



# Seedhead News

A Newsletter for Members of Native Seeds/SEARCH

Number 107

Fall 2010

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Coming Up in 2011  
*Give the Gift They'll Love!*



Native Seeds/SEARCH's new Agricultural Conservation Center.

## We've Come a Long Way! *by Barney T. Burns, PhD*

During the late 1970s, Gary Nabhan and Mahina Drees worked for Meals for Millions in their Tucson office housed in the Campus Christian Center on Park Avenue across from the University of Arizona's main gate. Part of their work involved a gardening project on the Tohono O'odham reservation west of Tucson. The Tohono O'odham gardeners told Gary they were interested in growing out their traditional varieties of corn, beans, and squash. The problem was those traditional varieties were unavailable or lost on much of the reservation. Gary and Mahina began to search for those adapted crop varieties across the reservation and beyond its boundaries. Some of these old seeds were located, but not in sufficient quantities for everyone who wanted them, so Gary and Mahina created a small seed bank at their MFM office housing the rare seeds in a 1940s electric refrigerator and growing them out at the UA Agricultural Farm. In order to safeguard the valuable seeds, they padlocked a chain around the refrigerator to protect the seeds from the crowds of college students that gathered each Saturday evening at the Campus Christian Center's folk music house called The Cup.

In the early 1980s, the MFM office and refrigerator seed bank moved to 17<sup>th</sup> Street where the organization rented a house from another church. The reservation gardening project continued and expanded. The

### NS/S Board of Directors, Staff, and Friends Dedicate New Agricultural Center

The Tucson community turned out in high spirits to celebrate NS/S's new Agricultural Conservation Center on Friday, October 22. At the late afternoon dedication, old and new friends, board members, and staff feasted on mountains of delicious food prepared by Sous Chef Catering and sipped lovely Southern Arizona wines from Pillsbury Wine Company, Dos Cabezas Winery, and Canelo Hills Vineyard as well as locally brewed beer by Barrio Brewing, and special Sonoran White Wheat beer created by Laura Burge, and Doug Miller. The Crystal Ridge Bluegrass Band and the Chicken Whisperers treated guests to lively Americana and bluegrass music. Pima County Supervisor Ann Day and Parks and Recreation Director Rafael Payan joined Executive Director Bryn Jones, Board Chair David Tiers, and Capital Campaign Chair Janos Wilder to deliver an inspiring program topped off with a beautiful poetry reading by Diné artist Luci Tapahonso and a Tohono Oodham blessing of the building by Regina Sequieros. Thanks to everyone who helped make our new Agricultural Conservation Center a reality.

*continued page 4*

# From our Director



*Dear NS/S Members,*

I write this message to you having not long ago returned from three months of leave to bond with my new son, Griffin. As a new mother, suddenly everything has more meaning. Apple picking over a weekend in September is no longer just a fun activity with the reward of delicious and locally-grown fruit, but now a family tradition that over time will help teach Griffin the importance of the most basic element of our lives: food. And, as I work in my office at NS/S's beautiful new Agricultural Conservation Center, I take great pride in knowing that the work I am doing ensures that Griffin will get to experience growing, harvesting, eating, and saving foods that result from the hard work and careful selection of generations and generations of farmers and gardeners before him.

In mid-June, we moved into our fantastic new facility – a six-year dream in the making! The NS/S Agricultural Conservation Center, located in Brandi Fenton Memorial Park and Pima County's Binghampton National Historic Landscape, is 5,200 square feet of brand new building! The 'seed wing' consists of a 1,000 square foot lab for processing seeds (germination testing, seed packing, photo-documentation, etc.) and a 600 square foot walk-in cold room maintained at 45° C. The *piece de resistance* is the new seed bank – the 120 square foot walk-in freezer (-18° C)! In addition to providing more space and better conditions to store and manage the collection, the facility brings together under one roof staff that were previously spread across town in two offices! The facility marks a new era for Native Seeds/SEARCH and a great accomplishment toward the long-term investment in the conservation of the precious resources held within its walls.

As an organization, we are also facing a 'new era' as we near completion of our efforts to regenerate every accession in the collection and begin to plan our future work. The possibilities for new approaches to achieving our mission of conserving and promoting heirloom crops from the Greater Southwest are endless. While basic work maintaining and managing the collection remains our core objective, exciting opportunities for new approaches and partnerships loom large on the horizon. Food security, crop adaptation to climate change, the local foods movement, development of healthy and sustainable food production systems – these have all become major challenges and issues of concern around the globe over the last decade. And they are all issues that have local and regional solutions. Not surprisingly, they are also all issues in which the availability of and access to locally-adapted seeds play a critical role.

