

Celebrate Earth Day at the Questa Municipal Park

CONTINUING A LEGACY OF YOUTH LEADERSHIP: YOU ARE INVITED! FRIDAY, APRIL 23 WORK DAY AT QUESTA PARK

Let's come together in solidarity with local youth to mark Earth Day alongside communities around the world. On Friday, April 23, the day after Earth Day, from 10 am to 3 pm! Join Active8 youth, Mayor Mark Gallegos, LEAP, and community volunteers at Questa Municipal Park to plant trees, celebrate natural beauty, and work to maintain and improve assets at our park.

The more our youth and we all put back towards our Earth in recycling, repurposing, and planting, we will hopefully find a balance within our whole ecosystem.

—Questa Mayor Mark Gallegos

The Questa Municipal Park we enjoy today exists in large part due to the vision and diligence of the Playground Superheroes Project, a group of eight Questa High School student interns who were hired through a work-study program in 2013-14. These motivated students helped transform the Questa Municipal Park with help from the Chevron Questa Mine, Community Build, and the Questa Economic Development Fund.*

Now, the Vida del Norte Drug-Free Coalition's Active8 members are continuing this legacy of youth leadership as they envision innovations at the park. Plans for a skatepark and other ideas for improvements will be explored and presented on Friday, April 23. The Active8 youth leaders are Angelica Lovato, Araceli Gonzalez, McKayla Martinez, Kalena Trujillo, Kaylee Piper, Amalia Gonzalez, Alianna Gonzalez, and Ashlynn Rael. New recruits are Dominic Vallejos, Patrick Vallejos, Marlayna Vallejos, and Esperanza Vallejos.

The first Earth Day was celebrated 51 years ago on April 22, 1970. This holiday was dreamed up by U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson, to mark the importance

of keeping our planet healthy and clean, and for people to renew their commitment to make positive changes in their communities.

LEAP's Earth Day celebrations in Questa started with a suggestion from Starr, the artist, seamstress, and friend to many, who passed away in January of this year. LEAP's first Earth Day event was the 2014 opening reception for "Seeds: Time Capsules of Wilderness," an exhibition of artwork by Alta Vista Elementary students, at OCHO Art + Event Space. Starr's remarkable Earth Day turtle banner hung in the window.

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY AT QUESTA MUNICIPAL PARK!

What: Tree planting, spring cleaning & youth-led visioning for skatepark creation

Where: Questa Municipal Park, 7-1/2 Questa Municipal Park Road, just past the Library and Youth Center.

When: Friday, April 23, 10 am – 3 pm (the day after Earth Day)

Who: Everyone is welcome!

Cost: Free

Event Contact: Claire Coté (LEAP) - emailforleap@gmail.com (575) 224-9066

Youth & Future Skatepark contact:

Maria Gonzalez (VIDA del Norte); maria.gonzalez@vidadelnorte.com (575) 779-2260

*Sourced from: https://www.taosnews.com/news/playground-superheroes-team-keeps-optimism-alive-in-questa/article_cf208386-72e6-57b7-865d-bbdb0f13b95c.html

This year for Earth Day, gathering outdoors to work safely together is especially meaningful. The day will include planting drought-tolerant trees, work on repairing the irrigation system, removal of invasive plant species, trash pick-up, and brainstorming park improvements. Of course, a hearty lunch for volunteers will be provided midday. Progress on-site is our goal, but what's more important is having fun, strengthening friendships by working together in service, and amplifying youth and community voices to shape the future of our park and beyond.

All local youth are invited and all are welcome! Please come to create the



Maria Gonzalez

The Vida Del Norte Active8, back row, from left to right: Angelica Lovato, McKayla Martinez, Araceli Gonzalez, Ashlynn Rael, Alianna Gonzalez, Amalia Gonzalez, Kaylee Piper. Front row: Esteban Gomez, Isaac Ortega



Claire Coté

Previous Earth Day work day volunteers at Questa Park.

vision for a skatepark and other projects at the park. Get in touch with Vida del Norte program coordinator, Maria Gonzalez, to join in on April 23 to share your ideas and help out! If you have them, please bring work gloves and yard cleaning tools; we'll have extra gloves donated by Questa Lumber and Hardware and additional tools on hand as well.

Coordinated by LEAP (Land, Experience and Art of Place) in collaboration with the Vida del Norte Coalition, Questa Earth Day Celebration partners include the Questa Public Library, Village of Questa, Localogy, North Central Food Pantry, and Questa Farmers Market. Sponsors that have made this project possible include ACE Hardware Nursery in Taos, Questa Hardware, Los Jardineros Garden Club of Taos, LOR



Martha Shepp

Entrance to Questa Municipal Park, behind the Library and Youth Center.

Foundation, and generous individual tree sponsors and volunteers.

To join the VIDA youth leadership team, contact Maria Gonzalez, maria.gonzalez@vidadelnorte.com or (575) 779-2260.

Information about the Earth Day event can be found at: www.leapsite.org or by calling (575) 224-9066.