

Sandia Mountains Medallion Trees

The Man Behind the Mystery

Presentation to Friends of the Sandia Mountains by Mike Coltrin and John Holmes September 2, 2025

Our speakers



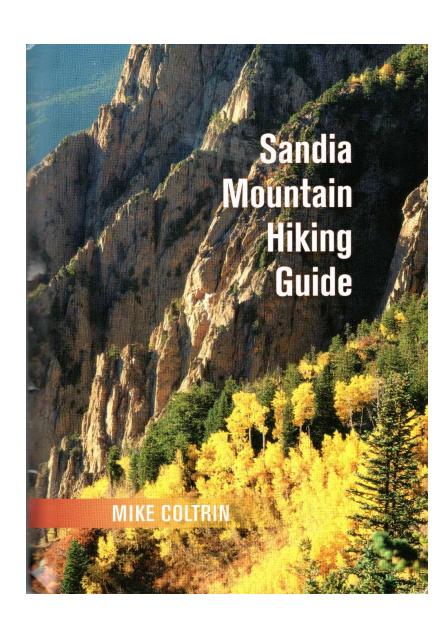
Mike Coltrin is a physical chemist by training and was a member of the technical staff of Sandia National Laboratories for 37 years before his retirement in 2017. He has enjoyed hiking in the Sandia Mountains for more than 40 years and is the author of the Sandia Mountain Hiking Guide. He created the Friends of the Sandias website serving as a member of the FOSM board of directors and webmaster from 2005 to 2021.



John Holmes is the third of five children born to David and Arlene Holmes. He grew up in Albuquerque and enjoyed countless hours exploring the Sandia Mountains with his dad. His professional career was spent in the jewelry business in Albuquerque.

Chance Encounter Inspired Mike Coltrin

I am



Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dave Jackson for his support, advocacy, and encouragement in this project. Dave Jackson, Gerry Sussman, and Bob Julyan

Dave Holmes is a long-time hiker of the Sandia Mountains, whom I met on Peñasco Blanco Trail several years ago. He has covered all of the ground discussed here every year for the past forty years, or so. Dave has patiently described nooks and crannies all over the mountain and sent me off to find them. He has also given me many firsthand accounts of historical events related to the trails, old newspaper clippings, and beautiful old photographs of the mountain. I appreciate the knowledge that he has passed on to me and will try to preserve it.

obtained from a compilation by Bob Julyan in the new *Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains* (see Additional Reading). I also appreciate Bob's advice on the content and revisions of this manuscript. I have benefited from his interest and experience.

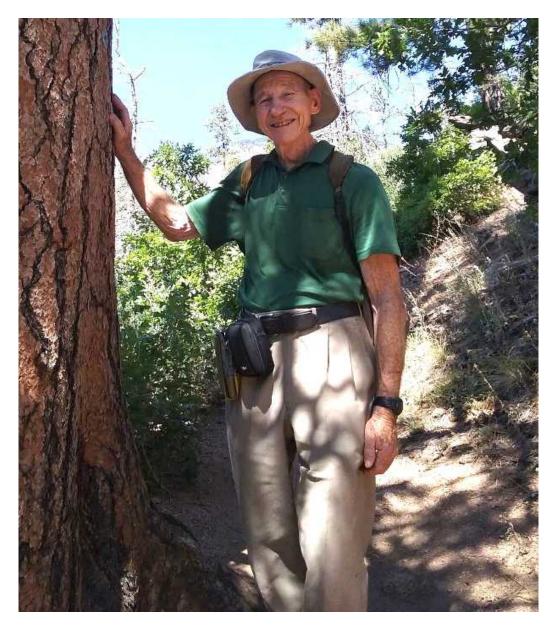
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David's Impressive Excel Database