Opportunity and challenge often go hand in hand. Like non-profits across the nation, NS/S has seen significant decreases in overall giving with the continuing depressed economy. And, like other non-profits, we have had to make some difficult decisions, including a 15% reduction in personnel costs, in order to better align with our core work, potential new opportunities, and our current levels of funding. Although painful, we are using this experience as an opportunity to recommit to our mission, envision new approaches and partnerships in order to develop more diverse programs in the future, and sustain a strong foundation from which to carry forth as the economic climate brightens. Your continued support will ensure our path to that brighter future.

NS/S's history and past achievements are the foundation on which any new era will be envisioned and built. Seeds – now better protected – are fundamental to whatever lies ahead. We thank each and every one of you who continue to make it possible for us to persevere in the increasingly important and relevant work of conserving and promoting the region's rich legacy of agro-biodiversity. And we hope you'll join us in harvesting and celebrating thanks for all that has been achieved this year!

Best,



## FOUNDERS

Barney Burns  
Mahina Drees  
Gary Nabhan  
Karen Reichardt

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## Seedhead News

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The mission of Native Seeds/SEARCH (Southwestern Endangered Aridland Resources Clearing House) is to conserve, distribute, and document the adapted and diverse varieties of agricultural seeds, their wild relatives and the role these seeds play in cultures of the American Southwest and northwest Mexico.

We envision the Greater Southwest as a place where farms and gardens, kitchens and tables, stores and restaurants are brimming with the full diversity of aridlands-adapted heirloom crops; people are keeping the unique seeds and agricultural heritage alive; and the crops, in turn, are nourishing humankind.

— VISION STATEMENT



## A Fabulous Fall

More than 100 friends joined us at the Conservation Farm for our annual Harvest Fest in October for a day of festivities.

People toured the farm, picked squash and gourds, and helped stomp beans while enjoying music by the Busted Cowboy Band.

from top **Bean stompers of all ages help process NS/S crops. NS/S volunteer Andre Dominquez explains how beans grow to a young visitor. Claire Hartigan won the raffle for a 53-pound pumpkin.**

## Thanks, Janos!

For the 14<sup>th</sup> year in a row, Chef Janos Wilder amazed diners with another sumptuous Arizona Harvest Dinner held at his restaurant on the grounds of Westin La Paloma Resort in Tucson. The entrees ranged from pan-seared halibut and Mrs. Burns' lemon basil with guajillo cream, garnet amaranth shoots and hibiscus to churro lamb with NS/S mole. Specially paired regional wines accompanied each course and guests ended the evening with layers of Brazilian white chocolate, Oaxacan chocolate, and Island Organic dark chocolate with pecan cake and cream. The October 21 benefit dinner kicked off the two-day dedication celebration of our new Agricultural Conservation Center. Thanks, Janos for your commitment and generosity, especially in the midst of opening Downtown!



## We've Come a Long Way! *from page 1*

growing seed bank housed the limited quantities of rare heirloom seeds, now including Pueblo and northwestern Mexican native seeds, in two refrigerators with freezers. The Seed Bank and gardening project received a great deal of publicity, so much so that MFM encouraged Gary and Mahina to form an organization focusing on the region's heirloom agricultural seeds.

Thus, 1983, joined by Gary's wife Karen Reichardt and colleague Barney Burns, Native Seeds Southwestern Endangered Aridlands Resource Clearing House was incorporated as a nonprofit organization focusing on preserving the rich diversity of agricultural crops adapted to the Southwestern US and the adjacent areas of northwestern Mexico. The seed bank, now the NS/S Seed Bank, was moved again—this time to Pilar Street near Oracle and Prince and the seeds were housed in Gary and Karen's guesthouse refrigerator. NS/S's first published Seed Listing included a total of 47 varieties of crops drawn from Hopi, Pueblo, Yaqui, O'odham, Mayo, Tarahumara, and Anglo sources. Several wild varieties of relatives of crop seeds were also included in the listing and in the NS/S Seed Bank.

In the mid '80s, the ever-growing Seed Bank moved again, this time to Mahina's rented house overlooking Esperero Canyon in the foothills of the Catalina Mountains. Mahina's stone house was surrounded by the lush Sonoran Desert and included a basement. Barney Burns built cinder block and board shelving along the cool basement walls. The new Seed Bank was reached down a steep wooden staircase and was lit by a bare light bulb hanging from the

ceiling. Barney and Mahina collected green plastic pickle buckets for bulk seed containers from several Tucson hamburger joints. The Seed Bank bulk storage was housed in the basement while the old smaller collections were kept in a freezer. Seed packaging soon took over the entire spare bedroom and another two rooms housed office and catalog/ mailing operations. The Esperero Canyon location saw interest in NS/S grow dramatically, requiring NS/S to collect larger seed accession quantities and grow out larger amounts of seeds for distribution.

