SAN LUIS
Oldest Town in Colorado

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Town of San Luis

N E W S L E T T E R

March 2025 — FREE

Sangre de Cristo Cultural Heritage Center Update

Some know it as the museum, some know it as the theater, some know it as their beloved high school. The Sangre de Cristo Cultural Heritage Center is a staple building within the Town of San Luis. According to the National Historic Registry, the Heritage Center was originally a Works Progress Administration project under President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal.

The Heritage Center building in the 1940s.

With construction complete in the early 1940s, Adams State Teacher College operated the San Luis Institute of Arts and Crafts from 1943 to 1953. "The Institute had a curriculum laboratory, a visiting teachers program, and a community outreach component including health education, art, and recreational activities."

When Adams State left the building it became Most Precious Blood High School until 1980. The final graduating class photo remains on the walls of the building to this day.

In the early 1980s the building underwent a remodel and the San Luis Museum and Cultural Center was born. For 30 years, the building operated as amuseum and theater, working to tell the story of San Luis and the surrounding villages, providing a place for locals and visitors to congregate in celebration of our unique corner of the world.

Unfortunately in 2010, the Heritage Center was forced to close for renovations. The building has been closed ever since. However, since purchasing the building in 2022, the Town of San Luis, along with the Costilla County Economic Development Council, has been working hard to get the building back up and running.

Lots of work has been completed on the building. The theater, kitchen, and dining area have all been remodeled. Appliances have been installed in the kitchen, the theater roof has been restored, and new audio-visual equipment has been in-

New restrooms built in the Hertiage Center.

stalled in the theater.

Most recently, two new ADA restrooms were completed and heat was installed in the south wing of the building. Currently there are three ongoing projects: bat mitigation and roof restoration above the museum, the theater ceiling is being restored, and cookware for the kitchen is being purchased and

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Heritage

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installed.

Several organizations have been instrumental in providing funding for these projects including History Colorado, the Department of Local Affairs, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, and the National Parks Service. This work would not be possible without our historic architect, Darden + Scheuber Architects, and our contractor, Torres Builders.

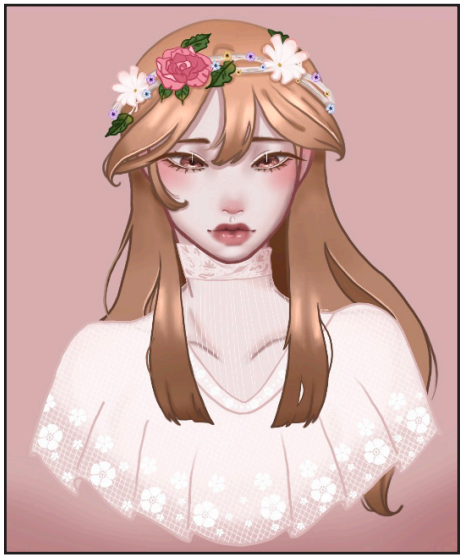
The re-opening of the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center is a priority project for the Town of San Luis and the Costilla County Economic Development Council.

"The Heritage Center means so much to the Town of San Luis," said Town Trustee Connie Gurulé. "We must continue to work towards re-opening this historic building to have a place to share our history, celebrate our culture, convene as a community, and boost economic development."

Though the building is much closer to fully opening, there are still several projects that must be completed. The electricity must be upgraded to service the entire building, heat needs to be installed in the museum and theater, bathrooms and offices need to be constructed in the north wing, and the water system needs to be updated. Grants have been written for most of these projects and the Town and the CCEDC are eagerly awaiting the results of these applications.

With these new projects funded and construction completed, The Heritage Center will finally be able to open year-round, allowing San Luis residents to enjoy this remarkable asset.

Junior Trustee Report: Springtime!



Drawing by Junior Trustee and Town Hall Intern, Laila Garcia.

By: Laila Garcia

The spring season, newly arrived, showers the world with a joyous time. The feeling of warmth on your skin, not from the fire, the vivid smell of rain across a freshly restored valley. A field permeated with buds and blooming flowers. Returning to daily strolls, tending to the garden. Bringing tasty gifts, luck, and fortune, everyone awaited this time thinking it could not have come soon enough.

This piece was created using the app Procreate. I used Pinterest as my primary source of references. The piece was inspired by spring and took six hours to render aiming to capture the essence that spring embodies. Although not particularly vivid, complemented with flowers, the final piece reflects the beauty and serenity that the season brings.

"The promise of spring's arrival is enough to get anyone through the bitter winter!" – Jen Selinsky

The annual Congreso de Acequias is taking place on March 8 at Centennial School. Congreso is a time to gather as a community in celebration of spring and the runoff from the snow into the irrigation ditches that feed our community. There will be food, a blessing of the water, student art contests, and much more. This event is free.

