Sandia Ranger District Recognition of Volunteers

October 2026

Friends of Sandia Mountains Lifetime Achievement Awards

Mike Madden, recipient of the lifetime award – Mike has served as our president for the past six years. Under his leadership, FOSM currently has a membership of 180 with 9,000 volunteer hours for fiscal year 2026.

Lou Romero, recipient of the lifetime award – Lou grew up in Vadito and spent his career working for the US Forest Service and later volunteering for FOSM. He has been instrumental in reaching the next generation by turning two miles of trails into a classroom.

Tijeras Pueblo Archeological Site Lifetime Achievement Awards

Lynn Bender, recipient of the lifetime achievement award for serving as a volunteer at the Tijeras Interpretive Gardens for 35 years. Lynn provides regular care of the museum and grounds. Lynn also repairs trail erosion, arroyo erosion and manages invasive species.

Judy Vredenburg, recipient of the lifetime achievement award for her over 30 years of volunteerism in the preservation and interpretation of the Tijeras Pueblo Archaeological Site. During her tenure as a volunteer, she was an active member with the Friends of Tijeras Pueblo, serving in every role on the administrative board. Judy also wrote several key grant applications that not only greatly enhanced the museum exhibits but also helped to steer direction of interpretation at the site.

Friends of Sandia Mountains – Administration

Cliff Giles for providing his services as our web master for the past six years.

Kerry Jones for serving as our vice-president for the past year.

Friends of Sandia Mountains – Trails

Byron Garner and Bob Lowder for leading Monday's trail crew and clearing trails in a safe and professional manner.

Sue Harrelson for her countless hours preparing and engaging NMVFO and BCH volunteers to clear densely vegetated wilderness trails.

Laura Leon for her commitment in leading the FOSM Thursday crew and spending endless hours directing tread work, some of the toughest work done.

Friends of Sandia Mountains – Recreation

Sam Beard (co-founder of FOSM, 1997) for leading Wednesday's project crew, serving as the interim leader of the graffiti removal and paint crew, and for his never ending contributions to FOSM over the years.

Jamey Browning for his tireless work as our volunteer cartographer and creating trail maps for the public and for setting up a volunteer crew to support visitor information services at Four Seasons Tram.

Joelle Hertel for her skills in engineering and project management resulting in the accomplishment of several complicated projects this year and for her leadership in working with the Annual Talking Talons Youth Leadership youth crew.

Tim Murphy for his people skills and assisting with the Crest project area closure and for organizing a volunteer crew to engage visitors at the Doc Long Interpretive Hut.

Tony Powell for transforming a small hut at Doc Long into a mini natural history museum to educate the public on the area's natural history.

Tijeras Pueblo Archeological Site:

Stephanie Long for her extensive knowledge of Pueblo history and native/medicinal plants and for mentoring new museum docents and volunteers, and educating visitors. Stephanie has made an enduring contribution to the success of the site.

Ann Ruhnka for her 16 years spent volunteering to control erosion and slow the movement of water to create a thriving meadow of diverse native vegetation and for preserving the history and remnants of the original people of this area.