The Journal of the American West

Ranch & Reata

Volume 1.3 $14.95

Tim Keller: Picturing Stories

The Future of The Western Novel

Boots O'Neil: Texas Cowboy

The Cowboy Art of R.S. Riddick

Art Show & Sale Benefitting the
American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame & Museum

August 13 – November 12

An American Icon
by Steve Devenyns

America's Horse in Art

The Horse That Settled the West

Save The Date *for the*
Opening Event Saturday, August 13, at the
American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame & Museum

2601 East I-40 – Amarillo, Texas – 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and entertainment

Can't make the opening?
Art will be available for viewing and purchase online at *www.quarterhorsemuseum.com* beginning August 15
For more information, call 806-376-5181 or e-mail *artshow@aqha.org*

Brian Asher
Wayne Baize
Don Bell
Buckeye Blake
Teal Blake
Lynn Brown
Brenda Bruckner
Mary Ross Buchholz
Kaye Burian
Tyler Crow
Steve Devenyns
Mikel Donahue
Bruce Graham
Steve Harris
Harold T. Holden
Rick Jackson
Connie Johnson
Greg Kelsey
T.D. Kelsey
Earl Kuhn
Jan Mapes
Rick McCumber
Lisa Perry
Annette Randall
Jason Scull
Jack Sorenson
Edgar Sotelo
Buck Taylor
Herman Walker
Don Weller
K.W. Whitley

FRONT GATE

Welcome to the West. Photography by Tim Keller.

Pryor's Horizon by Tim Keller

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FRONT GATE	1	Welcome By Tim Keller
EDITOR'S NOTE	4	What is Tradition, After All By A. J. Mangum
CLASSICS	6	Colonial-Style Spurs
BY HAND AND HEART	8	Matt Moran, Saddler By Guy de Galard
FROM OUT OF THE WEST	12	Books To Find
FEATURE	16	The Art and Ways of Walt Larue By Mark Bedor
WESTERN WEB	20	The Digital West
MAKING A DIFFERENCE	24	Mike Tatsey By Tom Moates
THE WESTERN HORSE	28	Clay Wright and the Art of the A-Ha By Jayme Feary
	33	Upcoming Clinics
A VISIT WITH BUCK BRANNAMAN	34	From the Beginning
FEATURE	38	The Ballad of the Rainbow Man By Tom Russell
FEATURE	50	Painting From Life By A.J. Mangum
FEATURE	56	The Frontier Project By A.J. Mangum
LIGHTING OUT	58	Little Bighorn Battlefield
RANGE RADIO	60	Adrian By Bruce Pollock
FEATURE	62	All About the Music By A.J. Mangum
FEATURE	66	America's Horse in Art
COVER STORY PHOTOGRAPHY	70	Tim Keller: Telling Stories
FEATURE	82	Rounding up the Literature of the West By Rod Miller
WESTERN READS	87	Hidden Water, *Chapter Four* By Dane Coolidge
THE COOK HOUSE	94	Mike Oden's Beans-in-a-Hole By Kathy McCraine
FEATURE	97	Larry Bitterman's Old Frontier Clothing Company By Jayne Skeff
FEATURE	102	Texas' Boots O'Neil By Paul A. Cañada
FEATURE	110	The Winchester Quarantine By Tom Moates
FEATURE	116	Three Years Later By Paul A. Cañada
FEATURE	124	A Western Moment, Sandy Collier
PUBLISHER'S NOTE	127	Two Wraps and a Hooey

COVER: *Driving Lesson* by Tim Keller
Kade Brown, at the wheel with his grandpa, Darien Brown, and brother, Kyle, will be the sixth generation of Browns to run 140-year-old Brown Ranch, located along the Dry Cimarron River outside Folsom, New Mexico. Darien says he learned to drive a truck the same way, and at the same age, as Kade.

