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Town of San Luis

December 2018 — FREE

Christmas Traditions Along the Culebra

by Richard de Olivas y Cordova

Christmas in San Luis and in the villages was a special time indeed. The families gathered to pray and sing the villancico, “Venid Pastorcillos” every night after dinner. Children went out to play in the cold night and would light great bonfires (luminarias) in each community for the nine nights before Christmas.

One bonfire lit for each night of the Novena to the Santo Nino which begins on December 16th and ends with nine bonfires on the night of December 24th, hearkening back to our ancestors’ Jewish roots and the celebration Hanukkah over 8 consecutive nights with similar lights. The children would play around the fire: daring each other to jump over them or throwing snow balls at each other.

In our New Mexico and Colorado “Manito” culture, an elder (perhaps a village elder, sometimes one of the older teens) would suddenly appear as if out of no where, dressed with a mask and carrying a whip. This was the abuelo and on the nights of the luminaria his word was law. Children were told to pray or sing villancicos (Christmas carols). Not doing as you’re told ran the risk of getting a licking with the Abuelo’s chicote (whip).

On the evening of the 24th, Christmas Eve, the Abuelo acted as the guide as he took the youngsters



from house to house in the given village. Each child carried a pillow case. At the door of the house the children knocked and bellowed out the centuries old poem: “Oremos, Oremos. Angelitos semos. Del cielo venemos a pedir oremos. Si no nos dan oremos, puertas y ventanas quebraremos.” Translation: We pray, we pray. We are little angels. From heaven we come to ask for oremos (goodies). If you do not give us goodies, we will break your doors and your windows.”

The owners of the home invited the children. The children were asked by the homeowner to pray or sing. The children were admonished by the Abuelo to either sing or pray or both as the homeowner had asked. Once the children had done what was asked of them, they received a goodie in their bag. It might be an empanadita, or a biscochito, or a piece of fruit or candy.

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Christmas Traditions

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Off they went to the next houses where the ritual was repeated again and again. The children often arrived at home with quite a trove of goodies. But it didn't end there.

The next morning, Christmas Day, the children would repeat the ritual, usually only at the homes of nearby relatives and friends – not the whole village. Except in the morning the children bellowed at the door: Mis Crismes! (My Christmas!) This time aunts and uncles, grandparents or close friends would again give a wee gift of food or money to the children.

A week later it was the adults who cavorted in the outdoors as they made their way from door to door beginning right after midnight on New Year's morning. Trobadores (troubadors) with guitars and violins would go from house to house dando los Dias (Offering the morning). They would sing verses composed specifically for the people of that house. And the homeowner would sing verses back to them. Then the musicians were offered a bit of aguardiente o juisque (moonshine or whisky) and sent on their way to the next house. Men and women whose birthday was January 1 were especially celebrated during the "dando los dias" event.

The Oremos tradition has continued in San Francisco. It was revived in San Luis at the Manito Christmas celebration in 2016. New Year 1999 was the last year the Dias were celebrated. Both traditions are still celebrated in Amalia, New Mexico and other places in New Mexico.

From the Mayor



I would like to personally invite you all to our Town Hall Christmas Open House December 1st from 6 to 8 pm. Young and old alike are welcome. It is a great opportunity for folks to come together and strengthen our community bond, and celebrate our San Luis culture.

As this Holiday Season is upon us, it is always a good time to reach out a hand of friendship to to each other and give a helping hand to those in need.

The Town of San Luis started a new Thanksgiving Tradition by creating a Turkey Drawing for its citizens this year. I would like to thank all those who participated in the drawing making it it a success.

Congratulations to our 2018 winners: Tom Rodriguez, Michele Gallegos, Miranda Equibel, Jason

Medina, Ruth Perez and Olivia Espinoza. Not only did the winners receive a turkey, they also received stuffing, mashed potatoes, green bean, cranberry sauce and a pumpkin pie—all as an extra surprise.

The other Town of San Luis November event was the second Feasibility Study meeting to review the options of building a recreation center on the San Luis Community Park property—held November 9th, at the Town Hall.

The University of Colorado's University Technical Assistance Field Supervisor, Jeff Woods, and three architecture students (James, Eric and Taylor) from the Colorado Center for Community Development, University of Colorado Denver, College of Architecture and Planning presented their schematic plans of three possible designs for the recreation center to a small group of interested citizens. Thank you to those folks who attended.

If you would like to review the plans/drawings and see their designs, come into the Town Hall. This recreation center is for you. We would love your feedback, suggestions and ideas.

