



# NEWSLETTER

March 2013

## DACHS Board Member and Book Sales Sara Wagner



Sara Wagner started out life on April Fools' Day. This alone has opened the door for her to be a hoot and to be known for her smile and laughter.

In 1983 she moved here and had a small farm in Fairacres. She has four incredible children that have blessed her with eleven grandchildren. Consequently, she has served this Valley in all sorts of endeavors from president of three parent teacher groups, substitute teaching, past speech therapist, foreign exchange students, the Whole Enchilada Parade, the Aggie Homecoming Parade, putting up two radio stations, volunteering at Mountain View Hospital, leading children and youth activities at church, editing books, and writing curriculum.

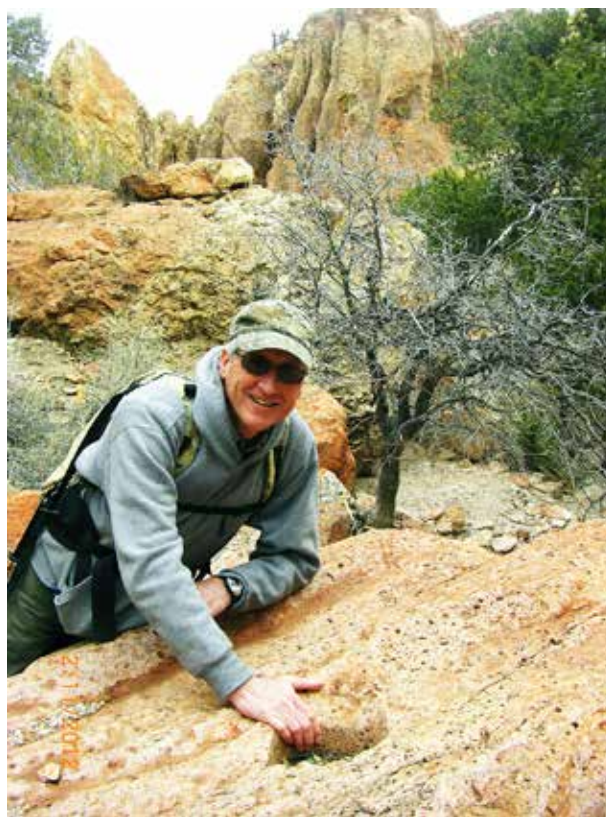
Hosting and networking give her much pleasure. Through all the above, she does not know a stranger. Watch out, she will pull you into some of her current activities. She is on the Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum Friends Foundation Board as secretary and their Volunteer Council as their Vice-President. It is there she learned how to stucco and paint a mural.

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## Our March Program

Our March meeting will feature a presentation by David Soules, which we think you will find very interesting and informative.

This month we will be back in our usual location in the Good Samaritan Auditorium at 7:00 pm.



David Soules exploring one of the interesting historic locations he will be talking about.

Photo courtesy: David Soules

David Soules, a local outdoor enthusiast, will provide a virtual tour of the proposed Organ Mountains – Desert Peaks national monument. The audience will get a taste of modern day exploration using “Google Earth” to identify uncharted stagecoach trails, remnants of Gadsden Purchase survey cairns, mile after mile of Civilian Conser-

See David on Page 2

## Sara from Page 1

She just finished her term as secretary of the Foundation for the four city of Las Cruces Museums. Currently, she is on the La Casa Guild and the Symphony Guild and volunteers for the Doña Ana Arts Council.

Her interests, first of all, are those grandchildren. Regularly, she travels to see them. Hobbies of hers include: jogging, traveling, singing, knitting, and baking (especially cheesecake). Her travels have taken her to: Europe, Puerto Rico, and all over the United States (her favorite being Alaska). She keeps up her certification in two areas of interest. Come up and meet her at the next Doña Ana County Historical Society meeting at the book table or as she sets out snacks for you. ■

## David from Page 1

vation Corp erosion control projects, and WW II bombing targets. Up close photos of local caves, petroglyphs and bedrock mortars, Billy the Kid's hideout, and historic ranches will round out the tour. Soules has worn out a few pairs of boots (and a computer memory stick or two) gathering this information. He will bring a self-proclaimed amateur's perspective of the historical thread tying these features together, but he looks forward to input and guidance from our organization. ■

## Awards Luncheon

On Saturday, 26 January we held the Society's Annual Awards Luncheon at the Picacho Hills Country Club. In the March, we will cover the Heritage Award, which was established to be given to a person or persons whose actions or deeds have contributed to the historical or cultural heritage of Doña Ana County and who is (are) not an avocational or professional historian. This year, there were two selections, George Hackler and Cal Traylor.