Ranch & Reata

Volume 1, Number 3 • August/September 2011
www.rangeradio.com

PUBLISHER
Bill Reynolds

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
Buddy Purel

EDITOR
A.J. Mangum

ART DIRECTOR
Robin Ireland

PRODUCTION
Curtis Hill, Javier Munoz

CONTRIBUTORS
Mark Bedor, Paul A. Cañada, Guy de Galard, Tim Keller, Kathy McCraine, Rod Miller, Tom Moates, Bruce Pollock, Tom Russell, Jayne Skeff, and the late, great Dane Coolidge

Ranch & Reata
PO Box 637, Santa Ynez, CA 93460
www.rangeradio.com

For advertising information contact Buddy Purel at 949.234.1281 or bpurel@gmail.com

Ranch & Reata is a bimonthly digital journal of RangeWorks, Inc.
PO Box 637, Santa Ynez, CA 93460
805.637.6205

All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.

View issue at www.rangeradio.com
Limited Edition print journals published three-times a year. Subscriptions available at website. Individual Limited Edition copies (limited to 1,000) are available for $14.95 and are sold in US dollars plus appropriate postage for destination. Order information at www.rangeradio.com..

Copyright 2011 by RangeWorks, Inc.

RangeWorks, Inc.
Peter Cuneo, Colin Cuneo, Jim Guercio
Shawn Knight, Bruce Pollock, Bill Reynolds

Scan this QR code with your enabled smartphone to subscribe to *Ranch & Reata* and view the enhanced online issue

Get your free Range Radio app at iTunes.com

EDITOR'S NOTE

What is Tradition, After All?

By A.J. Mangum

Waddie Mitchell paces the stage at the Warehouse Theater in downtown Colorado Springs, gesturing madly as he shares a story with the standing-room-only audience. His crisp white shirt reflects the bright stage lights and the percussion of his boot heels punctuates his unfolding narrative.

At a strategic point in his yarn, he leans toward the audience to give weight to a punchline and his eyes grow wide beneath his black, flat-brimmed hat. The crowd erupts in a wave of laughter and a grin breaks out under Waddie's trademark handlebar mustache.

The night's set list is diverse, ranging from such moments of humor to more poignant offerings designed to provoke deep thought, even jerk a tear or two. They're stories told in the most traditional way, with no technology at work beyond the amplification of Waddie's voice and the light by which he's seen.

Midway through his performance, Waddie calls an audible and opts to make a last-minute addition to the evening's lineup. He dons a pair of spectacles, reaches for a small black case and settles into a seat on stage. "This is a first," he warns the audience. "History in the making."

Waddie withdraws from the case a shiny black iPad. With a touch, the screen ignites, its light reflecting from his spectacles. He begins to read a newly completed work from the device's display and the novelty of the electronic tablet fades quickly as the audience is

photo courtesy A.J. Mangum

Waddie Mitchell reads from an iPad during a performance at Colorado Springs' Warehouse Theater.

transported to the landscape of Waddie's story.

Tradition, it seems, is not written in rock; instead, it's an ever-evolving premise. New tools alter the way in which tasks are performed, but the tasks themselves remain unchanged.

Waddie finishes his tale and, amid the audience's applause, powers down the iPad and returns it to its case. The show – its remaining minutes decidedly low-tech – goes on.

Read more about Waddie Mitchell's connections to the Warehouse Theater in this issue's "All About the Music."

CLASSICS

Colonial-Style Spurs

Idaho bit and spur maker John Ennis has long been fascinated and inspired by California's Spanish Colonial era. Also a sought-after gunsmith known for his intricate custom engraving and a former tool-and-die maker in the aerospace industry, Ennis found in this spur, one of a pair he made for the 2003 Traditional Cowboy Arts Association show, a unique opportunity to merge his array of talents and his passion for the functional art of the Spanish vaquero culture.

Ennis fashioned the spur from polished steel that he painstakingly pierced, filed and engraved. He gave the outside heel band (nearest the camera) a series of C-shaped scrolls. The inside heel band (out of view) is designed with a rope pattern.

The spur's traditional Spanish rowel has six points and measures 4 ¼ inches in diameter. As the rowel spins, it passes through the chap guard positioned atop the shank. Faceted jingle bobs hang from pierced jingle-bob hangers.

View more of Ennis's work at www.tcowboyarts.org/members/bit-and-spur-makers/john-c-ennis.

photo courtesy National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

Spanish Colonial spur, by Idaho bit and spur maker John Ennis.