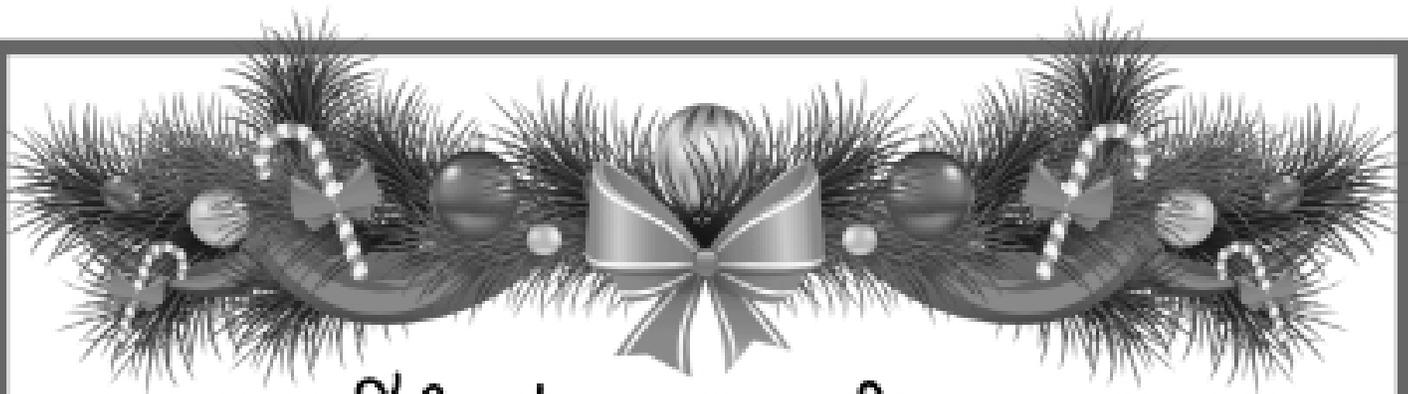
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Tiffany Gallegos
San Luis Mayor

Don't Forget!

**Business License Renewals for 2019 are due
by January 1st, 2019.**

Avoid paying a late fee and pay early!!!



You're invited to a



San Luis Manito Christmas CELEBRATION



When: Saturday, December 1st, 2018 • 6 to 9 pm

Where: San Luis Town Hall, 408 Main Street (Dress Warm!)

Who: Bring your Family, Neighbors and Friends, Young and Old!

What: **6 to 8 pm** - Christmas Tree Lighting - Town Hall

- Santa is Coming to Town!

(Bring your camera! Gifts from Santa for the kids!)

- Mis Crismes for the kids (Celebrating San Luis Culture)

- \$1.00 pizza slices served at Picadilly's!

- Town Hall (Cider, Hot Chocolate and Christmas Treats,

Bonfire and Christmas Music in the Town Hall Parking Lot.)

6 to 9 pm - Christmas Ornament Decorating, Teen Activity,
Free Cocoa Bar and Vendors! (Parish Hall)

All guests will receive a free ticket (color coded for age group) for attending the Manito Christmas Celebration at the Town Hall. A drawing sponsored by Adelante San Luis will be held on Sunday, Dec. 2, 2018 for three (3) prizes—one (1) per age group:



*This Family Fun Event is sponsored by
The Town of San Luis, Adelante San Luis, and the Costilla County Prevention Partners.*

Be in the Know! All Terrain Vehicles

The Town of San Luis has municipal codes in place for the use of all terrain vehicles (4-wheelers) being driven on public town roads.

There have been a lot of complaints this past summer concerning 4-wheelers being driven above the speed limit and during the late night hours disturbing the peace and safety of the public.

The Town of San Luis is currently working with the Sheriff's office to curb the misuse of all terrain vehicles on public roads. The following information is some of the most important codes for the public to follow concerning ATVs.

The Board of Trustees finds that all-terrain vehicles can be dangerous, particularly so if not used with safety precautions. The following codes are to reduce the danger of injury, death and property damage.

Municipal Code Regulations: No person shall operate or attempt to operate an all-terrain vehicle anywhere in the Town without complying with the following regulations and these regulations shall apply to all users, regardless of age:

(1) No operator of an all-terrain vehicle shall carry a passenger.

(2) No off-highway vehicle may be operated on the public streets, roads, alleyways or highways, except in the following cases:

- a. During special events unless prohibited (i.e., parades, etc.).
- b. When crossing streets, roads.
- c. When traversing a bridge or culvert.
- d. When using an off-highway vehicle for agriculture purposes.
- e. When a public utility, water, electric, gas, or public safety agency is using such for business purposes.
- f. During emergency conditions declared by the proper state or local authority.

(3) No person shall operate an all-terrain vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, as defined by state laws on driving automobiles.

(4) No person shall operate an all-terrain vehicle which the person is unable to control due to the person's size compared to the size of the vehicle, or due to any other physical condition of a person, making it impossible for the person to control the vehicle.

Children under 12 years old.

No person under the age of twelve (12) years shall operate an all-terrain vehicle.

Persons under 16 years old.

No person under the age of sixteen (16) years shall operate an all-terrain vehicle of a size larger than ninety (90) cc's.

Persons under eighteen years to have helmets.

No person under the age of eighteen (18) years of age shall operate an all-terrain vehicle without wearing a helmet of the type required by state law for motorcycle riders less than eighteen (18) years of age.

No recommendation of all-terrain vehicles.

This Article shall not be construed as a recommendation that all-terrain vehicles are safe or advisable to use. The intent of this Article is to establish regulations in order to reduce the danger of injury, death and property damage.

Please be careful using your ATVs. They are meant for off-road agricultural use or private land use. If you own an ATV please follow the above regulations and do not use your ATV on public roads. The Sheriff's office will be ticketing those who disregard the public safety and welfare of our citizens.

Join Us!
Volunteers Needed

Are you interested in serving the Town of San Luis?

The Town is seeking friendly outgoing volunteers to work in the Welcome Center starting in the Spring of 2019 on Saturdays and Sundays.

A knowledge of local history and enjoyment of connecting with tourists are a must!

Town Meeting Dates

All Town Hall meetings are open to the public.
Please join us!

Work Session
Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2018
6:00 PM

Town Hall Meeting
Tuesday, Dec. 11th, 2018
6:00 PM