

Santa Fe Summer: Stories of Santa Fe Workers, Doing the Work For Santa Fe

This report is a companion document to the department by department accomplishments of the hard-working men and women who proudly serve the City of Santa Fe. It provides a number of vignettes, testimonials, and examples of individuals who offered exceptional service to Santa Fe residents, and cross-departmental efforts that provided greater efficiency and effectiveness in delivering excellent service through collaboration and cooperation.

After City Traffic Engineer John Romero and the Public Works engineering team were contacted by a City resident whose home had been struck by cars, John and his team quickly responded by installing protective bollards outside the wall of her home—adding a critical layer of protection.

This summer, girls from Girls, Inc. did a study of the need for a cross walk near their facility on Paseo de Peralta. It took the Engineering Traffic team less than two weeks to accept the work by the girls and repaint the cross walk. A note from Girls, Inc. said, “Thanks so much for attending the girls’ presentation about the need for a cross walk on Hillside a couple of weeks ago and for quickly getting it repainted! The girls were excited about their success on this effort and we very much appreciate your support.”

Because of a freak snowstorm, this year’s Easter Egg Hunt almost didn’t happen. The morning of the annual Easter Egg Hunt, a blanket of snow covered the fields. But as the snow started to melt, the Parks and Recreation team led by TK, with the assistance of a cross-section of community volunteers went to work—extra fast, spreading eggs, prizes and a variety of goodies on the fields for the kids to find. Teamwork made the day.

This July, Santa Fe Police Officer Mark Cordova responded to a shoplifting call at one of the city’s big box stores. In conducting his investigation, Officer Cordova noticed that the person accused of shoplifting was wearing very badly worn and soiled clothing. The items that had been taken were to replace these clothes. Officer Cordova completed his investigation, issued the individual a citation in lieu of arrest—and purchased the clothes for the individual with his own money.

This August, Santa Fe Police officers responded to a call regarding a report of a shooting. When Officer Jeremy Rose arrived at the scene, he found an adult male with a gunshot wound to his arm. He immediately applied a tourniquet to control the bleeding and administered medical aid to the wounded man. Next, Santa Fe Fire Department responders arrived and took the man to a local hospital for treatment. Officers and detectives worked the case, and, over the next couple of days, with the help of community members, identified a suspect and made an arrest. Again, teamwork with the Police Department, with the Fire Department, and with the Santa Fe community saved a life and lead to an arrest.

This summer, if you went to The Children’s Museum the first Thursday of every month, you would have seen Santa Fe firefighters using their free time to volunteer to read to kids.

One of the best, most rewarding, and most heartwarming performances of the year was the National Dance Institute end-of-year summer bash. And once again, performing with the kids were an enthusiastic (and talented) group of Santa Fe firefighters, dancing in more than 20 shows with more than 1,000 Santa Fe kids.

As the summer rolled by, a steady sequence of community events helped bring Santa Feans together for fun and community: Capitol Ford’s Child Safety and Wellness Day; Career Day at the Indian School; Walmart City Appreciation Day; El Camino Real Fiesta Para Bebés; Healthy Kids Day; Santa Fe Fire Department Family Day; National Night Out; Southside Summer at SWAN Park events; Presbyterian Hospital Flag Presentation. The one thing all these events

had in common? Firefighters were at every one—and more—to participate, show off equipment, meet the kids, and educate the public on all kinds of public safety issues.

In another example of inter-departmental teamwork, this summer Fire and Police cooperated in a “Battle of the Badges” blood drive that produced 114 units of blood—one of the most successful blood drives in the city.

In a project that flew under the radar screen—but that speaks volumes about the reach and heart of the Santa Fe Public Library team, the La Farge Library team put on a special summer outreach program—“Fathers as Readers”—at the State Penitentiary.

At the Southside Library, the team put on a very popular family program—the Friday Afternoon Art program—that provided for sessions for 266 attendees, from toddlers to grandparents.

In cooperation with the Santa Fe River Commission, the team in the Stormwater Management division of Public Works coordinated the first-ever “RiverTalk” series—an educational program with five talks on a variety of aspects of the river, arroyos, and stormwater systems. Based on the enthusiastic response, this series will become an annual event.

More teamwork and cooperation: YouthWorks! Parks and Recreation crews, and Stormwater Management employees this summer cleared 5 miles of the river channel, arroyos, and drainage channels to get rid of overgrown invasive species—while also providing training for Santa Fe youth in techniques useful for future employment.

This summer, when the City’s Wastewater Treatment plant suddenly experienced a critical event that knocked it out of compliance, the Marty Sanchez Links and the MRC were both threatened with water shortages that could have cost millions of dollars to remedy. Instead, a team of people from Parks and Recreation, Public Utilities, and the Fire Department worked tirelessly—sometimes in the pre-dawn dark—to find and connect hoses to alternative water sources. The result of this cross-department cooperation and collaboration: the facilities were saved, the money was saved, and serious damage to recreational resources was prevented.

The Second Annual Santa Fe Southside Summer wrapped up after surpassing the performance of the first year. Music, films, special entertainment were provided to the families and kids of Santa Fe’s Southside, thanks to the generosity of local sponsors and the collaborative effort of Parks and Recreation, Tourism, Police and Fire Departments, the City Clerk’s office, Constituent Services, and more. A team effort in year two of Southside Summer made it a resounding success—and poised for year three.

This summer, once again the Plaza Cleanup brought much-needed paint and repairs to the heart of Santa Fe. Spearheaded by super-volunteers Buddy and Irene Roybal, the Cleanup brought together City Councilors, City employees, and volunteers from across the community to spruce up the Plaza—a community event led by the community.

In the lobby of Mary Ester Gonzales Senior Center just after lunch, Carlos Mendonca greets Nina Stetts warmly. “How are you doing today, Nina?” he asks, bending down to the level of her wheelchair. She responds with a smile and Carlos guides her through the main doors and outside to the Senior Services Transit Handicap van, which he’s prepared for her. He pushes her chair into the ramp and hops into the driver’s seat to raise the lift. He then rolls the chair into its secure spot and proceeds carefully to fasten a series of safety buckles. It’s a workout. “Albertson’s today?” he asks, and she nods. Carlos has been a driver with Senior Services for 6

years and loves his job. “I really like my customers. At the end of the day, I go home feeling like I did something good for someone who wouldn’t otherwise get out.” Ms. Stetts lives with her dog Bambi. Her daughter and son-in-law reside in Santa Fe and were the ones who first introduced her to the senior programs. She says she’s very satisfied with the transit service. She relates that she’s been able to get out and shop for healthy food and be more active. Carlos, like the ten other drivers in the Seniors Division who are trained to transport all seniors including those with mobility challenges, helps seniors in wheelchairs on average ten times a day. These drivers are much more than drivers, and achieve a high level of professionalism and customer service. They do what they do with tremendous care and attention to detail. Destinations include senior centers for congregate meals and other activities, grocery stores, doctor’s appointments, and even movie theaters. The idea is that getting out of the home and connecting socially with people in our community keeps us healthier as we age. And one of the most important connections? The one forged between residents and drivers. Supervisor Linda Quesada-Ortiz, who has been with the program 19 years, adds, “Seniors can’t tell us enough how much they appreciate our services. They are active, not stuck in their homes. And sometimes we’re the only interaction they have with another person all day. We take them on as grandmas and grandpas, treat them like family. Our drivers go above and beyond.”



