

***2018 MEDICAL HALL OF
FAME
HONOREES***

2018 MEDICAL HALL OF FAME

5:00 pm **Reception**

5:30 pm **Welcome**

Donna Wehe
San Luis Valley Health Director of PR and Marketing

5:35 pm **Induction of Honorees**

Danny Burns, RPh

Kelly Gurule, Presenter

Dr. Norman Haug

Kim Woodke, Presenter

Ann Holmes, R.N.

Lois Booth, Presenter

Dr. Jay Ruddell

Robert Kelly and Jim Robbins, Presenters

Dr. H. Dale Thomas

Grant Hurley, Presenter

Karen Wagner, R.N.

Julie Geiser, Presenter

Dr. Paul Wagner

Julie Geiser, Presenter



DANNY BURNS, RPH

Danny Burns was born in Oklahoma and moved around a lot as a child. He lived on Blanca Trinchera Ranch for several years before moving to Monte Vista from 4th through 8th grade. He then moved to Virginia where he graduated high school. He attended and graduated from South Western Oklahoma in May of 1973 as a registered pharmacist. He moved back to Monte Vista in December of 1972. He did an internship at Paradise Pharmacy/Centennial Pharmacy in Monte Vista. He also worked at the Medicine Chest in Alamosa.

He married the love of his life, Karla Miner, July 13, 1974. Around the same time Canon Drug in Monte Vista was for sale. He ran that pharmacy for seven years. On March 10, 1978 Danny and Karla were blessed with the birth of their first daughter Stacey followed by their second daughter Tamara in November 16, 1982. In 1980 he purchased Bechtel Pharmacy at the corner of Adams and Main in Monte Vista. This became Burns Pharmacy until 2002. During this time he worked with many of the local nursing homes and was the Pharmacist for the VA patients at the Colorado State Veterans Center at Homelake, Monte Vista. He then went to part time (8 days a month) until he “retired” in 2005.

Danny has been very active in the community. He was the President of the Operating Board at the Monte Vista Hospital. He was on the Operating Board at SLVRMC (San Luis Valley Health) March 2005 thru December 2008. At the same time he was very active on the San Luis Valley Health Foundation Board from 2004 to 2008. He has been a committee member of the Ski Hi Stampede for over 40 years. He was very instrumental in the Stampede supporting the opening of the Stephanie L. Miner Women’s Imaging Center in 2004 and continues this passion through the “Tough Enough to Wear Pink” event each year.

Danny continues to support the healthcare needs of the valley each year with the Stephanie L. Miner 5k walk and run. Danny and Karla still call Monte Vista home.

DR. NORMAN HAUG



Arguably the most significant event to occur on the Upper Rio Grande in the last 25 years has been the opening of the new Rio Grande Hospital facility in 2004. At a time when many small rural hospitals were closing, Rio Grande Hospital was resurrected from the remains of St. Joseph's Hospital three years after it closed in 1993. However, the old hospital structures were outdated and a new facility was sorely needed. So, how did a new hospital come to be? Clearly there was a need – St. Joseph's had served the local community since 1907. There was a very proactive Hospital Board, and there were several very generous land and monetary donations. The time was also right for a HUD loan, and finally there was Dr. Norman Haug, who helped put it all together.

Dr. Haug, who received the Del Norte's Chamber of Commerce's 2004 "Citizen of the Year" award, began his practice in Del Norte on November, 1982, induced by a desire to return to his Colorado roots and to work in a rural community. His grandfather had owned businesses in Creede, Leadville, and eventually Denver, where his father also had a grocery store. Dr. Haug attended Regis High School and later helped put himself through Colorado University Medical School in three years by buying and selling cattle.

In 1963, not long after graduating, Dr. Haug joined the Peace Corps and soon found himself administering an 80 bed hospital with a staff of four on an island off the coast of Malaysia. For the next two years he performed more tasks than a Swiss Army Knife. In addition to regular duties, he worked with inmates and mental patients, learned dentistry, provided legal assistance, performed autopsies, raised funds, and frequently traveled to other islands and the mainland. Amazingly, several days after his Peace Corps tour of duty ended, he enlisted in the Army and returned to Southeast Asia as a Captain. He treated civilians in remote areas of the South Vietnamese countryside, and he considers himself lucky to have survived the Tet Offensive in 1968.

