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## From the President

*by Cathy Mathews, ASLA*

What astounds me most about our profession is the power, creativity and “brains” of the persons attracted to landscape architecture. Everyday we experience the results of the force that New Mexico landscape architects bring to their work, whether it’s in the books and articles we read, the plans we review, the (endless) meetings we attend or, it goes without saying, the spaces in which we live, work and recreate. Your very own Executive Committee embodies this energy and enthusiasm in a tangible way as they work to support our profession and NMASLA members by providing valuable, fun and informative activities and learning experiences for us all.

I especially want to thank those ExCom members who are “retiring” from the board this year including: Laurie Firor, Bob Oberdorfer, Julia Mulder and Greg Miller. These folks put in long hours of diligent work and I’m sure we will continue to rely on their experience and energy. My deep appreciation also goes to Pat Gay, now Past President, for his continued leader-

ship and to Aaron Zahm, President Elect, for taking on this new challenge. Also, the leadership shown by Greg Miller, as he tackles the role of Chair of the ASLA Membership Services Committee, and Chris Green, new member of the Board of Trustees, keeps the great work and motivation of New Mexico landscape architects in the eyes and ears of other influential landscape architects from all over the country.

At the Chapter Presidents Council meeting in Washington, DC, a few weeks ago, chapter leaders from all over the country gathered to learn about the various activities, issues and challenges planned and encountered by chapters of all sizes and makes. Many of the challenges we face in New Mexico are similar to those dealt with by other chapters and by staff and board members at the national level, too. A few issues discussed at the meetings included: the possibility of licensure being a requirement for ASLA membership, quantifying benefits of landscape for clients, attracting sponsorships, and membership acquisition and retention. I hope to be able to bring the gist of these discussions to you in future

**NMASLA 2009-2010  
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newsletters and to hear your input and ideas throughout the coming year.

Lastly I would like to thank all of our chapter's loyal and generous sponsors for their unfailing support of NMASLA. We greatly appreciate your encouragement! And, I must thank you, the members of NMASLA, for giving me the opportunity to and honor of serving you and representing New Mexico at ASLA. I'm really looking forward to this coming year!

To comment on the President's message, please email responses to Cathy:

[cmathews@las-cruces.org](mailto:cmathews@las-cruces.org)



### Huge Thanks to Our Q3 Sponsors



Winners of the Q3 event's costume contest. (From L to R: Brian Verardo, Aaron Zahm, Will Moses, and Amy Duckert)

## Q2 NMASLA Golf Tournament



## THE KID TURNS 10

*Alf Simon Ph.D., FCSLA*

*Director, Landscape Architecture Program*

*Associate Dean*

*School of Architecture + Planning*

*University of New Mexico*

It was a typical early November day in Southern Manitoba – steely grey skies threatening to add more snow to the blanket that covered the city in the annual Halloween snowfall; the temperature was below zero and would not rise above freezing until late March. Not a big deal – I had spent much of my life in this environment. In many ways it was purifying and it meant the start of hockey season.

I started the day in the usual way: opening the mail, most of which ends up being filed in the garbage. As I went down the pile carrying out the ritual of tossing or open-

ing and tossing, I came to an envelope with the return address: University of New Mexico. I get quite a few letters each month from schools advertising faculty positions, most of which get a quick read on their journey to the garbage.

New Mexico – didn't the license plates claim that it's the Land Of Enchantment? So, I read. It was an ad for a position as Director of what was to be a brand new graduate program in Landscape Architecture. I read on. It listed required and preferred qualifications, and I had to admit it seemed that they might be talking about me. And how many people get the chance to start a new program? The letter's journey took a turn, avoiding the garbage, and going onto the desk, in the staging area for documents

that may be kept, or may be tossed.

I took the ad home that night to show my wife. She was a partner in a successful consulting office, and even if I was interested in pursuing this, I wasn't sure about how she would feel about moving. She read the letter, looked at me and said "they're talking about you", and then started to search for boxes to start packing. I realized that of all the position ads that came across my desk, this was the only one that truly grabbed me. No – what I realized was that I really wanted that position, and now that my wife was in full support, I gave it my best shot and submitted an application. It was one of those feelings.

Well, I was short listed and asked to fly down for an interview. It's funny when I think back about the first meetings with people that I now know quite well. I met many people who are still here, and some who are not. Ric Richardson and Baker Morrow seemed to be leading the visit, but there were so many others involved including Roger Schluntz, Claudia Isaac, Paul Lusk, Steve Borbas, Andy Pressman, Steve Shreiber, NMASLA members, many students..... Every one was gracious and friendly. I did have the sense that the two day interview process went well, but I won-

*LA Studio in Italy*





*LA Installation Project*

*"We started in the Fall of 2000 with about ten students who had been enrolled in a Landscape Architecture emphasis in the Planning program..."*

dered whether they were just being polite to a guest.

