that can leak and cause seizures, headaches, and weakness. In terms of caregiving, you don't fully understand what people are going through until you do it yourself. In my case, I've been very fortunate to have the support of family and friends. If I didn't have this network, I don't know what I'd do.

What are the unique challenges caregivers face?

It's the simple things in life that we take for granted. I never realized that wheelchairs were so hard to maneuver in parking lots or while gaining access to restaurants. A small ledge, a door's threshold—these can be difficult to navigate. It inspired me to remodel our family restaurant, Joseph's, along Route 66, to make it more accessible.

How does the PAC plan to support aging adults?

Secretary [Emily] Kaltenbach is emotionally invested in our seniors. For her this is a labor of love. Senior centers, for instance, are such gifts—not just for the people who attend them, but for the caregivers who can drop off a loved one and then get a few hours to themselves. The one in Santa Rosa is so vibrant and innovative in terms of the services it has for seniors. It's also great how the department is offering career training for people who are 65, 75, or even 85, because you should be able to work if you want to. Continuing to be involved in one's community is so important. And going forward, the Policy Advisory Committee is looking more deeply at how the entire community can support our seniors and caregivers—from infrastructure to meals to health care and education.

Faces Behind the Policy Advisory Committee:

Christina Campos

To ensure New Mexico seniors get the best resources possible, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham appoints people from around the state to the Policy Advisory Committee—a group of experts in different fields who meet regularly to share ideas with New Mexico Aging Services. One of those experts is Christina Campos, the

former CEO of Guadalupe County Hospital in Santa Rosa. “Caregiving has a huge impact on a family,” she says. “Our senior demographic is growing rapidly in New Mexico, so I’m very grateful that New Mexico Aging Services is helping our state prepare for the future.”

How did you get into caregiving?

I was born in Albuquerque, where I grew up watching my aunt care for my grandmother, who suffered from osteoarthritis. Then my stepfather developed Alzheimer's. I remember my mother worrying about leaving him alone to visit the grocery store. And



● The expanded center is designed to help support a range of classes and activities.

More Space, More Spirit, More Community

A recent renovation breathes new life into one of Santa Fe's most beloved senior centers, strengthening services for a growing population.

Santa Fe's Mary Esther Gonzales Senior Center continues to evolve nearly 50 years after its doors opened. What began as a modest gathering space in 1975 has grown into one of the city's most vital resources for seniors, thanks in part to an expansion project that was completed this year with a renewed focus on social and physical wellness.

Manuel Sanchez, senior services director for the City of Santa Fe, oversees the center and its sister sites, the Pasatiempo and Luisa Senior Centers. His open door is both literal and symbolic when it comes to the community-focused work he leads.

"It's constant oversight of the center—working with managers, working with seniors," Sanchez says. "My door's open all day long. Seniors walk by, say good morning, or pop in and chat for a few minutes."

Sanchez says the expansion project added a game room, a crafts room, an enlarged fitness room, additional meeting space, and new ADA-

accessible restrooms to the center. The city was able to pay for the upgrades thanks to capital outlay from the Department of Aging and Long-Term Services, which fought for the funds during the state's annual legislative session. The renovations were designed to support the wide range of classes and activities offered throughout the week, everything from ceramics and woodcarving to tai chi, improv, and guitar lessons.

Some mornings, as many as 60 seniors arrive for enhanced exercise classes, he says. Others spend time in the fitness center, take part in jewelry or sewing groups, attend book-club meetings, or simply gather for conversation and board games.

"We want to make sure we have as much social activity for seniors as possible," Sanchez says. "Sometimes when they come here, this is the only companionship they see the whole day. So it's important for them to come in and socialize."

The center's mission extends far

beyond classes. Staff provide communal meals, a home-delivered meal program, transportation services, respite care, homemaker support, and opportunities to volunteer. The Retired Senior Volunteer Program operates across 50 sites in the city, with more than 250 volunteers sharing their skills and energy. At Mary Esther, they help run the welcome desk, assist in the dining room, and lead most of the classes.

Sharing talents and seeing others embrace them is a major reason why volunteers find the work so gratifying, Sanchez says. "Serving their community, I think, is really rewarding."

Santa Fe's tradition of honoring elders, deeply rooted in northern New Mexico culture, is woven throughout the center's operations. Sanchez says the staff's care for the seniors is part of what makes the place special.

"My staff really love working here," he says. "Being able to have the seniors here and be a part of their lives—and them be part of ours—on a daily basis, it's very fulfilling."