In 1969, again a civilian, Dr. Haug joined the faculty of the University of Oklahoma Medical School and over the next 12 years helped establish Family Practice as a specialty. At first it was resisted by other departments but now is taught in most medical schools.

Back in Del Norte in 1982, Dr. Haug with his wife Becky, a nurse, settled in as a country doctor (and as a Family Practitioner), treating a wide variety of ailments, making house calls and never wanting for firewood or local vegetables in season; a true believer in the bartering system.

Because of his administrative experience, his innovative skills and his total commitment to community services, Dr. Haug was instrumental in reestablishing a hospital in Rio Grande County. Among his many other accomplishments, Dr. Haug served as the County Coroner for many years, helped create the SLV HMO, which was one of the first and most successful HMO's in Colorado, and proudly oversaw the medical facilities of the Colorado State Veteran's Center in Monte Vista for a number of years. He also served on the SLV Health Council, which served as a liaison with the University of Colorado Health Science Center and helped bring in rotating hospital residents. He also served as President of the Holy Name of Mary Parish Council in Del Norte, Colorado and also on the Board of the San Juan Community Credit Union. In addition to traveling to Malaysia with the Peace Corps, Dr. Haug volunteered his services to the community of Tegucigalpa, Honduras after Hurricane Mitch in 1998. Dr. Haug was the recipient of the Colorado Rural Health Excellence Award in 1999 from Colorado Rural Health. He was awarded the National Rural Health Practitioner in the year 2003. He was also awarded the very distinguished Civis Princeps Award from Regis University, Denver, Colorado in May of 2001 for his leadership.

And yet when queried about his most satisfying accomplishment, Dr. Haug, without hesitation, mentioned his role in helping raise his three sons, James, Frank and Anthony as the most satisfying.

Dr. Haug left many legacies.....



ANN HOLMES, R.N.

How does one encapsulate in a few paragraphs a life that has been so rich with so many contributions to so many communities, and now being honored because of these contributions in our San Luis Valley?

Ann Holmes was born in the small community of Los Sauces in 1937. She grew up on the beautiful Holmes ranch. She went to a small country school for eight years and then went on to attend Alamosa High School, graduating in 1955, and then attended Adams State College for three years majoring in elementary education before moving to Michigan.

Early married years were spent in Michigan raising her four daughters, participating in all the growing up activities that it takes to get them off to school knowing that her own dreams would have to be put on hold for a while. As room mother, school board member, PTA president, little league board member, and volunteer probation officer they all helped prepare her for a wide variety of nursing skills that she would be involved in upon graduating from Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, Michigan with an Associate RN Degree in 1979. She worked at the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit in the Med/Surg unit as well as in the Substance Abuse Inpatient Rehab unit until the fall of 1980.

When she started working at Alamosa Community Hospital in 1980, she found out how busy and short-handed the facility was. The pharmacy was closed after 5 p.m. so IV's were mixed by the nurses, as well as caring for floor patients, ER, and OB when they needed extra help. She also worked with Public Health while working for the hospital for 10 years, and spent two years with the Alamosa County Nursing Service. During this time she also oversaw her own parents' care. Her parents, Lester and Irene Holmes, had taught her throughout her life the importance of serving others, as they had spent many hours volunteering in various capacities.

In 1991 she became Director of Nursing at the Colorado State Veterans Center Home Lake for four years. That position was the "love of my career" says Ann. There she had the privilege of working with Dr. Norman Haug and valued his teachings. "The veterans became a part of my family," she added. Several years were spent at Conejos County Hospital as Director of Nursing and finally as the Assistant Administrator and Director of Long-term Care.

Ann said she "loved every position I held, every patient and their families that I cared for, it was about helping and trying to make their lives better. In reflecting it seems my association with Boards, teaching patients, and teaching patients and their families was as big a part of my career as the actual nursing."

Twelve years were spent on the board of Mental Health and just as many years on the SLV HMO board as well. She was involved with the first AIDS patients when others were fearful, and she became involved with the AIDS Coalition. She was vice chairman on the Conejos County Hospital Board for many years and served on the SLV Hospital board working through many concerns saving the small hospital. She was involved with several ethics committees, the Conejos Hospital auxiliary as well as working with compliance issues, infection control, and volunteering with Hospice. Even though retirement has its benefit she says, "I miss it all."

