

# La Voz de Mora

December 21, 2018

Volume 5

Edition 58

## Christmas and New Year Greetings!

by La Voz de Mora Staff

Dear Readers:

The first edition of La Voz de Mora, was published in December 2013. Since its launch the goal of La Voz de Mora has been: INFORM, COMMUNICATE, EDUCATE, REFLECT AND SHARE OPINIONS on different issues, especially to invigorate and to preserve our culture and heritage, create identity by recognizing the historical and cultural heritage of the people of Mora; propose actions to solve the things that affect our community and make constructive criticism without violence. We believe we are fulfilling this objective and we appreciate the feedback that many of yours have given us.

With this edition La Voz de Mora, ends the volumen five (5), we have reached you with 58 editions and we accept the challenge of another new year.

With love and respect La Voz de Mora Staff wishes you that in the New Year, enjoy all the simplest things every day because happiness is hidden in them. We hope that in the new year, you will never miss: a dream to fight for, a project to do, something to learn, a place to go and someone to love.

May the best of the year that ends, be the best of the year that begins. We let go with love and gratitude to our loved ones who returned to the creator this year.

We hope you enjoy this edition and as always you are invited to help La Voz de Mora grow participating in different ways.

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year for all families and God Bless you!**

## Las Misiones de Mora Celebran Las Posadas Navideñas



Immaculate Heart of Mary, Holman

The tradition commemorates Mary and Joseph's difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a warm place to stay the night. (*Posadas* is Spanish for "lodgings" or "accommodations.")

Beginning on December 16 and ending nine days later, on December 24, *Las Posadas* commemorates the nine months of Mary's pregnancy. Each night, one family agrees to house the pilgrims. And so, it begins: At dusk, a procession of the faithful takes to the streets with children often dressed as angels and shepherds. Religious figures, images and lighted candles are a part of the festivities.

The tradition continues each evening with a different house as the chosen *Posadas*. The last night—Christmas Eve—usually features a midnight Mass. The nine days of *Las Posadas* is more than just a feel-good tradition: It deepens faith and strengthens ties within the community at a holy time.

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# CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS - CULTURE AND HERITAGE

## A CHRISTMAS IN THE 1930'S

By Manuel Alcon

Dear reader, let me share the adventure of a Christmas during the 1930's, So that you may get the most enjoyment of this story you need to pretend you are a pre-teenager and try to see it through such a pre-teenager's eyes.

The Sisters of Loretto who were our teachers at school would, as a custom give all the kids a bag of goodies. This was the day. All school children went for their bag of goodies and for religious instructions.

In the evening my friends come to ask my folks for permission for me to go with them to ask for "Los Oremos". This was a custom that was similar to our present-day Halloween treats.

My mother knew me better than my dad and she reluctantly, allowed me to go. Dad had no problem, he gave me permission with the understanding that I would behave.

The first few houses we stopped went smoothly. We got our goodies and were sent on our way. There were eight of us. The way we approached each house was the same. We all called in unison. "Oremos. Oremos. Angelitos del Cielo semos si no nos dan oremos. puertas y ventanas quebreramos" (We pray, we pray. we are angels from Heaven if you do not give us what we pray for. we will break down doors and windows).

Next, we stoped at Mr. Ortega's house. We have known him as a good, easy going person. We recited the **oremos**. Mr. Ortega opened the door and we entered. The door was shut and Mr. Ortega said "In this house we earn what we get. First of all, we will pray and all of you must behave. One more thing, I don't like the idea of being intimidated by anyone. You will break my door and windows if I don't give you treats. I say you must earn your treats".

"Now let us pray. Kneel down. Pray that the Lord forgives us. Maybe two rosaries will be just about right for the treats I will hand to you", he continued.

All of us sweated a cold sweat since we feel that kneeling for such a long time is more punishment than praying. There is no alternative, we are locked in and there is no way out except kneeling and praying.

"God". we think, " If this does not clear our way to Heaven nothing will." Had we known what was about to happen, I would have told my mom not to permit me to go out in such a cold and blistery night.