BY HAND AND HEART

Matt Moran

Dedication and methodical planning led this young craftsman to become part of a new generation of saddlemakers

By Guy de Galard

Sheridan, Wyoming, saddlemaker Matt Moran didn't grow up riding on a ranch out West but instead spent his boyhood in Michigan. After high school, he spent eight months training cutting horses in New York before pointing his pickup west and eventually landing his first cowboying job taking care of yearlings at the Miller Cattle Company in Montana. He then rode at Wyoming's Padlock Ranch for three years before stints at the Overland Trail Cattle Company and Sunlight Ranches, also Wyoming outfits.

photo by Guy De Galard

Matt Moran during his cowboy days on the Padlock Ranch in Montana

In 2007, when he was just 26 years old, Matt retired from cowboying to become a full-time saddlemaker. Matt's decision to make a career change was fueled by his desire for self-reliance and independence. "The entrepreneur in me took hold," he says. "I had to go out and try it on my own. If it didn't work out, I'd still have cowboying to fall back on." He also believed the time he'd spent working on horseback gave him a certain understanding of what cowboys looked for in a handmade saddle.

This 15½ inch Wade saddle, built by Matt, has a 5-inch cantle, 4 x 4½ Guadalajara horn, in-skirt rigging and flower stamped overlay.

photo courtesy Matt Moran

photo by Guy De Galard

While installing a fork cover on a Wade saddle, Matt works on taking the stretch out of the leather for a tight fit.

Matt began making saddles in 2001, right after acquiring a custom saddle of his own. The price tag prompted a vow that he'd build his next saddle himself. He spent that winter in South Dakota with fellow cowboy Kevin Willey, a talented leather craftsman and rawhide braider. Under Willey's guidance, and using as a reference *The Stohlman Encyclopedia of Saddlemaking*, by Al Stohlman, Matt built his first saddle. As he continued earning a living as a ranch cowboy, he began diligently collecting – one tool at a time – the equipment he'd need for his saddle shop. Five years later, when he drew his last ranch wages, he owned his own shop, had no overhead, and had 15 saddle orders awaiting him.

"The worry started after the 15th saddle was built," he says. "Then, you have to think about what to do next."

On the recommendation of Sheridan saddlemaker Bob Douglas, Matt pursued a scholarship from the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association, a group that includes some of the world's leading saddlemakers, silversmiths, rawhide braiders, and bit and spur makers. With a scholarship funding his travel, Matt spent five days studying with Idaho saddlemaker and TCAA emeritus member Dale Harwood, observing the master craftsman build a saddle from start to finish.

"Dale helped me tremendously by showing me how to simplify [my process] and be more productive," Matt says. "He also taught me about the importance of consistency and attention to detail."

Not long after Matt began saddlemaking full-time, the economy tanked. He credits the time he spent working on ranches for keeping him on the radar of working cowboys, his primary clientele.

"Some cowboys don't realize it, but they've been in a recession all their lives," he says. "You just have to be the guy they want to buy a saddle from. I've been lucky and they've kept me afloat so far."

One such loyal client is Martin Anseth, who was foreman of the Padlock before later moving to the Overland Trail Cattle Company. Matt worked with Anseth on both outfits.

"Matt's saddles have a deep, comfortable seat," Martin says. "They fit most horses I ride and withstand the tests I put them through." The veteran cowboy also appreciates Matt's ingenuity. "One day, we were coming back from a day of gathering and rode by a pile of scrap metal. Matt came back later with a torch and made a pair of spurs out of a piece of junk metal. He has the