The Valley is richer having had her many years of service. She is married to Fred Holmes, a retired farmer from San Acacio. They now live in Bountiful and are involved with their five daughters (Nancy Thorn Leslie Davis, Roberta Newman, Amy Slazak, and Christy Baldwin), 10 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren.

DR. JAY RUDELL



James Wade Ruddell was born in Le Loup, Kansas on the 12th of February, 1930 to Thomas Jefferson Ruddell and Mary Estella Farrell. His father managed several businesses during the years of raising a family which included a lumber yard, hardware store, and a grain elevator resulting in several moves throughout Kansas during Jay's childhood. He graduated from High School in Wellsville, Kansas in 1948 and enrolled in Kansas University.

At this time he married Jesse Mildred Westgate went directly into medical school at the same university and received his MD degree in 1956.

Following graduation from medical school, he joined the Public Health Service and served a one year rotating internship in Seattle, Washington at the Seattle Merchant Marine Hospital. The next two years was also with the Public Health Service but this time on the Zuni, New Mexico Indian Reservation. He then did some additional training in surgery at the Loveless Clinic in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

About this same time another doctor whom he knew from medical school- Dr. Sherman Nichols was finishing his training and the two of them decided to move to Alamosa together arriving in 1960. They built their first office at 315 Edison Avenue. About three years later they built another office just south of the current hospital. At this time they were joined by Dr. Albert Duncan and Dr. Riley.

Several years later Dr. Ruddell returned to Albuquerque and received an additional year of training in surgery at the newly formed University of New Mexico Medical School and the Loveless Clinic. Dr. Ruddell was the first surgeon in Alamosa to perform "laparoscopic" surgery and worked for many years at the Alamosa Community Hospital. These non-invasive surgery methods changed many procedures and outcomes for the patients of the SLV.

James "J" and Jesse raised three children Stephen, Karla, and Sam. They have six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He retired from the San Luis Valley Medical Clinic in 1993 and he and Jesse presently live in Mesa, Arizona.



DR. H. DALE THOMAS

H. Dale Thomas was born 1-18-1929, in Manassa, Colorado. He graduated from Manassa High School, went to Adams State College, then left the Valley for mission work for his church from 1949-1952. The mission was in Swiss Austria and was he was part of the first missionary group allowed into Austria following the Second World War He came back to Adams State and married his love, Bessie Elnora Jensen--- and graduated in 1954.

Dale then went to CU medical school and graduated in 1958. Following his internship at LDS Hospital in Salt Lake City in 1959, he returned to the SLV and began his practice, buying out Dr. Wittenberg's practice, with admitting privileges in the Alamosa Hospital. In 1963, he was instrumental in founding and opening the Conejos County Hospital, offering local medical care with clinics in La Jara, Antonito, and San Luis. Dr. Thomas was a board certified family physician and surgeon.

By the mid 70's, the hospital was home to 40 new babies per month and over 4,000 babies were delivered by him. There were 12 major surgeries per week performed at CCH and Dr. Thomas would see an average of 60 patients per day in the clinic. Besides that, he continued to see many more patients at his home, in the ER and while in the office. Dale loved to fly and is known to have put very ill patients in his plane and fly them to Denver in the days that there was no flight service from the Valley. No patient was ever turned away for financial reasons or time of day, even those that did not pay him for his services in the past.

During his many years as a physician, preceptors from CU Med Center came to train under him. He served as the Chief of Medical Staff, President of the SLV Medical Society, Chairman of the SLVHMO, and was recognized as outstanding Alumnus of ASC in 1994. He received a tribute to the Colorado House of Representatives by Representative Scott McInnis in 1994.

In addition to his professional activities he served as president of the La Jara Rotary Club, founder of the Lasso days, served as county coroner for many years and was a member of the SLV Cattlemen's Association. He was an avid coin collector and was a cattle and land lover. At one time he had built his herd of Gelveigh into one of the largest in the nation. He was ahead of his time as he used an ultrasound machine to view a problem uterus in a cow, and he split calf embryos and inserted I.V.'s in scouring calves.