With Santa Fe's senior population continuing to grow, the need for expanded services is growing, too. Sanchez says the city is already working on the design of a new senior center to accommodate increasing demand.

"We see our senior population going up," he says. "We're looking forward to the future—looking at how we can provide more services as that population grows."

While he laughs that he probably forgot to mention a few programs in the long list he recited, Sanchez says that the heart of the center lies in the gratitude expressed by the people it serves.



Winter 2026 Events

A look at the upcoming opportunities to get out and about in your community.

JANUARY

Pueblo Gingerbread House Contest

*Judging by the public runs
December 19–January 4*

Indian Pueblo Cultural Center,
Albuquerque

The Pueblo Gingerbread House Contest is a favorite holiday tradition at the IPCC. Children and adults enter a gingerbread house they've constructed, inspired by a pueblo village, community church, or historic building, with prizes awarded in various categories, including a dedicated senior grouping. It's a unique way to share and enjoy Pueblo culture with your family, and judging of the gingerbread houses is open to the public. The winners will be announced January 6.

King's Day Celebration Honoring New Pueblo Tribal Officials

January 6

Various pueblos

This celebration is held in recognition of the gifts given to the baby Jesus in Bethlehem by the three kings. In the Pueblos, it's a time to show gratitude for the gifts from our creator, and also recognize newly elected officials in many of the pueblos. It's also a time they celebrate their rights to existence and pray for blessings, especially the new leadership. Various pueblos take part in the day with dances open to the public, including Picuris Pueblo, Nambe Pueblo, Sandia Pueblo, Santa Ana Pueblo, Santo Domingo Pueblo, and Taos Pueblo, among others. Please call other pueblos for more information.

Alzheimer's Foundation Webinar: Reframing Agitation and Aggression as Responsive Behaviors

January 13, 10 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.

Virtual

Individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other neurodegenerative conditions may experience episodes of agitation or aggression, a result of changes in the brain that affect comprehension and communication. This live, interactive webinar helps care teams and loved ones reframe outbursts and identify potential triggers while prioritizing comfort, safety, and dignity. Attendees will have opportunities to ask questions and get immediate answers from experts in dementia care. Learn more at alzfdn.org/nmtraining.

FEBRUARY

American Indian Day at the Legislature

February 6

New Mexico State Capitol, Santa Fe
Organized by the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, American Indian Day is a chance for Native elders to meet directly with legislators, highlight community needs, and engage in conversations that shape policy statewide. As in the past, this year's event will include plenty of activities, such as traditional dances, art displays, and speakers addressing priorities such as elder services and health equity. Learn more at iad.nm.gov.

Senior Day at the Legislature

February 13, 2026, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

New Mexico State Capitol, Santa Fe
This annual event brings together older adults, caregivers, community partners, and advocates from across the state. It's a chance to connect, learn, and use your voice to speak up for issues shaping aging in New Mexico. Visit the website to learn more and sign up: aging.nm.gov/seniorday.

Alzheimer's Foundation Webinar: Pseudo-Dementia versus True Dementia

February 10, 10 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.

Virtual

Many older adults and their care teams may have to navigate the overlap between depressive symptoms, age-related cognitive changes, and psychiatric episodes such as hallucinations and paranoia. This clinical webinar will compare the symptoms of depression and dementia and examine the risks and consequences of inaccurate diagnoses. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions. Learn more at alzfdn.org/nmtraining.

New Mexico Senior Olympics Winter Games

February 23–26

Santa Fe

Sign up and compete at one of the largest multisport events for seniors 50 and over, with age divisions up to 95-plus. Events include basketball, billiards, bowling, cornhole, frisbee, pickleball, shuffleboard, soccer kick, swimming, and table tennis. Learn more and sign up online at nmseniorolympics.org.