| A B | C D | E | F | G | н | - 1 | | К | L | М | N | 0 |
|---|---|---|--|--------------|--|----------|---------|---|---------|---|--------|-----------|
| Sandia Mountain Medallions & Tags | | 1 1 | | 100 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| November 4, 2006 | | *************************** | | | | 1 | | • | | ••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••• | | |
| Version #33 | *************************************** | | | Medallio | n i | 1 | | *************************************** | ****** | ······ | | * |
| # Medallion Description | Location (Lat/Long) | Elevation | Trail Name | Metal | (4) | North o | Minutes | West o | Minutes | North ° | West o | Waypoint |
| 1 1st Frankfurter Tree, DD ~ 1963, GD ~ 1652, TB17 | | | Penasco Blanco Tra | | • | •••••••• | | | | | | FRNKFRTR |
| 2 Brooklyn Bridge Tree, GD ~ 1883, TB ~ 1964, TB16 | | | Penasco Blanco Trai | | | | | | | | | BRKLYN |
| 3 Start Wars of the Roses, GD~1455, Douglas Fir, 2000 Data, Tree 69 | | | Survey Trail | Brass | • | | | | | | | WARROSES |
| 4 1st Romanov Russian Tsar Tree, GD 1613, #81 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | North Peak Trail | Aluminu | n: by the "cliff" about half way on the hike to North Peak | " | | | | | | 1ROMANOV |
| 5 Charles I King of England Tree, GD~1625, #82 | | ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~ | North Peak Trail | | n; about 100 feet south of 1st Romanov medallion | | | | | | | CHAR1KNG |
| 6 James Monroe 5th Pres, GD~1817, TB~1966 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | Chimney Canyon Tra | ·····• | <i>~</i> | " | | | | | | MONROE |
| 7 California 31st State, GD~1850, TB~1966 TB2 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | Chimney Canyon Tra | | | | | | | | | CALIFOR |
| The Robinson Crusoe Tree, Rescue of A. Selkirk inspired Defoe's novel, | | | to the same of the | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 GD~1709, Ponderosa Pine, 2000 Data, Tree 91 | | 8,240 | La Luz Trail | Brass | At Ponderosa Point | | | | | | | CRUSOE |
| Elizabeth I Birth Tree, GD~1533, Ponderosa 1999 Data Tree 78, Queen of | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 England, 1558-1603 | | 8,841 | La Luz Trail | Brass | 100' northwest from 1st switchback below La Cueva Overlook | | | | | | | ELIZBIRTH |
| 10 Theory of Gravitation Tree, GD∾1684, #93 | | 8,805 | La Luz Trail | Aluminu | n About 75 feet south of Queen Elizabeth Medallion | | | | | | | GRAVITY |
| 11 P. T. Barnum Birth Tree GD~1810 TB3 | 1 | 7,794 | La Luz Trail 137B | Aluminu | n | | | | | | | BARNUM |
| Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. Tree, The Great Dissenter 1841 - 1935, GD~1841, | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 Pinyon Pine 1999 Data Tree, TB4, TB~1933 | | 7,075 | Old La Luz Trail | Brass | Just below trail junction with Tramway Trail | | | | | | | OLHOLMES |
| 13 TWA Flight 260 Crash Site, 19 Feb 1955, Martin 404, 0 Survivors, 16 Died | | 8,737 | Domingo Baca Trail | Brass | Mid Way thru plane debris on left side of path | | | | | | | TWACRASH |
| USAC Northrop A-17 Crash Site, 17 Nov 1941, In Memory Of:, Lt Seldon T. | NEW YORK | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 Miller, Staff Sgt Howard L Miller | | 7,731 | Bear Canyon Trail | Brass | Just above (south) crash site by about 15 feet | | | | | | | A17CRASH |
| 15 English Window Tax Tree, GD∾1695, #102 | | 8,513 | Whitewash Trail | Aluminu | n Within about 100 feet of Oso Pass and trail junctions | | | | | | | WINDOTAX |
| 16 Huygens Manometer Tree, GD~1661, TB~1938, TB13 | | 5,846 | South Crest Trail | Aluminu | n ~ .83 miles north of Canyon Estates Trailhead, ~ .11 miles before junction with Lower Faulty Trail. | | | | | | | HUYGENS |
| Robert II Crowned King of Scotland, Grandson of Robert the Bruce, GD~1371, | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 Pinyon Pine, 2000 Data, TREE 85 | | O combination | South Crest Trail | Brass | | | | | | | | RBT2KING |
| 18 Joan of Arc Birth Tree, GD~1413, Pinyon Pine, Y2000 Data, Tree 86 | | () () () () () () () () () () | South Crest Trail | Brass | | _ | | | | | | JOANARC |
| 19 End French & Indian War Tree, GD~1763, DD~1939 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | South Crest Trail | Steel | East of 1st Fountain Pen medallion and south of trail on log facing up | | | | | | | FRINDLOG |
| 20 4th of July Tree, GC~1776, DD~1999, #56 | | | South Crest Trail | Steel | About 30 feet north east of First Fountain Pen Medallion | | | | | | | 4THJULY |
| 21 1st Fountain Pen Tree, GD~1780, #57 | | | South Crest Trail | Alumina | | | | | | | | FOUNTPEN |
| 22 Don Diego De Vargas Tree, GD~1693, Ponderosa 1998 Data, Tree 38 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | South Crest Trail | Brass | <u>, </u> | | | | | | | DEVARGAS |
| 23 Boston Tea Party Tree, GD~1773, TBB | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | South Crest Trail | Aluminu | n | | | | | | | BOSTPRTY |
| 24 Ohio 17th State Tree, GD~1803, TB~1960, TB9 | | | South Crest Trail | Aluminu | ii. \$ i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i | | | | | | | OHIO17TH |
| 25 Paul Revere's Ride Tree, GD~1774, TB10 | | | South Crest Trail | Aluminu | n . | | | | | | | PREVERE |
| 26 Alaska 49th State Tree, GD~1959, #58 | | | South Crest Trail | Aluminu | | | | | | | | ALASKA49 |
| 27 Vulcanized Rubber Tree, GD~1844, #37 | | •••••••••••••••••••• | South Crest Trail | Aluminu | n e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e | | | | | | | VULRUBR |
| 28 Lonesome Pine, GD~1762, Douglas Fir, 1998 Data, Tree 35 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | South Crest Trail | Brass | | | | | | | | LONSPINE |
| 29 N.Y. Stock Exchange Tree, GD~1792, Douglas Fir, 1999 Data, Tree 50 | | | South Crest Trail | Brass | | | | | | | | NYSTOCK |
| 30 Thomas Jefferson 3rd President Tree, GD~1801, Douglas Fir, 1999 Data, Tree | | the second section in the second section in | South Crest Trail | Brass | | - | | | | | | TJEFFPRES |
| 31 Hershey Chocolate Tree, GD~1857, TB~1954, TB5 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | South Crest Trail | | r From waypoint SSPEAK3 about 1/3 way toward Bart's Trail Junction | | | | | | | HERSHEY |
| 32 Dead log (SCT shortcut) GD~1696, TB~1930, DD~1930, TB 11 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | South Crest Shortcu | | | | | | | | | DEADLOG |
| 33 William Penn Birth Tree, GD~1644, TB~1938, TB12 | | 939 www.hoo.co.co.je | South Crest Shortcu | | n 1.12 miles from Trail Head on right side along trail | | | | | | | WPENN |
| 34 Ben Franklin's Kite Tree, GD~1752, TB~1928, TB7 | | ···· | South Crest Shortcu | | n 1.32 miles from Trail Head on left side along trail | | | | | | | BENFRANK |
| 35 First Performance of Hamlet Tree, GD~1601, Pinyon Pine, 1998 Data, Tree 12 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | Faulty Trail | Brass | | | | | | | | HAMLET |
| 36 Mozart's First Symphony Tree, GD~1764, #13 | | | Faulty Trail | | n left side of trail as you hike north, up the hill about 50 yards, easily seen from trail | | | | | | | MOZART |
| 37 Red Corpuscle Tree, GD~1668, #64 | | | Faulty Trail | | n hiking north, on right side 10 - 15 feet below trail | | | | | | | REDCORP |
| 38 Coronado Expedition Tree, GD~1541, #32 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | Faulty Trail | out on white | n 30 feet north of Red Corpuscle medallion and about 60 feet east of trail | | | | | | | CORONADO |
| 39 Phosphorous Tree, GD~1669, #63 | | | Faulty Trail | | n ~ .4 miles south of the Upper/Lower Faulty trail junction | | | | | | | PHOSPHOR |
| 40 King Henry VI Tree, GD~1422, #33 | | | Faulty Trail | | n On East side of Faulty Trail between George Washington and Phosphorus Medallion Trees. On an old Pinon Tree | | | | | | | HENRY6 |
| 41 Capt Kidd Hanged Tree, GD~1701, #66 | | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | Faulty Trail | | n On East side of Faulty Trail about 75 feet south of George Washington Medillon | | | | | | | CPTKIDD |
| 42 George Washington Birth Tree, GD~1732, LS~1957, #107 | | ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~ | Faulty Trail | | n hiking north, on left side about 75 yards up the hill, easily seen from trail | | | | | | | GWASHTN |
| 43 French & Indian War Tree, GD~1757, #42 | | *************************************** | Faulty Trail | | about 60 feet east of trail at Red Saddle | | | | | | | FRENCHIND |
| 44 Stamp Act Tree GD~1765 #41 | | | Faulty Trail | | n North of Upper/Lower Faulty Trail Junction | | | | | | | STMPACT |
| 45 Polarization of Light Tree, GD~1678, #40 | | | Faulty Trail | | n ~.8 miles north of the Upper/Lower Faulty Trail junction, ~ 15 feet east of trail, only visible when walking north on trail. | | | | | | | POLARIZ |
| 46 Lorenzo Log Water Trough #22, GD~1630, DD~1920 | | 7,571 | Faulty Trail | Steel | Junction of Forest Park Carryon Bottom Trail | | | | | | | LORENZLOG |
| | | | | illonosous | | | | | | | | |
| 47 Marie Antoinefte Death #23, GD~1793 | | | Faulty Trail | | n From Junction of Forest Park Canyon Bottom go west up hill for about 145 feet | | | | | | | MARANTION |
| 48 Binomial Theorem Tree #7, GD~1663 | | 7,530 | Faulty Trail | Aluminu | n Very clost to Hudson Bay medallion | | | | | | | BENOMIAL |

David Francis Holmes

1933-2025





David Francis Holmes passed away June 29, 2025. He was born May 5, 1933, in Pottstown, Pennsylvania and grew up in Douglasville, PA. Dave is survived by his beloved wife of 72 years, Ruth Arlene Holmes, their 5 children, Debra Holmes Graham (Rick), Susan Holmes Foor (Jim), John Holmes (Isabel), Dennis Holmes (Nicole) and Gael Holmes Hofemeier, along with 10 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, and his first great-great-

grandchild, who is on the way.

During the Korean War, Dave served in the U.S. Army at Sandia Base in Albuquerque. He and Arlene loved New Mexico and made Albuquerque their lifelong home. After he left the service, Dave attended UNM, where he earned a BS in Electrical Engineering in 1965, graduating with distinction. He spent most of his career working for the Air Force Weapons Lab at Kirtland Air Force Base, including the Airborne Laser Lab. Dave retired in 1996.

Dave and Arlene took their children on wonderful vacations, visiting all the lower 48 states and many national parks and monuments. They continued to travel the US after the kids grew up, visiting most state high points over the years.

Dave hiked the Sandia Mountains for more than 65 years. He became an expert on the plants, geology, and history of the Sandias and was a friendly presence to those he met on the trails, greeting them with a smile and always ready to share information about the mountains.

He was a curious, intelligent man, a lifelong learner, and a passionate hiker and steward of the Sandias. Many of us have benefited from the work he performed on trails throughout the mountains and from his interest in Sandia Mountains trees, which culminated in the Medallion Trees project.

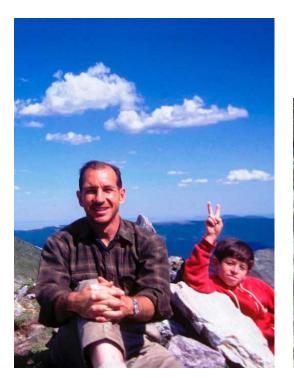
Within the family, he was a mentor and always ready to help when needed. We grieve his loss and will keep him in our hearts always.

