

2019 Hall of Honor

Ron Dawson

2019 Hall of Honor Inductee

Ron Dawson, referred to by friends as a Renaissance man with a broad range of skills and humanitarian concerns, was born in Las Cruces, New Mexico in 1940. After attending Las Cruces High School, he served as a Senior Airman from 1961 to 1965 and was wounded in Vietnam while testing the use of advanced military surveillance aircraft. Following his service in the military, Dawson earned an MA in Speech Pathology at New Mexico State University and spent most of the next three decades helping children overcome speech disorders at Anthony ISD in southern New Mexico and at Clint ISD in west Texas.

Beyond the fields of education and speech therapy, Dawson was passionate about the history of El Paso and the historic preservation of railroad and streetcars. On these subjects, he wrote two books, produced documentary films, and produced educational programs. These efforts led Dawson to help establish and serve in a variety of positions for several historic organizations, including the Southwest Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, the Paso del Norte Streetcar Preservation



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Society, and the Railroad & Transportation Museum of El Paso. He served as the Museum Historian and Webmaster for each of those organizations.

One of his greatest accomplishments was the successful funding of the El Paso Streetcar Project which required the restoration of the historic 1936 El Paso Streetcars. And, because of Dawson's tireless efforts, the Texas Transportation Commission earmarked \$97 million to bring back the electric streetcars in 2014. Chief Justice David Chew of the Eighth Texas Court of Appeals claimed that Ron Dawson was singularly responsible and deserving of credit for the restoration of the streetcars.

Ron Dawson passed away at the age of 75 on November 30, 2016. But he certainly won't be forgotten. In 2018, Sun Metro notified the El Paso City Council that the Community Advisory Board had reviewed and accepted the nomination of Ron Dawson's name to be placed on the new Streetcar Service & Operations Building.