

# IN A CHANGED WORLD,

# Fiestas de Taos **CONTINUES**

BY TAMRA TESTERMAN



## THE FIESTAS DE TAOS THEME THIS YEAR 'TAOS: LA TIERRA DE DIOS' (TAOS: GOD'S COUNTRY) RINGS TRUE IN THE CORAZÓN OF REINA (QUEEN) SONYA MARIAELENA FRANCIS GALLEGOS MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY.

"Taos is the most beautiful place on earth. I have been blessed to be born and grow up in God's country. Even though I will continue my education at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, I will always look forward to coming home to Taos, where my roots are. My family, my church, and my culture. The diversity of culture in Taos is so unique. We are a proud people that share our rich cultures and traditions with one another and appreciate each other's beliefs and values. Somos la gente de Dios."

Reina Gallegos and the Royal Court's Princesas Mariah Savannah Teresa Cebada, Mariaelena Feliz Agatha Lucero and Kyra Vanessa Trujillo are the soul of Taos history and continue to serve as ambassadors for Taos long after the festivities have ended. They are elected by an auditor and judges, all native New Mexicans devoted to keeping their heritage and culture alive.

In her farewell address, the 2019 Reina, Sheyenne Carleen Cecelia Torrez addressed the impact of a pandemic on Taos and the world. "These past three years have been tough on our community and our world, but by God's grace, we are here today. I ask each of you to say a silent prayer for those who have lost family and friends during these difficult times. Our world has changed so much, but through it all, we continue to prevail. During this time, I have witnessed our community come together to help their neighbors in different ways, and I am proud to be a part of such a caring community." Torrez's great-grandmother, Agapita Santistevan, was alive when she was crowned but has "since been called to heaven — I know how proud she was and how much this meant to her. She is watching over all of us — She loved her community."

Don Francisco Trujillo II, the man who juggles the logistics and fine tuning year-round for one of the grandest community celebrations in Northern New Mexico, escorted a member of the Royal Court, Princesa Annette Torres, decades ago as her caballero. "I just never left and have been with the Taos Fiesta Council for 40 years. I am the longest-serving member of the council, followed by Elma Vigil, who joined in 1990 and Manuel Medina and Theresa Trujillo, who both joined in 1992 when their daughter Leandra Medina was crowned fiestas queen."

"The Fiestas are a time for fellowship, dancing and music — To celebrate community and to taste from the menus available only during Fiestas."

Musicians and dancers pay their way for the honor of performing on Fiestas de Taos stage — Grammy award-winning artist Michael Martin Murphey is flying his band members in from around the country to perform — Trujillo said he has spoken with Murphy many times about his reverence for the diversity of culture and traditions of northern New Mexico. Murphey will take the stage for the final musical performance of Fiestas de Taos.



**Reina Sonya Maria Elena Francis Gallegos with Princesas (L to R) Mariaelena Feliz Agatha Lucero, Mariah Savannah Teresa Cebada, and Kyra Vanessa Trujillo.**

**Opposite: Mariachi violinists, Audrey Davis and Kate Worman round the corner into the plaza kicking off the start of the Fiestas de Santa Ana and Santiago. Taos Plaza Live.**

PHOTO BY CHUCK MCLAUGHLIN

On Friday (July 22), from 5:30 to 6:45 p.m., the celebration begins with Fiesta Mass at San Francisco de Asís Mission Church, Ranchos de Taos, with Celebrant — The Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe. This is only the second time in the history of Fiestas an Archbishop has presided over the procession—The last time was 1983, when Archbishop Roberto Sanchez presided.

Procession into Historic Taos Plaza following Mass led by Mariachi Calor. Opening ceremonies begin at 7:15 pm in Taos Plaza.

Saturday (July 23) from 10-10:30 a.m. is the Children's Parade led by Mariachi Calor. From 4-6 p.m. Legacy Band of Colorado Springs and Grammy award-winning Latin Jazz Star Paris Escobedo take the stage.

Ana Maria y Sangre Latino, with Gustavo Rodriguez, will perform for the Gran Baile de Las Fiestas on Saturday evening (July 23), and on Sunday (July 24) from 9-11

a.m., there is a selection of Traditional Northern New Mexico Music, followed by the Saint Francis Choir.

