



MEDIA CONTACT: Jeanne Albrecht
210/496-6686
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Conservation Society Elects Nancy Hamner Avellar as Chairman of NIOSA®

Nancy Hamner Avellar has been elected by the San Antonio Conservation Society as its Fourth Vice President, with the primary responsibility of chairing the 62nd presentation of the Conservation Society's "A Night In Old San Antonio®" (NIOSA®), April 20-23, 2010.

NIOSA—one of the nation's largest historic preservation festivals—benefits the Conservation Society, which in turn benefits local and central Texas communities by celebrating and preserving the buildings, customs and culture unique to its region through the preservation, education and research programs of the Society.

The NIOSA chairman volunteers her time all year to plan and coordinate the four-night event, assisted by three appointed NIOSA vice chairmen—Evelyn Williams, Charlie Hansen and Roberto Hinkson—and NIOSA treasurer Kathy DeWaal (all of whom are volunteers and assist Avellar in leading the team of 16,000 volunteers that work at the event). As Society Fourth VP for 2009-2010, she also is chairman of NIOSITAs®—mini NIOSAs that are presented throughout the year for any private groups, including conventions and wedding receptions as another fundraiser for the Conservation Society.

A member of the Conservation Society since 1974 and a Board of Director since 1988, Avellar has been active in the volunteer efforts of the Society and of the various operational areas of NIOSA since joining. She served as the Society's Fifth Vice President overseeing the budget from 1993-1995, 1997-1999 and 2003-2005; and Society Treasurer from 1991-1993 and 1999-2001. For NIOSA she served as Treasurer from 2007-2009; and Anticuchos Booth Chairman from 1980-2000.

"It is an honor to be elected as chairman of this venerable committee," says Avellar. "I suspect that I was born under the burners at A Night in Old San Antonio; among my earliest memories are helping my parents in the Anticucho booth in Mexican Market. I later chaired the

booth for 20 years, and after a brief respite from the braziers, I returned to NIOSA as Treasurer under immediate past-chairman Christine Turner.”

Other organizations in the San Antonio community that Avellar has been involved with include Fiesta San Antonio Commission (Executive and Finance Committee); San Antonio Symphony League (Board of Directors and Chairman, Symphony Belle Service); Miss Fiesta Scholarship Pageant (Board of Directors); Military Civilian Club (Board of Directors, Fiesta Military Ambassador Sponsor, President and Treasurer); Brackenridge Park Conservancy (Founding Board of Directors); and Alamo Heights Schools (PTSO Board of Directors).

Annually attracting 80,000 visitors, NIOSA is presented by the Conservation Society as part of the city-wide Fiesta San Antonio celebration held each April. NIOSA runs Tuesday through Friday evenings during Fiesta. A Night in Old San Antonio is held at La Villita, which is divided into 15 different cultural areas for the presentation of ethnic costumes, food, music and fun. Representing truly "old" San Antonio, NIOSA includes many of the sights, sounds and tastes brought to the city by its earliest settlers.

Two special funds are set up as part of the contract between the City of San Antonio and the San Antonio Conservation Society when they lease La Villita, a city-owned property. The “La Villita and HemisFair Park Historic Districts Preservation Projects” fund is available to restoration projects in La Villita and HemisFair Park. The “Historic Neighborhood Preservation Projects” fund is available to citywide historic preservation projects.

Advance tickets are available March 1 through April 23, 2010 at www.niosa.org, and all H-E-B Stores in San Antonio, Boerne, Bulverde, Seguin and New Braunfels; the Fiesta Store at 2611 Broadway; select San Antonio area military bases; the company store at USAA; Southwest Research; and the NIOSA headquarters at 227 S. Presa Street.

Tickets can be purchased nightly at the entrance gates to “A Night In Old San Antonio” for \$12 for adults and \$2 for children 6 to 12 years, with free admission for children 5 years and under. Gates open at 5:30 p.m. and close at 10 p.m.; the celebration continues inside until 10:30 each night. All tickets are non-refundable because NIOSA is open, rain or shine.

Those wanting to order NIOSA posters and pins can visit its online store at www.niosa.org or the NIOSA headquarters at 227 S. Presa Street, on the edge of La Villita.

For more information on NIOSA or NIOSITAs, visit www.niosa.org or contact (210) 226-5188 or niosa@niosa.org. For more information on the San Antonio Conservation Society, please contact the Society headquarters at (210) 224-6163 or visit www.saconservation.org.