



## HISTORY OF THE “TRAILS” PART 2

In 2004, I ran for a position on the Board of Directors for CASI. That year the Great Peppers Meeting was held in Baltimore, MD. During the round table for the candidates, everyone asked me what skills I had and what position on the Board was I best suited for. My comment was Ranch Manager (Jimmy Taylor was the Ranch Manager at that time and I knew that position was not available). As a Registered Professional Land Surveyor in the State of Texas, involved with many aspects of construction, from road layout, construction staking, subdivision development, etc., the position of Ranch Manager would have been a good fit. My next response was that I was least qualified to be the editor of the *Terlingua Trails*. Lo and behold, I was elected to a two-year term on the Board at that meeting and during the Board meeting following the elections, Mel Fitzhenry, the CASI President, asked if I would assume responsibility as the editor of the *Trails*. I thought to myself “holy crap,” what did I get myself into now. I was re-elected to a three-year term in 2006.

Interim editor Jim Staczny said he would work with me to prepare me for this task. Fortunately I had some computer savvy, since I had adapted my company to computer aided drafting (CAD) several years earlier, and also had a working knowledge of the Word program. Through Jim and his company Hill Country Software and Support, I personally purchased a laptop computer which Jim set up and loaded with PageMaker software, to use for the publication of the *Trails*. He also installed Paintshop Pro software, which was used for editing photos, and several other programs which were necessary for the production process. I also personally purchased a printer and scanner which were needed for this endeavor.

I met with Jim at his office around the 15<sup>th</sup> of October for my first lesson and together we worked Friday, Saturday and Sunday to prepare the November 2004 issue of the *Trails*. I started preparation of the December issue, which included all of the results from TICC, early in November and had all of the articles and photos basically ready for Jim’s review. I met with Jim again and we downloaded the winners and the upcoming cook-off listings at his office, printed a review copy, edited some of the data and sent it off to the printer. The *Trails* was always ready to send to the printer between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of each month so the hard copy would arrive in the mail prior to the first of each month. From then on I was on my own, even though I had frequent phone calls to Jim asking questions on how to do certain things that had slipped my memory. Thanks to Jim’s assistance, my job as *Trails* editor was simplified and I hope successful.

One of the things Jim did as editor was to ask chili cooks from various regions of the country to submit articles for the *Trails*. These articles included much history, local news, and other things of interest that were taking place. Some of the contributors were Ray King (A View from the Top of a Chili Head), Irene Duffield (Chili Bites), Junior and Dixie Johnson aka Bess and Harry (Bess’ Best), Donn Shands (Tejas Medicineman), Alan Dean (Pepperdean’s Ponderings), Louis Gonzales (Tales from the Ranch), Bill Pierson (TallyWhackers), and Ken Rodd (The Chili Frontier). I expanded on this since some of the original writers started dropping out for various reasons (some have since passed away) and added Bud Barrick (A New Mexico Perspective), Steve Dowdy (Nobody Told Me), Sue Caffey (Murmurs From Mama Sue), and Hut Brown and Ken Large (The

Making of the Terlingua Ranch), which was one of my favorites and can be found in the October and November 2005 issues of the *Trails*. All of the back issues can be found in the on-line CASI Museum. All of these people provided so much about the early days of chili and CASI, and provided interesting and informative content for the *Trails*. If I missed anyone, I apologize for the oversight. During my tenure as editor, Don Shands, Jason Ezell and Steve Nadeau provided me with plenty of photos following the Terlingua International Chili Championship each November. Many other people sent in photos and articles on various cookoffs around the country providing me with current events in the chili world.

Another thing that Jim did in 2002 was make the *Trails* available via email in a pdf format. This gave members who had a computer, or access to one, an early and full color look at the current issue of the *Trails*. Later this was enhanced to placing the *Trails* on the CASI web page for all of the membership.

My second term on the Board ended in 2009. Dana Plocheck was elected that year and volunteered to assume the responsibility of publishing the *Trails*. I met with Dana in Houston in November to initiate the transfer. We worked on the *Trails* on Friday, Saturday and finished on Sunday. She was a fast learner and had both the experience and desire to make the transition. When I left Houston that Sunday afternoon, I called Renee Moore then CASI President, and let her know I felt confident Dana would do an excellent job as the next editor. Dana would call me whenever she had difficulty with anything regarding the *Trails* and I was always happy to help her. She did not let me, the Board or CASI down.

That's my story as I remember it.

Doug "Bucky" Seelig  
*Terlingua Trails* Editor 2004-2009