In 1986, the ever-expanding space requirements necessitated a further move of the Seed Bank to Tucson Botanical Gardens where we already had a grow out site. Originally, NS/S moved into the three rooms of the Friends House in the back of the gardens. New shelving was added for seed storage, as well as more refrigerator and freezer space for the continually growing number of seed accessions. A store was initiated for the first time where people could purchase seeds and related items. Eventually, two additional rooms were rented for our growing staff and library. The NS/S staff became ingenious in their efforts to house more and more seed accessions and the bulk grow outs.

In July 1983, NS/S moved from Tucson Botanical Gardens one block south to the Sylvester House property, which we had purchased. The Seed Bank and NS/S offices occupied two adobe buildings originally built in the 1920s as a homestead surrounded by creosote bush flats. The Sylvester family grew watermelons and melons for sale in nearby Tucson. The smaller building consisted of four rooms for the seed bank. Shelving was added and freezers and refrigerators

*continued next page*

clockwise from top left **NS/S co-founder Karen Reichardt. Tasty blue corn cazuelitas with refried tepary beans. The Crystal Ridge Bluegrass Band. Regina Sequieros blesses the new building. NS/S co-founders Mahina Drees and Barney Burns.**



installed to hold the collections as well as the bulk grow out used for

seed distribution. A large germination chamber was also added. The front room was used for processing seed packages for filling orders from across the US and around the world. The Sylvester House was originally roomy, but became more and more crowded as the number of NS/S accessions approached 1850 and the thousands of pounds of grown out seeds from NS/S' Conservation Farm needed to be processed and stored, which necessitated renting additional cold storage space.

By 2005, the Seed Bank was bursting at the seams and technically was "chucky jam full." The NS/S Board of Directors realized the dire need for a larger and improved seed bank and approved a capital campaign to raise funds for a new Seed Bank. The result is our brand new Agricultural Conservation Center on land leased from Pima County in Brandi Fenton Memorial Park and Binghampton National Historic Landscape. The Center was built with the generous support of many individuals and agencies, all believing in the mission of NS/S. The Agricultural Conservation Center provides the space required for NS/S to process and store our current and future seed collections and grow outs. The new Seed Bank is much more secure than before and greatly reduces the risk of losing these unique, adapted, heirloom crop varieties from across our bi-national region. The shared heritage of these rare and endangered seed stocks, developed by so many different individuals and cultures over so many centuries, is safer now and more available to meet the growing needs of our modern world.



from top **The Chicken Whisperers. NS/S co-founder Gary Paul Nabhan. Luci Tapahonso reading her poetry.**



## An Intimate Evening with Diana Kennedy



Food and cooking enthusiasts joined regional foods writer and Native Seeds/SEARCH co-founder Gary Paul Nabhan and James Beard award-

winning Chef Janos Wilder on November 18 for a unique conversation with renowned Mexican culinary author Diana Kennedy in celebration of Kennedy's new book, *Oaxaca al Gusto: An Infinite Gastronomy* (University of Texas Press, 2010). The special event took place at our new Agricultural Conservation Center.

Acclaimed as the Julia Child of Mexican cooking, Kennedy has studied Mexican food ways and culture for more than fifty years. *Oaxaca al Gusto: An Infinite Gastronomy* is an irreplaceable record of the traditional regional cuisines of Oaxaca. Organized by regions, the book presents three hundred recipes — most from home cooks — for traditional Oaxacan dishes. Fascinating notes about the ingredients, cooking techniques, and the food's place in family and communal life accompany each recipe.

Nabhan, Wilder, and Kennedy transported guests on an amazing journey into the diverse state of Oaxaca and introduced them to one of the most outstanding and colorful cuisines in the world. Proceeds from the event benefited Native Seeds/SEARCH and *Sabores Sin Fronteras*. Thank you Diana, Gary, and Janos.

above, from top **Janos Wilder and Diana Kennedy discuss Oaxaca food traditions. Gary Nabhan enjoys the conversation. Bryn Jones, Diana Kennedy, and Janos Wilder.**

# Improvements to the Native Seeds/SEARCH Collections: Current Efforts and Future Goals

by Chris Schmidt, PhD, Curator of Collections

Native Seeds/SEARCH is tasked with two major endeavors: conserving and documenting the region's agricultural diversity and associated knowledge, and making this diversity and knowledge accessible to indigenous communities, farmers, gardeners, educators, researchers, and the general public. Through our work we aim to improve access to healthy and culturally-relevant foods, to provide farmers and gardeners with the materials and support they need to build a robust regional food system, and to maintain the region's crop varieties *in situ* and *ex situ* so that they can contribute their unique adaptations to the agricultural systems of an increasingly challenging future. The seeds in our collection are the basic but essential tools that make all of this possible.