## Reliving Las Posadas

We are reliving this beautiful tradition in Mora. The mayordomos of the missions have come together to live the Christmas spirit and unite the community around this tradition.

Between, December 16 to December 24, you can live your faith and infuse strength into this tradition that is part of your culture. This year you are very welcome to the following missions at 6:00pm:

Sunday 16th - Immaculate Heart of Mary - Holman; Monday 17th - Alto del Talco - Santiago; Tuesday 18th - Sacred Heart of Jesus - Rainsville; Wednesday - 19th Santo Nino de Atocha - Buena Vista; Thursday - 20th - San Jose - Ledoux; Friday 21st - Nuestra Senora del Carmen - El Carmen; Saturday 22nd - Santo Nino de Padua - Cleveland; Sunday 23rd - Santa Teresita del Nino Jesus - Turquillo; Monday 24th - St. Gertude Parish (Chapel)



Community gathered on December 16th



Home of Khole's family on December 17th

The mission of Holman, with the leadership of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, has chosen nine homes as hosts of Las Posadas.

Between "Villancicos" y Ave Marias, cookies, bizcochitos y bebidas calientes, los peregrinos han sido bien recibidos y se le ha dado posada al espiritu de la reina del cielo, la virgen Maria.

For more information you can contact the mayordomos of the missions and the sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

For sure, next year we will to have also, "Los Oremos" other Christmas tradition.

**COURAGE, IS WHAT IT TAKES TO STAND UP AND SPEAK.**

**COURAGE, IS ALSO WHAT IT TAKES TO SIT DOWN AND LISTEN.**

## Santa Claus Assistants in the Mora Senior Center



*Feliz Navidad*

*Feliz Navidad  
Feliz Navidad  
Feliz Navidad  
Próspero Año  
Felicidad*

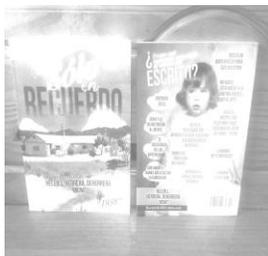


*I wanna wish you a  
Merry Christmas  
I wanna wish you a  
Merry Christmas  
I wanna wish you a  
Merry Christmas  
From the bottom of  
my heart!*

**Ms. Garcia and Lujan Class**

Mora Elementary School surprised our Citizens Seniors with songs and many presents. Well done!

## Preserving Our Oral Stories "Solo en Recuerdo"



Helen L. DeHerrera (Herrera) lifelong resident of New Mexico, born and raised in Chamisal, Taos County. "I have made my home in Cleveland, Mora County for the last 40 years where I still reside with my husband Joseph".

Growing up in a small town with a large extended family, I was exposed to many traditions and beliefs, which have since become a thing of the past, lost on newer generations.

For decades I have saved these memories with intentions of one day passing the information along to my children, grandchildren, and the whole world.

Over the past year I have worked to document this information and written a book titled 'Solo en Recuerdo'. My hope is that this book sparks memories for those of us who still remember while leaving behind something for the next generation to learn. To contact the author: [recuerdo18@yahoo.com](mailto:recuerdo18@yahoo.com)

## Sponsored by Southwest Capital Bank

submitted by Bernadette Vigil



**Bernadette, Tera and Felicia**

Recently here at Southwest Capital Bank in Mora we held a Winter Warm Drive. The purpose of this drive was to be able to provide warmth to our children in need throughout the community. We were able to provide over 50 children at our Mora Schools a brand-new jacket, gloves, and beanie. We got them out to children right before they went out on their Thanksgiving break.

We would like to thank all of those in our community that donated to make this Winter Warm Drive successful!!



Southwest Capital Bank in Mora recently invited the kindergarten class to decorate our tree this year. They happily accepted!! We would like to thank Faith Rivera and Denise Garcia along with their assistants on helping these little ones create cute ornaments for our tree.

