LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
SUE WAGNER, 1991-1995

Sue Pooler Wagner was born in Portland, Maine, in 1940. Her family moved to Tucson, Arizona, while she was young and there she graduated from high school and the University of Arizona (B.A., Political Science; M.A. History). She worked as a history teacher, reporter, and assistant to the Dean of Women at Ohio State University. Sue and her husband Dr. Peter B. Wagner moved to Reno with their two children in 1969 where Peter was an associate professor at the Desert Research Institute until his death in a plane crash with three colleagues in 1980. Sue served as assistant to the President of the Desert Research Institute until she ran for public office.

Wagner, a Republican, served in the Nevada Assembly, 1975-1980 and the Nevada Senate, 1981-1989. As a legislator Wagner was an advocate for legislation that helped women and children, pushed for the creation of the State Ethics Commission, and helped insure passage of the 1990 ballot referendum that prohibited the state from amending Nevada's abortion law without a vote of the people. She was widely respected by both Republicans and Democrats.

Wagner ran for the position of Lieutenant Governor in 1990 but was involved in a serious plan crash shortly before the election. Although severely injured, friends and colleagues assisted in her successful campaign and Wagner was able to take part in the inauguration on January 7, 1991. She was the 30th lieutenant governor and the first woman lieutenant governor of Nevada. Wagner dealt with Guillain-Barre disease and faced additional surgeries while in office but did not miss any Legislative sessions. She chose not to run for a second term in order to address her health issues.

As Lieutenant Governor, Wagner served as chair of the Nevada Commission on Economic Development; chair of the Nevada Commission on Tourism; member of the Board of Directors of the Nevada Department of Transportation; and member and chair of committees and task forces of the National Conference of Lieutenant Governors. She was a member and officer of the National Republican Legislators' Association; Council of State Governments, Western Conference; and National Council of State Governments.

Sue Wagner was the recipient of awards and honors from many organizations including the National Conference of Christians and Jews, Commission on the Status of Women, Anti-Defamation League, Committee to Aid Abused Women, American Civil Liberties Union, and American Association of University Women.

RECORDS 1989-1994 9.5 cu. ft.

The records of Sue Wagner in the Nevada State Archives were created by Wagner as lieutenant governor. All of her other political papers are at the Special Collections Department of the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, University of Nevada, Reno. See the finding aid at http://knowledgecenter.unr.edu/specoll/mss/94-58.html
.

Wagner's lieutenant governor records consist of general correspondence, reports, and subject files; correspondence and reports created during her role as chair of the Nevada Commission on Economic Development and Chair of the Nevada Commission on Tourism; and speeches presented at political and office-related events. A finding aid is available online.

Photo credit: Top: Nevada Lieutenant Governor Sue Wagner, ca 1991, courtesy of Nevada State Library and Archives. NSO-0171. Bottom: Governor Bob Miller signing SB 452, the Collegiate License Plate Bill, July 9, 1993. Front: Lieutenant Governor Sue Wagner hugging Governor Bob Miller. Back, L-R: Jane McVeigh, Chris Ault, Tim Jones, Jim Weaver, Bob Dickens, Fred Albrecht (behind Dickens), and Susi Botsford. Courtesy of Nevada State Library and Archives, NSO-0248.