



NEWSLETTER

December 2015

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dr. Susan Krueger

OUR NEXT MEETING IS THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND AWARDS LUNCHEON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 2016, AT NOON, DOUBLE EAGLE RESTAURANT ON THE PLAZA IN MESILLA

Seating for the luncheon will begin at noon with the buffet opening at 12:30. The installation of new board members and the Awards program will follow lunch. The reservation form for the event appears in this Newsletter; please complete it and send it in while it is fresh in your mind. What follows is a taste of the who and what of the event.

C. W. "Buddy" Ritter, owner of the Double Eagle and a ten year member of the DACHS Board of Directors, will start things off, sharing his memories of growing up in the Mesilla Valley and describing one or two of the challenges he faced while writing his book Mesilla Comes Alive.

Then, Susan Krueger, the Society's outgoing President, will install the new Board members: Sally Kadding, elected to the position of Historian; George Helfrich and Sara Wagner elected to positions of Board member-at-large; and Jon Hunner who, as the Society's Vice President, becomes the President.

Jon's first act as President will be as Master of Ceremonies for the Awards Program. Buddy Ritter will join Jon at the podium to receive the Society's Pasajero del Camino Real Award to honor Buddy as the author of Mesilla Comes Alive; A History of Mesilla and its Valley. This book is a significant historical publication about

events, persons, places and issues in the Mesilla Valley in the time period up to statehood. Once you begin this book, it will be close to impossible to put it down.

Then Doyle Piland will join Jon to receive the Hall of Fame Award for Doyle's remarkable contribution to the preservation of the history and culture of the Mesilla Valley through his on-going service as a DACHS Board member and Newsletter editor and for his work as a volunteer Archivist for the White Sands Missile Range Museum.

Next, Jon will give Frank Parrish the Heritage Award in honor of Frank's wealth of knowledge of Billy the Kid and Billy the Kid memorabilia, particularly the collection that once was housed in George Grigg's Museum. The award also honors Frank's writings and photography, depicting the old and the new in the Mesilla Valley.

Moving from people to things, the Awards program will reach back into pre-history with the celebration of the Prehistoric Trackways, a natural phenomenon uncovered in the Robledo Mountains by Jerry MacDonald in June of 1987. To the extensive sets of footprints, left by amphibians, reptiles and insects during the Permian period, some 70 million years before the time of the dinosaurs, the Society fittingly gives the Old Timers Award.

Honors for two previously recognized buildings close out the Awards program: the Phillips Chapel and the Nestor Armijo House. In 2001 the Society recognized the Phillips Chapel, 638 N. Tornillo St., as a structure worthy of restoration. From 2010 to 2013, community volunteers along with faculty and students from NMSU and DACC rebuilt the more than 100 year old adobe building. To recognize their effort and success, the Society will honor the Phillips Chapel for its noteworthy restoration.

The Nestor Armijo House at 150 E. Lohman Ave., recognized by the DACHS as a building worthy of preservation in 1967, will receive an award as a building of historic significance. The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce took ownership of the property in early January 2012, and anticipated completing the renovation in the fall of that year. The excitement of the challenge of restoring a 3,000 square foot adobe building built in the mid 1860's was so evident in the Chamber's voice in January 2012 and it is still evident today four years later, however, with added meaning given to the phrase "unforeseen circumstances." To honor the Chamber as it continues the restoration work, the Society reaffirms its recognition of the Nestor Armijo House as a building of historic significance worthy of preservation.

Join the Society on January 30, 2016, to meet the people and places being honored and to share in their recognition. The food, the ambiance and the company promise to be outstanding.

JANUARY 30, AWARDS LUNCHEON BUFFET MENU, DOUBLE EAGLE RESTAURANT

- Green Chile Cheese Enchiladas
- Cactus Barbeque Brisket
- Oven Baked Potatoes
- Medley of Fresh Vegetables
- Freshly Baked Dinner Rolls
- Fresh Garden Salad with Assorted Dressings
- Tomato, Cucumber, Onion Vinaigrette Salad
- Cherry Tomato Mozzarella Salad
- Chefs Assorted Dessert Table
- Ice Tea and Coffee



Abandoned roadside stand on U.S. 85 near Hatch, New Mexico. circa 1939. Photo courtesy Library of Congress.