The family celebrated his life in a private gathering.

Albuquerque Holmes Family Home Since Early 1950s

- Family residence -Albuquerque
- Place of work Kirtland AFB
- Weekend home away from home - Sandia Mountains











David's Vocation - Electrical Engineering

University Student Given Scholarship

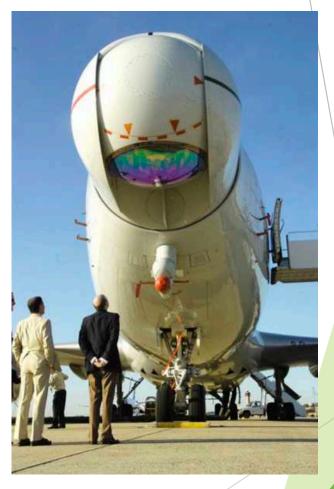
A Western Electronic educational funds scholarship of \$125 has been awarded to David F. Holmes, a junior majoring in electrical engineering at the University of New Mexico.

The funds are being used for Holmes' educational expenses during the spring semester. He was selected for the award by a faculty scholarship committee of the electrical engineering department and the UNM scholarship committee.

Holmes, his wife and four children reside at 316 General Bradley, NE. * SCHOLARSHIP—David F. Holmes, a junior majoring in electrical engineering at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, was awarded a Western Electronic educational funds scholarship of \$125 for the Spring semester. Son of the Francis P. Holmes, 108 North Keim street, he was selected for the award by a faculty scholarship committee of the electrical engineering department and the UNM scholarship committee. Holmes, a veteran of the US Army, lives with his wife and four children in Albuquerque . . . Sherrill Ann

A delightful and very instructive movie was premiered by Joe Geary and David Holmes, Air Force Weapons Laboratory, Kirtland Air Force Base. The oscilloscope displayed synthesized fringe patterns with known values of third-order aberrations convolved with x-y tilt and piston for phase shifting. Both as an instructional tool illustrating the effect of aberrations on fringe patterns and as a method for the analysis of fringe patterns by direct comparison with the synthesized pattern, this technique is most valuable.



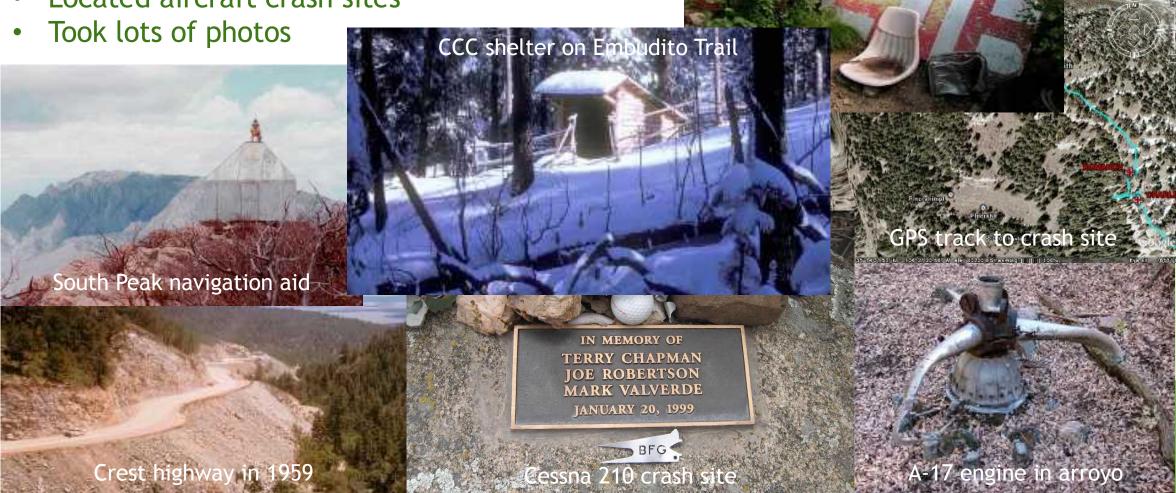


David's Passion -Sandia Mountains

Hiked every canyon and trail

Blazed and mapped new trails

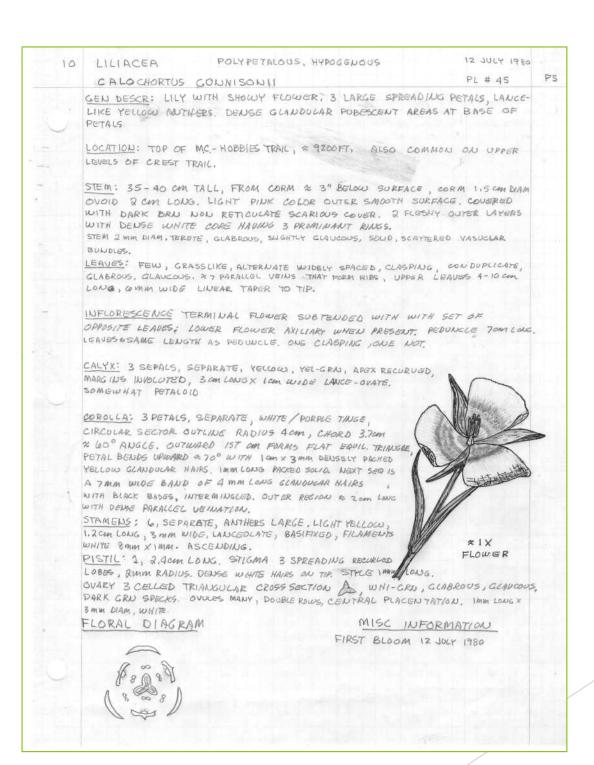
Located aircraft crash sites



TWA crash site

David's Passion -Sandia Mountains

- Used his engineering skills to become self-taught expert on flora and fauna
- Note the detail and artistic talent in this one-of-many plant descriptions



David's History of Sandia Mountains

- Seven dense typewritten pages of events from 300 million years BCE to March 2018
- Describes historical events that shaped the culture of the mountains
 - Refers to completion of Faulty Trail sections (1974-2007)
 - Describes forest fires and insect infestations
 - Describes aircraft crashes and sites Describes other deaths in mountains (falls, exposure, ...)
 - Mentions Hiking and Field guides
 - Subtle mention of Medallion Trees
 - Will post on FOSM website