The Native Seeds/SEARCH seedbank contains over 1,800 accessions, each a lineage of a particular crop variety with its own unique history. The collection includes representatives of more than 100 species of agricultural crops and their wild relatives, with particularly large holdings of the "three sisters" of corn, beans, and squash, reflecting the importance and long history of these crops in the region. It is geographically dominated by accessions hailing from the states of Chihuahua, Arizona, New Mexico, Sonora, and Sinaloa, which together encompass the bulk of Native Seeds/SEARCH's core region of focus, and nearly 50 tribal groups are represented, with particularly large numbers of accessions from the Tarahumara, Hopi, New Mexico Pueblos, Mayo, Mountain Pima, Tohono O'odham, Navajo, Guarijio, and Tepehuan.

With the hope of making more complete use of our resources and better achieving our mission, NS/S conservation staff have been re-evaluating the ways in which we manage our collections (including our seeds, photographs, data, and literature) and developing proposals for future improvements. Our overall goals are to enhance our seed storage and monitoring capabilities; provide better security for the collections; optimize the size and scope of the seed collection to better fulfill our mission; increase the quantity and efficiency of data tracking; generally improve operational efficiency; and, most importantly, increase the accessibility of the collections to the public. Below are a few examples of how we're striving to meet these goals. In addition to updating our members on the work we're doing, my hope is that this gives a glimpse of some of the behind-the-scenes curatorial work involved in keeping our collections secure and usable.



**Beans in our new walk-in coldroom; these particular samples are used for distribution purposes. From left: Frijol de Cerocahui, Tarahumara Frijol Negro, and Tarahumara Purple.**

## Seed Storage and Monitoring

Early this summer we moved our seedbank and offices to the new NS/S Agricultural Conservation Center in Pima County's Brandi Fenton Memorial Park and Binghampton National Historic Landscape. The new seedbank is dramatically improving our ability to care for and work with our collection. For example, our new 1,000 sq. foot processing area provides badly needed space for cleaning and packing seeds, performing germination tests, storing supplies, and conducting photo-documentation and other data taking. Even more appreciated is our new 600 sq. foot walk-in cooler and 120 sq. foot walk-in freezer for seed storage. By providing dramatically more space for storing and organizing our seeds, a much improved ability to precisely control climatic conditions for seed storage, and robust fire suppression and other security measures, the new cooler and freezer are a major advance over the packed freezers and 1920s adobe garage that constituted our previous seed storage facility!

Including this year's efforts at the Conservation Farm, approximately 86% of our accessions have been regenerated at least once since their initial field collection, yielding fresh, viable seed samples kept in frozen storage at  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$ . While seeds can theoretically survive under such conditions for many decades, it is important to monitor their viability to detect problems with storage methods. We therefore recently began periodic viability monitoring of our frozen seed samples. Initial results have revealed no apparent drop in seed viability after five to 12 years, giving us hope that we may be spared frequent costly regenerations in the future once our initial round of growouts is completed. Unfortunately, the plastic zipper-sealed bags we currently use to store our frozen samples are not a secure long-term solution and we hope to eventually transfer these invaluable samples to moisture-proof laminated foil envelopes for better protection.

## Security Backup Collection

One of the realities of seedbank management is that unforeseen catastrophes may strike and accessions, or even entire collections, could be lost. Natural disasters, wars, vandalism, equipment failures, storage pests, funding shortfalls, and politics all pose threats to a collection's continued integrity. A recent fire at the AVRDC

seedbank in Taiwan and the pending destruction of the Pavlovsk Experimental Station (an important Russian fruit genebank) drive home the inherent fragility of living collections and the urgency of steps to prevent their permanent loss. To date Native Seeds/SEARCH has backed-up 40% of our accessions at the USDA National Center for Genetic Resources Preservation in Fort Collins, CO. We hope to complete this task in the near future by sending fresh “black-box” samples of every accession in our collection to the USDA center for safe storage, just in case...

### **Collection Reorganization**

Though the collection includes just over 1,800 accessions, it consists of nearly 16,000 distinct seed samples. To facilitate the general curation of this material, we recently instituted a new organizational scheme which divides the samples into six subcollections. For any single accession in the collection, there are usually multiple distinct samples of seeds, each with particular functions and maintenance requirements. For example, accession G01-021 (San Juan watermelon) is currently represented in the collection by an archived voucher sample, an active distribution sample, a sample set aside to be used for future “increase” growouts, five duplicate long-term frozen storage samples, a black-boxed sample at the USDA, and a seed sample to be used for educational demonstrations. The new collection organization is streamlining our curatorial processes by making explicit how each sample is to be used, stored, monitored, and documented. To further streamline operations we hope to eventually barcode every sample in the collection to provide faster and more reliable tracking of the seeds and their associated data.

