



# VILLAGE NEWS



Small Community • Big Possibilities

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## SHOOT YOUR SHOT PHOTO CONTEST

The Village of Los Lunas Community Development Department ran the Shoot Your Shot Photo Contest from September through November as a way for creative community members to participate in the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Each winner took home a cash prize and a gift certificate of their choice.

The winning photos are featured on the Village social media and will be included in the plan update.

The Community Development Department congratulates the following winners and thanks local businesses for participating.

- 1st Ken Vincent  
Sunrise Over Los Lunas
- 2nd Adolph Lopez  
Tondre Road In The Snow
- 3rd Elissa Gomez  
Rio Grande Bosque

Businesses included Andy's Boots, Mariscos Altamar, Raks Building Supply, and Smiths Grocery.



*Sunrise Over Los Lunas*

## ADMINISTRATOR HONORED

Village Administrator Greg Martin has been recognized by the International City/County Management Association in honor of his twenty years of service in the city management profession, including the last eight and a half years with the Village of Los Lunas.

Martin is proud of his time in management especially at the Village which he considers a milestone.

"I appreciate the opportunity to continue serving the mayor, council, staff, and citizens of the Village of Los Lunas," said Martin.

## VILLAGE SCAVENGER HUNTS

The Village Open Space Division recently created a scavenger hunt and hid multiple clues in six Village parks and the Open Space Preserve.

The Scavenger Hunt project was very successful, with all who participated enjoying it.

The Open Space Division will continue to do scavenger hunts in the future. Watch for information on social media and other places.

## WATER, WASTEWATER AWARDS

The Village of Los Lunas Facility has won the New Mexico Water and Wastewater Association (NMWWA) Section Presidents Award for Most Improved Facility.

Village employee Steven Freeman has won the NMWWA Outstanding Lab Analyst Facility Operator of the Year Award.

- Craig Byers has won the NMWWA Caroline Martinez Achievement Award. This award is presented to an individual who best demonstrates a significant or outstanding achievement or accomplishment during that year.

Byers demonstrated his outstanding accomplishments with his leadership and management of the Village wastewater treatment facilities. In addition, Byers had operational responsibilities in the management of a new sludge management facility and the effluent load-out station.

The Village won the Good Housekeeping Award for an Activated Sludge Plant 20 years and older. The Village has been nominated in two other categories for awards:

- Mechanical Wastewater Treatment System (old & new).
- Activated Sludge Wastewater Treatment System (old & new).

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## VILLAGE PROJECTS IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant changes to many aspects of government including at the Village of Los Lunas. Fortunately, the Village will be able to continue working on a variety of projects that will continue to improve life in the community.

Budgeted projects the Village will be working on in 2021 include:

### ***I-25 Off-Ramp Second Lane***

Construct a second right-turn lane onto Main Street / NM Hwy 6 from I-25, including roadway signal improvements. This is a Village project funded by NM State Local Economic Development Act Funds.

This improvement will support upcoming economic development west of I-25 and meet NM Department of Transportation (NMDOT) State Access Manual (SAM) requirements. The project will be designed during 2021 with construction expected to start in fall 2021.

### ***Parks and Recreation Master Plan***

A new Parks and Recreation Master Plan has been developed and is expected to be presented to the Mayor and Village Council in January 2021.

### ***I-25 Interchange Beautification Phase III***

This project is in the design phase and will be landscaping and irrigation for the center and outer medians of I-25, including repainting sections of the Main Street / NM Hwy 6 Bridge.

### ***NM Hwy 314 Bike / Pedestrian Improvements from Railroad Avenue to Griego***

This project is in design phase and will include a multipurpose path, lighting, irrigation and landscaping improvements on one side of NM Hwy 314 between Railroad Avenue and Griego.

### ***NM Hwy 6 Trail / Sun Ranch Village Road to Jubilee***

This project will design and construct a multi-use trail along NM Hwy 6 between Sun Ranch Village Road and Jubilee Boulevard to include signage, striping, drainage, landscaping, and lighting.

### ***Local Street Improvements***

The following streets will have improved roadway conditions through removal and replacement of roadway surfacing, including any utility or sidewalk deficiencies. Work is expected to be done March 2021 through July 2021.

