



## Call for Altars!!!

We would be honored to have you participate in our Dia de los Muertos Celebration this coming November 4th. We are asking you to bring your own tables and items to set up an altar at the Westside Community Center on 1250 Isleta SW. The setting up of altars will take place from 10am to 1pm in the gym of the community center on Sun., Nov. 4. The assembly of the Marigold parade will begin about 1pm and will process at 2pm en route to the community center.

We hope that you will be able to participate in displaying an altar to the many individuals that come to our celebration. If you are interested in displaying an altar please e-mail or mail back the following information to: Karen Cathey 420 Indiana St. SE, Alb., NM 87108 or abrasos1@yahoo.com

*Name of group displaying altar*

*e-mail address or mailing address to receive updates*

*phone number and name of contact person*

*Theme of altar or who it is dedicated to*

We ask that you do not light candles or incense or display any alcoholic beverages due to the rules of the community center. Altars will be taken down towards the end of the event around 6pm.

**Thanks for your time and consideration! We look forward to your participation!**

Sincerely,

Karen Cathey (For any questions you may have (505)301-6622.)

What is the purpose of a Day of the Dead altar?

The ritual of Dia De Los Muertos once was strictly a ritual celebrated by the Native Americans of the South and Central Americas. This holiday is a time when we believe that the veil, or division, between the afterlife and the living is made easier to cross allowing our loved ones that have died to come back and share a time with us again.

A Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) altar is meant to honor the memory of a person who touched your life. This can be anyone from a family member to a historical leader. Anyone who had a positive impact on your life can be the subject of your Day of the Dead altar. People also make altars to show their support for others. Your altar could be dedicated to a group of family members or even a group of people such as those who died for a certain cause. There are two aspects to altar making on el Dia de los Muertos (the Day of the Dead). The first is to communicate with those that are no longer physically with us. The second aspect is the connection it provides us to the world at large and to our place in the after-life. By building an altar we are acknowledging that we go on and that not being physically present isn't the same as being gone.

Altars should include:

1. a picture of the one being remembered
2. items they were found of
3. A selection of the deceased favorite foods
4. A cup of fresh water to drink after a long dry journey
5. candles (not to be lit at community center)
6. fresh flowers, the traditional flower is a marigold, or its relative, the chrysanthemum, called "xempasuchitl.," or paper flowers
7. Salt to season the dish is always provided

Altars could include:

1. pictures of saints
2. papel picado
3. sugar skulls
4. books
5. their favorite drink and a glass (no alcoholic beverages allowed at the community center)
6. Pan De Muerto
7. Homemade or store brought Skeletons: These should be funny and inviting images of the dead doing things that are fun, scary or grotesque images are never used in this ceremony.
8. A wash basin with water and a towel to refresh ones' self from the journey from the netherworld to this and also to freshen up when getting ready to depart
9. Cigarettes for those who were smokers
10. Extra sweets and a toy for those who were children
11. Incense-copal(do not light at community center)

A Dia de los Muertos altar can be as simple or as elaborate as you want. The purpose of an altar is remembrance, with that in mind feel free to do what you think your honoree would enjoy. The point is, size doesn't really matter, what matters is the heart you put into it.