**From all of us at Southwest Capital Bank we would like to wish the Mora community a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!**

## Las Cabañuelas

by Estevan Arellano (New Mexico History.org)

For the early settlers who braved the “Jornada del Muerto,” or Journey of the Dead from Mexico to northern New Mexico in 1598, it was not simply a matter of finding good soil and water to plant in order to survive, it also meant learning to understand nature and their new environs and applying the knowledge they brought with them to this new homeland. Reading the sun, the moon, and the stars was an old tradition, one that could be easily applied to new worlds and geographies. The arid landscape of New Mexico was similar to that of Mexico, Spain and the Middle East. The settlers brought with them knowledge of place, or *querencia*, that ran through their blood. This knowledge included the sacred triumvirate of water, weather, and land passed down from father to son and mother to daughter in an oral tradition that was accumulated from those with whom the settlers came into contact, an accretion of knowledge that was life sustaining.

“January has the secret of all twelve months,” or so says an old proverb in Spanish. Or it could be that the month is August, depending on what part of the Spanish-speaking world one lives in: In New Mexico the dicho is referring to the reading of the cabañuelas, which people still use to predict the weather for the coming year. The cabañuelas is the name given to the first twelve days of January. Each of these days in turn will indicate the kind of weather that will be produced in the following months. Though no one knows for sure where the term originated, it may have come from Zamuc, or “Fiesta de las Suertes,” the feast of luck, from the Babylonian calendar, which in Hebrew translates to the Fiesta of the Tabernacle. The word cabañuelas comes from the word cabaña, a shelter, small cabin or house, or tabernacle and the twelve days “house” the prognostication. La fiesta de las cabañuelas is of Jewish origin but is of mixed cultural heritage. Arab and Jewish cultures were a part of the Spanish heritage brought to the Americas and transplanted in New Mexico.

In the past and still in some villages there is an individual who can “read” the cabañuelas, or predict the weather for the whole year. In general, the cabañuelistas don’t want rain at the beginning of the year for it’s a bad omen. They say that the cabañuela “se vacía,” o “se revienta,” that is, that the cabañuela “empties,” or “bursts.”

To “read” the Cabañuelas copious notes are referred to either written or mental. Much of this history has been passed on orally and from generation to generation. The first day of the month represents January the “key to the year,” the second day is January, and so on until you get to the 13th day which represents December; then one starts counting backwards, that is, the 14th day represents December, the 15th day November, until you get to the 25th day, which represents January; the 26th day represents January and February, 12 hours for each day; the 27th day represents March and April, and so on, until the 31st day representing November and December. If the first day is not observed as “llave del año,” then the 31st is broken into two hours to represent each month. A sample cabañuelas follows:

**“Llave del año,” key to the year, Jan. 1st.** Since the wind blew all day from the north, this cabañuela is considered very negative; therefore, a bad year.

**January:** Second of January, windy, moisture in the morning, represents a very dry cabañuela.

**February:** 3rd of January, swift wind, towards noon wind shifted north, normal month. There’s a saying that reads, “febrero loco, marzo poco,” February is very unpredictable and March is sort of the same.”

**March:** 4th of January, bad weather, north wind, very dry.

**April:** 5th of January, same as before, windy and dry, not much of a chance for rain.

**May:** 6th of January, uncertain cabañuela, bad sign.

**June:** 7th of January, easterly wind most of the day, good omen.

**July:** 8th of January, another bad day, windy and dry, not much hope of rain.

**August:** 9th of January, another bad month, same as the previous day.

**September:** 10th of January, regular, morning not much wind.

**October:** 11th of January, good but no rain.

**November:** 12th of January, dry, bad cabañuela, sunny all day.

**December:** 13th of January, same as the day before.

**Who can “Read” the Cabañuelas in Mora?**

## Mora Independent School Working to Move Forward

Interviewers: Gina Pacheco and Nancy Quintana

Intelligent, optimistic, enthusiastic, hardworking and a woman of faith who believes that everything happens for a reason, are the words with which we can define the personality and first impression that Dr. Carla Spaniel has left us during our meeting last 5 of December.