### **Re-evaluating the Collection**

A major consideration for any genebank is the appropriate size and scope of its collection, optimized so that its limited resources can be most efficiently used to further its mission. At Native Seeds/SEARCH we are developing plans to re-evaluate or “rationalize” our collection. This will involve identifying accessions that are not relevant to our mission and could be removed from the collection; accessions that are duplicates of others and could be combined; accessions that are highly heterogeneous and could be split into multiple accessions; and accessions for which we lack viable seed and which could be targets for future recollecting efforts. As we approach the end of our first full round of crop regenerations it is an ideal time to systematically reconsider the individual status of every accession, a process that will yield a more accurate picture of the current scale of our collection and inform future management decisions.

A related effort is the identification of traditional crop varieties from the region that are currently not represented in our collection. NS/S conservation staff hope to undertake a thorough examination of the ethnobotanical literature and other sources to identify gaps in the collection, with the ultimate goal of filling these gaps when possible via collecting missions. Similarly, we hope to search other genebanks to locate additional relevant material that could be incorporated into our collection. Another important component of this rationalization is the processing of our enormous backlog of

unaccessioned material, which consists of a bewildering quantity of seeds donated to Native Seeds/SEARCH over the years by many generous individuals. We hope to begin assessing this material in the near future to identify samples that could be formally incorporated into our collection and ultimately made available to the public.

### **Data Management**

The curation of the Native Seeds/SEARCH collection involves the coordination of enormous quantities and types of data. Each seed sample has an associated accession number, lot number, catalog number, and viability data, while each accession has extensive information on collection locality, taxonomy, physical and agronomic characteristics, cultural uses, and growout and distribution history. Add to this our large collection of photographs documenting the collection and the history of the organization, and an efficient and robust data management system becomes essential.

We are currently developing an improved database system that will allow us to track a greater quantity and diversity of data with greater efficiency and security, and to access those data more easily and in more creative ways. Among other features, it has improved mechanisms for tracking inventory, germination tests, taxonomic determinations, acquisitions of new materials, farm operations (including pest and disease monitoring), and the physical characteristics of each accession. This new database is being designed with future compatibility with the GRIN-Global database in mind, to facilitate communication and exchange with other genebanks.

To enhance our ability to work with our vast and varied data, we are also developing a new web application that will integrate our database, photographic collection and online resources and give NS/S staff many new and more efficient ways to interact with our data. This will translate into less time spent finding the information we need, and more time spent using that information to further our mission! An additional task we are currently actively pursuing is the digitization of our most important and irreplaceable records, such as the accession sheets and original field notes documenting the history of each accession in our collection.

### **Website and Accessibility**

In order to enhance our outreach and education capabilities and facilitate community-building, Native Seeds/SEARCH staff are considering ways to make our collections and associated information more broadly accessible to the public. Three recent additions to our website hint at the possibilities: the online search tool and informational pages for the Southwest Regis-Tree Project; the online searchable archive of the entire back catalog of *Seedhead News*; and our new Community Seed Grants program.

One major additional component of this effort would be an online search tool enabling the public to explore our seed collection. It would provide information on the origin and history of each accession, its characteristics (with photos), current availability from

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Examples of recently-digitized photos from the Native Seeds/SEARCH archives. From left: Strips of dried squash at a Guarijio house in Mesa Colorada, Sonora. Juan Ochoa Huntado, a Guarijio maskmaker (Chonijoa, Sonora). Photos by Suzanne Nelson.

## Improvements to the Native Seeds/SEARCH Collections *continued*

our seedbank, and tips for growing and using it, and would enable direct comparisons with other accessions. It would also include a mapping feature showing not only where the accession was originally collected but also which accessions originated in areas with climates similar to that of the user's location, helping to identify varieties that might be best suited for growing there.

Through our Gardener's Network program we at one time offered free seeds to gardeners in exchange for detailed data on how the crops performed. We are currently considering ways to relaunch this program so that everyone can benefit from the experiences of gardeners around the country. Some likely components of this reinvigorated and redesigned program would be an online forum where gardeners growing Native Seeds/SEARCH varieties, or gardening generally in the Southwest, could share their successes and failures and set up seed exchanges. We also envision making the crop performance data collected through this program available online.

