



Site Santa Fe's dramatic new facade helps frame the Farmers' Market pavilion in the city-owned Railyard, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this weekend.

EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL

EDITORIAL

Happy Birthday to the Railyard

The Railyard is celebrating the 10th anniversary of its opening this weekend. It's taken a while, but things are looking up at the 50 acres of city-owned land purchased in the mid-1990s for a sticker price of \$21 million and many millions more dollars in debt-service costs.

Check out the Railyard at certain times — times that happen more and more often — and it's a really bustling urban space.

Go to the Farmer's Market on a Saturday morning, any of the impressive and impressively diverse free concerts during the summer under the water tank or take in a movie with a beer at the Violet Crown. Private events in the Farmers Market pavilion, including weddings and quinceañeras, can be bigger than the concerts. El Museo Cultural is a funky, friendly space that hosts everything from theatrical drama to the great, experimental Currents New Media Festival.

Sometimes it's hard to find a parking space at the Railyard. New apartments are now up and full. The Railyard Park looks better with age, as its plants spread into fullness.

All of these are good things. Development of the site was hard to envision during

the dark days of the Great Recession, which hit at almost the exact time that the Railyard officially opened in 2008.

We had that giant hole, dug for a cinema that never got built and left to gape for years, before Violet Crown came along and filled that space wonderfully. The Market Station, the Railyard's big commercial building, went bankrupt. The city bought part of Market Station for city offices — not exactly a use that makes Santa Fe more interesting, liveable, diverse or socially progressive — as a combination bailout/legal settlement. REI has anchored Market Station commercially, but the Flying Star restaurant didn't make it.

The first residential development in the Railyard was a major misfire — impressive, but way-too-expensive, condo units were built when something that would provide housing for people who actually hold jobs downtown was what was needed and would have generated more activity in the neighborhood.

The Railyard has stuck to its guns on taking in locally owned businesses (other than REI and Violet Crown, from Austin originally, which really has evolved into a local business). It rejected potential tenants like Chipotle (when the chain was

still sort of cool), even as spaces languished empty in Market Station, which should blossom now that key parts of the bankruptcy have been resolved.

Yes, there are art galleries in the Railyard. Outside of gallery owners, there probably weren't many people saying that what this town really needed when the city government bought the property were more art galleries. But the galleries do look great and there's plenty of space for other things.

This mixed bag, in the end, has become an important and attractive part of Santa Fe, a gathering spot beyond the Plaza, more locally oriented and with its own style. It's something to be proud of.

Going forward, there are still gaps to fill and issues to deal with. The neighborhood next to the Railyard needs to be protected from overflow parking. The Railyard needs to be a place that remains first and foremost a place for Santa Fe residents, which will also make it more attractive to visitors looking for something authentic.

Those who conceived of the Railyard and pushed it along, starting back in Mayor Debbie Jaramillo's 1990s administration, deserve thanks and congratulations for what's happened so far.

Candidates Pearce, Rich and Herrell are best for NM

BY JOHN BLOCK

As New Mexicans, we have many choices for the people who will lead our state forward, even in this age of political chaos.

I am proud to say I always have been, and always will be, a proud New Mexican. My family has been here for centuries, many of them making a difference in state politics, such as my grandfather, former Democratic Corporation Commissioner Johnny Block.

Although my grandfather lived in a much different time with less partisanship, he was a fair man who gave people the benefit of the doubt. Following in my grandfather's political footsteps, I started paging at the New Mexico House of Representatives, where my grandmother, Eloisa, was the Assistant Chief Clerk. I interacted with legislators of both parties and learned how lawmaking happened.

In high school, I worked at Guadalupe Café, located next to the Capitol building in Santa Fe. One summer day, I served Congressman Steve Pearce and his lovely wife Cynthia at lunch. Although he was a member of Congress and had every reason to brush a young highschooler like me aside, he didn't. He had a friendly conversation with me and treated me like an equal, asking about my schooling and family.

In college, I had the good fortune of working once again at the House as a Committee Attendant, where I met Rep. Yvette Herrell. I could tell she was a standout, especially with a notable Business Committee exchange between her and Rep. Debbie Rodella over the Real ID Act, which is now law. Herrell knew how to get things done and she fought passionately for her constituents.