But who is she? She is the new Superintendent of the Mora Independent School, a position that she will occupy in interim until June 2019. Before speaking of her professional life and the priorities in which she wishes to achieve until the fulfillment of this term, we would like to tell you something about her as human being.

The roots of Carla Spaniel are in New Mexico and began with the group of families that arrived with the first settlers. Her grandparents on the maternal side were Adelina Moreno and Vicente Ulibarri from Las Cruces and Tierra Amarilla, respectively. Her vocation as a teacher comes from her parents, Emilia Margarita Ulibarri and Carl Westbrook, who dedicated their lives to the teaching.

Dr. Carla Spaniel began her career as an educator 25 years ago. She is married with a military officer Major Keith Spaniel and is mother of one girl and one boy.

After May 7, 2010 her personal and professional life was publicly affected by facts that were subsequently clarified in her favor and declared not guilty for District Judge Carter Thomas. The love of her husband, the support of her family and her lawyer, helped her to prove her innocence. I am proud to say that as of December 2, 2011 my case has been expunged, Dr. Spaniel said ".

Dr. Spaniel did not hesitate to share her story with us giving us a copy of "My Public Humbling", which contains all the events that took place on the night of May 7, 2010 and that leaves us with the reflection: "do not judge to person until you have all the facts", as Dr. Spaniel wrote.

Dr. Carla Spaniel's curriculum vitae is very impressive. She has a license to work in three states: Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico. In 2008, she graduated with a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction and she love conducting professional development to enhance teachers' instructional strategies.

About her achievements: She was the principal at J.P. Elder Middle School in Fort Worth ISD from 2006-2010. It is the second largest in the district with 1,200 students and 120 faculty and staff. "Before I was principal it had a 55% performing rate, under my tenure school performance increased to 98%". As a Principal at Hamilton Middle School in Tulsa, Oklahoma, it was considered the worst performing school in the state. "After I was there it was recognized by the state for the largest academic gains over a two-year period", she states.

Listening to her professional experiences, observing her credentials and the results achieved in the different districts in which Dr. Carla Spaniel has worked, there is no doubt that she has earned the reputation of being part of the solution in schools that need to improve their performance. "My job was to bring these schools up academically to meet state and federal standards," she said.

Hard work, excellent staff, dedicated teachers and the commitment of parents, will undoubtedly bring academic results and personal growth for the entire educational community.

Heal the school, leave the past behind working for the welfare of the students and convert each of the students who graduate from Mora Independent School into a complete and productive citizen, this is the main objective of Dr. Carla Spaniel. "We are moving forward, she said".

For all the above mentioned, it is understood that to achieve this goal is necessary: Bring Staff together; community evolvment and help the teachers grow.

**Are you ready to move forward?**

### **Be Ready for Mora Historic Cultural Event 2019!**

In May 5, 2018, around 100 people of all ages, came to reenounter with their roots, culture and traditions. The main organizer of this event was La Merced de Santa Gertrudis de Lo de Mora (Mora Land Grant), assuming its mission as Guardians of the Cultural Heritage bequeathed by the ancestors of the natives of Mora.

Mora Independent School was the main partner in the organization of the event by allowing us to do it in the facilities of the High School Lecture Hall, for which we are very grateful with the former Superintendent Mrs. Ella Arellano, teachers Rita Sanchez, Karla Sena, Staff and the School Board.

### **Why is it important to preserve culture and heritage?**

**Heritage is important** in understanding the story of North of New Mexico and particularly of the Mora Valleys – its history, identity and its **people**. **Heritage** can incorporate both the tangible and the intangible. It is present in many forms such as landmarks, spirituality, religion, music, arts, places, buildings and contents, spaces, views and the stories associated with them **Culture** and its **heritage** reflect and shape values, beliefs, and aspirations, thereby defining a people's national identity. It is **important to preserve our cultural heritage**, because it keeps our integrity as a people.

Come to Mora May 5, 2019... Know, respect, share and live our

Culture!

# Merry Christmas and Prosperity in the New Year



**MVCHS** provides a wide range of services to the Mora Valley area. **MVCHS** offers quality medical, dental, and behavioral health services in its primary care clinic. In addition to primary care services, **MVCHS** also operates an adult day care program, as well as home care, and personal care services.