From noon to 4:30 p.m., the entertainment includes James Valerio con Mariachi Calor with Special Guest Sarae Alise Tafoya Garcia, Antonio Reyna con Mariachi Calor, Severo Martínez y Fuego, Grupo Divino and Black Pearl.

The final musical performance from 5:30-7 p.m. is Michael 'Miguel' Martin Murphy, followed by the closing ceremony of Fiestas de Taos por el año 2022.

Tempo provides a complete schedule of Fiestas de Taos events and entertainment in this issue. Check the Taos News website for updates at [taosnews.com](http://taosnews.com) and Fiestas de Taos website for details about the Royal Court, the history of the event, and calendar at [fiestasdetaos.com](http://fiestasdetaos.com).

# 2022 FIESTAS DE TAOS ROYAL COURT



**REINA**  
SONYA MARIAELENA FRANCIS GALLEGOS

"I am so grateful to have this opportunity to represent my community as La Reina de las Fiestas de Santiago y Santa Ana por el año 2022. I appreciate our families for the support and love that they have given us as we begin our journey as the 2022 Royal Court. We will represent our communities with pride and devotion to our faith. To all my sponsors, community businesses, family and friends, that supported the journey I am on — I thank you. I'm eternally grateful to the Fiesta Council for their devotion and commitment to keeping this tradition alive and giving us the opportunity to be role models for the young people of New Mexico."



**PRINCESA**  
MARIAH SAVANNAH  
TERESA CEBADA



**PRINCESA**  
MARIAELENA FELIZ AGATHA  
LUCERO



**PRINCESA**  
KYRA VANESSA TRUJILLO

**OUTGOING  
REINA  
2019-2021**

**SHEYENNE  
CARLEEN  
CECILIA  
TORREZ**

"Being La Reina has given me experiences that will help me grow as a woman and a member of my community. I have met amazing and carrying individuals through these experiences and gained knowledge about my community, surrounding communities and my heritage. I will take this knowledge and share it so that we may keep our culture and traditions alive. To the incoming Royalty, I know you girls will represent our community with grace. Cherish the memories and the experiences you will make throughout this journey."



COURTESY PHOTOS

## 2022 HONOREES

The 2022 Fiestas de Taos are dedicated in honor of Mary Medina and Monte Chacon.  
The 2022 Children's Parade is dedicated in honor of Yvonne Jaramillo.

SPECIAL *Fiestas* EDITION

## EVENT SPONSORS

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PHOTO BY CHUCK MCLAUGHLIN

## 2022 FIESTA DE TAOS, INC. MEMBERSHIP

2022 Fiesta de Taos, Inc. Membership. Back Row (L to R): Emilio Garcia; Mike Medina; Liz Medina; Thelma Montez, Vice President; Joshua Herrera; Annabelle Garcia-Noga; Charles Lane; Ruby Ann Alaniz; Hon. Don Francisco Trujillo II, President. Front Row (L to R): Elma Vigil; Kathleen Branchal-Garcia, Treasurer; Gwendolyn Gonzales-Romero, Secretary; Bernadette Trujillo; Renee Medina Lavadie; Isabel Chacon; Sonya Torres Vigil; Liz Peralta. Not Pictured: Donna Jo Martinez; Tina Jo Martinez; Manuel Medina; Melecia Ortega; Philip Ortega; Marlene Rael; Theresa Trujillo; Stephanie Cordova-Levy; Auxiliary Members: Monique Cisneros; Tiana Martinez; Bree Medina McCash; Derek Silva; James Valerio.

COVER STORY

# 'El Viboron'

## THE FIESTA DE TAOS CHILDREN'S PARADE ON SATURDAY MORNING



BY TAMRA TESTERMAN

The Town of Taos Community Events and Taos Youth and Family Center want you to be part of “El Viboron” the Fiesta de Taos Children’s Parade on Saturday morning, July 23 at 10 a.m. Meet at Enos Garcia Elementary School (305 Don Fernando Street) at 9 a.m. Children of all ages are welcome. A free t-shirt will be available for all participants.

Tempo asked Judy Esquibel, the Town of Taos Community Events Coordinator, to fill us in on the details—here are the highlights.

