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Tourism Association of New Mexico

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Three Noted New Mexicans to be added to the Tourism Hall of Fame



Drew Judycki



Cathy Gonzales



Al Lucero

The Tourism Association of New Mexico is pleased to announce the three new inductees to the Tourism Hall of Fame, who will receive this prestigious recognition at the May 7 banquet at the Farmington Courtyard by Marriott during the 2009 Governor's Conference on Tourism. "This is always a much anticipated ceremony, with many from the inductees' communities attending the dinner to join in the celebration," said Tourism Association of New Mexico CEO Sharon Schultz. MC for the evening will be Tom Rutherford, who was himself inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1999.

The Tourism Hall of Fame was established in 1997 and includes the likes of Conrad Hilton, Ernie Blake, Ben Abruzzo and Tony Hillerman. Individuals, alive or deceased, or an icon (such as Smokey Bear), who have enhanced New Mexico tourism may be nominated for the honor if they have lived in New Mexico for over 10 years and have made substantial and sustained contributions to the state's tourism industry through leadership and service.

The 2009 inductees are:

Drew Judycki, Red River Ski Area (posthumous recognition)

Drew was a 35-year resident of Red River and owner of Red River Ski Area since 1984. He passed away in May, 2008.

Skiing was Drew's guiding passion so during his first year in college he found work as a ski patrol for Sipapu, and then worked as a ski instructor for Red River Ski Area. He joined PSIA (Professional Ski Instructors of America) in 1968 and earned his Level 2 certification in 1971 and Level 3 certification in 1973. After his college graduation, Drew worked for Red River Ski Area as a ski school supervisor for two years, then was a ski school director a year at Angel Fire Resort before returning to Red River Ski Area where he ultimately worked for more than 30 years as ski school director, marketing director, general manager and, finally, owner. Upon his death, Drew was sole owner, president, and general manager of Red River Ski Area.

He was always great at "getting the word out" to neighboring communities via vehicles other than electronic and print media. The word 'vehicles' is important, as Drew championed Wally Dobbs and his Little Red Willis tours throughout the multitudes of towns and cities in neighboring states. State Fairs, ski shows, sports expos and the like were priority in Drew's marketing plan. Drew also hosted local schools' ski programs and was an avid supporter of the Red River Junior Racing Team and the University of New Mexico Ski Team.

In addition to Drew's 40-year affiliation with PSIA, he was a longtime member of Ski New Mexico and served as president more than once, most recently in 1998, and on its board of directors. At an advertising committee meeting in the 1970's the search for a Ski New Mexico slogan was in progress when Drew said, "how about 'Ski where the sun spends the winter?'" Within minutes the committee shortened it to "Ski the Winter Sun", and Drew was a hero!

Recognizing that his ski area and local businesses were intertwined, Drew also contributed to the growth and success of Red River by serving on the board of directors of the Red River Chamber of Commerce, on several town committees, including the Economic Development Committee, and as a town councilor 1974-78.

Cathy Gonzales, Vice President of Conventions and Tourism for the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce.

Cathy has been heading this division for nearly 30 years, and has developed extensive contacts with national corporations and Hispanic executives nationally and internationally, promoting Albuquerque as a convention and tourist destination. Reaching out to partners around the world, she has an advantage in Spain and Latin America due to her fluency in both Spanish and English. She has traveled throughout the US, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Europe, successfully securing hundreds of events for New Mexico that have made a significant economic impact.

Cathy has also developed a strong group of volunteers who tirelessly assist with convention logistics. That team is very influential in conventions returning to Albuquerque due to their endless energy and expert assistance. Beyond her position with the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, Cathy works with the US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and serves on the board of the International Association of Hispanic Meeting Professionals, is a member of the Connected International Meeting Professionals Association and is an affiliate member of the National Council of La Raza.

Loretta Armenta, President of Qwest and former President of the AHCC states: "Cathy Gonzales' outreach has increased cultural and diversity awareness. She is respected by leaders within the political and business community. Her efforts in bringing conventions and tourism to Albuquerque have earned her national and international recognition plus numerous awards. She is a true ambassador." Cathy has made her love for New Mexico her lifetime career and in the process she has brought recognition to her birthplace as the "Land of Enchantment" where everyone should visit.

Al Lucero, current chairman of the New Mexico Tourism Commission, owner of Maria's Santa Fe restaurant. Al began a 30 year career in broadcasting while attending UNM, staying in radio for 10 years then entering TV management in Arizona for 20 yrs.

In 1983 he returned to Santa Fe to put Channel 2 (Independent) on the air, serving as President and COO until selling the station in 1985. He and his wife Laurie then purchased Maria's New Mexican Kitchen and became involved in many efforts to bring tourists to Santa Fe. Al became an expert on tequila and margaritas, with three books published: "The Real Margarita Book," "The Great Margarita Book" and "The Great Margarita Book – 2nd edition", with sales exceeding 100,000 copies.

He organized several grass roots efforts to fill hotel rooms outside the July-August season, the most successful of which is the Santa Fe Wine and Chile Fiesta which he spearheaded along the Gordon Heiss. In an effort to bridge the lull in visitors to Santa Fe between Labor Day and the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta, he set out to establish Santa Fe as an international culinary destination and "let people know that you could find fine dining in New Mexico, and that we did not just serve enchiladas and tacos." Now in it's 19th year the event "fills every room in town with visitors and cash drawers with green backs!" Al has always said that full hotel rooms mean full restaurants, full galleries and full retail businesses, and has done much to promote that idea.

He has served as chairman of the board of the NM Restaurant Association, Santa Fe Restaurant Association, El Rancho de las Golondrinas living museum, the city of Santa Fe OTAB; past president of Santa Fe Economic Development, Inc; founder, past president and current board member of the Santa Fe Wine and Chile Fiesta; member of the board of the Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce; member of the School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management Advisory Board for NMSU; member Community Advisory Committee of KNME-TV and was most recently appointed by Governor Bill Richardson as Chairman of the New Mexico Tourism Commission.

The Tourism Association of New Mexico (TANM) is a non-profit membership organization created over 20 years ago to unite the interests of the state's travel, tourism and allied industries, and works closely with the New Mexico Tourism Department, the New Mexico Lodging Association and New Mexico Restaurant Association. TANM works as an advocate for the tourism industry with both the executive and legislative branches of state government.