### Photographic Collection

The Native Seeds/SEARCH photographic collection contains well over 25,000 unique photos and is growing rapidly (by early September we'd already taken nearly 1,000 photos of this year's farm growout, with more to come!). The photos include formal documentation of each accession in the collection, images of events and people from throughout the history of the organization, and photos of traditional

farming practices from throughout the region. Over the past year and a half, staff and volunteers have been working to digitize all of our photographic slides and prints to improve their security and usability. This task is nearing completion, and the next major endeavor will be organizing and tagging the photos in a new searchable web-based gallery so that they're more accessible to staff and ultimately the public.

### We Need Your Help

The next few years should be exciting ones for conservation at Native Seeds/SEARCH. With our improved seed storage and monitoring practices, a refocused and growing collection, streamlined data tracking, and an increased emphasis on reciprocal information sharing with the broader community, we are working hard to strengthen our ability to protect and promote the agricultural diversity of our region. All of these efforts require precious resources, and Native Seeds/SEARCH depends on the generous support of individuals and organizations who share our vision and goals. If you are in a position to do so, please consider renewing your membership, making a donation, or offering your time and skills by volunteering at our seedbank, farm, offices, or store. Thank you for supporting our mission!





## NS/S Staff Highlights

## Meet our 2010 Seed SEARCHers of the Month!

*Each month, NS/S employees select one of their peers as the Seed SEARCHer of the Month in recognition of his or her achievements and accomplishments for the organization. We're proud to present our Seed SEARCHers for the second third of 2010.*

In May, NS/S staff voted Membership and Events Coordinator **Suzanne Jameson** as Seed SEARCHer for facilitating the spring plant sale at the Tucson store. People lined up before the doors were open and all but a handful of seedlings were sold out within hours. Suzanne joined NS/S in December 2008 and loves cooking, growing vegetables in her garden, and writing fiction. This is Suzanne's third Seed SEARCHer award.



**Lindsay Werth** was named June's Seed SEARCHer in recognition of her tremendous work managing the move of the Sylvester House offices and the seed collection to the new Agricultural Conservation Center. The move included exhuming mountains of dusty boxes from the basement and overseeing scores of volunteers who landscaped the grounds during the summer heat. Lindsay took the extra tasks in stride and ensured a smooth relocation. Lindsay also was honored with a Seed SEARCHer award in February 2009.

Director of Finance and Operations **Tracey Martineau** was selected as July Seed SEARCHer after her extraordinary efforts coordinating the move into the new Agricultural Conservation Center. NS/S staff unanimously chose Tracey for the award citing her calm demeanor, attention to detail, and good humor during a chaotic period. "Tracey never lost her cool," one staff wrote. "And she could still laugh after it was all over." This is Tracey's second Seed SEARCHer commendation.



The August Seed SEARCHer award went to Farm Operations Technician **Benito Gutierrez** for effective gopher control at the Conservation Farm. Benito, an experienced farmer from southeastern Arizona, joined NS/S in 2003. Benito's technical skills and his agricultural knowledge are highly valued at NS/S and his effervescent personality helps make difficult jobs easier. Benito also was voted Seed SEARCHer in June 2009.

## Searching for Ways to Support Native Seeds/SEARCH?

Now Native Seeds/SEARCH will earn money every time you use GoodSearch for your web searches and purchases. GoodSearch is a Yahoo-powered search engine that donates fifty percent of its revenue to charities designated by its users. It's easy to participate and only takes a few minutes to download the GoodSearch Toolbar.

STEP 1: VISIT  
[www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/](http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/)

STEP 2: TYPE **Native Seeds**  
under **Who Do You Support?**

STEP 3: CLICK **Verify**  
to see our full name.

STEP 4: CLICK  
**Download Toolbar.**

GoodSearch will appear on the far left and the words **I Support Native Seeds/SEARCH** should appear to the right of the search box. NS/S will earn money each time you use that box to search the Internet or shop using the GoodSearch tab. Make all your searches GoodSearch and support NS/S.

**Thank you!**

## From our friends...

NS/S friends are widespread around the globe. Our website and Facebook page have tracked log-ins from visitors in countries as far away as the Czech Republic, Vietnam, Liberia, Mexico, Greece, Singapore, Dominican Republic, India, Argentina, Ireland, and Taiwan. Thank you for sharing the following with us:

I have been growing melons in the Southwest for more than thirty years. I've tried dozens of varieties and grow six to ten types each summer—always trying some new ones. I find many are not adapted, but gradually I've focused on a few varieties that are reliable. My family agrees that the San Juan melon from NS/S has the best flavor or any we have grown. I have grown it five or more years and if we have an average or longer growing season, we also obtain nice yields.

*Nic Korte, Grand Junction, Colorado*

Please find enclosed my extra striped Havasupai Sunflower Seeds. There are from your seed stock. I've grown these 12-foot sunflowers in Garberville, California for more than ten years, often sending my surplus to you. Our family thanks you for many years of beautiful gardens.

*Carrie Conine, Redway, California*

### SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE!

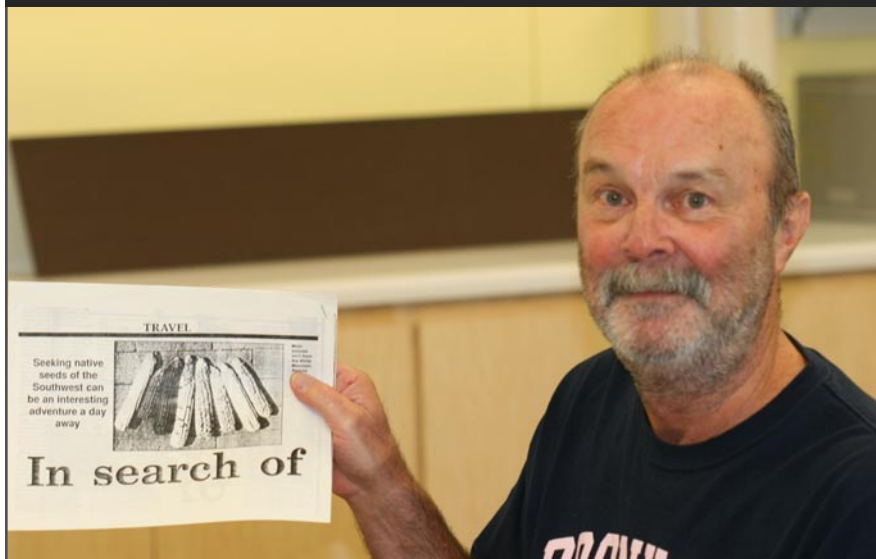
Have you had fun and success growing NS/S seeds? We love hearing your stories and would like to highlight them in our newsletter. Please email your experience and photos to [membership@nativeseeds.org](mailto:membership@nativeseeds.org)

## Tokens for Bags Program at Buffalo Exchange

Buffalo Exchange has chosen Native Seeds/SEARCH as one of three non-profit organizations in its Tokens for Bag Program. Now through December 2010, customers in the Tucson store may opt to take a token worth five cents and donate it to NS/S rather than take a plastic bag. Buffalo Exchange has generated nearly \$358,000 for hundreds of local non-profit organizations since 1994 and saved 7.2 million bags! We're proud to be part of this important program.

*Thank you Buffalo Exchange!*

## Volunteer Highlight



### Meet David Kelly by Suzanne Jameson

Professing to emulate the snakes and lizards that drew him to the Southwestern desert, David Kelly wanted to retire in a "warm place" after a lifetime of battling frigid Connecticut winters. In fact, David and his wife Barbara were so determined to find the perfect location, they spent 366 consecutive days traveling around the US by car searching for their new hometown. Fortunately for Native Seeds/SEARCH, the Kellys chose to settle in Tucson. He's been a NS/S volunteer since 2006, often logging two days a week to make "order out of chaos." David is attracted to the jobs that most people avoid such as entering data, sorting news clips from years past, performing handyman duties, and scanning hundreds of photographs for our collections. Always quick to crack jokes and never too busy to share a laugh with other volunteers and staff, David is beloved by all who know him. When he's not digging through boxes and organizing NS/S files, David loves to watch nature from his Sabino Canyon area home, fascinated by the flora and fauna of the Sonoran Desert and enjoys spending time with his rescue fish Lowell. Thank you, David, for all you bring to NS/S.

## Store Hours

Visit our Tucson store for the latest in Southwestern crafts, foods, and books, all in one convenient location. Our experienced staff can answer your questions about cooking with regional products and offer suggestions for the best time to plant.

**Monday—Saturday: 10am–5pm**  
**Sunday: 12–4pm**

*(Avoid traffic delays during construction on Campbell and Ft. Lowell by taking Hedrick east from Mountain)*

## To Contact NS/S Staff

### Conservation 520.622.0830

*Director of Conservation* Suzanne Nelson, ext. 111

*Curator of Collections* Chris Schmidt, ext. 112

*Seed Distribution Coordinator* Dawna Gravley, ext. 114

*Farm Operations Technician* Benito Gutierrez

### Distribution 520.622.5561

*Director of Distribution* J.P. Wilhite, ext. 5

*Distribution Coordinator* Betsy Armstrong, ext. 6

*Retail Assistants* Vivian MacKinnon, Elaine Terrell

*Bulk Foods Associate* Laura Jones

### Administration 520.622.0830

*Executive Director* Bryn Jones, ext. 104

*Director of Finance & Operations* Tracey Martineau, ext. 103

*Membership & Events Coordinator* Suzanne Jameson, ext. 105

*Administrative Assistant* Maureen Moynihan, ext. 100

## Community Seed Grants

*Supporting educational, food security, and community development projects in the Greater Southwest through targeted donations of seeds.*

