

## Fiber Build Update

We are proud to share that fiber network connectivity is now available to approximately 80% of the Mora and Wagon Mound Exchanges. This percentage far surpasses the New Mexico state average of 21.5% among 148 total internet providers in the state. In the fall of 2018, La Jicarita and its subsidiary, Northern New Mexico Telecom, launched phase two of the fiber build out project. Today progress continues into both Buena Vista and Golondrinas. The Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH) construction team has maintained a consistent schedule with the pleasant weather this winter has brought. La Jicarita management is pleased with the progress made since 2018 and is optimistic that the goal of 100% fiber broadband access to all customers will become a reality by 2024.

It is anticipated that Buena Vista and Golondrinas will be completed in 2023 and the construction team will migrate to the Sierra Bonita, (northern) Chacon and Murphy Canyon areas.

As a reminder, please work with the FTTH construction team to provide the necessary information needed for any existing facilities and utilities located on your property. Again, there is no additional cost for receiving a fiber connection and your monthly bill will remain the same as your existing subscribed services.

**For more information, please feel free to contact Michael J. Leyba, Operations Manager at (575) 387-2216 or visit our new Facebook page!**



455 State Highway 518  
Mora, NM 87732



# LAJICARITA NEWS

Winter 2023

Working together to stay connected

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# Congratulations to our 2022 Scholarship Recipients!



## Meet our winners

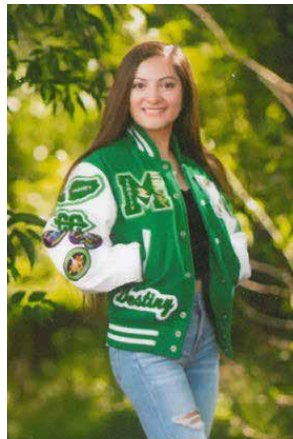
Our scholarship recipients are decided upon by our Scholarship Committee and we couldn't be prouder of the hard work achieved by these students. 2023 scholarship applications will be available starting February 1, 2023.



### **Kaitlyn Vigil**

*Pecos Connections Academy*

We are pleased to announce that Kaitlyn Vigil is one of our 2022 award winners. She graduated from Pecos Connections Academy. She is attending the University of New Mexico majoring in Engineering. Kaitlyn is the daughter of Carlota Sanchez from Holman, New Mexico.



### **Destiny Trujillo**

*Mora High School*

We are very thankful that we were able to award a second scholarship this year to Destiny Trujillo. Destiny graduated from Mora High School and is attending the University of New Mexico majoring in Nursing. Destiny is the daughter of Gary and Susan Trujillo from Mora, New Mexico.

## Call 811 Before You Dig

On occasion, almost everyone has occasion to do a little yardwork—and sometimes it involves using a shovel. Maybe you want to do some spring gardening or plant a bush. Perhaps you're installing a new mailbox. It doesn't matter the reason, if you're putting a shovel into the ground—you really need to make sure you're doing it safely.



That's why you need to call 811 or check with the New Mexico 811 center before you do any kind of digging on your property.

### **Why is calling 811 so important?**

It's a matter of safety for you—and your community! If you were to accidentally strike a buried line while digging, it could disrupt utility service for you and your neighbors, cost a lot of money to repair, or even cause severe injury or death. That's why you always want to contact your 811 center before putting a shovel in the ground.

When you dial 811, you'll automatically be connected to a representative from your state's 811 center, and they'll ask you a few simple questions about the location and details about where you plan to dig. If you make your request online, you'll enter the same information into a form. Regardless of which method you use to contact them, you'll receive a ticket number, instructions for how much time utilities have to respond to your request, and how to confirm that all utilities have responded before you can safely dig.

### **It's not just a good idea—it's the law!**

Here's what happens after you've reached out to 811 with your request:

- A utility locator will visit your home or business.
- The contractor will locate natural gas and utility lines on your property—free of charge!
- The contractor will put down visual markers to identify the lines—that way you'll know where it's safe to dig, and which areas you should avoid.

Remember, even if you think it's a small project, like planting a garden, if it involves putting a shovel into the ground, the law requires you to contact 811. To find out more, visit [call811.com/before-you-dig](http://call811.com/before-you-dig).

## Board Member Feature: Douglas Velarde

Douglas Velarde has served on the La Jicarita Board for 20 years, and as Board President for 18 of those 20. As a community leader, well-known and liked, Douglas knows that serving with the La Jicarita Board is a chance to give back to the community he cherishes. He appreciates that he and his fellow Board Members “pull the wagon in the same direction,” working toward goals that serve the best interest of La Jicarita's co-op members. Douglas is proud that La Jicarita is a transparent company whose members know exactly what the Board does.



Douglas has seen immense growth in La Jicarita's capabilities. He says he's proud of La Jicarita's accomplishments, especially with regard to the company's fiber network. Douglas points out that, by 2024, 100% of La Jicarita's customers will have access to fiber internet. Beyond the network, as Board President Douglas has presided over clean audits, helped add new equipment and facilities, and gave La Jicarita employees new professional development opportunities. All the while, La Jicarita's prices have remained affordable—Douglas points out that there has been one price increase in his 20 years, and it was only a \$1 increase.

Beyond the La Jicarita Board, Douglas worked in education for 29 years—13 as a classroom teacher and 16 years as a high school principal. During his career, he also coached basketball and baseball. Outside work, Douglas was in the National Guard for 21 years, including serving during the Gulf War and Operation Desert Storm. He retired from the National Guard as an E6 Staff Sergeant.

Douglas is married to Doris, his wife for 50 years. They have three children and eight grandchildren, who keep them busy and happy.