

Donie Nelson has stepped down as Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor of *Nuestras Raices*, the quarterly journal published by GSHA. We are grateful to Donie for devoting over twelve years of impeccable work on each edition. This equates to almost 50 journals in the course of her time as editor. Donie not only edited other people's submissions, but she wrote hundreds of articles herself and managed several copy editors who helped her. Donie took pride in being the editor of our journal and we owe her a big debt of gratitude for the pride and professionalism she gave to each edition. We thank Donie and write the following as a farewell tribute because not too many people really know how much she did, not just for the journal, but for GSHA, GSHA-SC and the genealogy world.

Donie joined GSHA in 1989 during a research trip to Colorado where her mother was born. During these 33 years, she made some wonderful friends, both in California, as well as Colorado and New Mexico. It is these friendships that encouraged her to continue her membership and became a volunteer while remaining a career woman and single mother.

She began her tenure with the journal in 1997 as managing editor recruiting writers and editing their submissions before submitting them to the editor, a new member that she recruited for the job. When the editor resigned in 2006, she also took a break, but when *Nuestras Raices* in 2010 came to a halt with no editor and no staff, she volunteered for her current position.

Since 2010, she recruited more than 15 GSHA members to the staff and 62 writers who submitted one or more articles for publication. She loved creating special sections: *The Extranjero in Our Trees*, which focused on non-Hispanics, and *The Memorable Women in Our Trees*. She also instituted an annual issue that focused on those who served in the military. She developed a style sheet, a method for tracking every article and author, developed ads, and enjoyed every minute of it.

On the national board, she served as Vice President, Secretary, and Member-at-Large Representative. In 2016, Donie was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award for her service to GSHA and GSHA-SC. Only two other members have been honored with this award.

She is a founder and contributed six years as President of GSHA-Southern California Chapter. She also served as their VP Communications & newsletter editor, scrapbook chair, Sales Chair, VP Programs & Education, Annual Fiesta Chair, and Chapter Representative to the national board. She worked on numerous GSHA Annual Genealogical Conferences, supervising the publication of our official printed program for each conference.

As Outreach Chair for GSHA-SC, she set up several outreach programs to the Los Angeles community and beyond: Genealogy Garage, a monthly presentation, which continues today via Zoom meetings sponsored by the Los Angeles Public Library [LAPL], History & Genealogy Department, and "Hispanic Saturdays" where researchers could meet with a genealogist who would help them solve their own problems. "Hispanic Tuesday" and "Hispanic Thursday" were set up at the Southern California Genealogical Society Library in Burbank and the LDS-West Los Angeles Library, respectively, where researchers could meet with a genealogist for help. In addition, they set up a "Hispanic Saturday" in San Diego County.

Donie has been researching her Swedish-Scottish-Spanish ancestry for over 40 years and she has shared many fascinating stories as a genealogical presenter. In 2018 she was the featured genealogist on the pilot of the PBS television series "We'll Meet Again" hosted by Ann Curry.

Not only has she been a featured speaker for many societies and conferences, but a recognized leader in the genealogical community. She served on the board of the California State Genealogical Alliance (CSGA), and the Southern California Genealogical Society (SCGS), She is a past President of Los Angeles WESTSIDE Genealogical Society (LAWGS), where she supervised the publication of the book: "Abbot Kinney's Venice of America" and was also editor of their monthly newsletter.

Professionally she has over 40 years of experience working with feature film, television, and newspaper professionals, with a focus on writers for films and television. She held positions on the MGM, Paramount Pictures, and 20th Century Fox lots and worked for television's largest advertiser, Procter & Gamble. She also headed her own consulting company, *Career Strategies for Writers* with a goal of assisting writers to break into film and television.

Donie has one daughter, Molly Phelps, and a four-year-old grandson, Rocky. Today she lives in Sacramento with her 15-year-old, newly rescued cat, Maxx.

Charlene Garcia-Simms and Jeanette Martinez