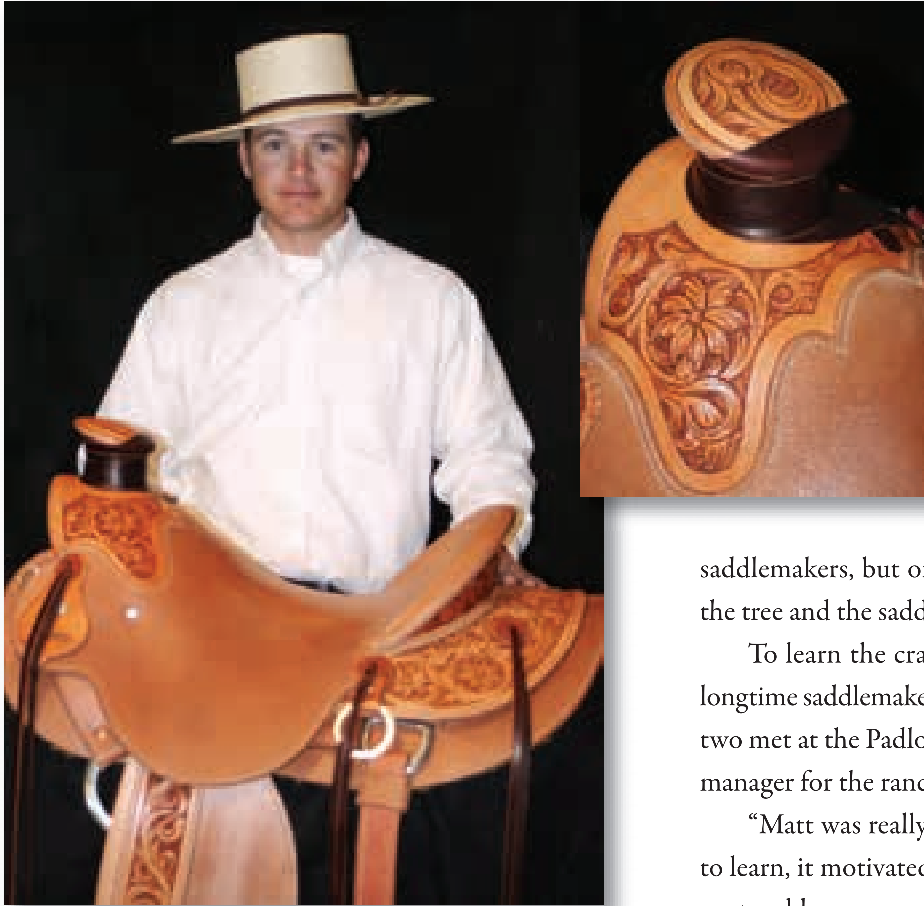


photo by Guy De Galard

Matt built this Wade saddle, giving it a 16-inch seat, 4½ inch cantle, and 3-inch round post horn. The floral pattern is what Matt calls a "spin-off of the Sheridan style."

ability to visualize, and is very creative and crafty."

Sixty saddles into his career, Matt promotes himself through a web site and by word of mouth. He supplements his income by shoeing horses and making a variety of leather items – chinks, breast collars, belts, wallets, purses.

Six months ago, Matt moved his shop two miles down the road from his home to a new four-room building. The new location offers more working space and more storage for leather and the tools Matt requires for his newest undertaking: making saddle trees.

"In saddlemaking, the tree is number one," he says. "If you don't have a solid foundation to start with, you can't have a solid end product." Matt believes building trees will give him a competitive edge over other saddlemakers. "There are a lot of good saddlemakers, but only a handful who can build both the tree and the saddle."

To learn the craft of treemaking, Matt turned to longtime saddlemaker and tree builder Matt Miller. The two met at the Padlock, where Miller works as the unit manager for the ranch's Bar V camp.

"Matt was really interested and was trying so hard to learn, it motivated me to teach him and encouraged me to add some new blood to the tree-making business," Miller says.

The tree-making learning curve, Matt admits, was steep and, at times, overwhelming. "It's another tedious process, but it's fun," he says. "And, so far, so good," he adds, looking at his fingers. "I can still count to 10."

Matt enjoys working for himself, but admits he occasionally misses cowboying and its camaraderie. Such nostalgia, though, has its limits. "I don't have to ride in snowstorms anymore," he says. "Now, I can pick and choose the days I want to be horseback. And when people call me, asking me to day work, I tell them I have to check the weather first, instead of my schedule."

Guy de Galard is a writer and photographer living in Wyoming.
Learn more about Matt Moran at www.moransaddles.com.

