

Lt. Governor Denish Visits Cuba



Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish met with Mayor Richard R. Velarde at the Cuba Town Hall on March 30, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the Rural Economic Recovery Initiative, helping Rural Communities take advantage of the Federal Recovery Act. The benefits for individuals are: New Tax Credit, Benefits for Seniors and Disabled, retired teachers, new car deductions, first time home-buyers, affordable college, expanding for the earned income tax credit, relief for Laid Off workers, Pell Grants, and Tax Relief. Lt. Governor Diane Denish will run for Governor in 2010.

*submitted by,
Vandora P. Casados
Village Clerk-Treasurer*



NEW SPEED LIMIT IN THE VILLAGE OF CUBA

New 35 mph speed limit signs have gone up along Hwy 550 within the Cuba Village Limits. The NM Department of Transportation extended the 70 mph speed limits to very near the village limits, and then gradually reduced the speed limit with signs with bright orange flags to catch the drivers' attention. A few "no parking" signs came down and a few went up in other locations.

At a meeting called by the Village in November, 2008, Ron Romero, Traffic Engineer for the NM Department of Transportation, discussed the DOT's reasons for wanting to raise the speed limit through the Village of Cuba. At that time, Mr. Romero was suggesting a 45 mph speed limit. Because of the number of safety concerns mentioned by a crowd of approximately 50 people, it was decided that the speed limit through Cuba would increase from 30 mph to 35 mph. It was also agreed that the DOT would look for ways to decrease sign clutter so the 35 mph signs would stand out so drivers would slow down as they drive through the Village.

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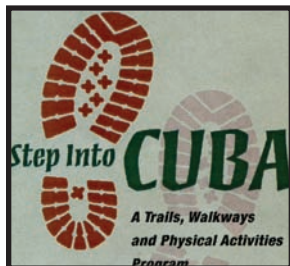
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Nacimientto Medical Foundation Receives Five Year Contract from the New Mexico Department of Health

The Nacimientto Medical Foundation (NMF) was just notified that it was selected as a contractor for the NM Department of Health's Healthy Communities Project. This contract will provide resources for

NMF to continue its support of Step Into Cuba walking groups and other interventions to prevent chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

Our project will be the only one of its kind in New Mexico, and will allow NMF and its partners, with the help of the Health Department, to plan and implement important programs for the future health of our community. Our Healthy Communities project was selected as the result of a five year competitive grant submitted by the Health Department to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

If you are interested in learning more about Step Into Cuba, or wish to join a walking, hiking, or volunteer group, please contact Jeanette Linville or Arletta Hogan of the Nacimientto Medical Foundation at 575-289-3718.

University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center Receives Funding for VIVA-Step Into Cuba Partnership

Step Into Cuba has formed a unique partnership with the University of New Mexico's Prevention Research Center (PRC). New Mexico's PRC is one of 33 university-based centers in the Nation dedicated to working in partnership with communities to improve health. These Centers are funded by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The PRC recently received notice that its application for competitive renewal, featuring VIVA-Step Into Cuba as its core project, has been funded for the next five years. VIVA, which stands for Village Interventions and Venues for Activity, will bring many exciting opportunities to the Cuba area. The PRC's role in the partnership includes consultation, technical assistance, training, assessment and evaluation, and access to University resources.

Susan DeFrancesco, JD, MPH, Emily Piltch, MPH, and others from the Center have been working with us on grant applications, safety issues, training programs, production of materials, and website development. We look forward to continuing to work in close partnership with PRC faculty and staff to realize our vision for a healthier community.

Step Into Cuba Chosen to Receive Technical Assistance from US National Park Service

The Nacimientto Medical Foundation and its community partners are pleased to announce that our Step Into Cuba project was selected - after competitive application - by the US National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program to receive technical assistance for the next several years. Attila Bality, outdoor recreation planner from the Santa Fe Field Office is the project manager and primary point of contact. The Step Into Cuba project scored particularly well in identifying strong achievable goals and already having a strong partnership in place ready to contribute to the project's success. The RTCA program was encouraged by the project's goal of using trails to increase physical activity and quality of life among Cuba area residents. Increasing trails and walkability within the Village and connecting these community trails to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail align closely with the RTCA program strategic initiatives.

RTCA will support the Step Into Cuba project in several ways. First, it will recommend and assist with community involvement and outreach techniques for citizens, civic and educational organizations, health partners and community leaders. Second, RTCA will provide technical expertise for trail design, construction and maintenance of community paths and trails. Third, it will develop strategies to engage adjacent land managers (USFS, BLM) in the Step Into Cuba planning effort. Fourth, RTCA will identify funding strategies for project implementation. Finally it will provide graphics support for project outreach materials.

