

Angela Flanders is the very deserving recipient of the 2018 Jack and Martha Carter Native Plant Conservation Award. Anyone who has spent any time with Angela finds out quickly that she is “a doer.” Born in a small rural town, Rochelle, Illinois, she grew up pulling weeds in her dad’s corn and bean fields in exchange for a summer pass at the local swimming pool, including swimming lessons. Angela also worked for a time as a telephone operator, and upon moving to Galesburg, Illinois, she worked as a clerk and then as a manager for an import shop. After marriage to her husband Spike, the two purchased a 40-acre farm where Angela raised sheep and kept bees. When they decided to have children, they sold the farm and moved to town where she raised two daughters, became president of the West Central Illinois Cooperative, and president of the local chapter of the American Field Service, hosting foreign exchange students. As their children grew up, Angela took a job working for a local Fine Arts organization as their Office Manager. When Spike retired, so did she, and these two Midwesterners moved to Silver City, New Mexico in the early 2000’s. And now (quoting Paul Harvey), let’s go on to “the rest of the story.”

My earliest memory of Angela was when she, typical for her, took a leadership role in the Gila Native Plant Society by serving as its President in the mid-2000s. With Angela in charge, monthly meetings started promptly, were always well organized, ran smoothly and concluded within their allotted time to allow time for members and guests to mingle afterwards over refreshments (which were always ample and tasty). Many worthwhile projects were undertaken by GNPS under her watch, including a trip that she helped organize to rescue several truckloads of cacti in the path of a scheduled construction project near Carlsbad. After her term as president was up, Angela did not withdraw from activity in GNPS but rather maintained a leadership role

that continues until this day. Case in point: her work in the Silva Creek Botanical Garden, which many visitors to Silver City had the privilege of touring with current GNPS President Elroy Limmer earlier this month during the annual conference of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. Angela has been involved in every aspect of the garden's success, especially helping to research and select the plants that are on display there, and of course attending to all the other tasks that need doing in a garden (planting, weeding, labeling, watering, etc.) on a regular basis.

As the botany professor at Western New Mexico University, I am most familiar with Angela's contributions to the Dale A. Zimmerman Herbarium at Western New Mexico University. Long ago, she observed the piles of plant specimens in newspapers waiting to be mounted and the stacks of plant folders needing to be filed, and surmised that I (the herbarium curator) "needed some help". Did I! Since then, Angela has worked as a volunteer in the main collection room of this herbarium on an almost daily basis, 3 hours a day, 4-5 afternoons a week. She is sometimes joined by other GNPS members, most recently Jane Spinti and Betsy Kaido, and together they mount plants and attend to a myriad of other tasks needing doing in the herbarium. I occasionally ask Angela (and Jane and Betsy) to demonstrate the fine art of plant mounting to my students, because she/they are now far more skilled at this task than me. However, on most days Angela works alone, and I can find her sitting in front of the herbarium computer entering specimen data into SEINet. I always like to brag to fellow botanists at other institutions that label information for virtually all 28,000+ plant specimens in the Dale A. Herbarium have been data-based, and this is largely due to Angela's cheerful dedication to this task. When recently presented with almost 1,000 moss and liverwort packets to be processed by Dr. Russ Kleinman, she did not blink, and I think that she actually looked forward to the challenge! As this plant collection

continues to grow, we are looking ahead to purchasing additional herbarium cabinets to house additional plant specimens and Angela has already drafted several alternate floor plans showing how 6-8 new herbarium cabinets might be arranged in this limited space. Check the herbarium out in 7 years or so when the NPSNM annual conference is held in Silver City again!

I am so pleased that Ms. Angela Flanders was selected to receive this award, especially because there are so many other NPSNM members worthy of recognition for their own respective contributions to promoting plant conservation and education. Angela, congratulations! And thanks!