- o Appaloosa Road
- o Cinder Road
- o Mesa Cruzada / Mesa Loop
- o Willow / Nieto Road
- o Gensen Drive
- o Mission Road
- o Rivas Road
- o Camino de Higino
- o Pandora Drive

There will be improvements to the following intersections:

- Castillo and Entrada Road
- Maestas and Castillo Drive
- Aspen to Lopez off South Los Lentos

***Construction of an entertainment pavilion*** at the Museum of Heritage & Arts began in May and is almost complete.

The pavilion is in an enclosed courtyard complete with a stage area for presentations and performances.

The project is funded by 2019 New Mexico Capital Outlay appropriation and local funds.

For answers to question about various projects, contact Michael Jaramillo, public works director, 505 352-7629, [jaramillom@loslunasnm.gov](mailto:jaramillom@loslunasnm.gov).

## LOS LUNAS LIBRARY SELECTED FOR NATIONAL PROJECT

The Los Lunas Public Library has been selected as one of twelve libraries to participate in the STAR Net STEAM Equity Project, a competitive grant program that will enable the library and its collaborators to offer special programs, educational products, and exhibitions.

Through this project, Los Lunas and surrounding area residents are invited to join this effort to empower tweens and their families in equitable STEAM learning and career paths by building off existing strengths, interests, and diverse cultures.

The STEAM Equity project — where STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math — is designed specifically for libraries in rural communities with sizeable Latinx populations.

“We are so proud to be chosen through a competitive application process for this amazing opportunity,” said Library Director Cynthia Shetter.

“I think kids and adults alike will see that science, technology, engineering and math are more than school subjects — they offer ways to approach our personal and community needs and inspire creativity, collaboration, and the curiosity to learn more”, said Shetter.

“We’re delighted to have the opportunity to collaborate with UNM Valencia’s Title III: Reaching Rural STEM Students program, New Mexico State University’s Cooperative Extension Service in Valencia County, Valencia Soil & Water Conservation District, the Kiwanis Club of Los Lunas, and the Friends of the Los Lunas Public Library and Museum of Heritage & Arts to launch a series of fun STEAM learning opportunities.

“We will be working together to encourage participation by community members who are under-represented in STEM fields, especially Latino/a/x families and individuals, and women and girls,” said Village Children’s Librarian Stephanie Birr.

## SUGAR SKULLS NOW OPEN

Are you a New Mexico artist looking for a place to sell your creative pieces? Or maybe you're looking to buy something uniquely New Mexican.

Stop by Sugar Skulls Coffee and Gifts, 1402 Main St. NW, northeast corner of Main Street and Los Cerritos, phone 505 554-1519.

Raquel Montoya, owner of the UPS Store at the same corner, created Sugar Skulls Coffee and Gifts when she rented the space next door to the UPS Store for packing supplies. Now the supplies are in the back with coffee and gifts in the front.

Raquel is helped by her daughter Yvonne Macias.

The shop opened the beginning of January, welcoming people who want to look at the buying opportunities or want to linger over coffee.

COVID 19 rules are being followed to keep people safe. Currently there is limited seating, but Raquel hopes to expand as COVID19 rules change.



*Skulls at Sugar Skulls*

## SUBSTATION IN ALBERTSONS

Albertsons has created a substation for Los Lunas Police Officers to use anytime they want in the grocery store at the intersection of Main Street / NM Hwy 6 and NM Hwy 47.

The substation has been equipped with all the supplies the officers need.

LLPD has been deploying a bait car in several locations throughout the Village.



The first place business winner in the 2020 Light Up the Village contest, with 355 votes, was Edward Jones, 3459 Main St., Ste C. The business was a 2019 winner as well.

Second place business, with 47 votes, was Jubilee Los Lunas.

The first place homeowner, with 244 votes, was Amanda Blair off Festival Drive.

The second place homeowner, with 237 votes, was Rhiannon Mendoza off Entrada Drive SW.

## FIRST AID KIT POINTERS

With all the news geared toward the Covid-19 pandemic, it is wise to consider having one or more adults in a family certified in CPR and First Aid to ensure proper use and application of medical supplies found in first aid kits!

Get a first aid kit and then add to it, or build one for your family from scratch to fit your family's needs. To start, choose a container, make the kit safely accessible, teach your family about it, and keep your kit up to date!

Stocking a first aid kit differs but a basic and functional kit will have an array of bandages, basic medical tools like tweezers, scissors, non-latex gloves, thermometer, cotton balls and swabs, cleansing wipes and zip lock bags to hold medical waste.