Native Seeds/SEARCH is pleased to offer small donations of our seeds to eligible organizations in the Greater Southwest region. These Community Seed Grants are designed to support the work of educators and those working to enhance the nutritional, social, economic, or environmental health of underprivileged groups in the region, while simultaneously keeping locally-adapted crops varieties alive and in active use in farms and gardens.

Please visit [www.nativeseeds.org/seed\\_grants](http://www.nativeseeds.org/seed_grants) for detailed information on eligibility requirements and application procedures. Applications are due January 7, 2011, by 5pm MST for the Spring Planting period.

## News & Notes

### Farewells and Welcomes

We say goodbye to Development Director **Julie Evans**; Bulk Foods Assistant **Kieran Conner**, Field Coordinator **Chris Lowen**, Native American Outreach Coordinator **Alex Sando**, Volunteer Coordinator **Jules Richelson**; and Collections Manager **Lindsay Werth** and wish them all the best as they explore new opportunities. Thank you all for your dedication and commitment to NS/S.

After many years of service on the NS/S board, we're sad to bid farewell to **Bob Sanderson**. We're extremely grateful for his longtime devotion to our mission of preserving Southwestern biodiversity and for his unflagging support of our organization.

We're pleased to welcome **Laura Jones** as the new Bulk Foods Associate and already appreciate her help at our store.

Fall brings NS/S a new board member. **Kim Fernández** is an architect with Albanese-Brooks Associates, PC and has an overreaching record of community involvement including serving as Chair of the Arizona Humanities Council, the President of the Tucson Leadership Board, and President of Arizona Youth Partnership Board. Kim's interests span such topics as edible gardening, sustainability, and permaculture. In 2009, she received the Inside Tucson Business "Women of Influence" Award.

### We were Recognized in the Best of Tucson!

Tucson Weekly staff selected our Native Seeds/SEARCH store as the *Best Place From Which to Export the Desert*. The announcement reads: "In a world of genetically modified everything, this internationally known organization has made it its mission to preserve and promote the use of seeds and crops native to the Southwest and the Sonoran Desert. At its relatively new storefront on Campbell Avenue, you'll find a cornucopia of our desert's raw materials—all appropriately modified for human consumption (and holiday mailings!) Everything—from mesquite and prickly pear soaps, to chili-chocolate brownie mixes, to the Desert Healing Salve (made from desert willow wildflowers, chaparral and jojoba oil)—will scream your love for the Arizona desert."

### Find us on Facebook!

Join almost 2,500 other NS/S fans on Facebook and get the latest news and event information.



Non Profit Org  
US Postage  
PAID  
Tucson, AZ  
Permit #2157

Native Seeds/SEARCH  
3584 E. River Road  
Tucson, Arizona 85718

## Coming Up in 2011

**Saturday, February 12**, 10am–5pm  
*NS/S Spring Plant Sale*  
3061 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson

**Sunday, March 20**, 6–10pm  
*Flavors of the Desert 2011*  
Location TBD, Tucson

**April** (Date, Time TBD)  
*NS/S Cooking Demonstration*  
3061 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson

**Saturday, April 23**  
*NS/S Spring Plant Sale*  
Patagonia Trails Day

**Saturday, June 25**  
10am–2pm  
*San Juan's Day Celebration*  
NS/S Conservation Farm, Patagonia

and 10am–5pm  
*NS/S Summer Monsoon Plant Sale*  
3061 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson

## Give the Gift They'll Love!

This year, you can give the perfect gift that will please everyone on your holiday list — a Native Seeds/SEARCH gift membership! Memberships begin at \$30 and provide your friend or family member with an entire year's worth of newsletters, product discounts, and, most importantly, the satisfaction that you're taking a proactive role to conserve seeds that have sustained generations of Southwestern farmers and backyard growers. As a NS/S member, your gift recipient will receive:

- A special card announcing your gift
- A new member packet, including information about NS/S, membership card and more
- *Seedhead News*, our newsletter published three times a year
- An annual Seedlisting catalog
- Invitations to special events such as San Juan's Day, Flavors of the Desert, and others
- A ten percent discount on all purchases in our store or online

Ever mindful of the "culture" in agriculture, Native Seeds/SEARCH is dedicated to nourishing vital relationships between people and seeds. Give the gift of conservation and help preserve our future.