Books to find

BUCKAROO: Visions and Voices of the American Cowboy

Cowboy Poetry: A Gathering

Buckaroo: Visions and Voices of the American Cowboy is aptly described by its editor: "This book and compact disc have been completed because each of us involved in the cowboy movement feels deeply that there is a vision here that the whole world should know about and share." – Hal Cannon, Western Folklife Center, Elko, Nevada

Back in 1993, the "cowboy movement" was taking on a life of its own. It could be said that the "quiet renaissance" that started in the late 1970s and early 1980s could be tracked by some "moments" that were true aah-ha events and a few come to mind. Two landmark books were published that depicted the real faces of the contemporary west. Photographers Kurt Markus and Jay Dusard published *After Barbed Wire* and *North American Cowboy, A Portrait*. The cow town of Elko, Nevada became a cultural center with cowboy narratives and poetry. Folk artist Ian Tyson released his album *Old Corrals and Sagebrush* and just as *Urban Cowboy* had given every attorney in the country permission to learn the two-step and wear a $14.00 hat in 1980, the living horse and cow culture of the era reminded

everyone that people still were making a living horseback. The late Ray Hunt was featured in *Time* magazine and the concept of the "clinician video" brought the horse training business into the DIY, how-to world. The cowboy crafts were being reexamined with the concept of the "gear-as-art" show at art institutions, encouraged by gear makers who showed up at places like Elko, NV or Jordan Valley, OR with bridles, bits and spurs, and *mecates* on their arms. In 1986, the Trappings of the West show was held in Flagstaff and really helped get that ball rolling. All reminders of tradition, both what had been, and what is.

Heifers, photographed by Martin Schrieber. From the book, *Buckaroo.*

Buckaroo demonstrates why the cowboy was more than a fabled icon. He – or she – is also a poet, a performer, and a musician. Cowboy literature and music had undergone an astonishing revival over the ten years prior to the book's release, and today there are hundreds of scheduled poetry and music gatherings in the West that attract hundreds of thousands of people each year. From Albuquerque to Calgary, men, women, entire families continue to convene to celebrate together a way of life that embodies great American traditions and timeless values.

This book and CD brought together the best of contemporary cowboy writing, along with a full range of sound recordings on its unique, attached CD, and show why the cowboy movement remains a dynamic cultural force in America today. *Buckaroo* honors classic cowboy culture and its continuing renaissance.

Hal Cannon, a prime mover of contemporary cowboy poetry and music, served as advisor and audio editor on the book. Writer and critic Thomas West edited the book, and brought together the best poetry, prose, and recordings of sixteen leading cowboy bards.

Cool images? But of course. The era's foremost cowboy and Western photographers, including William Albert Allard, Peter de Lory, Jay Dusard, Bank Langmore, Kurt Markus, Norman Mauskopf, and Martin Schreiber contributed work along with the superb watercolors of William Matthews. The book is a picture of time, recently passed, that had a huge effect on the acceptance and expansion of the cowboy and vaquero culture that continues today. The book is still in print and is a must for any serious western culture bookshelf. It is published by Simon and Schuster and available at amazon.com, but do us all a favor and buy it from the bookstore at the Western Folklife Center at www.westernfolklife.org. The editors and the culture will thank you.