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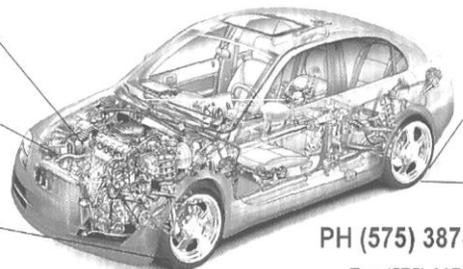
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## '2018 Mora Valley Economic & Community Development Leadership Summit'

By Carla Gomez and Anita LaRam

On Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup> the first "2018 Mora Valley Economic & Community Development Leadership Summit" was held at the Buena Vista Fire Department. The event was organized by Collaborative Visions (CV) and facilitated by Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC). In 2014 -2015 a Leadership Institute was sponsored by RCAC with six series of trainings taking place over a period of six months. Seventy individuals registered and over 40 community members completed the training. Several projects were identified during the Leadership Institute as priorities for the community at the time. The Leadership Summit was for the purpose of bringing the group back to celebrate what has been accomplished during the years that followed the Institute as well to identify collaborative efforts to support each of our groups as well to identify needs that we can support. The participants shared thoughts and ideas in order to understand what the strengths and weaknesses of the community were. Groups were developed and continued to meet. Out of this workshop groups gathered to share ideas about the preservation of our water, our forests and our culture. Many of these groups still meet and many of the ideas that were born have grown into greater visions and developments in the community.

La Voz de Mora was born and is now celebrating the printing of its 58<sup>th</sup> edition. Overcoming many initial obstacles La Voz extends their gratitude to the Mora Valley Community Health Center for their continued support allowing us the use of their printer and also providing the paper. When La Voz initially started St. Gertrude's Parish and Collaborative Visions both helping out with the service of printing Las Voz de Mora. Special thanks to all the volunteer staff for taking individual responsibility and helping to make this happen.

Mora County Economic Development Corporation has taken many steps to lead the community in any way possible for the economic growth of the community.

Los de Mora Local Growers Cooperative has opened a permanent space in the old Cleveland Clinic where they are developing a community kitchen and have many growers collaborating in order to provide fresh produce and meats to the community. Sangre de Cristo Livestock Growers continues to work with members interested in marketing their beef with added value other than the sale barn.

Mora Water Alliance was formed in order to support local water systems that are struggling with billing issues, reporting and certified water operators.

Mora Wood Products Cooperative has developed a board consisting of several loggers in the area seeking strength and continued economic viability for the health of our forests.

Mora Valley Tourism Cooperative is reaching out to the community to develop tourism as a viable, clean source of revenue for the community by highlighting the beauty and culture that we have. They are encouraging entrepreneurs to open up to new ideas while becoming self-sustainable.

Mora Arts and Culture Compound is busy looking to revive the rich and vibrant arts and culture of our community.

Mora Valley Chamber of Commerce hosts the Winter Fest and Christmas lighting of downtown Mora, as well as the Christmas Light Parade. This group also Markets events and businesses of Mora County.

Mora Theater Group is hoping to revive the Historic Chief Theater. Our community needs a place for our children to learn about the arts and arts expressions.

The Mora Land Grant and La Voz and other supporters held it first Dia de Cultura at this year's Cinco de Mayo Celebration. This will now be a recurring yearly event. Mora Independent schools provided tremendous support for the event. Many volunteers made this event possible. The Mora Land Grant has interest in collaborating with other entities to create economic ventures that will benefit the better good of all, in example wind energy.

Collaborative Visions staff and Board of Directors have worked diligently to ensure that all groups are supported in one way or another so that our community dreams are supported and continue to grow.

Rural Development Leadership Institute and USDA who provide monetary support for CV staff in order to continue to provide services for the communities, coops and the farmers they serve.