**Please tell us about the history of the event — your involvement over the years and why it is special for you and the community.**

The tradition of El Viboron for the Fiesta de Taos Children’s Parade goes back to the 1970s. Ted Egri, the Taos artist and creator of El Viboron, passed away in 2010. When I inherited the responsibilities of the dragon, the name came with it. The female baby dragon/wagon named Zani Jo was created by Jo Trujillo in 2008. I have been involved with El Viboron for over two decades, and every year I find the involvement fulfilling. Being part of the important tradition is so special and dear to me. It inspires me, especially seeing the children of youth who took part years ago. Generations of Taseaños showing up keep our tradition ongoing.

**What are some charms and challenges of putting on an event like this?**

A charm is continuing the community tradition during the Fiesta de Taos Children’s Parade with participants of all ages. I enjoy working with the participants, staff and volunteers. Seeing everyone having a good time and wearing their t-shirts even after parade day is also satisfying.

A challenge is not knowing how many youths are going to take part until the parade day. We always hope our advertisement was enough to get enough youth involved to make the dragon come to life.

**How will this year’s parade be different?**

El Viboron participation in the Fiesta de Taos Children’s Parade will continue its annual tradition with a few additions. We will hand out Otter Pops and bubbles to parade spectators this year. Because the Historical Parade was canceled this year, we want to do more for our community youth.

**Anything else our Tempo readers need to know?**

It takes a community to make the dragon come to life! Join in the fun and tradition. All participants meet at Enos Garcia Elementary School at 9 a.m. The parade starts its way through the Taos Plaza at 10 a.m. with El Viboron shaking and rattling. The youth creates this movement under the colorful raincoat cloth.

If you cannot join us as an El Viboron participant, please cheer us on along the parade route and get your Otter Pop and bubbles from one of our participants. To sign up to take part in El Viboron or for more information, contact Judy Esquibel at 575-751-2037 or at [jesquibel@taosgov.com](mailto:jesquibel@taosgov.com).



COURTESY PHOTOS

## FIESTAS DE TAOS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### FRIDAY, JULY 22

#### Noon-7:15 p.m.

PLAZA ENTERTAINMENT, including Time Machine, Sangre Joven, Singer/Songwriter Gustavo Rodríguez, Niños Bailadores, Michael Rael y Sus Compadres, Northern Revolution

#### 5:30-6:45 p.m.

FIESTAS DE TAOS MARIACHI MASS & CROWNING OF THE ROYAL COURT

San Francisco de Asís Mission Church, Ranchos de Taos.

Celebrant—The Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe

#### 7 p.m.

PROCESSION WITH MARIACHI CALOR into The Historic Taos Plaza

#### 7:15-8:30 p.m.

OFFICIAL FIESTA OPENING CEREMONIES

The Historic Taos Plaza

#### 8:30-10 p.m.

PLAZA ENTERTAINMENT with Lluvia Negra

### SATURDAY, JULY 23

#### 10-10:30 a.m.

CHILDREN'S PARADE led by Mariachi Calor, Enos Garcia Elementary School to the Historic Taos Plaza

#### 10:30 a.m.-7 p.m.

PLAZA ENTERTAINMENT, including Michael Rael y Sus Compadres, Emi Arte Flamenco, Una Mas y La Chacha, Legacy of Santa Fe Band, Baile Ilusión, Legacy Band of Colorado Springs & Latin Jazz Star Paris Escobedo and Pete Martínez y Suave.

#### 7-10 p.m.

GRAN BAILE DE LAS FIESTAS

Featuring Taos' own UZ Band, Singer/Songwriter Gustavo Rodríguez and Ana María y Sangre Latino. This is a family event open to the public at no charge.

### SUNDAY, JULY 24

#### 9 a.m.-7 p.m.

PLAZA ENTERTAINMENT, including Traditional Northern New Mexico Music, St. Francis Choir, Singer/Songwriter Gustavo Rodríguez, James Valerio con Mariachi Calor with Special Guest Sarae Alise Tafoya Garcia, Antonio Reyna con Mariachi Calor, Severo Martínez y Fuego, Grupo Divino, Black Pearl and Michael 'Miguel' Martin Murphy.

#### 7 p.m.

CLOSING CEREMONIES. Note: Due to the on-going road improvement to the state highway, approval was not granted by the state for the historical parade due to public safety of all concerned.



Guitarist and vocalist Christina Gomez performs with Santa Fe-based Mariachi Sonidos del Monte during the Fiestas de Taos Children's Parade.

MORGAN TIMMS / The Taos News