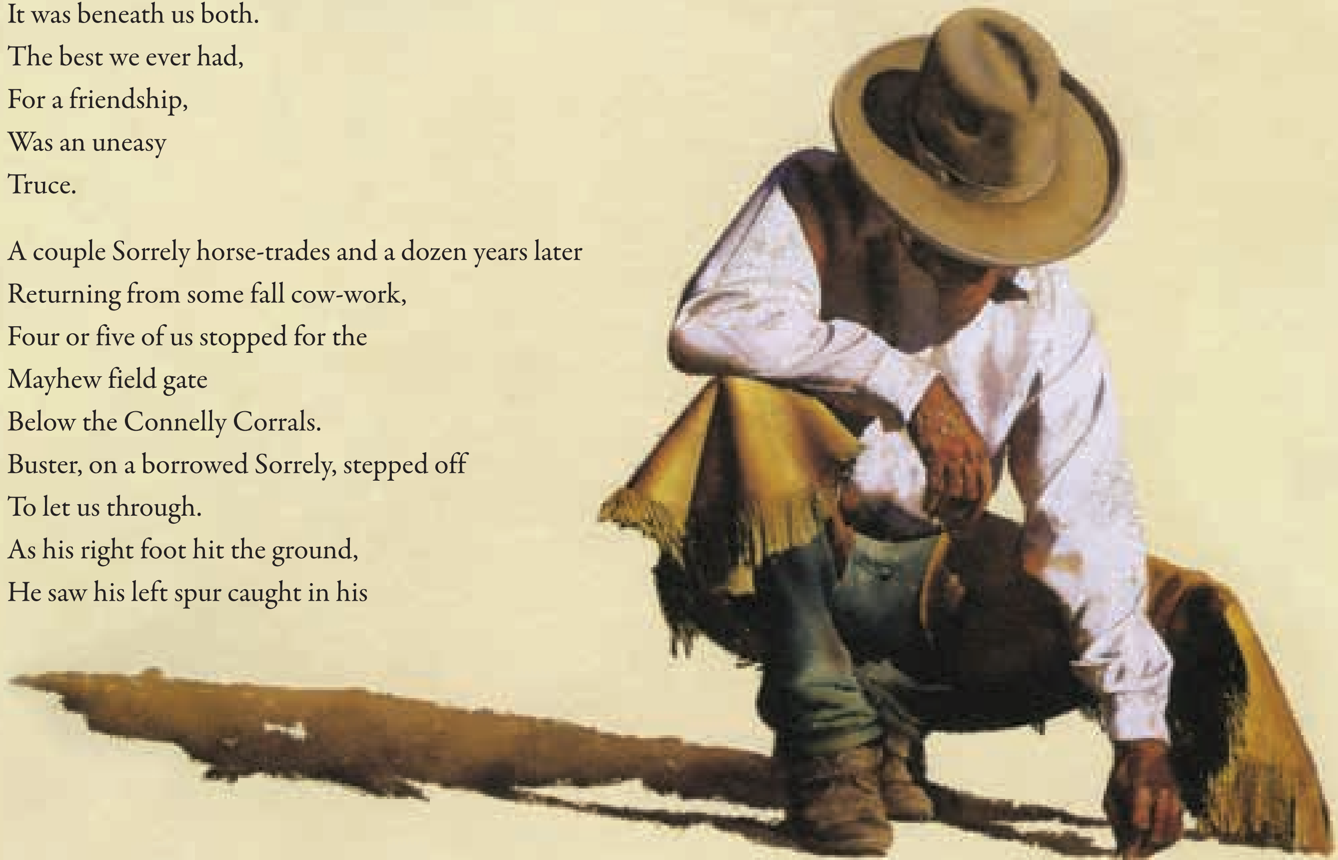
FOR SORRELY

By Rod McQueary

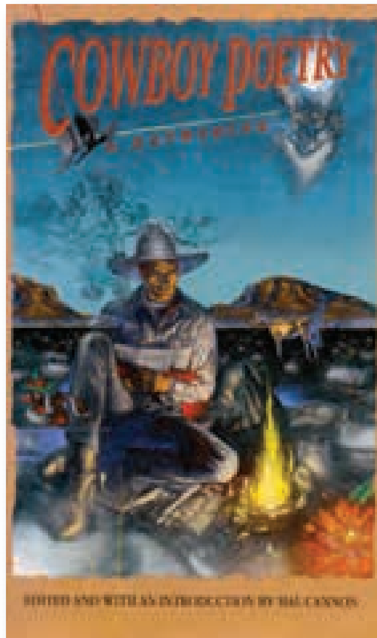
It was just business between us,
He and I,
He was wild and untrusting,
I thought training horses was to crawl on them,
and ride.
I would rope and choke him,
Then catch one hind foot and stretch it
So he couldn't kick.
Hook my cinch ring with a wire, and
Away we'd go.
He didn't buck often, when he did
It was hard and quick and flat
He'd bawl and spin, trying to unload
The man he never liked
and would not trust.
I never petted Sorrely,
It was beneath us both.
The best we ever had,
For a friendship,
Was an uneasy
Truce.

A couple Sorrely horse-trades and a dozen years later
Returning from some fall cow-work,
Four or five of us stopped for the
Mayhew field gate
Below the Connelly Corrals.
Buster, on a borrowed Sorrely, stepped off
To let us through.
As his right foot hit the ground,
He saw his left spur caught in his
Hobble buckle.
He tried to step right back,
But half-way on, Sorrely blew.
They scattered the rest of us like deer.
Trying to keep a bay filly from hitting the fence,
I watch it all over my shoulder.
Buster, hatless, both hands on the mecate,
Sliding, sitting half-up,
Kicking frantically at his trapped boot.
Sorrely stampeding, bent by the load
On the snaffle bit, bawling and kicking
At the old enemy.

At that moment,
I learned a lot about
Training horses.

