1993 Mule Days Celebration Dignitaries

by George L. Garrigues

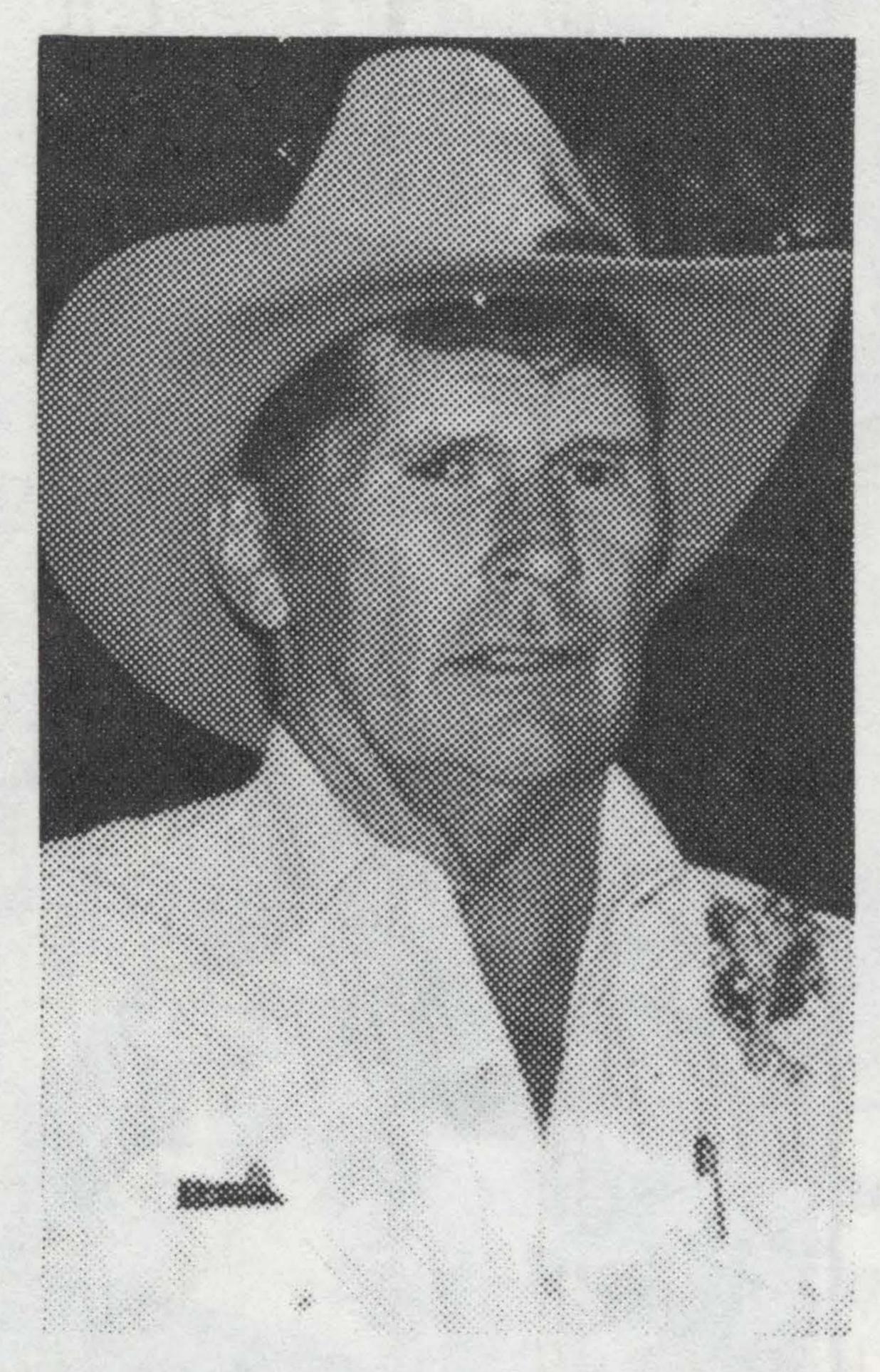


SAM DEAN President

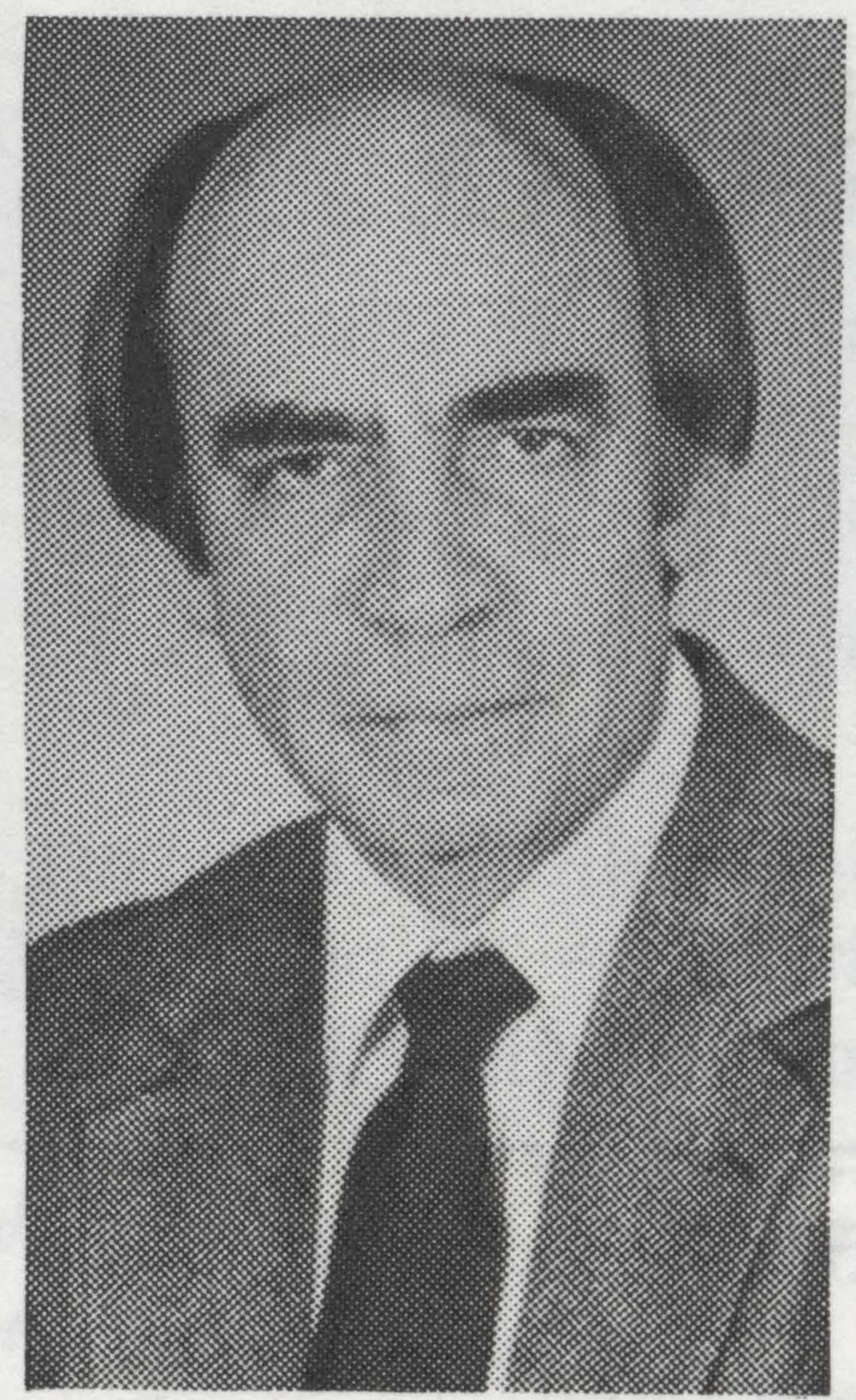
PHOTO AVAILABLE

THOMAS JEFFERSON

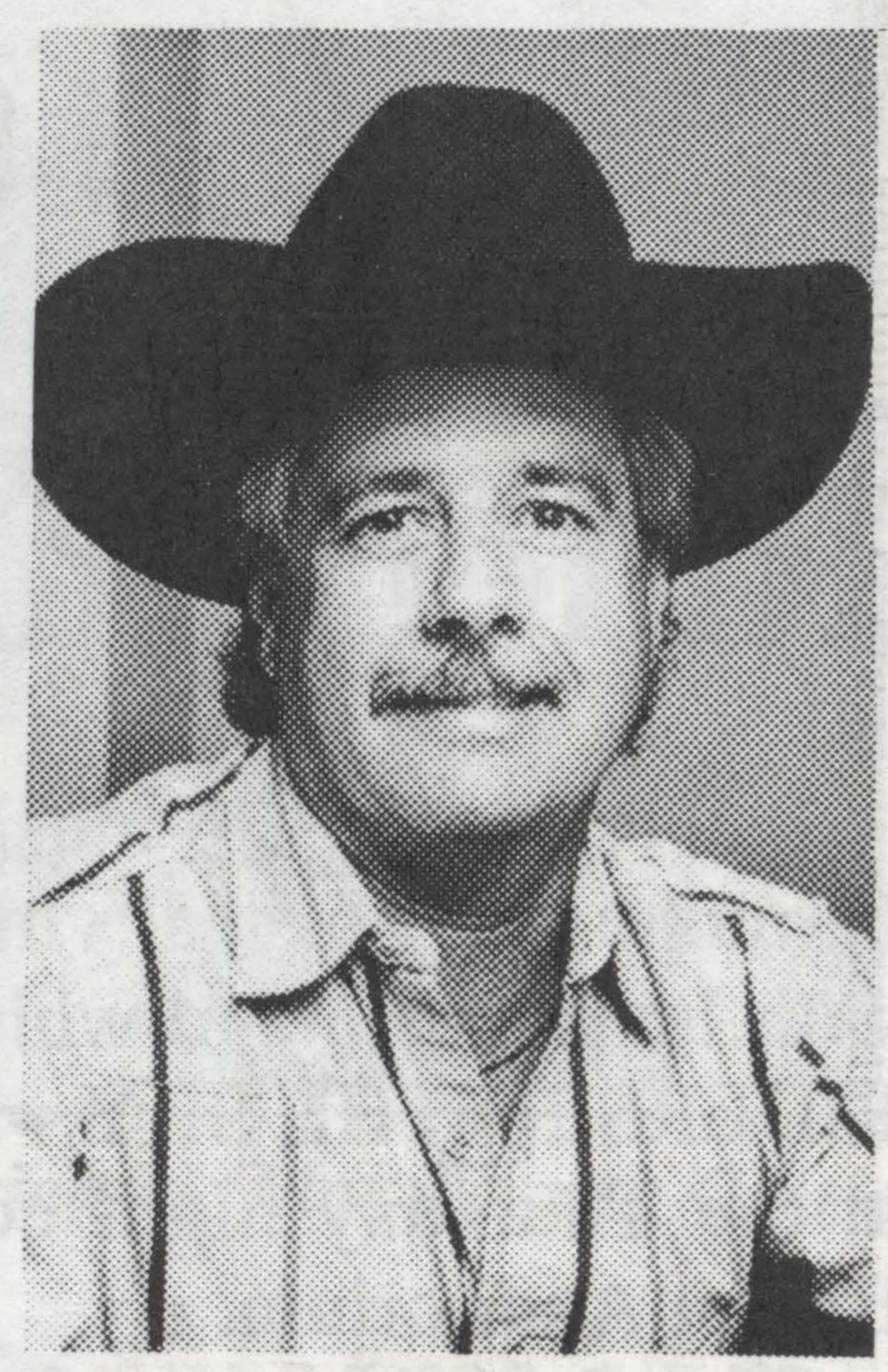
Most Honored Packer



WALTER SVETICH Best Friend of Packer



DENNIS MARTIN Best Friend of Mule Days



RICK PUCCI Committee Person of the Year

Sam Dean 1993 Mule Days President

President of this year's Mule Days Committee, Sam Dean, was born in Texas and came to California in 1946. For many years he had Dean's Plumbing & Heating, working on numerous commercial building projects and residential construction jobs. He is a member of the Bishop Lion's Club and the Bishop Elks Lodge. He has served on the City of Bishop planning commission and city council. Presently he is an Inyo county supervisor and chairman of that board. He has been active on the Mule Days board of directors for many years. His expertise and good judgement have been invaluable.

Thomas Jefferson Most Honored Packer

Tom Jefferson, Native American, was born in Lone Pine. His father was a bronc rider and Tom became interested in horses at a very young age. His attended school at the Indian Mission in North Fork (near Oakhurst, California).