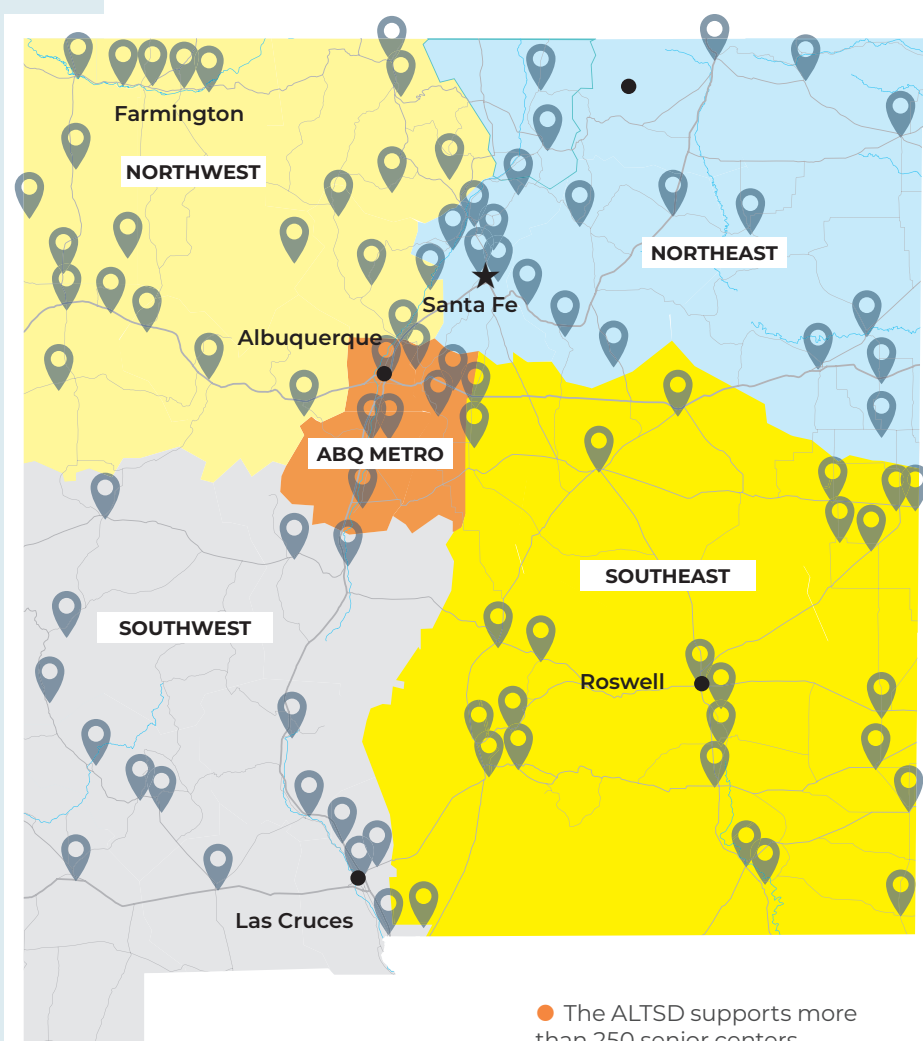
National Caregiver's Day

February 20

New Mexico joins the nation in celebrating the quiet heroes who keep families, communities, and elders thriving. Whether it's a spouse, an adult child, a neighbor, or a friend, caregivers make aging possible. On February 20, take time to thank the person who makes independence feel a little more achievable every day. And if you're a caregiver, we're grateful for everything you do to help keep seniors living with dignity and community.

MARCH

Alzheimer's Foundation Webinar: An Overview of the Other Types of



● The ALTSD supports more than 250 senior centers across the state, with a range of daily and weekly activities.

Pueblo Feast Days

Throughout the year, pueblos celebrate and honor their patron saints. Each event is different, but many of them feature traditional dances, food, and arts markets. For more information and contact info for each pueblo, go to indianpueblo.org/feast-days.

January 23

San Ildefonso Pueblo: St. Ildephonsus Feast Day, with Buffalo, Comanche, and Deer Dances.

First or Second in Weekend February

Old Acoma Pueblo: Governor's Feast with various dances
Ohkay Owingeh: Deer dances

Second Weekend in February
Picuris Pueblo: Candelaria Day Celebration

March 19

St. Joseph's Feast Day: Laguna Pueblo (Old Laguna), Harvest Dance & Various Dances.

Dementia-Related Illnesses

March 10, 10 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.

Virtual

When people think of dementia, Alzheimer's disease is often the first condition that comes to mind. But many other illnesses fall under the umbrella of dementia-related disorders. In this general course, participants will learn about a range of dementia-related illnesses, including dementia with Lewy bodies, vascular dementia, and frontotemporal degeneration. Attendees will have opportunities to ask questions and par-

ticipate in real-time dialogue to deepen their understanding of dementia-related illnesses and of best practices for care. Learn more at alzfdn.org/nmtraining.

