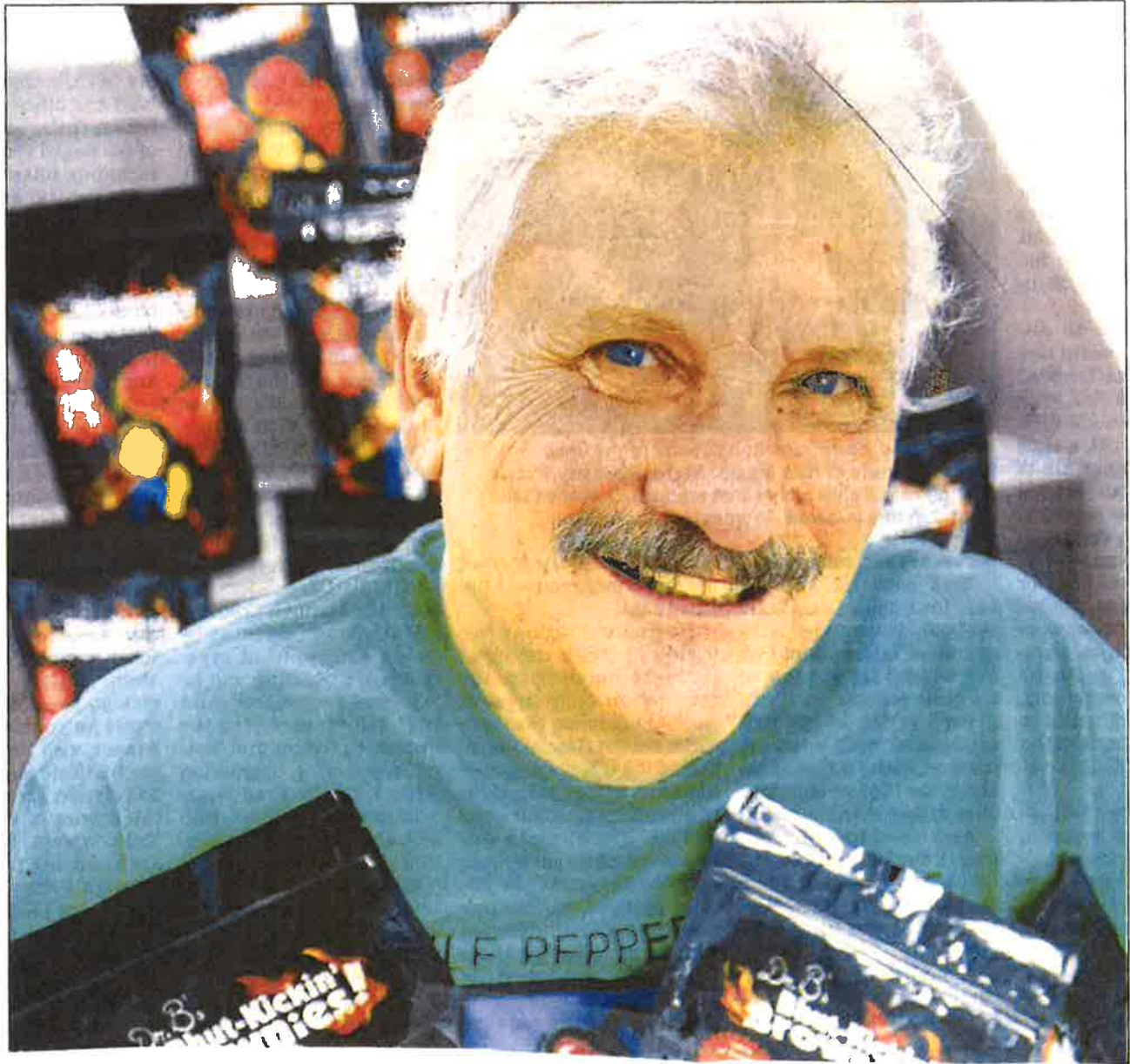


CHILE CELEBRATION

Chile czar Paul Bosland reflects on decades of spicy happenings and shares hot news



Paul Bosland co-founder and director of the Chile Pepper Institute at New Mexico State University, holds numerous bags of his Dr. B's Bhut-Kickin' Brownies, a popular mix based on his fiery recipe that is spiced with Bhut Jolokia peppers.

Heritage Garden planned

IF YOU GO

What: The Chile Institute Store

When: 8 a.m. to noon, 1 to 5 p.m.
Monday to Friday

Where: Room 265 Gerald Thomas Hall

Products: Seeds, packaged

food products and mixes, books, plants, shirts, chile accessories

How much: Admission free

Info: 575-646-3028,
CHILEPEPPERINSTITUTE.ORG

By S. Derrickson Moore

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LASCRCES» Paul "Chileman" Bosland envisioned a place where the world could come to learn more about our favorite peppers, and where students, faculty and researchers could find ways to grow, use and even improve chiles.

Those visions have expanded and grown, more than two decades after the founding of the Chile Pepper Institute. And a new chapter will soon begin. Chiles will be an integral part of NMSU's new Heritage Garden, a planned facility behind the Las Cruces Convention Center that is expected to become a reality in about two years, according to Bosland, an NMSU Regents professor and director and co-founder of the Chile Pepper Institute.

"We're in the fundraising stage now. The Heritage Garden will start in the Fabian Garcia Seed Barn, and we hope to have chile gardens in a greenhouse so people can see chiles grown there all year around. Eventually, we may have demonstrations of beer and wine making and we may move the chile store there. And we have enough quality chefs all over the state that we could do pop-up kitchens for

Inside: More about Project Discovery fund-raiser
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+ On-line: To watch videos of Paul Bosland discussing spicy happenings at the Chile Pepper Institute, view this story at
LCSUN-NEWS.COM.