| File:SandiaEv | docx SANDIA MOUNTAIN EVENT SUMMARY Rev: 16 Mar 2018 Future site of the Sandia Mountains is below sea level at the bottom of a shallow sea. |
|----------------|--|
| | |
| 20,000,000BP | Rio Grande rift began to develop in response to extensional forces within the earth's crust. |
| 0,000,000BP | Sandia Mtns began to form on the eastern edge of the Rio Grande rift. |
| 0,000BP | Sandia Mtns were much the same as they are today. Sandia Man Cave was occupied by early hunters. Bones of mammoths, mastodons, camels, & bison were reported to be found embedded in the cave floor sediments. |
| 313 | Tijeras Pueblo inhabited until it was abandoned by 1370. The site was reoccupied from 1390 to 1425 |
| 680 | Pueblo Indian Revolt: At least 5 Spanish mines in the Sandia foothills, which included the Montezuma Mine, were in |
| | operation at the time. The Spanish used Indian slaves from Cochiti, San Felipe, Santa Domingo, & Sandia Pueblos to work the mines. The Indians sealed and hid the mine entrances after the revolt. |
| 706 | Albuquerque founded by Governor Francisco Cuerva Valdez in honor of Duque de Alburquerque. |
| 711 | What is now known as the "Elena Gallegos Land Grant" was awarded to Captain Diego Montoya |
| 748 | Massive fires in Southwest U.S. Very dry year in Sandias with only 20% of normal tree ring growth. |
| 763 | Settlers locate in Carnuel; abandoned in 1770 due to Apache raids; resettled in 1819. |
| | |
| 767 | Las Huertas (later Placitas) was occupied by settlers, abandoned in 1774 & reoccupied by 1840. |
| 776 | United States declared independence from England. |
| 800 (circa) | Road of the oxen (El Camino de Los Bueyes) passed by the springs at future site of Sandia Park. |
| 1819? or 1822? | A great fire burned many trees in the Sandias. 1819 & 1822 were dry years in the Sandias & therefore likely fire years. |
| 1819 | San Antonio was settled by 22 families at the ancient pueblo ruins of San Antonio north of Tijeras. |
| 1819 | Tijeras was settled less than a year after the settlement of San Antonio. Water was more available along Tijeras Creek |
| 821 | Mexican rule replaced Spanish influence in the New Mexico Territory |
| 821 | Trade over the Santa Fe Trail began. More Americans began filtering into the region. |
| 826 or later | Canoncito was settled by Juan Nuanes et al. Apache attacks slowed growth. More settlers arrived in the late 1850s |
| 828 | Placer Gold discovered in Ortiz Mtns; may have intensified mining interest in Sandia Mtns. |
| | |
| 844 | San Antonito was settled possibly by a feuding group split from San Antonio. |
| 846 | Mexico relinquishes control of New Mexico to the United States |
| 851 | Massive fires in Southwest U.S. Mildly dry year in Sandias with 80% of normal tree ring growth. |
| 853, 10 Oct | Dr Bigelou & Jules Marconi did the first recorded climb to the Sandia Crest summit. |
| 858 | U.S. Army made a dirt wagon road through Tijeras Canyon to replace a narrow horse trail. |
| 861 | Massive fires in Southwest U.S. Start of 3 very dry years in Sandias with about 30% of normal tree ring growth. |
| 861 - 1865 | Civil War in the United States |
| 1862, March | A brigade of Confederate troops camped for a week at San Antonio on their way to defeat at the battle of Glorieta. |
| 1867 - 1903 | A railroad grade was surveyed and possibly constructed through Tijeras Canyon but then abandoned in 1903 |
| 1870 | Leonard Skinner "The San Antonito Lumber King" opened a large saw mill in the vicinity of Doc Long Picnic |
| | Ground. |
| 1874, 27 June | Charlotte Ellis was born in Joliet III. She collected plant specimens & documented much of the flora of the Sandia |
| | Mtns in the early 1900s. She lived at the Ellis Ranch in Las Huertas Canyon. |
| 879 | Massive fires in Southwest U.S. Start of 2 very dry years in Sandias with about 70% and 20% of normal growth. |
| 1881 | Pipeline (15 miles long) constructed from Sandia Mtns to supply water for the placer mines near the San Pedro Mtns |
| | Source of the water was a small dam below the Las Huertas P.G. A road was built from Placitas to the dam site whe |
| | the pipeline was constructed. Ex General & President U. S. Grant proposed the pipeline & had it built. |
| 887 | La Luz ore vein discovered below Sandia Crest by Juan Nieto; the vein was then lost and not rediscovered until 1907 |
| 892 | Puerto Nambe forest fire in the Santa Fe National Forest burns for two months. 1887 was cited by a different source |
| 893 | George Ellis, a Civil War veteran, established a 160 acre homestead in Las Huertas Canyon. Ellis built a trail from |
| | the road's end up Las Huertas Canyon to access his ranch. A trail from La Madera via Lagunita Seca was also used |
| 893 | Tijeras was at the junction of primitive roads: East to west through Sedillo to Albuquerque and north to south from |
| | Santa Fe through Cedro Canyon. |
| 894 to 1904 | Mines at Bland & Albemarle in the Jemez were in their most active years. |
| 897 | Francisco Duran started homesteading at Piedra Lisa tract in South Fork of del Agua Canyon. He built a house, |
| | fences, & irrigation ditches. This property was later acquired by the Sandia Pueblo who then traded it to the USFS. |
| 900 to 1914 | Charlotte C. Ellis (daughter of George) collected several hundred different plant species in the Sandia Mtns. She did |
| 15-76-5 | this in cooperation with the leading NM plant biologists at the time. Her plant specimens can be found in herbarium |
| | throughout the country. |
| 906 | George Ellis' son Augie shot the last recorded grizzly bear in the Sandia Mtns. |
| 907 | |
| 201 | H. B. Hammond became the first Forest Ranger for the 100,555 acre Sandia District. Turkeys, deer, & bear were |
| 1000 += 1001 | plentiful. Almost no roads existed in the area at the time. |
| 1909 to 1921 | "La Luz Mine" in operation (originally named the "Ruppe Mine" after its owner). Access to the mine was by |
| 909 | precursor to the La Luz Trail. |
| | "Well Country Camp" was established by Larry Glasebrook, a Chicago physician with tuberculosis (now Hobbies). |

2001, 19 Mar

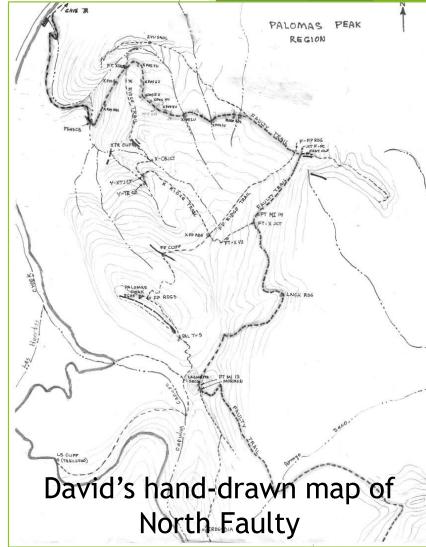
I found my 1st Medallion Tree on the south Crest Trail. It & many other trees have been named & tagged for an event that occurred near the date they germinated (GD). Over the years I & other hikers have found over 70 such trees mostly along Sandia trails. The tags are 2 inch diameter brass or aluminum discs with name & date engraved on the surface.

David Blazed Faulty and North Faulty/Mystery Trails









David Cored Trees on Both Sides of Mountains

- Started coring in 1990s
- Cored over 150 trees by February 2008
- Installed 80 steel, aluminum, and brass medallions
- Installed 22 Trail Blaze (TB) medallions