Senior Connection Trade Show

March 14

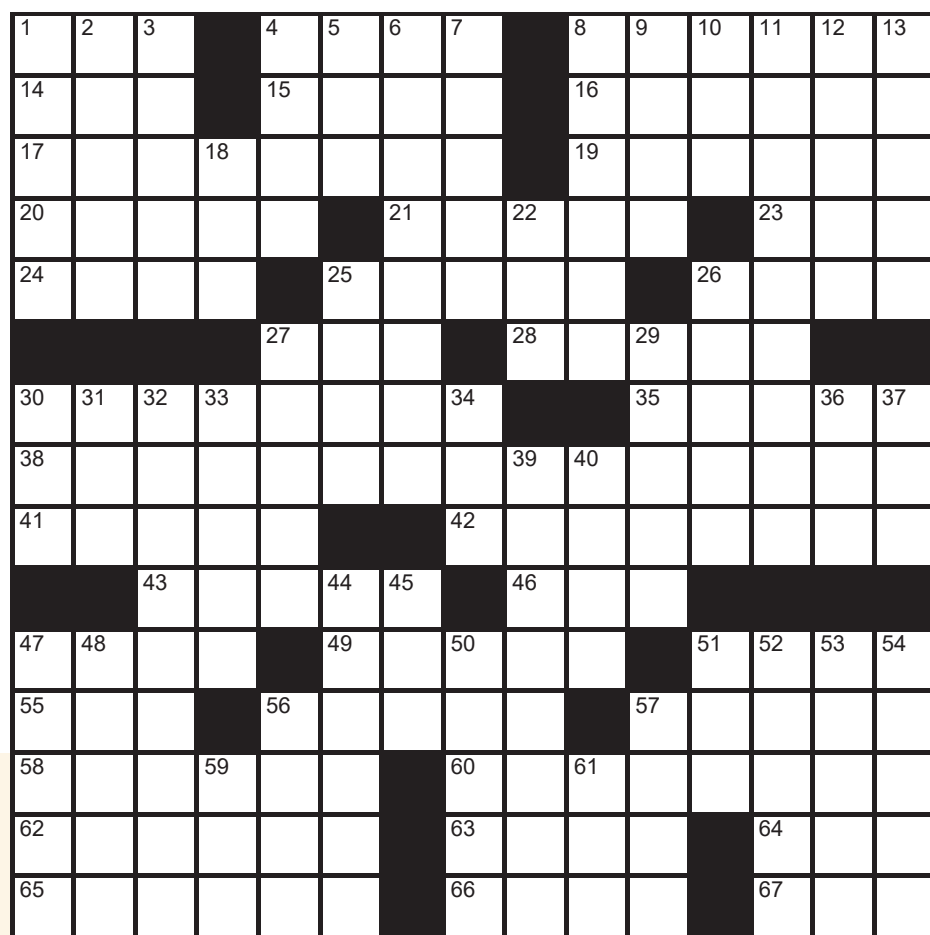
Jewish Community Center Ballroom, Albuquerque

This show features vendors offering products and services for today's seniors, entertainment by seniors, and door prizes. The event is free and open to the public.

THE CROSSWORD

Solution to the Fall 2025 puzzle:

P	A	L	M		T	A	I	C	H	I		A	M	I
A	S	I	A		O	N	G	O	A	L		L	A	X
T	H	E	R	E	W	I	L	L	B	E		C	N	N
				I	N	N		O	I	L		I	O	T
B	L	O	O	D		N	O	C	O	U	N	T	R	Y
B	O	D		S	A	C					S	R	T	A
S	N	O	B		R	I	M		G	E	O			
	G	R	A	P	E	S	O	F	W	R	A	T	H	
			B	O	A		M	A	E		D	I	V	A
	I	T	O	O			U	N	O		N	A	H	
F	O	R	O	L	D	M	E	N		B	U	T	C	H
O	D	I	N		O	O	P		P	O	T			
R	I	B		O	P	P	E	N	H	E	I	M	E	R
U	N	A		R	E	S	E	E	D		C	U	L	T
M	E	L		T	R	Y	S	T	S		A	M	I	E



The solution to the puzzle will be printed in the following issue, and available online at newmexicogenerations.com in mid-January.

- 58.** Resort in Vadito, New Mexico
60. Resort in the Jemez Mountains
62. Christmas Day urging
63. Collar type
64. Murals and mobiles
65. Wool source
66. Goes kaput
67. Meadow mom

DOWN

- 1.** Jeweler's unit
2. Last letter of the Greek alphabet
3. Pitcher Martinez in Cooperstown
4. French friend
5. Cleveland cager, for short
6. 1960s Roger Moore TV series
7. Fire alarm
8. Sight-related
9. Gouda alternative
10. Mother Teresa was one
11. Darjeeling, e.g.
12. Electrolysis particle
13. Credit-union offerings
18. Object in a courtroom
22. GPS suggestion
25. What sunscreen covers
26. Food Network Guy
27. Persian potentates
29. Latches (on to)
30. Javits Center architect
31. Switch ups?
32. Blotter sheets
33. Series of links
34. Rare find
36. AOL rival
37. Aliens, for short
39. Uber-techies
40. Go bankrupt
44. *A Rumor of War* author Philip
45. Half and half
47. England's ___ Downs
48. Michael of R.E.M.
50. Stared stupidly
51. Much
52. War story
53. Back in
54. Ham it up
56. Public relations effort
57. Minus
59. Groove-billed ___
61. *Stranger Things* actor Keery