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Garden

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a week or a month, or for special events like homecoming or our annual chile conference, or to highlight different regional cuisines like African-inspired chile menus," said Bosland, who feels the new enterprise, like the Chile Institute, has the potential to attract fans from around the world.

Agricultural tourism is becoming a greater draw, he believes, as fewer people have agriculture as a part of their lives.

"It becomes almost like a holiday, a special vacation to visit a farm," he said.

Bosland, a California native who has become an international expert on chile peppers since joining the NMSU faculty in 1986, talked about his long, hot relationship with the divine pod.

He's led efforts to discover, test and develop new and hotter peppers. Trinidad Moruga Scorpion Red, with a ranking of 2,009,231 SHU (Scoville Heat Units, a scale measuring the spicy fire of chile peppers), was declared the world's hottest pepper in 2012, dethroning the previous champ, the Bhut Jolokia, or Ghost Pepper, the basis for Bosland's marriage of what could be the two most wonderful food groups, chocolate and chile, in Dr. B's Bhut-Kickin' Brownie mix. Both peppers still rank in the World Top Ten Hottest Chile List, according to crazyhotseeds.com.

There's more behind such quests than bragging

ts, Bosland stressed. "For poor villages or any area with poverty, there's a lot of economy involved, and an extract from fewer peppers can go a long way," he explained, in uses ranging from seasoning to pep-

there's the old controversy that heated up again when the chile was declared New Mexico's official state vegetable.

"Botanically, it's a berry. On the plant, chile is a fruit. It's a vegetable, usually, to

sine is based on something very different. What became part of American culture and our cuisine started with the introduction of the New Mexico pod-type chile, used in main dishes, chile rellenos, salsa and red pow-

er. An after-party on the NMSU Horseshoe will feature "chile-inspired sorbet and kid-friendly gelato," refreshments and salsa dance lessons. Tickets, at \$15, \$10 for NMSU employees and retirees and \$5 for NMSU

are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For information, call 575-646-3028, or visit online at chilepepperinstitute.org.

S. Derrickson Moore may be reached at 575-541-5450.



PHOTOS BY ROBIN ZIELINSKI — SUN-NEWS

NMSU Chile Pepper Institute program specialist Erica Trevino looks at "The Complete Chile Pepper Book," written by Paul Bosland and Dave DeWitt.



Paul Bosland, co-founder and director of the Chile Pepper Institute at New Mexico State University, shows off ornamental chile plants that are for sale at the Chile Institute store in Gerald Thomas Hall at NMSU.

per sprays and remedies.

"I've been lucky to be here for a golden age," said Bosland, who also led a cooperative international effort to map the genome of the chile pepper.

For a variety of research projects, he reports, having comprehensive information about the DNA of chile has already begun to bear fruit.

And speaking of fruit,

most people, in the way we use it as a main course," Bosland said.

He feels our region's role in chile history is very clear.

"We're building on the research of chile peppers since the famous horticulturist Fabian Garcia, the father of the U.S. chile pepper industry, began standardizing chile pepper varieties in 1888. The Mexican cui-

PROJECT DISCOVERY

What: Music, dance, food treats and the science behind the world's hottest chile pepper

When: 7:30 p.m. Sept. 19

Where: NMSU's Atkinson Recital Hall

How much: \$5 to \$15

Info: chilepepperinstitute.org

ders. One type of chile pod makes all those products possible."

He's enthusiastic about new research focusing on the complexities and diversity of chile flavors.

Teaching has been the most rewarding aspect of his career, he said.

"Training students who go out in the world and become successful pepper growers and breeders ... they are my greatest joy and legacy," Bosland said.

He's looking forward to celebrating the glory of chile with a brand new chile fiesta: Project Discovery, billed as an evening of music, dance and the science behind the world's hottest chile pepper, at 7:30 p.m.

Sept. 19 at NMSU's Atkinson Recital Hall. The event will include the debut of Frank "Pancho" Romero's group Salseros Nuevos Mexicanos, performances by NMSU DanceSport, directed by Hannah Cole and NMSU Dance, directed by Debra Knapp, what organizers are boasting will be "the world's greatest salsa bar" and "Discovering the Secrets to Hotter and Hotter Peppers," a discussion with KRWG's Fred Martino and Paul Bosland, who will also host a Q & A ses-

students with I.D. and kids under 18, will be available at chilepepperinstitute.org.

Program specialist Erica Trevino led a tour of the institute's store, pointing out such exotic items as defensive chile pepper gel.

"With the gel, it's more of a direct shot than the spray. We'll also be getting our 2015 chile calendar in mid-September, with our personal pictures and recipes," Trevino said.

The store features several variety of chile pepper seeds, posters, cookbooks and other books about our favorite pepper, T-shirts, polo shirts, a variety of chile-themed household and office accessories, frozen chiles and a variety of packaged food products including mixes, powdered chile, salsa and sauces. Among the best sellers are Bosland's chile brownie mix and his book, written with Dave DeWitt, "The Complete Chile Pepper Book: A Gardener's Guide to Choosing, Growing, Preserving, and Cooking," which will soon be out in paperback.

Trevino also led visitors down to 150 Gerald Thomas Hall to see the just-opened store Crimson Creations, where students offer a variety of home-grown produce, plants and exotic culinary offerings that currently include a savoury red chile sorbet available by the scoop or pint. To learn more about chile peppers and pick up some unique spicy treats for yourself and your friends, visit the Chile Pepper Institute Store in Room 265 Gerald Thomas Hall at the corner of College and Knox streets. Store hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday