

Tahoans honored by Nevada tourism agency

Bruce Rettig of Meyers was one of 11 people honored Thursday with a VolunTourism Awards at the Nevada Commission on Tourism's 20th Rural Roundup conference.

"Volunteers are vital to promoting tourism in rural Nevada because they care deeply about enhancing their community's tourism attractions, and their work is a labor of love," Lt. Gov. Brian K. Krolicki, NCOT chair, said in a press release. "We are very proud of our devoted rural tourism volunteers, we appreciate their fine work, and these awards are our way of thanking them."

Nevada's six tourism territories selected the VolunTourism recipients, and one award was given posthumously, to the late Gene Kaplan of Wells, who died in 2008. In addition, four outstanding individuals who have contributed decades of hard work received Tourism Lifetime Achievement awards.

In addition to the tourism awards, Brittany Masin, 17, an Incline Village High School senior, received the 2010 June Stannard Memorial Scholarship, which she will apply toward studies for a major in hospitality management at UNLV.

Receiving VolunTourism awards in each territory were:

Indian Territory – Bruce Rettig, a Web designer and president/owner of Charter Advertising/Design, at Lake Tahoe, for sharing his marketing and advertising expertise with Indian Territory and for his advocacy of American Indian historic resources.

Cowboy Country Territory – Peg and Gene Kaplan, for creating, restoring and promoting tourism attractions in Wells and Elko County.

Las Vegas Territory – Jennifer Mahar Mulder, associate publisher for Relocation Resources guide in Las Vegas for meeting planners, has been involved with the territory for only 10 months, but already has done a commendable job of instituting upgraded technology to streamline the membership program.

Nevada Silver Trails – Rebecca Elkins, with her husband, Jerry, own and operate the Horse Fly Ranch for guests in remote, scenic Monitor Valley north of Tonopah.

Pony Express Territory – Jan Morrison, entrepreneur and staunch promoter of tourism in historic Austin and Pony Express Territory, is founder-owner of Main Street Shops and St. Augustine's Catholic Church building, which she is transforming into a cultural arts center and tourism attraction.

Reno Tahoe Territory – Mary Reno, sales manager for the Silver Legacy Resort Casino in downtown Reno, for devoting her time and expertise to local and regional tourism-building programs and events.

Tourism Lifetime Achievement Awards honored two individuals and a couple for their decades-long passion and commitment to building rural tourism.

The winners are:

Virginia Ridgway of Goldfield, longtime, enthusiastic, resourceful rural tourism booster, authority on local history and created the concept of marketing area highways as Nevada Silver Trails.

Wally Cuchine of Eureka, manager of the historical Eureka Opera House and art gallery and a recipient of the Distinguished Nevadan Award from the University of Nevada Board of Regents, has championed cultural tourism statewide, serving on numerous boards ranging from Pony Express Territory

to the Nevada Humanities programming and grant-giving council.
His love for art has created

Don and Carol Shanks of Pioche, a husband-wife team, have been unceasing supporters and leaders of tourism building and promotion in Nevada Silver Trails Territory.