

Adventures at the New Mexico MVD

That's "Motor Vehicle Department" if you were wondering. In this state, once you turn 80, you have to renew your driver's license (at no extra charge) every year. In Los Alamos the MVD office was usually a busy place and doing business there chewed up most of a morning to do so. On moving to Santa Fe in 2019 Maggie was no longer driving because of her eyes. Anyway, I decided it might be faster getting mine renewed if I went to the MVD Express, a commercial outfit that charges \$30 (beyond the usual state-imposed fees) for their faster service.

It ain't necessarily faster. Since Covid-19 restrictions came into effect, they have been grossly understaffed. When Jere had to update her Prius's vehicle registration about two months ago, it took us three-and-a-half hours to do that. It didn't take quite that long when she came back later to renew her driver's license. But long enough that I was convinced to try going directly to the state's MVD office when it was time for me to renew. And save the \$30.

When the time came, I googled "MVD Santa Fe" and came up with three hits, one of which was, of course, the MVD Express. The other two were for state-run offices, one of which was in the Joseph Montoya Office Building, within walking distance of where I live. So I went there. To discover a note posted on the front door that the MVD office there no longer transacted customer services. Hmm. I went in anyway, found out where the office was, and went up there. It was locked, of course, with no one at the desk.

Standing in front the door, thinking I had to backtrack and go to the MVD office further away, a young woman emerged from a nearby door just down the hall. I think she was heading to a john, but she asked what I wanted. When she learned that what I wanted was a renewal of the license and was over 80, she said "Wait there" and that she could help me. But first she had to complete her restroom visit, go back in the door she came out of, and come around to unlock the door where I was standing. After that, things went smoothly and I emerged with a temporary paper license and should expect a plastic one in the mail (after correcting my address).

She was, of course, being more than nice by going out of her way to serve me. The proper procedure in these days of Covid-19 is to go on-line to the MVD website and make an appointment for an appearance at the larger, more modern MVD office in the western part of Santa Fe. OK, now I know, and that's what I'll do.