Saluting America 250 at the 102nd Burning of Zozobra

Founded in 1921 as one of the City of Santa Fe's first nonprofit service organizations, the Kiwanis Club of Santa Fe is well known as one of New Mexico's premiere event organizers.



In 1964, Zozobra's creator, artist Will Shuster, honored Kiwanis by entrusting the all-volunteer Club with the responsibility of producing the Burning of Zozobra in exchange for a solemn promise to present and reserve the event in perpetuity. 62 years later, Kiwanis produced a memorably vibrant amd historically resonant celebration of this cherished cultural tradition.

The Kiwanis Club of Santa Fe was honored to receive a Santa Fe Arts & Culture TMI-B Marketing Grant in support of the 102nd Burning of Zozobra, which marked the 250th anniversary of the United States of America on Friday, September 4, 2026,, in Zozobra Field at Fort Marcy Park in Santa Fe, NM.

Zozobra 2026 Shared the Rich History, Culture, and Artistry of Santa Fe America's First UNESCO Creative City



KOAT YouTube



Santa Fe New Mexican YouTube



Santa Fe Literary Fest

The 2026 Burning of Zozobra welcomed an in-person audience of 49,732, with the help of over 600 volunteers. The free TV broadcast reached 56,453 viewers, ages 18+ in 40,386 households. The free KOAT.com website livestream welcomed 24,029 views and the KOAT YouTube free ivestream of the burning reached 40,915 views. KOAT Zozobra pFacenook osts achieved 529,041 video views. TV and radio interviews and print marketing identifying the Santa Fe Arts and Culture Dept. produced similarly robust results throughout Zozobra season, April-September 2026.

Zozobra 2026 + America 250 Created Participation





In April 2026, the Stephen Watts Kearny Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution invited Kiwanis to partner in the dedication of a Liberty Tree planted at the New Mexico Military Museum. Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernandez, Brigadier General Nathaniel Carper and DCA Secretary Debra Garcia y Griego joined the festivities, laying the foundation of a DAR Zozobra partnership.

Over 800 glooms were submitted online and combined with thousands more submitted in person at the event. Glooms are collected year-round up until 8 p.m. on the night of the burning, when they are placed inside Zozobra to burn.

Zozobra 2026 Inspired Artists, Patriots and Performers



Kiwanis issued two annual calls for artists, one for the year's Official Zozobra posters, tee-shirts and tickets imagery, and one for the ZozoFest Zozobra Art Exhibit.

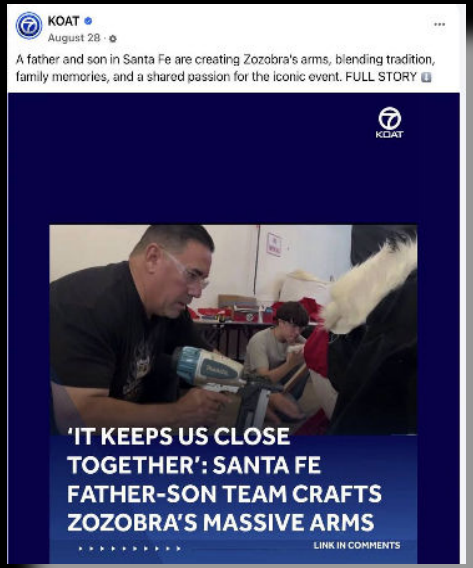
The 2026 Poster designed by Kevin Kramer portrayed Zozobra as King George III marking the America 250 celebration of the Spirit of '76 vs. The Tyranny of Gloom.



Open auditions juried by independent community members selected the New Mexico Gay Men's Chorus to perform the National Anthem at Zozobra. In addition Zozobra 102 honored the passing of the Fire Spirit's torch to dancer Than Povi Martinez, a member of Poh'Woh'Geh Owingeh Pueblo, who will assume the role for Zozobra 103 in 2027

Zozobra 2026 Showcased Community and Culture

Santa Fe Kiwanis







The Zozobra construction process, Public Stuffing Day, 2026 ZozoFest and on-site Car Show gave Kiwanis banner opportunities to meet local families, mentor young Zozobra fans, help them learn valuable skills, give them confidence, and inspire them to share together in the rewarding values of achievement and community service.

More families and youth builders participated than ever before! The Zozobra father-son arm crew were featured on KOAT-7, and parents and children performed together in the 2026 pageantry of the 102nd Burning of Zozobra.

Zozobra Ignites Santa Fe's Economy



For the 3rd year in a row, Santa Fe Brewing Company issued a limited-edition Zozobra beer and pint glasses available tap rooms and from local retailers, with the 2026 release celebrated at a festive HQ party!





Zozofest 2026 gave artists and local designers a four- day opportunity to sell their unique creations and meet their fans.



Gruet Winery's special edition Zozobra Brut sparkling wine continues to be popular for special occaasions and by the bottle and the glass at tasting rooms.

Zozobra annually partners with New Mexico businesses, large and small with event tickets sold at local credit unions. bringing in customers, and local food vendors vied for spaces at the 2026 Burning, where the night's offerings sold out.

Zozobra Lights Up Santa Fe's Skies









For the 3rd year in a row, Zozobra the Balloon traveled the State of New Mexico and the Southwest region, delighting hot air balloon fans and Zozobra fans alike. 2026 brought appearances in Pagosa Springs, Colorado Springs, Gallup, NM, the 52nd Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta –– at which the 2027 Zozobra Fire Spirit, Than Povi Martinez, danced below the balloon to celebrate New Mexico Day –– and at the Rio Grande Sky Fiesta at the historic Los Luceros site in Alcalde, NM, the New Mexico Rio Grande National Historic Area.

Zozobra Inspires Kids Around The World



Youth are key to keeping Santa Fe's art, history and cultural traditions alive and well for future generations.

Zozobra artwork was not only a hot topic in Santa Fe Schools, but artwork was also submitted from all over the USA,as well as the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Serbia, Uzbekistan and Reunion Island in the South Pacific.

Together, kids around the world make magic!

The Kiwanis Club of Santa Fe Makes Iconic Santa Fe Events Happen

The Kiwanis Club of Santa Fe is privileged to be the standard bearer for some of Santa Fe's most historic and most beloved cultural traditions.

As the keepers of Zozobra's flame since 1964, Kiwanis is already hard at work creating the 103rd Burning of Zozobra, launching another creative opportunity to make life better for Santa Fe's creative economy, with three other unforgettable events hosted by Kiwanis––Día de los Muertos, New Year's Eve on the Plaza and the City of Santa Fe July 4th Celebration––all on tap to celebrate our state's rich and abiding heritage.

The Kiwanis Club of Santa Fe is deeply grateful for the meaningful support that the Santa Fe Art and Culture Dept. TMI-B Marketing Grant grant provided and for the powerful City of Santa Fe branding that continues to amplify Zozobra's cultural heritage and global recognition.

Here's to Zozobra 103 on Friday, September 3, 2027!