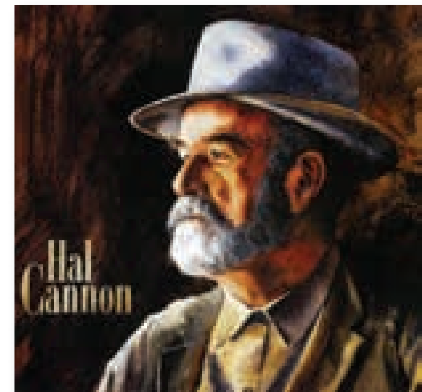


Cowboy Poetry: A Gathering



This may seem like it's turning into a Hal Cannon love fest, but his little tome, *Cowboy Poetry, A Gathering* was the real hand grenade that jump-started the cowboy movement and enabled *Buckaroo* to happen. The little book continues to be the finest collection of cowboy poetry published since the pioneering work of John Lomax almost eighty years ago. Tough and lean and honest, these little poems have evolved and remain within the cowboy culture as literature.

As stated by the publisher, the endearing Gibbs Smith, "This collection resulted from an intensive field gathering effort throughout the Western states by a team of folklorists and researchers led by Mr. Cannon. Ten thousand poems were gathered from cowboy reciters, ranch poets, and form a library of over two hundred published works of cowboy verse. The poems that finally were included were part of that effort. One third of the poems are classics that have proven their vitality by their enduring capacity; they have lived in the minds and hearts of cowboys and ranchers of the West for several decades. Two thirds of the poems in this volume are new, created within the last few years – some within the last few months. Many of these poems express an honest, tough, hard-bitten spirit that the reader looking for a fresh and vital literary experience will value."



That pretty well says it. But the book carries more with it, especially in the charming illustrations that appear throughout that harken back to an era when wood cuts and steel engravings were *de rigueur* as illustrative add-ons in publishing. Then there is the Bibliography – no finer reference tool exists, short of the National Archives, as a window on the classic poetic west. This little book truly is more than a book; it is a thank you to the likes of John Lomax and Howard Thorp – two horseback scholars who chronicled the songs and writings of the cowboy universe over a century ago. If you love the west you will love these books. To Hal Cannon, a tip of the old Stetson.

The Art and Ways of Walt Larue

By Mark Bedor

Imagine being a horseback, Hollywood stuntman during the heyday of the Western. Or working in Glacier National Park, leading a string of pack mules while guiding guests through the spectacular Rocky Mountains. Think about what a rush it would be to be a singer-songwriter and guitarist, performing in L.A. nightclubs, and jamming with the top stars of the day. Or how about being an accomplished Western artist, whose acclaimed oil paintings are constantly in demand, and even on display in prestigious Western museums.

Put all that together, and you have just a part of the life of the late Walt Larue. He also competed in pro rodeo from L.A. to New York's Madison Square Garden; created a newspaper ad campaign for Levi's jeans that lasted ten years; and published a book.

photos courtesy Mark Bedor

Walt Larue

Walt Larue didn't like to talk about himself, and even once turned down an interview request with Leonard Maltin of TV's *Entertainment Tonight*. "He says, 'No... I don't want to talk to people,' and he wouldn't," tells Marge, his wife of 45 years. "He says 'My work speaks for me.' And that's the way it was."

I got the same response when I called one day with my own interview request. But it wasn't because Walt was unfriendly and I had to take no for an answer. But then we proceeded to talk on the phone for perhaps an hour. I later realized my tape recorder was rolling the whole time. And I wound up with what is very likely the last interview of a man whose amazing life lasted nearly a century.

"I'm older 'n hell," chuckled the then 90-year old as he looked back over the years. "I'm older 'n hell..."

Born in Canada in 1918, Walt's parents were U.S. citizens, but were not the horseback type. "No, I just went to cowboyin' on my own," he told me. "I came to California when I was about 12. And I lived next to a guy that was breakin' horses and stuff. I just kinda got to hangin' around there and learned a lotta stuff from him. That was down in Bellflower (outside Los Angeles). When I was a kid, you could ride (a horse) from Bellflower to Long Beach and cross one road. That was long ago..."

"I broke a lot of horses," he continued. "I was always around horses ever since I was a kid."