Personalize your kit with family medications.

## INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Village Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) for Fiscal Year 2022-2026 has been approved by the Village Council which means the council, as well as Village staff, is planning for the community's future.

The ICIP lists projects that improve life in the Village if those projects are built. This list must be reviewed every year, so the Village is ready if project funding becomes available.

Top projects for the 2022 budget year include the I-25 interchange and bridge construction south of Exit 203; Central Rail Park utilities extensions; Carson Park Phase II infrastructure improvements; Valencia Regional Emergency Communications Center radio upgrades; and Castillo Street road improvements.

Funding comes from a variety of sources including legislative appropriations, grants, the village budget, and loans which are then repaid from the village budget.

The complete ICIP is available at [loslunasnm.gov](http://loslunasnm.gov).



## “BEST OF” IN LOS LUNAS

Every year the Valencia County News-Bulletin asks the public to vote for the “Best of” in the Valencia County communities. In 2020 Village Fire Chief John Gabaldon was chosen the best firefighter, Police Chief Naithan Gurule the best police officer, and Daniel D. Fernandez Memorial Park the best park.

(Thanks to the Valencia County News Bulletin for the stories about the “best of”)

### Best Firefighter John Gabaldon

John Gabaldon has been the Village fire chief for five years.

He began volunteering for the fire service in Los Lunas and Belen, and was hired as a career firefighter at the Los Lunas Fire Department in 1998.

Being a firefighter, Gabaldon said it was about joining in and making a difference.

“Being the fire chief in the midst of a pandemic, I think it shows what our firefighters can do and the effort they put forward,” the fire chief said. “It isn’t about me, it’s the department — we’re a team. It’s all of us as a unit.”

Gabaldon says while he’s grateful being voted Best Firefighter, if it wasn’t for the effort and hard work of the men and women of the Los Lunas Fire Department, he couldn’t do his job.

### Best Police Officer Naithan Gurule

Los Lunas Police Chief Naithan Gurule started his law enforcement career in July 2002 when he joined the Los Lunas Police Department. He was named chief of police in March 2014.

He became interested in a career in law enforcement as a young boy after watching his aunt and uncle, who were both police officers.

“I’m excited,” Gurule said. “It’s neat to get that positive feedback. It makes me feel the effort I put into my job is recognized by the public.”

Gurule has won the coveted title of Best Police Officer for several years in a row, and when asked if the honor gets old, he says it’s the opposite.

“It becomes more motivating because I want to make sure I do a good job,” the police chief said. “There’s no room to slack.”

### Best Park Daniel Fernandez Memorial Park

Voted best park was Daniel D. Fernandez Memorial Park located at 1103 NM Hwy 314 SW, Los Lunas. Phone: 505 839-3845.

Daniel D. Fernandez Memorial Park has been around for forty-plus years, and remains a go-to spot for any type of outdoor activity for those in and around Los Lunas.

With different outdoor activities, such as tennis courts, a softball field, a soccer / football field and horseshoe pits, the Village recently added a splash pad over the summer to the park, though the coronavirus pandemic has delayed the use of it.

Parks and Recreation Director Jason Duran said this park is a top priority for the Village and Mayor Charles Griego, as they constantly make improvements.

## LOCAL EVENTS

**Monday, Jan. 18, 2021**

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

Village Offices Closed

Monday Jan. 18, 2021

garbage pick up on

Tuesday Jan. 19, 2021

**Attend a Village Council Meeting**

January 14 & 28, 2021

660 Main St NW

Main Street and Don Pasqual

Meetings begin at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting may be conducted virtually.

Check agenda on Village website

[loslunasnm.gov](http://loslunasnm.gov)

## MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

In December 2020 Vicki Otero gave a presentation on mini retablo Christmas ornaments at the Village Museum of Heritage & Arts.

Mini retablos are popular ornaments sold around Christmas holidays and throughout the year.

This virtual Facebook event will be a presentation on New Mexico Spanish Colonial Artists which will include the artwork of Nicolas Otero and several other well-known artists from around the area.

2021 events will include presentations by Dr. Richard Melzer and John Taylor, an exhibit on the New Mexico Navy, a talk on the History of New Mexico Flamenco, and also Herbs along the Rio Abajo, and the Annual Student Juried Art Show.