

# Group Saves Living Landmarks

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Cottonwood trees are as much a part of the Corrales landscape as quiet winding lanes and quaint adobe homes.

Many residents of the village want to keep it that way. Last year, a group of residents promoted an ordinance to protect trees of unusual size, age or distinctive appearance from being cut down or disfigured.

The tree protection ordinance, passed in April 2006, allows residents to nominate trees to be designated as landmark trees, a designation which prohibits anyone from harming or removing the tree without approval from the village planning and zoning administrator.

Residents proposed the ordinance after a majestic cottonwood near the southern entrance to the village was removed as part of a road widening project.

"Old trees are precious. The village wouldn't be the same without them," said Penny Perkins, a member of the Tree Preservation Advisory Committee.

Perkins and the other four members of the advisory committee review nominations and can recommend that the village Planning and Zoning Commission approve the tree's landmark status.

Advisory committee members are volunteers who are appointed by the mayor with the consent of the Village Council.

Trees nominated for landmark status can be on private or public land and must be of exceptional size, age, distinctive shape, historical significance or be a recognized landmark in the village.

Four trees have been nominated and their status is still under consideration. In addition, the mayor and Village Council have agreed to declare May 20 as Corrales Landmark Tree Day. The declaration recognizes the efforts of residents who helped create the Landmark Tree Preservation Program, Perkins said.

The Tree Preservation Advisory Committee is sponsoring a garden party to celebrate its work and invite more nominations.



COURTESY PENNY PERKINS

Sunday's celebration of the Corrales Landmark Tree Program will be held in the garden of Penny and Bill Perkins of Corrales.



The party will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday at Perkins' garden at 5768 Corrales Road. Entry to the garden is from Walden Road off Corrales Road. Ample parking is available at the property next door.

Visitors will be able to enjoy free refreshments, stroll the gardens and learn more about the tree protection program. Pictures of the trees nominated for landmark status will be displayed at the party, Perkins said.

Perkins and her husband, Bill Perkins, a landscape architect, acquired the two-acre property in 1972. At the time, it boasted a

1950s-era mobile home, beaten down sand and a riot of overgrown trees and vines.

"The backyard was basically a dump," Perkins said.

Since then, they have added a pond, a xeriscape garden, a vegetable garden and planted an array of flowers. They also created areas where visitors can walk to observe and enjoy the vegetation.

The Perkins garden has been part of several local garden tours, including one to raise money for the Rio Grande Botanic Garden in Albuquerque.

## Get involved

Information about the Corrales Landmark Tree Program is available at [www.corralestrees.org](http://www.corralestrees.org).

## If you go

**WHAT:** A garden party to celebrate the Corrales Landmark Tree Program, which aims to protect trees of unusual size, age or distinctive appearance. There will be refreshments and information about the program.

**WHEN:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday.

**WHERE:** The garden of Bill and Penny Perkins, 5768 Corrales Road, 1.5 miles north of village post office. Signs will be posted.

**HOW MUCH:** Free.