We look forward to working with Mr. Bality and the RTCA program to make our vision for a walkable and healthier Cuba area a reality.

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AND ADS FOR THE CUBA NEWS IS THE
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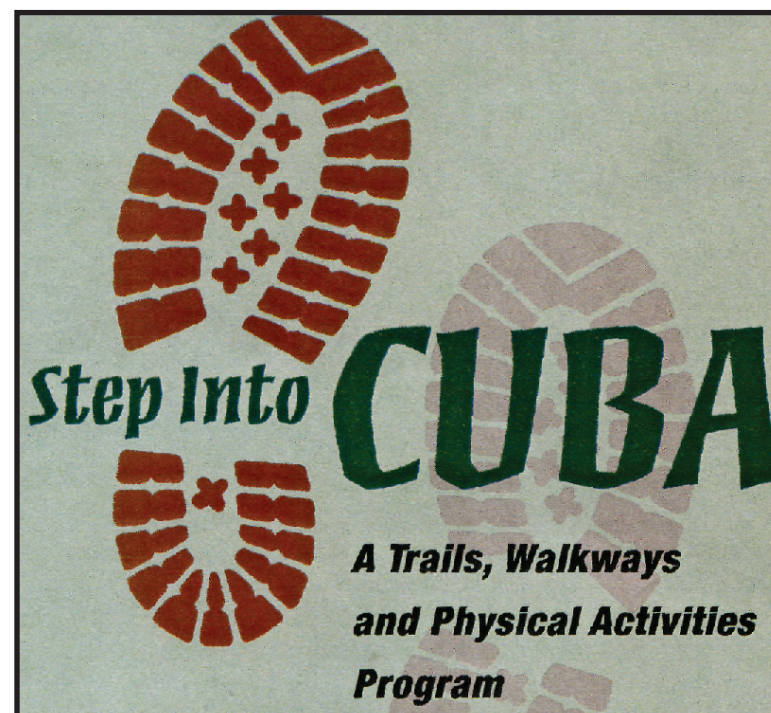
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Volunteers braved the cold weather at St. Francis of Assisi Park in Cuba to plant seedlings and create a walking and nature trail around the perimeter of the park



Step Into Cuba Volunteers Begin Work on a Walking and Nature Trail at St. Francis of Assisi Park

On Saturday 3/28 and Sunday 3/29, you may have seen some people hard at work at the park. This was the result of a new Step Into Cuba partnership with the Village of Cuba to create a walking and nature trail around the perimeter of the park. Step Into Cuba, led by the Nacimiento Medical Foundation, is an ambitious project to create and encourage use of the exciting walking and hiking environment we have around Cuba. The goal is to use our area's remarkable natural terrain to create walkways and trails, connect Cuba to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, encourage and engage individuals and organizations in a shared goal of healthy exercise, develop a trailhead and nature trail at St. Francis of Assisi Park – our hub of activity, and help create a healthier local economy.

The Village had previously cleared a route for the future park trail. On 3/28 and 3/29, volunteers first removed brush from the southwest corner and east side of the park. We then planted over 300 assorted seedlings obtained from the New Mexico Forestry Division. We created a windbreak at the southwest corner, stabilized a small arroyo bank on the east side, and created two small future "forests." This will be the first of many volunteer activities at the park.

Thanks to the following volunteers who gave so generously of their time: Vandora Casados, Sara D'Alessandro, Susan DeFrancesco (UNM Prevention Research Center), Arletta Hogan, Sharnay Hogan, JoAnne Hughes, Dick Kozoll, Sally Davis Kozoll, Jeanette Linville, Owen Meyers, Frank Murphy, Suzanne Norman, Brett O'Haver, Emily Piltch (UNM Prevention Research Center), Julie Pederson, Rita Schoener, Anna Schulte, Sam Smelser, and Elena Snyder.

Special thanks to Loretta Jacquez and Vandora Casados of the Village of Cuba, Richard Velarde Jr. and True Value Hardware for our golden "groundbreaking" shovels, the Cuba Soil and Water Conservation District for its support of our seedlings, and Hazel Herrera for a delicious burrito lunch at the worksite on Sunday.



Ground-breaking of the Step Into Cuba Walking Trail



Planting Seedlings at the St. Francis of Assisi Park