Founders Day: April 5, 2025

On April 5, 1851, the Town of San Luis was established, making it the first town in Colorado. 174 years later, on that same date, on the same lands the original settlers walked, using the same water off the ditches those settlers dug, grazing cattle in the same Vega, we celebrate everyone that came before us and the way of life they established that we all enjoy to this day.

'We Are San Luis' sign with locals handprints was created at Founders Day 2023.

Long before the Spanish settlers arrived, this land was inhabited by Native peoples. Paleo-Indian cultures are the first known people to live in the area we now know as San Luis, followed by the Ute, Navajo, Apache, and Comanche tribes, among others. When the Mexican government approved the Sangre de Cristo Land Grant in 1844, people from the Sante Fe area began to move north, establishing the Town and the lifestyle we know today.

Founders Day is a time for celebration, yes, but it is also a day of reflection.

As you move through Town on April 5, 2025, observe the buildings that were built early in the Town's history and consider the hands that built them. Look at the contours of the land and think about how Native people might have used the hills and the trees to block themselves and their animals from the brutal Valley winds. Peer up into the mountains and imagine people 200 years ago looking among the same peaks as they planned a series of acequias that would feed the whole community with water.

It is very easy to take it for granted but we owe so much to those that came before us. Let this day be a day dedicated to remembering the ancestors who made our life and our Town possible.

This year's Founders Day celebration is on Saturday, April 5. The day will begin at the entrance to the Vega with a 5k Color Run & Walk. After the run, vendors will be set up through town selling art, clothing, antiques, and of course, good food. Indian Nickel will be performing from 12 - 3pm at the Town Plaza and there will be a small carnival set up on the grounds of the Heritage Center.

There will be cultural activities to participate in throughout the day. The SLV Cocha group is putting on a demonstration starting at 1pm at the Town Hall. Stop by to learn the regional art of Colcha embroidery. The class is $20 per person. At the Heritage Center, the Soul Players of the Valley will be using the new community horno to bake bread for anyone to sample.

A kid runs through colored chalk during last years Founders Day Color Run.

Founders Day 2025 is a collaboration between the Town of San Luis, Soul Players of the Valley-San Luis, and the Costilla County Conservancy District. Thank you to everyone who has helped in making this event happen. If you want to be a vendor, please call the Town Hall at 719-672-3321. We are looking forward to seeing everyone there!

Santa Ana Poster Contest

Designs due: **April 4, 2025**

Keep design proportional to 12″ x 18″

Keep design Saint Anne or San Luis themed

The winning designer will recieve **$100**

Call **719-672-3321** with any questions

Santa Ana is July 24-27, 2025

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Call for Vendors: Founders Day 2025

Founders Day 2025 is right around the corner! If you have something to sell (art, food, clothing, antiques, etc.) and want to set up a vendor booth, call the San Luis Town Hall at 719-672-3321. There is an application to fill out and a $10 fee to be a vendor. Reminder that the event is on Saturday, April 5. The event starts with a 5k run/walk at 10am and will last throughout the day. See you there!

CRANIUM CORNER

Sudoku: How to play

A 9×9 square must be filled in with numbers from 1-9 with no repeated numbers in each line, horizontally or vertically. To challenge you more, there are 3×3 squares marked out in the grid, and each of these squares can't have any repeat numbers either.

	1	7	8	6		5		
4							7	
		6	9			3		2
	3	9					6	
	5	1	2		3	4	8	
	4					9	2	
9		5			4	6		
	6							1
		3		8	5	2	4	

Support San Luis Businesses

ASC Electronics	672-0362
BeLeaf Wellness	206-3361
Family Dollar	982-4360
Carson Construction	298-0727
Casey's Enterprises	480-9366
Central Oil	672-3840
Ernie's Barbershop	588-9942
Fresh! Bakery	298-0482
Glasswerk Orange Headshop	849-1126
Gus's Liquor Store	672-3331
Jacales Art Gallery	588- 6831
J&J Self Storage	672-3660
Kuhn Kuts	492-0765
La Casa Canna Bis	672-4220
LEC Mechanic & Towing	588-8061
Mondragon's Tire	672-3325
Mountain Disposal	489-3456
Mrs. Rio's Restaurant Thai Kitchen	672-0211
Painted Sage	(303) 919-9937
Piccadilly Pizza	672-0340
San Luis Coffee Company	(719) 206-0002
San Luis People's Market	672-3346
Romero Funeral	589- 9200
San Luis Inn	672-3399
San Luis Music	680-3933
San Luis Thrift	602-6281
Speedway Garage	672-9903
Sonia's Convenience	672-4461