

La Vereda del Norte Chapter News of the North Branch of the Old Spanish Trail,  
The West Fork and East Fork Trails in the San Luis Valley, South Central Colorado

July, 2015

Angie Krall, Public Lands Center Archaeologist, Ft. Garland Museum Director Anita McDaniel and historian Lorrie Crawford put together an excellent museum display of the East Fork Trail of the North Branch of the Old Spanish Trail (OST) in the San Luis Valley (SLV) of Southern Colorado. They concentrated on The Bunker Site, which was in use at the time of the Old Spanish Trail. Angie will give a presentation of Cultural Crossroads which includes information about the OST as well as research in the Baca Mountain Tract. This is at the Saguache Museum in Saguache CO on July 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 PM.



At the end of August she will research a site on East Pass (Cochetopa Pass) at the north end of the SLV where the East and the West Fork Trails of the North Branch meet in the SLV. This may be another North

Branch OST camp.

A fun event led by members of La Vereda del Norte (LVdN) Chapter of the Old Spanish Trail (OST) offered exercise, knowledge and fun for 14 members of the Crestone Charter School. Led by Archaeologist and rock art specialist Ken Frye, these 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders enjoyed a field trip to an archaeological site nearby.



Next was a tour of the West Fork Trail of the North Branch of the OST, which started at the landform sculpture just east of Del Norte. Ken and Suzanne Off told the kids about this National Historic Trail, and the two corridors which run the length of the San Luis Valley, skirting the Sangre

de Cristo Mountains and the San Juan. Atolè, the corn meal drink of travelers of that time, was served and most of the kids enjoyed the unusual drink.  
12 Hours of Penitence, the Penitente Canyon Bike Race on October 18, 2015

### The Old Spanish Trail Theater Company

The Old Spanish Trail Theater Company was founded in the spring of 2014 with the goal of producing quality theatrical entertainment for and with the people of the San Luis Valley. Since our inception we have presented Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* to a sold out audience at the Windsor Hotel in Del Norte Colorado. Last October we produced *The Authentic Life of Billy the Kid* which was met with overwhelming support in both Del Norte and The Ute Theatre in Saguache Colorado. Members of the La Vereda Del Norte chapter of the Old Spanish Trail Association attended a performance of *The Authentic Life of Billy the Kid* and an idea was born.

The Old Spanish Trail Theater Company is collaborating with The La Vereda Del Norte chapter of the Old Spanish Trail Association and the U.S. Forest service in providing area schools with a four point Old Spanish Trail lesson plan to include the following:

1. Class classroom curriculum including literature on The Old Spanish Trail.
2. Expert Lectures
3. Games/Learning Activities
4. Live performance of *Tails From the Trail: The San Luis Valley Chronicles*.

*Tails From the Trail: The San Luis Valley Chronicles* is an original work I am currently writing with the goal of presenting the show to San Luis Valley 4th graders in the Spring of 2016. The play will highlight the trail as an ancient trade corridor, its significance from 1829 to 1848, and the future of preserving the rich cultural and historical heritage that is The Old Spanish Trail.

Thank You

**Theodore J. Mendez**  
**Founder/Artistic Director**

### **The Old Spanish Trail Theater Company**

A new 12 hour Solo, Duo and Three-Person Team bike race has a 21 mile lap on a primitive and epic singletrack. With impressive views at every turn, Penitente Canyon is rich with history and the San Luis Valley is one of the last hidden gems of Colorado.

Our local chapter, La Verada del Norte, will have an information table to give out brochures and information on the Old Spanish Trail and how we think it went just to the east of Penitente Canyon. It is an ancient trail and we will speak about the "Trail Through Time" and how ancient Native American used the Trail over 10,000 years ago, since we find Folsom points and very old rock art in the area. We may do some touring to local rock art sites if there is an interest.