Last summer, I interned in Senator Martin Heinrich's D.C. office. There, I heard a lot of side chatter about Senate candidate Mick Rich. Seeing Mick's travels across the state was a stark difference between him and my then-boss. I barely heard of Heinrich traveling the state and, when he did, it was to advocate his starkly partisan message, which often involved luxurious fundraising dinners.

From all the candidates I have met, spoken with and heard from, I proudly endorse Steve Pearce for governor, Yvette Herrell for Congress in CD-2, and Mick Rich for the United States Senate. If my grandfather were alive today, he would have been proud of the humility, faith and dedication to our state that these three exceptional candidates have. As someone who loves our great state and wants only the best for it, these candidates are the best options to bring substantial change and prosperity to the place we all call home.

John Block lives in Santa Fe. His grandfather, Johnny Block, was a member of the old Corporation Commission, which was replaced by the Public Regulation Commission, from 1952-62.

LETTERS

Celebrating ex-mayor Valdes, a great guy

Thursday, Sept. 6, marked a one-of-a-kind fiesta as the Santa Fe community turned out in droves to wish ¡Feliz Cumpleaños! to Joe Valdes, mayor of the City Different from 1972-76. His grandfather, Manuel Valdes, was alcalde of Santa Fe from 1892-93.

Streets surrounding Santa Fe Antiques, formerly Valdes Paint & Glass, were lined with cars as family and friends gathered to celebrate Joe's 88th birthday with food, fun and mariachi music.

Joe's first job was in a paint store and, after military service, he became the store's manager, ultimately purchasing the business in 1972, and adding an art supply store and framing business to the mix. This Santa Fe Living Treasure doesn't believe in the word "retire" and, to this day, he can be seen

welcoming shoppers to the antiques mall with a smile and a friendly hello.

EVERET APODACA
SANTA FE

La Fonda a fabulous place to stay in SF

Having been blessed by God and luck to stay in some of the most amazing places in the most beautiful places on Earth, including Singita in South Africa and Tanzania, Bataleur Tented Camp at Kechwa Tembo in the Masai Mara, Amangani in Jackson Hole, Bulgari Resort in Bali and Milan, Rio's Hotel Fasano, and Berlin's Kempinski, we are simply grateful. As a young man, I was first employed in Aspen, Colo., working at The Little Nell as a pool boy. I have experienced amazing service on both ends of the spectrum.

Let us be completely honest: The service, cuisine and professionalism at Santa Fe's La Fonda on the Plaza is second

to none. La Fonda's staff does her proud. The Four Seasons, the Ritz-Carltons and the Little Nells have nothing on you. It's worth every penny for a staycation for you locals.

EDWARD LEE MULCAHY
ASPEN, COLO.

No violence at elections, please

Thankfully, the word or sentiment of hate has no place in my life or vocabulary, but I would be lying if I would tell you that a strong dislike for some actions done by our Commander in Chief has not affected me.

My age and country of origin have a lot to do with these feelings, because I come from a generation in which respect and good manners took precedent to emotions. I was raised to believe that one person can say almost anything as long as it was said in a decent manner.

Our president forgets that as president of this country, he is,

in reality, a server of his country and its people, not the other way around. When he first was nominated, he made his grand entry into the political arena by insulting, not only people of other countries by generalizing all as criminals and drug dealers, but to my amazement, insulting his contenders! The way he talked to Ms. Fiorina and the rest! The way he described and referred to Mrs. Clinton, and the contempt and disrespect he has for women in general is unbelievable.

That was just the beginning, and day by day he added more to his long list. And when the press reacted to such vile and preposterous comments, he attacked the press and said they were the enemy of the people, and went on to criticize the FBI and others who did not agree with him.

All of these comments were viewed on live television, we all heard them! And yet, he declared that what the papers were writing was fake news! As

a mother and former educator, I would come and ask him to take a course in ethics and diplomacy! I truly believe that his inner desire is to be loved and admired, and go into history as a great man. He just has never learned to win such things with respect and kindness, rather than by bullying and trying to force people to like him and agree with his unorthodox manner. It hurts to see people in his cabinet minimizing and condoning his awful actions, enabling him to continue.

November elections are coming and I beg Democrats, Republicans and others who do not agree with his ways to abstain from violence! Do not fall into the trap of doing what he is predicting. Let's just hope and pray that things can be worked out in peace and for the benefit of the citizens of this great nation.

JOSEFINA STAUDHAMMER
LOS ALAMOS