GPS CO-ORDINATES: NAD 27 DATUM

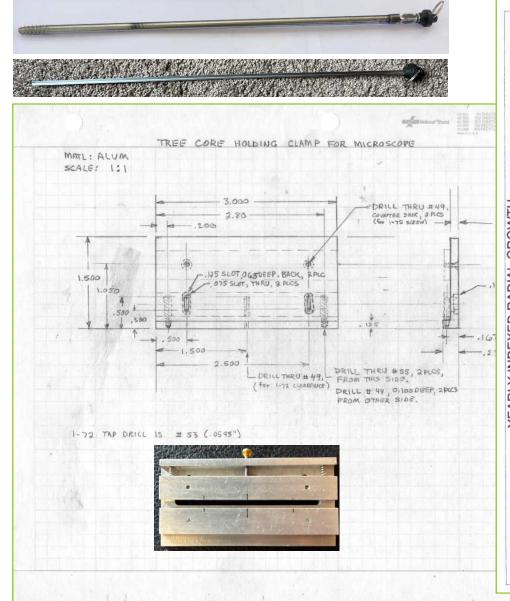


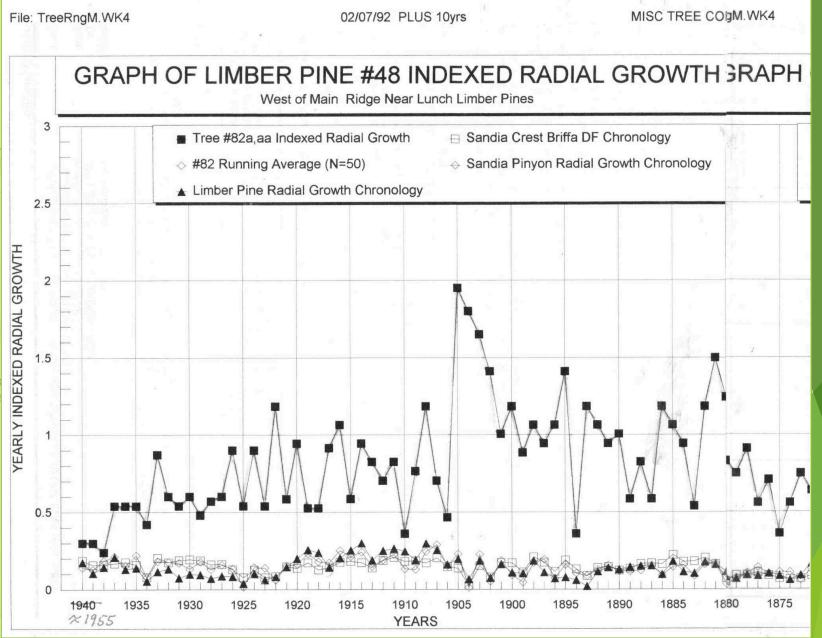
Revised: 20 Feb 2008

CORED TREES ALONG FAULTY TRAIL & LOWER FEEDER TRAILS

| 34RTNCTR | 35deg 06.248N 106deg 23.922W | 7356ft | #34 no name Pinyon / rotten center (before 1686) |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|---|
| 13MOZART | 35deg 06.295N 106deg 23.911W | 7392ft | #13 Mozart's 1st symphony @ age 8 yrs (1764) |
| 30PINYON | 35deg 06,286N 106deg 23,898W | 7392ft | #30 pinyon(circa 1720) @ Hobbies Tr Jct |
| 12HAMLET | 35deg 06.281N 106deg 23.888W | 7382ft | #12 Hamlet 1st performance Tree (1601) |
| 31LEANER | 35deg 06.341N 106deg 23.861W | 7410ft | #31 Pinyon leaner (1673) |
| R CRPSL | 35deg 06.379N 106deg 23.798W | 7431ft | #64 Red Corpuscle Tree (1668) |
| CORONADO | 35deg 06.383N 106deg 23.793W | 7420ft | #32 Coronado Expedition Tree (1541) |
| PHOSFRUS | 35deg 06.389N 106deg 23.804W | 7436ft | #63 Phosphorous Tree (1669) |
| HENRY VI | 35deg 06.426N 106deg 23.788W | 7416ft | #33 King Henry VI Crowned Tree (1422) |
| CAPT KID | 35deg 06.474N 106deg 23.823W | | #66 Captain Kidd Hanged Tree (1701) |
| 65NEXTPI | 35deg 06.476N 106deg 23.822W | | #65 Pinyon next to #66 (circa 1720) |
| WASH BIR | 35deg 06.489N 106deg 23.819W | 7477ft | #107 Washington's Birth Tree (1732, 1957 LS) |
| F IND WR | 35deg 06.980N 106deg 23.785W | 7561ft | #42 Start French & Indian War Tree (1757) |
| STMP ACT | 35deg 06.997N 106deg 23.798W | | #41 Stamp Act Tree (1765), Red Hill Saddle |
| POL LITE | 35deg 07.332N 106deg 23.852W | | #40 Polarization of Light Tree (1678) |
| 73LOR CB | 35deg 07.437N 106deg 23.829W | 7646ft | #73 Large Ponderosa in Lorenzo can bot (circa 1800) |
| MARE ANT | 35deg 07.476N 106deg 23.814W | | #23 Marie Antoinette Guillotined (1793, died 2005) |
| LOR STMP | 35deg 07.467N 106deg 23.796W | | #22S Lorenzo Log rotting stump |
| LORNZ LG | 35deg 07.462N 106deg 23.783W | | #22 Lorenzo Log Water Trough (1630/tree cut 1920) |
| 21SAPTRE | 35deg 07.452?? 106deg 23.758?? | | #21 Douglas fir in canyon bottom (bad core) |
| HUDS BAY | 35deg 07.506N 106deg 23.602W | 7547ft | #20 Hudson Bay Co Tree (1670), APS Ridge |
| BIN THRM | 35deg 07.500N 106deg 23.592W | HIND SECTION IS | #7 Binomial Theorem Tree (1663), APS Ridge |
| 19APSPNY | 35deg 07.501N 106deg 23.569W | 7521ft | #19 APS Trail unnamed pinyon tree (circa 1735) |
| 11PONDR | 35deg 07.501N 106deg 23.588W | 7547ft | #11 no name, ponderosa (1676), APS Rdg |
| 39BIGALI | 35deg 07.553N 106deg 23.459W | 7441ft | #39 Very big alligator juniper east of Faulty Tr |
| 06ALIGTR | 35deg 07.563N 106deg 23.462W | 7444ft | #6 Alligator juniper 60ft north of very big alligator |
| 72BGPOND | 35deg 07.984N 106deg 23.521W | 7644ft | #72 Big ponderosa S. of Cole Spr Saddle (circa 1794) |
| 130MUDSP | 35deg 07.684N 106deg 23.080W | 7124ft | #130 Ponderosa 25ft south of Mud Spring (1 core) |
| 131MUDSP | 35deg 07.693N 106deg 23.091W | 7136ft | #131 Ponderosa 25ft north of Mud Spring (1 core) |
| QUENCH | 35deg 08.214N 106deg 23.450W | 7567ft | #ME3 Bent trunk (core), Next to Gentian Spring |
| WLS FARGO | 35deg 08.361N 106deg 23.392W | 7513ft | #15 Wells Fargo & Co Tree (1852), Phantom CB |
| 1MINT | 35deg 08.375N 106deg 23.402W | 7529ft | #17 1st Mint Tree (1791), Phantom Creek CB |
| GRNT BRT | 35deg 08 380N 106deg 23.405W | 7538ft | #16 U.S.Grant Birth Tree (1822), Phantom CB |
| LWS CLRK | 35deg 08.355N 106deg 23.369W | 7495ft | #14 Lewis & Clark Tree (1804), Phantom Canyon |
| OHMS LAW | 35deg 08.390N 106deg 23.399W | 7570ft | #9 Ohm's Law Tree (1827) |
| STATULIB | 35deg 08.399N 106deg 23.411W | 7546ft | #8 Statue of Liberty Tree (1885) |
| YELSTONE | 35deg 08.384N 106deg 23.379W | | #27 Yellowstone N. P. Tree (1872) |
| APOMATIX | 35deg 08.380N 106deg 23.375W | 7524ft | #10 Appomattox Tree (1865), Lee surr to Grant |
| 28ROTNPI | 35deg 08.357N 106deg 23.326W | | #28 Rotten center pinyon pine (before 1835) |
| 24BALOON | 35deg 08.394N 106deg 23.381W | | #24 1st Balloon Flight Tree (1783) |
| DELISTAT | 35deg 08.397N 106deg 23.379W | | #4 Delaware 1st State Tree Stump (1787 / DD1996) |
| 26STATON | 35deg 08.443N 106deg 23.398W | | #26 Grand Central Station Tree (1913) |
| 25CENSUS | 35deg 08.448N 106deg 23.408W | | #25 First US Census Tree (1790) |
| OLIVERTW | 35deg 08.806N 106deg 23.290W | | #ME2 Oliver Twist Pinyon (no core) |
| ERIECNAL | 35deg 08.553N 106deg 23.054W | | #49 Erie Canal - Start Constr (1817), old Can Tr |
| LIMILATIVILL | 55405 55.55511 100405 25.05411 | 751710 | " To The Culture Durit Court (1017) old Cult II |

