

Huerfano County Historical Society
P.O. Box 3, Walsenburg, CO 81089

www.huerfanohistory.com

**OUR MISSION: TO PRESERVE AND PRESENT THE HISTORY
OF HUERFANO COUNTY AND ITS CITIZENS**

2023 Membership Form

- Individual \$20.00 Family \$30.00 Business \$50.00
 Butte Membership \$100.00

Additional Donation \$ _____

Interested in volunteering at:

- Walsenburg Mining Museum - your particular interest _____
 Huerfano Heritage Center - your particular interest _____

Please send check to: Huerfano County Historical Society
P.O. Box 3, Walsenburg, CO 81089

Date: _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

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Huerfano County Historical Society is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donors may deduct contributions to the Society as provided by section 170 of the IRS Code.

Dear Huerfano County Historical Society Members, 2022 was a productive year for the HCCHS. Here is a summary of some of the accomplishments.

Carolyn Newman sponsored a competition for the best original Huerfano County historical research project. Two winners were selected, Bob DeWitt and Sandy Dolak, each to receive a grant for \$2000 for their historical projects. Bob DeWitt's project, "Gone But Not Forgotten: Some Early Coal Camps of Southern Colorado," will focus on the history and people of some of the smaller coal camps, Hezron, Ideal, Old Rouse, Rouse, Pryor, Lester and others. Sandy Dolak is teaming up with Sylvia Brandl and Ron Sandoval to produce a "Photographic Tribute to the Hispanic Founders of Huerfano County," which will feature photos and stories from 25 families that have been instrumental in the early history of Huerfano County.

The HCCHS now has historic photo prints and books for sale at the Walsenburg Mercantile and sales have been good. Our thanks to the World Journal for sharing their booth with us. The Walsenburg Mercantile is on Russell St. across from the old railroad depot and be sure to check out their deli.

Tours are back this year. A Sangre de Cristo Pass Tour is scheduled for Saturday, June 10. This year the tour will follow, the approximate path of the 1853 Gunnison Expedition, builders of the first wagon road over Sangre de Cristo Pass, with stops at the historic Montoya homestead at Farasita and an abandoned adobe homestead on South Oak Creek. We are also putting together a tour of the Hezron Mine with owner Bob DeWitt, also owner of DeWitt Historical Books in Colorado Springs. A date and details will be announced soon. Because of parking limitations this tour will be limited to 20 persons, members and guests only. A tour of the historic Libre Commune is scheduled for the fall, hopefully to coincide with the Gardner Chuck Wagon on August 5. Members will receive discounts on tours.

The HCCHS received a COSHARP grant (Colorado Humanities American Rescue Plan) of \$12,600 which was used on a much needed new computer, large format scanner, office supplies, the new website and the digitization of a collection of photo negatives from La Veta and surrounding areas from the early 1900's, which were donated by the Francisco Fort Museum from the W.A. Campbell family and give an incredible look at the history of early La Veta. A slideshow of these photographs was presented at the La Veta Library last fall. Donations of over \$400 were received from the Spanish Peaks Business Alliance Annual Christmas Giving Event.

The Huerfano Heritage Center has been very active, with information requests coming as far away as Switzerland. Historian Virginia Sanchez has translated several local oral histories for us which were recorded in 1980 in Spanish. She also translated a remarkable store ledger of the Domingo C. Baca and Brothers Company written in Spanish in 1878. The Bacas' may have been partners of Walsen and Levi. Virginia also donated numerous historic documents from the Cucharas area, including Cucharas School history from Minnie Jean

Barela and historic homestead documents from the Cucharas area. A collection of letters and documents from the 1890's of Walsenburg blacksmith Henry Snedden and his school teacher daughters, Lizzie and Jessie, was found in an attic in Walsenburg and donated by Mike Reyes. Marty and Betty Schmidt gave us a detailed history of life on the J-M Ranch and the Meyer family going back to the 1870's written by Lida A. Kepley Meyer. A history of the Saliba family, written by Jeanette Thach, is being typed out and digitized. A wonderful collection of photo negatives taken by Jeanette Faris Thach documenting life in the Farasita area in the 1930's and 40's was converted to positives and digitized. A slideshow presentation of these photos is planned for the Spanish Peaks Regional Library in Walsenburg this summer. All of these collections and more can be viewed at the Huerfano Heritage Center.

New interpretive photo displays have been added to the Walsenburg Mining Museum by Diane Hanish. The Mining Museum will open on Memorial Day. People interested in meeting and greeting visitors for several hours a week at the museum are encouraged to contact Carolyn Newman at 719-738-2840.

We thank our members for their continued interest and participation in our history and we hope you will renew your membership in 2023,

Huerfano County Historical Society