He was married for 43 years and together they raised four children. Delra (Paul) Sowards, Teri Jo (Greg) Rogers, Kris Ann (Greg) Williams, and Shawn (Kristie Thomas. They have 21 grandchildren and 29 great grandchildren.

Dr. Thomas left this earth August 15, 1995, following heart surgery to replace a valve, and his loss was a loss for many.

KAREN WAGNER, R.N.



Karen Wagner was born in Marshfield, Wisconsin to Reverend Gustav and Emma Krueger. She was one of five sisters and one brother.

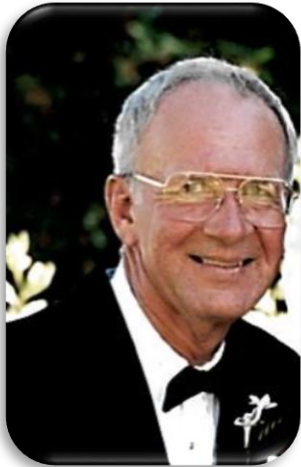
She attended nursing school in Mankato, Minnesota at the Bethany Lutheran College for one year, and then transferred to Mt. Sinai Hospital Nursing School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She became a registered nurse in 1961. Karen spent two years working at Colorado General Hospital in Denver before moving to the San Luis Valley in 1972.

She worked as an operating room and recovery nurse at the Alamosa Hospital. In that role, she is remembered as providing tender, loving care to her patients, and also to staff and students. She believed in having fun as she worked, but absolutely paid attention to detail as a medical professional. She made everyone's day better with her ready smile. She retired from this position in 1998.

Paul Wagner was the man she married on September 9, 1965 in Denver, Colorado. They are parents to Rick Wagner, Ingrid Nagy (Cade), Mitch Wagner (Nicky), and Gretchen Fowler (Laurence) with three children. Paul and Karen will celebrate 53 years of marriage this September and have seven grandchildren.

Karen was always busy with hobbies which included cross stitching, skiing, camping, and gardening. She was an active member of the "Child Study Club" which raised money for childhood education. The crafts she made for the annual fundraiser were extra-ordinary. She participated as an Ambassador for the SLV RMC from 2006 to 2015. During all of these activities, her infectious personality prevailed.

Karen and Paul still reside in Alamosa, Colorado.



PAUL WAGNER, M.D.

Richard Paul Wagner was born in Alamosa on March 18, 1938 to Richard and Marcellene Wagner. He was the oldest of three children which included two sisters. His father was the operator of the steam plant in Alamosa at that time.

Paul graduated from Alamosa High School in 1956. He went on to attend the University of Colorado in Boulder from 1956-1960. He attended the school of medicine from 1960-1964. At that time, he went to San Diego where he interned at the U.S. Naval Hospital. His residency in ophthalmology was completed in 1972 in Oakland, CA. Paul then became the head of Ophthalmology at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Great Lakes, Illinois. In 1972, Paul was certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology.

He married the daughter of a Lutheran Pastor, Karen Laura Krueger, on September 9, 1965 in Denver. To that union were born four children: Rick Wagner, Ingrid Nagy (Cade), Mitch Wagner (Nicky), and Gretchen Fowler (Laurence). Paul and Karen will celebrate 53 years of marriage this September and have seven grandchildren.

Paul was in the U.S. Navy from 1964 to 1972. During that time he spent one year in Vietnam as a flight surgeon. He then joined the SLV Medical P.C. in September of 1972. He retired from that position in December of 1995.

Dr. Wagner was the first physician to be appointed to the Board of Trustees with the Lutheran Hospital Association. He was also on the Board of Trustees for the Adams State College Foundation and a founding board member of the Alamosa County Ambulance District.

His hobbies have included golf, gardening, skiing, and camping. Paul and Karen still reside in Alamosa, CO.

His skill as an Ophthalmologist and his compassion are remembered by many persons of the San Luis Valley.

**THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING
THE 2018 MEDICAL WALL OF
FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY**

2018 Medical Hall of Fame Committee

Lois Booth

Julie Geiser

Kelly Gurule

Grant Hurley

Robert Kelly

Barbara Mondragon

Ted Morrison

Jim Robbins

Jackie Scheidegger

Janet Whitmer