David's Coring Tools and Results





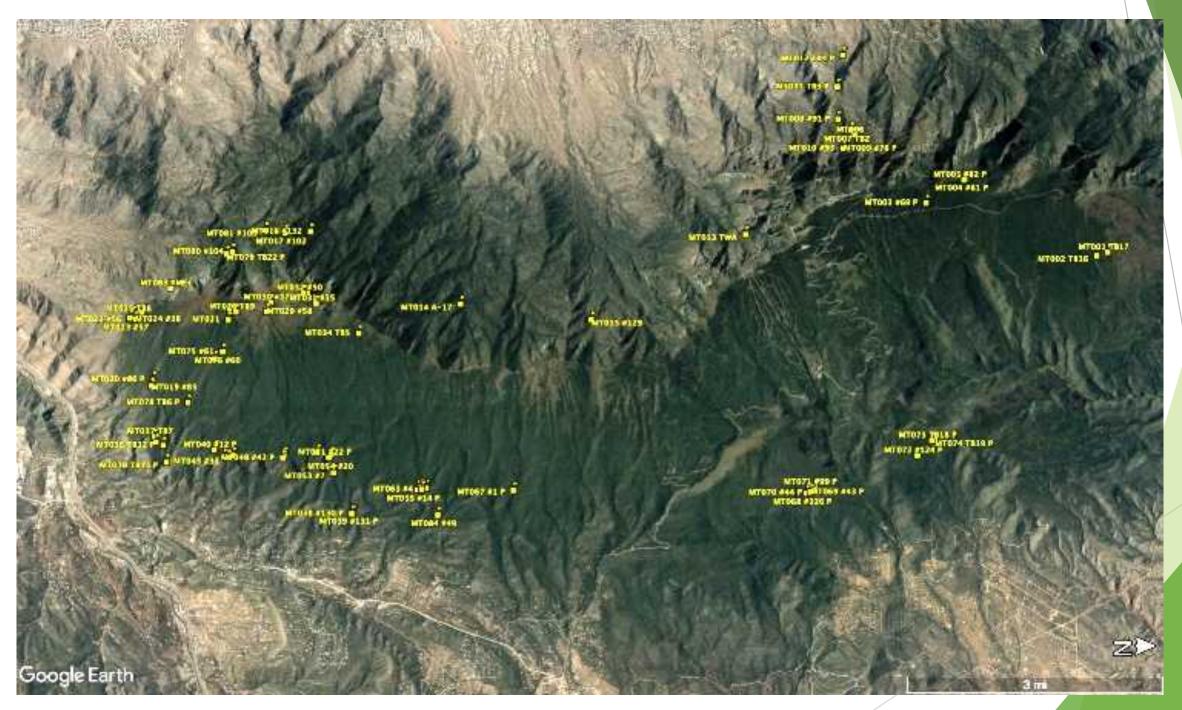
Tree Cores Donated to Science

- Given to Thomas W. Swetnam, Regents Professor of Dendrochronology, Emeritus
- Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research,
 University of Arizona, Jemez
 Mountains Tree-Ring Lab

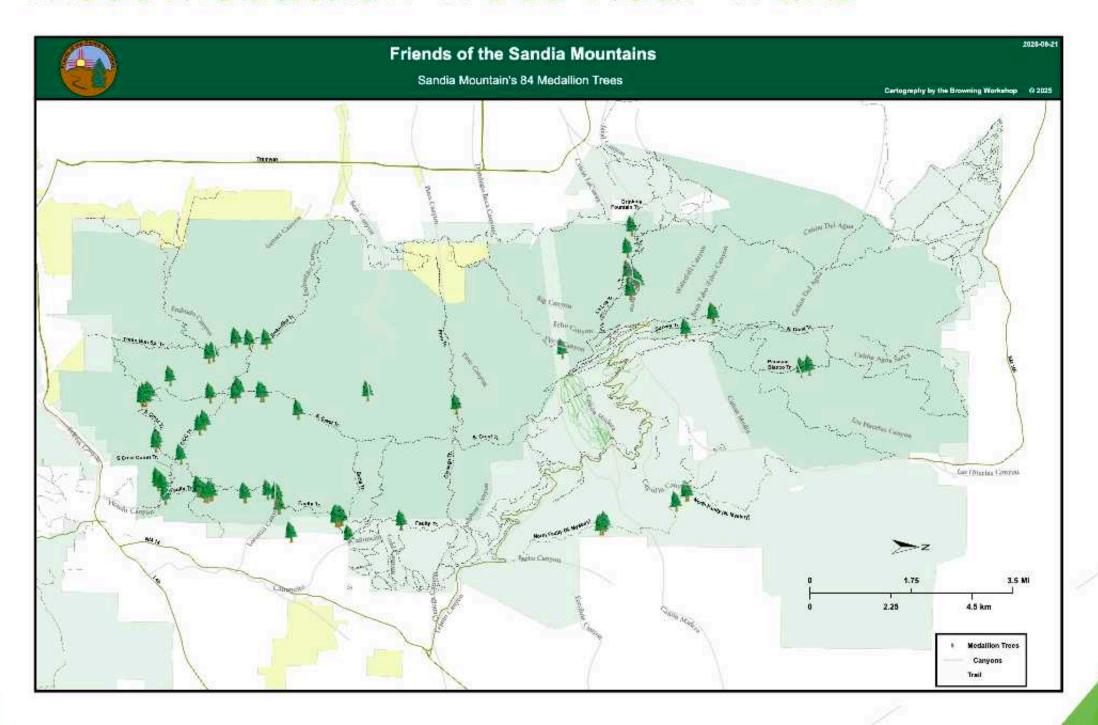




Medallion Trees Located Across Sandias



Most Medallion Trees Near Trails



Some Trees Have Fared Better than Others











Some Medallions Missing or Stolen

- David feared this would happen.
- Replicas installed (and stolen) in some cases.



Original medallion



Someone's not-so-exact replica



Original medallion

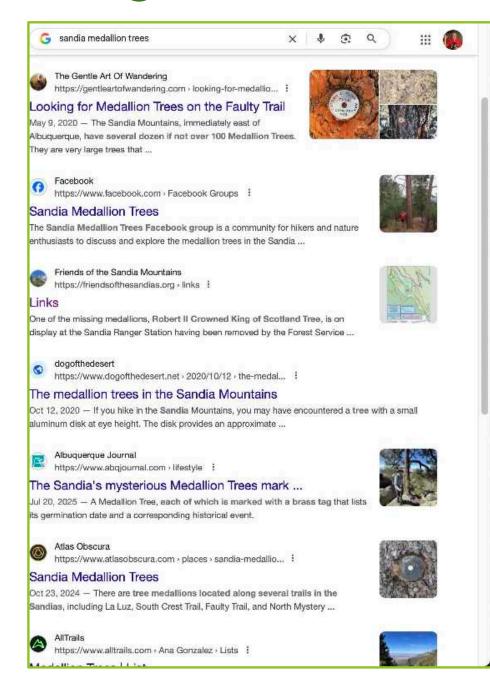


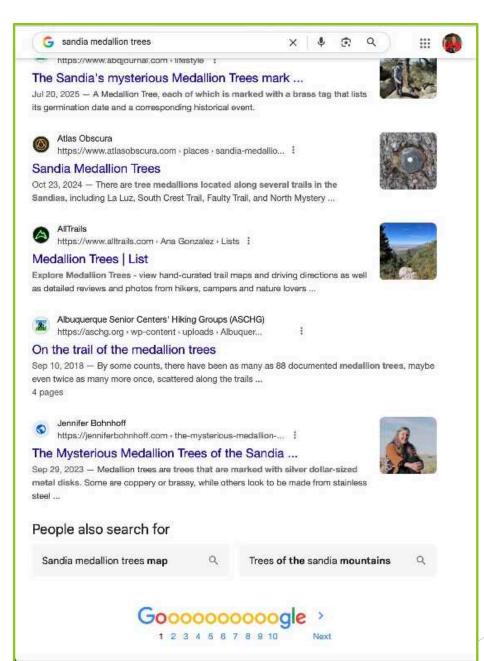
Jamey Browning's nearexact replica



Someone's not-so-exact replica

Google Search Yields Lots of Hits





News Articles Have Fed Public Interest

GD≈1812

#126

The Grimms' Fairy Tales Tree has a germination date of



On the trail of the medallion trees

Hikers captivated, historians puzzled by mysterious markers in the Sandias that link germination dates with historical events

'd like to imagine what happens not well versed in the more esoteric particulars of history comes across a tree in the Sandias studded with a small metal marker that reads, Galileo's Death Tree. Or one Anne Bolevn Beheaded Tree, Or Capt. Kidd Hanged Tree. Or

lion ties the tree's germination to 1541,

Deerfield Massacre Tree. Do they fear they've stumbled upon an ancient site of carnage? Do they shudder at the horror of their inadvertent find? Do they worry that spirits of the damned still haunt the

Do they get the heck out of there? Surely, though, they also wonder, as do we, who affixed these mysterious medallions to these trees.