He returned to Lone Pine to work, cowboying during the winter and packing for Burkhardt and Gill in the summer. He learned to respect mules. During World War II, he served in the army in the Marshall Islands.

In 1946 Tom started packing for Norman B "Ike" Livermore. He led many long pack strings with twelve packers and more than sixty mules into the Sierras between Mammoth and Olancha.

In 1964 he purchased the Mt. Whitney Pack Train and operated it until 1971.

Tom has many pertinent comments about mules. "I like 'em. They are smarter than horses and can carry a heavier load even though they can be ornery at times. They are all

different, each has his own personality." Tom has used them to carry mining equipment, lumber and other unusual loads into the Sierras. He said that, "They were like big trucks. On sharp switchbacks, they would back up while the load caught up, then move forward. Often they needed to unload at a steep location. Each mule would stop in place until unloaded, then move up the trail just far enough so the next one could take his place."

In 1975 he started making cowboy saddles. In 1981, he added boot making. Now is retired again to just play his guitar though he just might turn out a saddle or pair of boots for you.

Walter Svetich Best Friend of the Packers

Walter Svetich was born and raised on a ranch near Dillon, Montana that depended on horses to do everything, After serving in the Navy during the Korean War, he worked with "cow outfits" in Montana, then "drifted" through Nevada and into Arizona. He wrangled horses for movie companies at Tucson and was introduced to mules. He soon realized that they were much smarter than hors-

He drifted to Lake Tahoe and worked for a commercial packer with many mules. He gained more respect for them. He continued drifting, but soon discovered that punching cows didn't pay enough. Returning to Tahoe, Walter took employment ("just for a little while") with the U.S. Forest Service. THAT JOB LASTED THIRTY-FOUR YEARS.

Walter's experiences with the Forest Service could fill a book. About 1974, he transferred to the Inyo National Forest. His first assignment was to build fifty miles of the

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Pacific Coast Trail, a project that involved 150 tons of explosives. Walter says, "It was nothing to see twenty mules going up the trail loaded with explosives.

When the Wild Horse & Burro Act was passed, Walter was assigned to its implementation. He is now the Wild Horse and Burro Coordinator for the Inyo National Forest.

Walter has appeared at every Mule Days since the first one in 1969 when he brought a mule string from the Los Padres National Forest. He says, "It is great to have seen Mule Days grow from a small show to what we have today."

Dennis Martin Best Friend of Mule Days

Dennis Martin has been Supervisor of the Inyo National Forest for the past seven years. He directs activities on a forest that covers over two million acres and has more than 1,200 miles of trails. During that time, he has instituted several program that are responsive to the public and the communities that the Inyo National Forest serves. The major of these began in 1987 and continues today. It consists of intensive public involvement in wilderness planning and management.

Dennis was raised in a farming community in eastern Oregon. He attended and graduated from Oregon State

University in Forestry in 1966.

Dennis worked first for the Millan, Blowbell Timber Company in British Columbia. He was offered employment with the United States Forest Service on the Wallowa-Whitman Forest near Baker, Oregon. He accepted the position, was given a horse, a mule, a back country cabin and assigned to trail maintenance work. He has also worked as one of the early "smoke jumpers"

based at Winthrop, Washington. He has made fire jumps all over the western states including as far away as New Mexico. Since that time he has served on the Willamatte National Forest Service in Oregon and on the Boise National Forest in Idaho.

He has participated in the last seven Mule Days. He is proud of mules and what they do for the U.S. Forest Service. He says: "without them the emphasis on improving the wilderness and the administration of the back country for the best interests of the public would be impossible."

Dennis spends as much of his free time as possible on various community projects such as Mule Days and the Bishop Rotary Club. Unfortunately, his employment activities require a considerable amount of travel which restricts his local participation.

His family life is also important. His two children are graduates of Bishop Union High School and have gone on to earn their college degrees.

Rick Pucci Committeeperson of the Year

Rick Pucci was born in Wisconsin and raised in southern California where he worked in various cities at administrative positions. In 1980, when the City of Bishop decided that it needed a full time administrator, he applied for the position and was hired. Rick is a salient member of the Mule Days Committee on which he has served for the last twelve years.

When asked why, he replied in a jokingly manner, "I hate mules!!" Then, more candidly, he said, "Mule Days is a big event and an important asset to the community. I am happy to participate. It, along with the Bishop Rotary Club, are my favorite volunteer things."