



Conservation Society giving two special honors this year

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An ironworker and the caretakers of the Alamo are among honorees being lauded by the San Antonio Conservation Society tonight.

Historic Preservation Awards for the Built Environment, which honors those who have restored buildings, are also being given and several individuals will be singled out as Heroes of Historic Preservation.

The Conservation Society hosts an awards dinner every spring, but only occasionally gives out the Lynn Ford Craftsman Award and their premier honor, the Amanda Cartwright Taylor Award.

Ted Voss, who has restored a chandelier his grandfather built in the 1920s for the Aztec Theatre, is receiving the Craftsman Award; his father was the 1985 recipient.

"He comes from a long history of craftsmen — that's his life," said Barbara Johnson, president of the Conservation Society.

Voss said he's enjoyed restoring the 2,000-pound chandelier crafted of sheet metal and glass that boasts hand-hammered and hand-chiseled features.

"It was really neat to break it down and see how he did it," he said of his grandfather's work.

The Daughters of the Republic of Texas will receive the Amanda Cartwright Taylor Award for their work in preserving key pieces of Texas history, including the Alamo.

"The Conservation Society is honoring a visionary group of women who founded the Daughters of the Republic of Texas in 1891 and throughout their foundation and inception they sustained its original vision to perpetuate the memory and the spirit of the people that achieved the independence of Texas," Johnson said. "And they've done this without public funding."

Last year, the DRT celebrated a century of custodianship of the Alamo. Nelma Wilkinson, president general of the group, said the Daughters are ecstatic to receive the honor.

"We work hard, and we're delighted when someone recognizes us for what we've done," she said.

The awards, to be presented at a dinner tonight, also go to those being honored as heroes of historic preservation:

Frank W. Jennings, principle founder of San Antonio Founders Day.

Charlotte Kahl, for her 30-year efforts in neighborhood revitalization, conservation, historic and overlay districts, and master plans. She also helped preserve the 50-mile Bexar County segment of the Old Spanish Trail.

Patsy Pittman Light, author of several texts for historical markers. Light is the former chairwoman of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park Commission.

A combined award goes to Ruth Lofgren, Anne Parrish and Ernest Roney for their leadership of the Mitchell Lake Wetlands Society, which is dedicated to the stewardship of the wildlife refuge at Mitchell Lake.

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