Have you seen them? By some counts, there have been as many as 88 documented medallion trees. maybe even twice as many more once scattered along the trails throughout the Sandia Mountains like secret little

and the youngest is the Alaska 49th State

Tom Dieterle showed him a See ON THE TRAIL >> A4 kes three times a week, r medallion trees with a list

aid he never hiked much

ng the group, never heard

information, such as the date

as marked or the type of tree.

s been written about these finding them has largely been

reate hikes featuring the

of like a scavenger hunt for

es, a GPS receiver, a topo map and a pair of good hiking boots. "People seem pretty excited about them." he said. "They're kind of amazing."

along the Faulty Trail and the South Crest Trail. Others are located along the North Mystery, CCC and Three Gun ngs trails. A few are completely off

of the medallion trees

hed by word of mouth or the of a summer hike.

ast couple of months, though, ue hiker Carl Gervais has ng out the medallion trees on Two are somewhere near the Chimney Canyon Trail, a steep, treacherous excursion considered one of the most dangerous hikes in the Sandias, So far, Gervais has not attempted to reach those. He isn't sure while regressible feet.

He isn't sure who is responsible for the medallions. Apparently, nobody is. According to the Sandia Mountain ervais, who hikes mostly with erque Senior Centers' Hiking Natural History Center, they are the enior status beginning at the work of an "unknown person" in the

David Ryan, writer of the "Gentle Art of Wandering" book and website, suggests that they started as a project of the Civilian Conservation Corps, which built roads, ampgrounds and picnic areas in the as between 1933 and 1942.

But other medallions, such as the TWA Flight 260 Crash Site Tree of 1955, were embedded long after the CCC passed into Others appear to have been replaced

march on. For now, the med little history, a littl and no spirits of the

red friends find trees, new str



MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2018





"In a way, the my

Recently, he foun

floor, a victim of b

Another hiker

trees, possibly the Thankfully, get

requires more of a

average scofflaw ca

will fade, quite liter

woodwork. Trees v

neday, it's like

these things make



THE SUNDAY JOURNAL I JULY 20, 2025 | SECTION F

Start Wars of the Roses Tree is one of the Medallion Trees located in the Sandia Mountains. The Wars of the Roses started in 1455, the same year the tree is thought to have germinated. For those who wish to see some of these Medallion Trees in person, New Mexico Wild will be offering a pair of hikes on the Faulty Trail on Friday, July 25, and Saturday, July 26, in conjunction with the Old-Growth Forest Network.

The Sandia's mysterious Medallion Trees mark world events

 New Mexico Wild can help you find them

Rediscovered friends find trees, new strength



Joline Gutierrez

hey were best friends since middle school, smart girls who made the honor roll. played in the youth sympho ny and dreamed big dreams, none of which included athletic prowess. "We were nerds," Cathy Callow-

"Geeks and nerds," Karen Colvin

They graduated from Eldorado



COURTESY OF CATHY CALLOW-HEUSSE A medallion in a tree in the Sandias among Cathy Callow-Heusser and Karen Colvin's favorite finds.

High School in 1976, and as smart girls do, both made their way in the world, their paths leading them far from home and far from each other.

Colvin was the rambler, moving to Texas and Missouri for nursing school and nurse anesthetist school. and then settling in Wisconsin. Callow-Heusser attended the Uni-

versity of New Mexico, then settled in Utah, rambling between professions from chemical engineering to computer science to math specialist.

Eventually, their paths led them back to Albuquerque — Colvin, 61, returning in 2014 to be closer to her ailing mother.

Callow-Heusser, 62, returned in March just before COVID-19 put the rence kibosh on her months of commuting n Con between her software company in Utah and her husband in Albuquerque, where he had moved earlier to escape the frigid Utah winters.

See REDISCOVERED >> A5



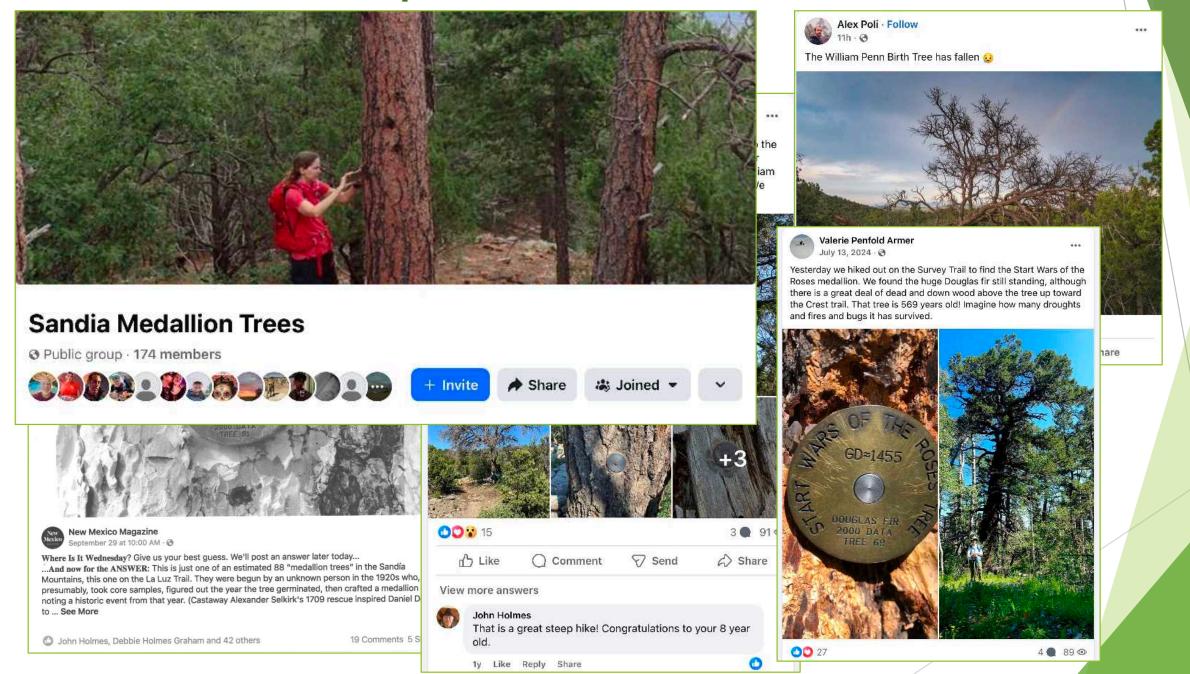
twist to it. Even the number of medallions out there is

SANDIA MEDALLION TREES HIKE WHEN: 2-4 p.m. Friday, July 25, (3 miles), and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday July 26 (6-7 miles