The Crossword

A New Mexico Generations Original
 By Brendan Emmett Quigley

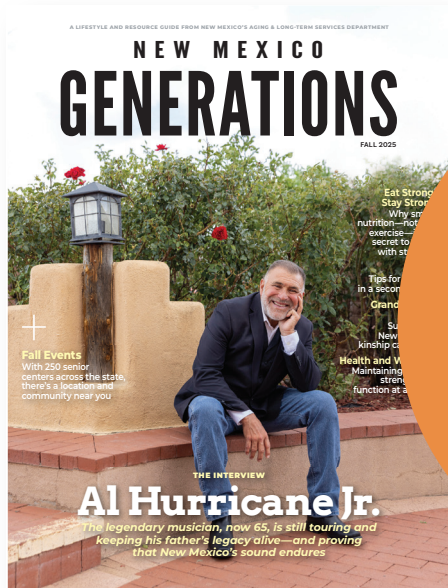
ACROSS

- 1.** He pounds a beat
4. Does summer stock
8. Minor, as a sin
14. Letters in many Baptist church names
15. Dolphinfish, when doubled
16. "Beats me," slangily
17. Resort in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains
19. Bernalillo County resort
20. Side (with)
21. Truth ___ (interrogation drug)
23. + or - item
24. Resort in the Carson National Forest
25. ___ Fe

- 26.** Tailgate parties
27. Enjoy any of the places in this puzzle's theme
28. Chicago suburb
30. Taking illegally
35. "Can I show you?"
38. New Mexico resort for going cross-country
41. Thomas of the NBA
42. TV's *Golden Girls*, e.g.
43. *Saturday Night Fever* music
46. Grunts
47. Sports streamer
49 & 51. Resort in the Rocky Mountains
55. School org.
56. Traditional fishing tool
57. Capital near Portland

NEW MEXICO GENERATIONS

A magazine dedicated to enhancing life for New Mexicans as they age.



New Mexico Generations magazine is an initiative of New Mexico Aging Services and is distributed at its statewide network of 250-plus senior centers.



ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

Each issue of the magazine is devoted to healthy-aging in New Mexico—its people, places, food, arts, and culture. We'll cover stories from all corners of the state and people from all walks of life. The goal for each issue is to feature inspiring seniors living their best lives while offering guides, resources, tips, and a listing of premier community events where seniors can gather.

FIND US ONLINE

All of the same inspiring stories you get in the magazine can be found online, along with recipes, health and fitness tips, and resources from New Mexico Aging Services.

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Lighting the Way

Christmas in New Mexico wouldn't be the same without farolitos—or luminarias, depending on where you live—decorating the state's adobe buildings, as seen here in a 1927 photo of Santa Fe's La Fonda Hotel. The tradition is often traced back to 1590, when Spanish explorer Gaspar Costaño de Sosa wrote in his journal about a night his men lit small bonfires to guide a scout back to camp. At La Fonda, farolitos began decorating the building when the current structure was finished in 1922, but previous versions of the hotel likely displayed lanterns in some fashion, too, considering there's been an inn of one type or another on the site since 1607. This image was taken by T. Harmon Parkhurst, one of the great photographic chroniclers of New Mexico in the early twentieth century, and it demonstrates his self-taught technical prowess with camera equipment. The light streaks, made by passing automobiles, were captured using a long exposure, which is hard enough to perfect today, let alone with the photographic technology of the 1920s. The result is one of the best early images of a blossoming tradition that has come to define the winter aesthetic in New Mexico—whatever you prefer to call those cheery holiday lights.

T. HARMON PARKHURST, CA. 1927; COURTESY OF THE PALACE OF THE GOVERNORS PHOTO ARCHIVES

New Date

SENIOR DAY



FEBRUARY 13, 2026

Join us at the Roundhouse on February 13th for Senior Day at the Legislature where you can participate in our free resource fair, learn more about New Mexico Aging Services' initiatives, budget requests, and advocate for funding that makes **positive impacts in the lives of New Mexicans every day.**



WWW.AGING.NM.GOV/SENIORDAY



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