*Editor's Note: Much of the following information came from the Awards Luncheon Program by Mary Kay Shannon.*

### Heritage Award 2013: George Hackler

Las Cruces native, George Hackler, graduated from New Mexico State University with a double major in physics and mathematics. His career included rocket flight determination, heavy construction, and design and construction of rocket propulsion test facilities.

His interest in southwest history began at a very early age. His grandfather, Riburn Hackler was a Tennessee railroad engineer who wanted to be a cowboy and gave up a secure job to come west to Las Cruces in 1922. He cleared a farm out of the rough gravel hills on the west side of the river below Hatch. There was an Indian camp site and burial ground above the farm on a bluff overlooking



George Hackler receiving Heritage Award from Susan Krueger. Photo Courtesy: Bob Gamboa

the river. As a child George spent endless hours at the farm searching for arrow points and potsherds, trying to visualize the lives and times of the people buried there. His other grandfather, George Cross also came to the valley in 1922 where he worked on a steam driven dragline bigger than the boarding house he lived in. George learned to harness and work draft horses and mules from both grandfathers. During his stays on the farms and ranches he learned what happens to a wagon when the team is turned too short and when a contrary mule steps over the tongue and tangles the traces.

Author of *The Butterfield Trail in New Mexico*, George is an authority on the trail. He has visited and documented the sixteen sites in New Mexico and coordinated modern surveys in respect to those made by historians in the 1930s. The Pasajero del Camino Real Award was presented to George in 2006 for his book. It quickly went out of print and became highly collectable. Due to demand, a second printing is now available from Amazon. George is a past president and a life member of the Doña Ana County Historical Society. ■

### Heritage Award 2013: Cal Traylor

Cal Traylor is a lifelong New Mexican and history buff with a particular fondness for information related to the murder of Pat Garrett. Twenty years ago he began a search to find the hearse that carried Garrett to his grave in 1908.





Cal Traylor receiving Heritage Award from Susan Krueger. Photo Courtesy: Bob Gamboa

In 1894 the Women’s Improvement Association purchased a hearse for Las Cruces, which served many prominent citizens, among them Pat Garrett. The new horse-drawn hearse sported glass windows, velvet curtains, and fancy carved molding on the corners. The hearse was in service until 1912. Traylor found the hearse in Piños Altos and after years of persistence finally purchased it in August 2012. He then donated it to the Doña Ana County Sheriff’s Department for

permanent installation in the Historical Museum of Lawmen, located inside the lobby of the department’s headquarters at 845 N. Motel Blvd. in Las Cruces.

“It was simply misplaced at its former location,” said Traylor, whose research concluded the Women’s Improvement Association sold the hearse to local rancher Hal Cox, who converted it to a trailer before selling it to Grant County resident and antique collector Frank Tatsch in 1935. Tatsch later restored the hearse and placed in the Pinos Altos art museum. After Tatsch’s death, his son sold the hearse to Traylor.

Traylor is a past president and life member of the Dona Ana County Historical Society. He was added to the Hall of Fame in 1987 He is now added to the recipients of the Heritage Award for his dedication in acquiring the WIA Hearse. ■

## Election of Officers and Board Members

At the beginning of our February 21<sup>st</sup> Membership Meeting, an election was held to elect new Officers and Members at Large to fill vacancies. Susan Krueger read the positions and the slate of nominees presented by the nominating committee as follows.

Co-Treasurers: Xandy Church and Rebecca Slaughter  
 Secretary: Linda Galloway  
 Members at Large: Doyle Piland and C. W. “Buddy” Ritter

After soliciting nominations from the floor with no nominations made, the entire slate was voted on and elected.

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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 Treasurer, Xandy Church, at 575-526-9774 (May-Sept. 575-536-9728) or the President, Marcie Palmer, at 575-496-4736.

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
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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



**Eric Fuller, Dan Aranda, Mary Kay Shannon, and Emilio Tapia**

The presentation by the FAT Boys at our February meeting started off with Dan Aranda giving us the history of Bernardo Gruber, a German trader who's life and death may be connected to the naming of Jomado del Muerto. Dan was followed by Emilio Tapia who discussed the movements along the Camino Real and problems they faced. And, Mary Kay Shannon gave some insight into places along the Camino Real that we could visit and take in the sights and learn some of the history.

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Doña Ana County Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the accounting assistance of **Beasley, Mitchell & Co.** for tax preparation.

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