WHERE: Clenega Canyon Trail at the Clenega Picnic Area

September 2, 2025

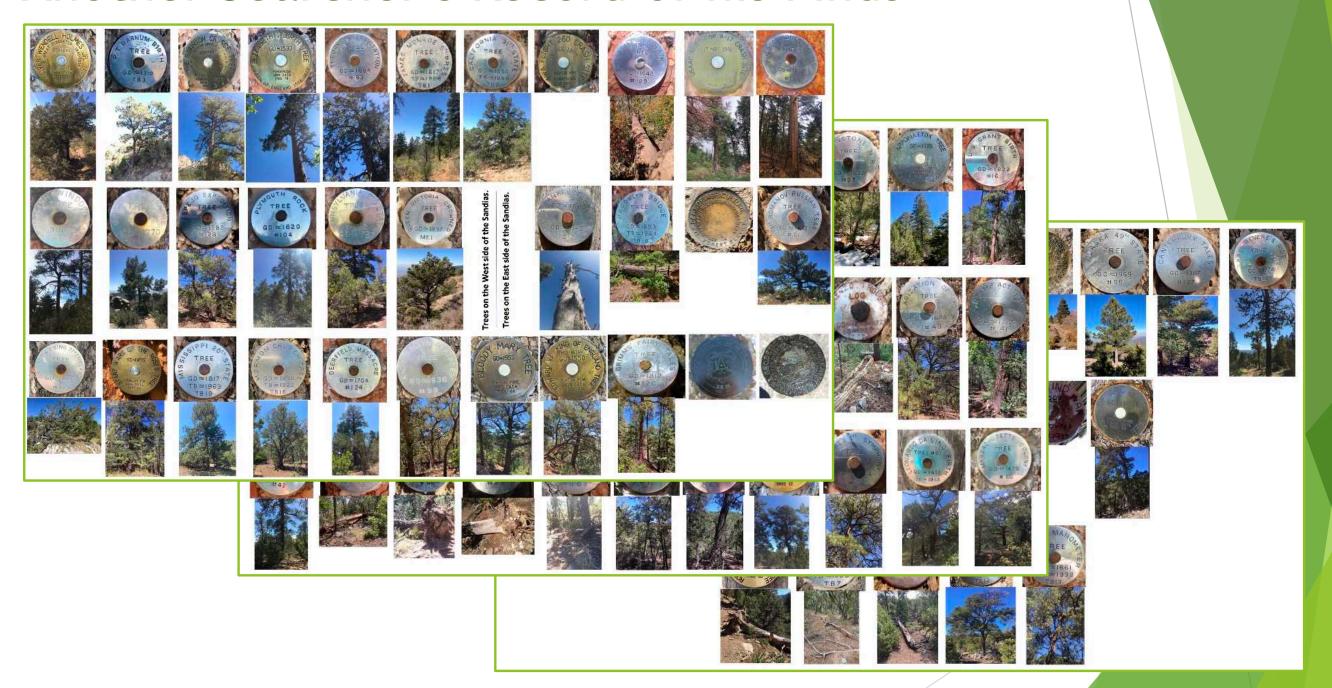
Facebook Group has 174 Members



One Searcher's Scorecard



Another Searcher's Record of his Finds

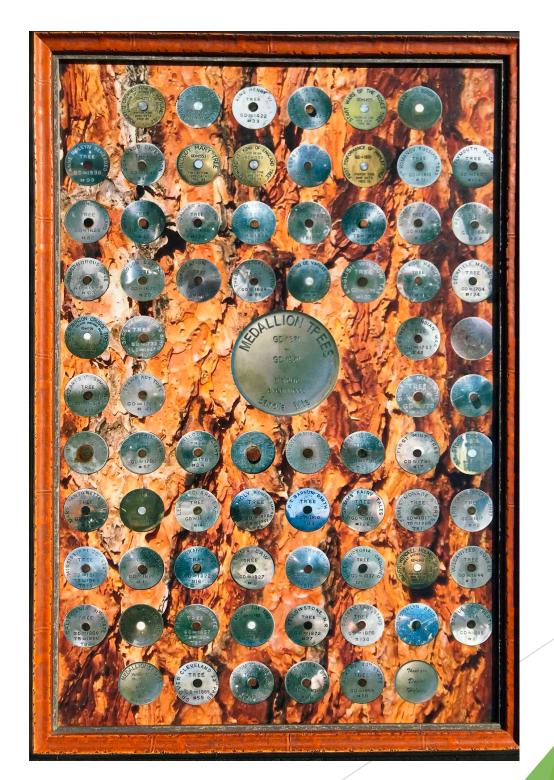


A Third Searcher's Record of his Finds

- Collage given to Sam Beard by a friend who found and photographed at least 74 medallions.
- Photos taken between 2010 and 2015
- References Version 36 of the database
- Note Sam's expression of thanks to David Holmes at bottom right.







Forest Service Recognizes Medallion Trees



Robert II Medallion on Display in Sandia Ranger Station



Faulty Trail Sign Pointing to Santa Fe Trail Tree



Planned Sign on Rerouted North Faulty Trail Pointing to Medallion Tree

David's Interests Extended Beyond Sandias



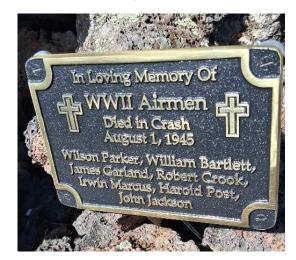
Twisted-grain tree in Malpais



Lateral Cambial Growth Cessation in Malpais



Medallion tree in Malpais



Plaque at Malpais Crash Site



Debbie Holmes Graham at Malpais Medallion Tree

Questions?









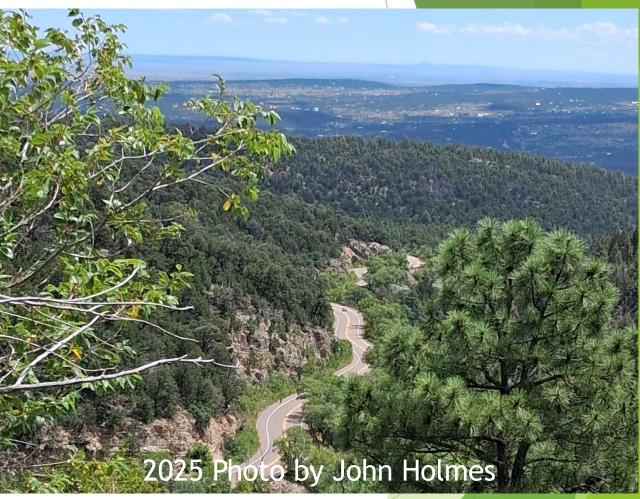


David Francis Holmes 1933-2025

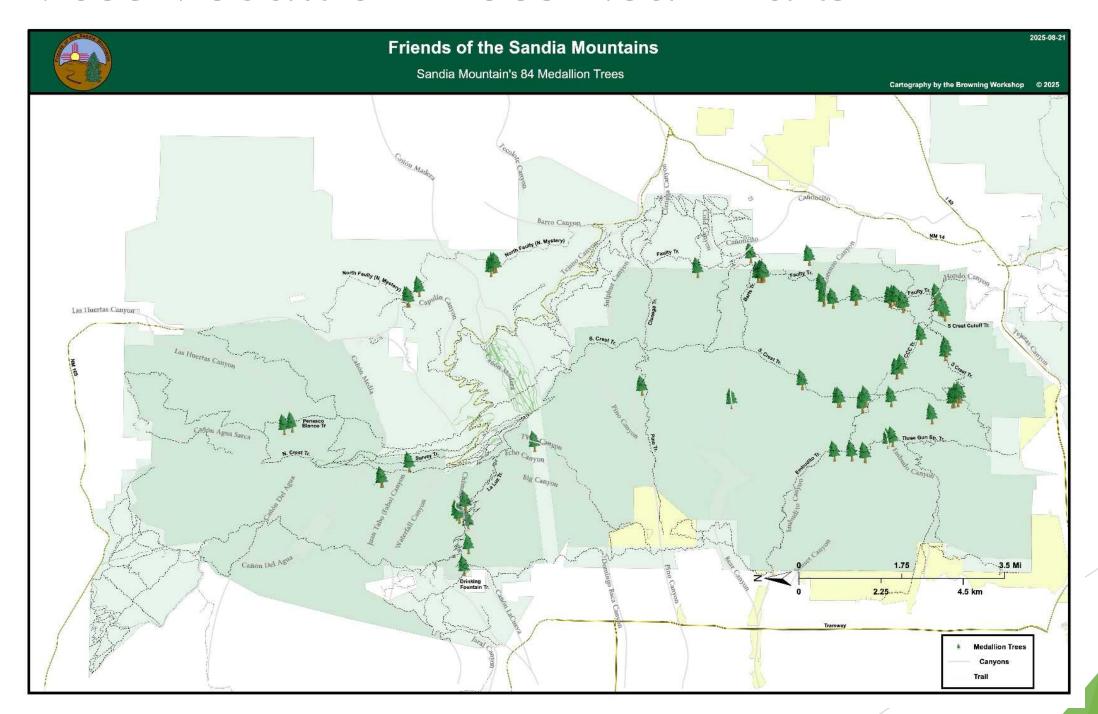
Backup Slides

Sandia Crest Highway Then and Now





Most Medallion Trees Near Trails



Malpais Medallion Tree Site

