‘It’s wicked good’

Redevelopment’s grand opening brings out community for firsthand look

By Kate Nash
The New Mexican

If you closed your eyes for a moment anywhere near the Railyard Park on Saturday, the blast of train horns, the wafts of fresh bread, the murmur of strolling crowds might have led you to think you were somewhere in Europe. The kaleidoscope of fruits, vegetables and flowers, not to mention the adults gliding leisurely on swings and children frolicking in playgrounds nearby, had felt more like Spain’s Barcelona than the Southwest.

Soon, though, came the toot of a Rail Runner train as it approached the place where it was to “kiss” a car from the Santa Fe Southern Railway during the grand opening of the Railyard Park — an event that could have happened only in Santa Fe.

The two trains met at the park in a symbolic blending of the old and the new shortly before the public was offered tours of both trains. A throng of onlookers snapped photos and video of the moment as Mayor David Coss appeared to be driving the SFSR car while it crept up to the Rail Runner.

The Rail Runner train was only in town for the ceremony, but by early December, it is expected to carry passengers from Santa Fe to Albuquerque and as far south as Belen. Of the 23 miles of new track that are needed for the extension to the Capital City, just 4.5 remain to be done. Although the train is primarily for commuters along the Rio Grande corridor, it drew visitors from out of state who were curious to check it out.

Margaret and Lloyd Cargill came from...