Weeks went by (an eternity) and I had heard nothing. My wife had never stopped packing, but I wasn't so sure. Just when the point came that I was ready to let it go, the call came with an offer.

And so the Landscape Architecture Program at UNM began ten years ago, in the fall of 2000. Baker, Roger, Ric, Steve Shreiber and others had done all of the work to get the proposal for the new program through endless hoops

and finally approved at a State Board of Finance meeting in June 2000. My task was to get it up and running, to make it grow, and to make it successful.

We started in the Fall of 2000 with about ten students who had been enrolled in a Landscape Architecture emphasis in the Planning program under Baker's mentorship. As soon as the LA program was officially established, they came over. Understandably this group didn't take kindly to a new master who started to make new rules for a new

program, but somehow we all survived. I occasionally now reflect back on the beginning and think "was I crazy? what if it didn't work?" Luckily, it never occurred to me at the time that it wouldn't work (talk about naive!!), and I am thankful for that.

*asimon@unm.edu*

## EMBRACING WINTER

### An Urban Greenway and Pollution Treatment System for Yakutsk, Russia

by *Katya Yushmanova, MLA*

#### Context

The project site is located in the city of Yakutsk, in the Russian northeast. Located only 450 kilometers south of the Arctic Circle, with a population of 220,000 people, Yakutsk is the coldest city on the planet. It is situated in a sub-arctic semi-arid climate with temperatures reaching -55C in the winter and +35C in the summer, with yearly precipitation of about 7 inches. Winter conditions last for six months. On December 20th there are only 4 hours of daylight, and about 50 days during winter have thick fog. Yakutsk is built on continuous permafrost, which starts 1.5 meters below the surface and is 250 meters deep. Permafrost

is the major factor affecting hydrology, soils, and vegetation: all buildings are constructed on piles to minimize heat transfer to the ground, all infrastructure is located above ground, and there is no underground storm sewer. Even though the city gets little precipitation, the permafrost, which acts as an impermeable layer, and flat topography cause regular inundation in many areas. Pollutants from sewer and fuel leaks, exhaust, and illegal dumping concentrate in the snowmelt causing severe pollution of soil and bodies of water.

Yakutsk is currently faced with an environmental crisis stemming from inadequate planning, pollution, and poor building practices: in 2005 ecologists rated the ecological situation there "7" (critical) on a scale from 1 (favorable) to 9 (catastrophic). The design proposal applies concepts of

sustainability to this extreme environment, combining basic practices and unique technological solutions to resolve ecological issues and create public space for cold climate.

#### Site

The 2.8 kilometer-long, 40-80 meter wide drainage corridor selected for the design intervention is a former braided channel of the Lena River, which due to anthropogenic factors has lost its connectivity with the river and is ecologically degraded. With no outlet at its lowest point, the channel floods adjacent neighborhoods during snowmelt and becomes a stagnant polluted pool in the summer. The channel cuts through multiple neighborhoods, creating a barrier even when it is covered with ice due to the water and sewer pipes that run along its banks. Even though there are several existing vehicular and pedes-



Yakutsk, Russian Federation:  
62° 02' 20"N, 129° 44' 46"E  
Population 210,000  
Elevation 94 m  
Climate sub-arctic, semi-arid, Zone 1



The site in the context of the city  
site boundary



*Perspective showing light cloud and path after snowfall*

*"The concept for the Filtration Towers combines a greenhouse, a constructed wetland, and an indoor public space."*

trian bridges, the distances between them are too great for comfortable travel on foot during winter months.

#### **Channel Modifications**

Two new outflows are proposed at the southeast and northeast ends of the site to allow for proper drainage. The outflow elevations are set to ensure that the channel reaches maximum storage capacity before discharge in order to minimize the amount of pollutants entering the river. Runoff will be collected from the neighborhoods and transported to the channel via a network of vegetated swales. The channel corridor will be modified to allow for greater flood absorption, increased floodwater storage capacity, habitat for wetland plants, and improved pedestrian connectivity.

#### **Filtration Towers**

A short growing season and plant dormancy during snow-melt make application of constructed wetlands very limited for this project. While it is proposed that the channel and its sides will be re-vegetated using a mix of native species, the main solution for year-round pollutant removal will be twelve Filtration Towers. The concept for the Filtration Towers combines a greenhouse, a constructed wetland, and an indoor public space. The Filtration Towers will be climate and light controlled triple-glass enclosures positioned over the deepest parts of the channel. The filtration function will be performed by bamboo (*Phyllostachys nigra*) planted in the growing capsule. A pump will continuously pump water from the channel into the capsule

where it will be distributed over the growing surface via sprayers. The condensation will then be collected and released back into the canal. The daily evapotranspiration rate of bamboo can be controlled by adjusting the temperature in response to the amount of water available. The public space between the first and the second glass skins of the towers will provide a climatic refuge throughout the year.

#### **Path**

The new elevated path will span the entire length of the site, creating multiple connections and "stitching" together the opposite banks of the canal. The bridge-like elements of the path will extend into the neighborhoods, creating easy access to amenities and transportation, and facilitating



Inside of a filtration tower in spring

movement along and across the canal. The organic shape of the path will form sun lounges and benches, creating gathering and resting spaces, which in the winter will act as sculptural snow collectors and play areas. The path will provide access to the Filtration Towers and interact with existing infrastructure without hiding it.

**Light Cloud**

The main element to address winter light conditions will be the Light Cloud, constructed of hundreds of metal rods of different heights with LED lights on the top. The Light Cloud will be a reappearing event along the path. Its soft glow will act as a magical beacon during foggy winter nights.



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*Perspective showing frozen channel with filtration towers, path, and light cloud*

### **Conclusion**

“Embracing Winter” demonstrates how solutions to a complex environmental situation can combine ecology, infrastructure, and public space. The filtration towers, path, and light cloud represent a decentralized system of pollution and flood mitigation, which also addresses the everyday quality of life by providing much needed climatic refuge, light during long winter nights, and pedestrian connections for the inhabitants of Yakutsk.

The project received First Prize in the 2010 Wayne Grace Memorial Student Design Competition and an ASLA Honor Award in the General Design category.

Please direct any comments or questions to Katya Yushmanova

*detura@unm.edu*



**Mountain West GolfScapes, Inc.**

## Chapter Events

### Q4

**Date/Time:** November 5th, 2010  
8am-9pm

**Location:** El Camino Real International Heritage Center and Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

Tour Bus leaving from Weston Solutions Parking Lot

**Note:** See Attached Flyer

### Landscape Architecture Program 10th Anniversary Celebration

**Date/Time:** November 19, 2010  
5-7pm

**Location:** UNM School of Architecture + Planning Gallery, Pearl Hall

## Membership & Address Changes

Please email Amy Duckert:  
aduckert@mrwnm.com

## Newsletter

The NMASLA newsletter is produced by students in the MLA program at the University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning.

Please submit articles, news, photos, corrections, etc., to the editor:

Ryan Anderson  
rva321@unm.edu

## Website

### Have you visited the NMASLA Website?

Please check it out:

<http://www.nmasla.org/>

Want to show off your projects???

We are requesting project images or landscape images that anyone would like to have posted on the website. Please include a note with a brief description (name of project/landscape, location... anything else to explain the image).

Please send projects to Sara Zahm:  
saraz@dpsdesign.org

### Call for Articles!

We want to showcase YOUR projects in our newsletter! Please send us your case study of a project completed in the last year and half for inclusion in the next or future newsletters. Additionally, if you have ideas for a different type of article, please send us your suggestions. Help us keep our newsletters relevant and interesting for the NM Landscape Architecture community.

Please send your questions, case studies and/or articles to Ryan Anderson:  
rva321@unm.edu

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2010

# Q4

NMASLA's  
4th-Quarter Mtg.

## el camino real international heritage center + bosque del apache national wildlife refuge tour

### schedule of events

friday **NOVEMBER 5, 2010**

**8:00 Depart from Albuquerque**

Bus departing from the Weston Solutions parking lot @ 3840 Commons Ave NE - parking available in the adjacent movie theater lot

**10:00-12:00 Tour the El Camino Real International Heritage Center**

**12:00-2:00 Lunch and Transportation to the Bosque del Apache**

**2:00-5:30 Guided Tour of the Bosque del Apache**

**6:00- 7:30 Dinner @ Socorro Springs Brewery**

**9:00 Arrival in Albuquerque**

a big thanks to:

**Hansen and Prezzano  
Builders - dinner sponsors**

*(additional sponsorship opportunities are still available!)*

### rsvp

by **october 29, 2010**

Email or fax this form to Bob Oberdorfer:  
robert.oberdorfer@westonsolutions.com  
505.837.6595

This event is **free to NMASLA members**, but friends, family, and colleagues are encouraged to attend for \$25. Kids under 12 are \$10 each. Includes transportation, admission fees, lunch, and dinner.

Payment is due at the event.  
Please make checks payable to NMASLA.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

### box lunch order

- turkey & cheese croissant \_\_\_\_\_ qty
- toasted pepper and beef salad with chipotle dressing \_\_\_\_\_ qty
- vegetarian chopped salad pita \_\_\_\_\_ qty