Special gratitude goes out to our partners at RCAC and RCAP who facilitated and took photos at the event; Souder Miller and Associates, Mora County Economic Development Corp., and Sangre de Cristo Livestock Growers who provided the funds for our specially prepared meal by our new commissioner elect Mr. Frank Maestas.

If anyone is interested in getting involved in any of these initiatives please don't be shy. You can call Christine Barela or Anita LaRan at 575-387-2031 or email at all\_laran@yahoo.com.

## **A New Beginnings in Mora County Government**

Interviewers Gina Pacheco and Nancy Quintana

Mora, NM. - On December 31, 2018 at 1:30 p.m. at the Mora Senior Citizen Center, the newly elected Mora Officials will be sworn in to serve the citizens of Mora County with honesty, transparency and integrity.

There are a lot of expectations in the air of the board of commissioners which include Commissioner Elect, Veronica Serna, District 1, Commissioner Elect, Lionor Frank Maestas, District 2, and standing Commissioner, Alfonso Griego (Ford), District 3.

In an interview with Serna and Maestas, we wanted to educate ourselves a little about the executive duties of the Commission and to clear the question: **What new things are in store from the County under their administration?**

As defined by New Mexico Counties (formerly New Mexico Association of Counties):

Commissioners are elected officials that serve 4-year terms on the Board of County Commissioners; the governing body of a county. The Board's responsibility is the overall management of the county government operations. They have the power to control budget, levy taxes, and enact ordinances. Commissioners also provide for the issuance of bond financing for public buildings, roads, utilities, hospitals, and libraries; as well as carry out election, planning and zoning, and health and safety functions.

With this description, we wanted to know what the priorities will be during their first year of government, in accordance with these duties.

"Our priorities will be (not in any specific order): a) Balance the budget, b) hire a county manager, c) fill vacancy in Finance, b) forming an advisory council represented by at least 2 members of each district with different expertise, skills, and experiences. This council will not have formal authority to govern but will report directly to the Commission, d) introduce public transportation so that the people can decide whether or not it's something they would want to keep, especially for the elderly needing to get to doctor's appointments and if we remain a food desert, our people may want a ride to obtain their necessities outside of Mora.

"Surely, we will agree to disagree in some cases, but we will respect and value the work that we can do together; our interest always will be to make decisions in the best interest of the citizens of Mora County as a whole. We will continue to encourage public participation and comment at open meetings to understand the interests of the people. Coherence is the key word, in this case," stated both Maestas and Serna.

Both Serna and Maestas concurred that they have been extremely grateful for the time and effort Commissioner Paula Garcia has spent providing a formal orientation for the incoming commissioners. They are also very appreciative of the cooperation they have received from Commissioner Alfonso Griego.

When asked about the Mora Complex and the situation of the roads in the county, they answered: "The roads will be taken care of according to their severity and budget constraints."

"As for Mora Complex, the goal is to complete it; in fact, a little over 1/3 of the building should be receiving a certificate of occupancy in February, 2019, which will house county offices downstairs with the Courts occupying the upper floor."

At this point it is uncertain where all of the funds to complete it will come from, however, they are looking at different sources: State, Federal and even private funds for rent of spaces by different agencies.

"However, no action can be taken until we are certain how these decisions will impact the county. The money of the tax-payers will be spent with care. It can be a slow but direct process to complete the other phases of the building and guarantee its maintenance" said Maestas.

"It is clear that we are not going to jeopardize our integrity to accomplish something. We have to maintain moral and ethical practices in our community and we have to start with the Commissioners" they state.

Finally, Commissioners Serna and Maestas express: "This is an opportunity for community development and growth". We are going to work together in the best interest of the County."

The first regular meeting will be held on January 3, 2019 at 10:00 am, location to be determined.

**PUBLIC NOTICE (from Las Vegas, Optic)**  
**County Commission Meeting will be held on**  
**December 28, 2018, 9:00 am at the Luna Community**  
**College, David Cargo Library, Mora, NM.**  
**To propose adopting an Ordinance Mora County**  
**Zoning and Subdivision Code and Regulations.**  
**Copies are available for public inspection.**