DONA ANA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR DECEMBER 2015 TO MAY 2016

December 2015: There is no membership meeting in December to avoid conflicts with the holidays.

January 30, 2016: Annual Membership Meeting and Awards Luncheon.

In February, the DACHS returns to its regular schedule of membership meetings on the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Good Samaritan Auditorium, 3011 Buena Vida Circle.

Mark the following dates on your 2016 calendar: February 18; March 17; April 21; and May 19. Then watch for the January 2016 Newsletter and the list of programs. ■

Hembrillo Battlefield Tour

The Hembrillo Battlefield trip is still scheduled for Feb. 13, 2016. Don't forget to register with Jim Eckles starting January 10th if you want to go. If you have a high clearance vehicle and can drive, he'll need the kind of vehicle and how many passengers you can carry with you. All names for registration are due by Feb. 2 so the missile range security folks can run a background check on each participant.

Eckles can be contacted at nebraska1950@comcast.net or by phone at 575-521-8771. The road is not in very good shape but still does not require 4x4 for access - lots of oil pan rocks for the careless. ■



Oklahoma drought refugees stalled on highway near Lordsburg, New Mexico. circa May 1937. Photo courtesy Library of Congress.

Do you know what the person is doing at the front of the vehicle? He is cranking (starting) the engine. There were no electric starters back in those days.

**You are invited to the Doña Ana County Historical Society's
Annual Awards Luncheon**

**January 30th, 2016, Double Eagle Restaurant
on the Mesilla Plaza; 12:00 noon**

Seating for the Annual Awards Luncheon will begin at noon with the buffet lunch to be served at 12:30 p.m. The cost is \$25.00 per person payable in advance or at the door. For your convenience, this reservation form is included, and you may email your reservation directly to Susan Krueger at skrueger575@msn.com. Or, if you prefer, you may print it, fill it in, and snail mail it to Susan Krueger, c/o DACHS, P.O. Box 16045, Las Cruces, NM 88004.

Following lunch, there will be the awards program and the installation of new Board members.

If you have any questions, please call Susan at 525-0654.

RESERVATION FORM due by Saturday, January 23, 2016

Name _____ Name _____

Name _____ Name _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

\$25.00 per person TOTAL enclosed

Will pay at the door

**If you haven't already renewed your membership for 2016,
Please renew your Membership Today. See form below.**

-----Cut along dotted line-----

Doña Ana County Historical Society, P. O. Box 16045, Las Cruces, NM 88004-6045

DACHS Membership Form

Please renew/enroll my/our membership in the Doña Ana County Historical Society. Memberships are active for the calendar year of enrollment and fees are deductible within legal limits for Federal and State income tax purposes. If you are unsure of your status or have questions regarding membership, please contact the President, Susan Krueger, at 575 525-0654.

Annual Membership/Sponsorship Rates

Individual \$20 Family \$25 Student \$8 Contributor \$40 Benefactor \$150 Life \$300
Southern New Mexico Historical Review Sponsorship \$50

Is this a change of information? Yes No A check for \$ _____ is enclosed. Date _____
Check # _____

Name(s) _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____ Newsletter via E-mail Yes No

How would you like to receive your copy of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* (SNMHR)?
Printed Version Society Website Version PDF on CD Version



After his presentation, Paul Ward poses with Society President Dr. Susan Krueger

At our last Membership Meeting, Paul Ward gave a presentation on Lorenzo Torrez, and his involvement in the Empire Zinc Mine strike on October 17, 1950, in Hanover, New Mexico. Because the men who worked at the mine could not walk the picket line without losing their jobs, they were assisted by their wives who walked the picket line. Lorenzo Torrez fought hard against racial and gender discrimination. He eventually became aligned with the ideas of the communist party and became a member of the party. ■

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We encourage our Members to patronize their businesses

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2015 Board Members

Las Cruces, NM 88004-6045

P.O. Box 16045

Dona Ana County Historical Society