Walt's interest in art began about the same time. "I've been doin' it since I was a kid," revealed the painter. "It was always kind of a sideline. But then it got pretty good."

The art was always Western. Authentic Western. Vivid colors. As good as it gets. Inspired by a lifetime in the saddle. "I cowboy'd up in Montana," he recounted. "...Worked as a packer and guide in Glacier Park... Yosemite Park. I took Farnsworth up there one year in Glacier Park. He worked up there. That'd a been in the 40s."

Farnsworth was Richard Farnsworth, the longtime stuntman who late in his career became a two time Oscar nominated actor for his roles in *Comes A Horseman* and *The Straight Story*. He also starred in *Tom Horn*, *The Grey Fox*, *The Natural*, and many other films and TV shows. But long before that fame, Farnsworth and Larue were rodeo buddies, traveling around the country competing in bronc and bull riding. "We'd make all the shows we could," says Walt. "Then when there was a big movie goin', we'd go for that.'

But first the friends had to break in to what was then known as the "picture business." "Oh, we just kept chargin' them casting directors... ya know, tryin' to get in," he explained. "We had some friends that rodeoed and they worked in the picture business, and we thought... 'We could get in that!' And we finally made it. We just worked extra when we first got in there. Then we got to doin' stunts."

1943's *Five Graves To Cairo* was Walt's first movie. "It was a war picture... I was just an extra... But we did some stuff with some friiggin' explosions and stuff... We went on a stunt check... Then we finally got in the Westerns. That's where we did our stuff."

The stuff was good. Walt was in more films and TV shows than he could remember. And while he worked on all kinds of shows, horses were his specialty. "I was ridin' buckin' horses... drivin' wagons... doin' falls... stuff like that."

"All them falls that ya lived through hurt ya later," he admitted. "I used to hear them old guys, they'd say, 'Ya know Walt, that's gonna hurt ya some day.' And you'd just kinda grin, and do another one... 'cause you was makin' money."

"Yeah... it's kinda rough, those stunts," he reflected. "But I loved 'em."

There were some falls off the set as well – in barroom brawls, most of which started for one reason. "Aw, over a gal," he tells. "I run with some pretty good gals in them days. I could fight pretty good too... I learned to box when I was a kid. Did a lot of boxin'... amateur."

Those rowdy times started in Larue's 20s, about the same time the cowboy – who was also a singer – first picked up a guitar. "I sang everywhere, but I didn't play. Then I see some little kid somewhere playin' the guitar... Playin' the hell out of it! And I figured... if he can learn

coined the phrase, *The West Grew Up In Levi's*. "The first one I sold 'em," Walt remembers, "I had a couple of angels up in heaven... with their togas on, sittin' on a cloud. And they're talkin' to a cowboy... he just got up there ... and he's sayin', 'If its all right with you guys, I'll just keep wearing these Levi's ... For that heavenly fit!"

By the 1960s, Larue's art had evolved from cartoons to painting. Primarily self taught, Walt did get tips where he could, including advice from Joe De Yong, the only protégé of the legendary Western artist Charles M. Russell. "I was ridin' some buckin' horses here in Burbank... We was havin' a jackpot (an informal rodeo competition)... And he was over there... And I see him... And I knew who he was... So I drew a little picture and showed it to him... And he invited me to his house... he lived in Hollywood with his mother."

The painter, whose style resembled Russell's, was deaf. His mother helped him out, answering the phone when the studios called for De Yong, who worked as an advisor on Western films. "And I went to Mary De Yong's 100th birthday!," laughs Walt. "She danced when she was 100 with Monty Montana! (A well-known actor, stuntman and rodeo star.) And I played the guitar! Joe's tappin' his toe... and he can't hear a thing! I guess maybe he could feel the rhythm... 'cause he's tappin' his toe to the music."

Joe didn't find much wrong with Walt's art. When he did have any advice, De Yong would write a note, since he had difficulty talking. "I listened to him... and it probably improved my work," reveals Larue. "He kinda liked the way I did stuff... He was satisfied with most of it."

to play it, I guess I can. So I bought this guitar from the bartender... And in a couple years, I played pretty good."

The self-professed ham played clubs around L.A., and brought the guitar on movie shoots too. "Yeah, it opened the door for a lot of things... They'd take me on movies a lotta times just to hear me sing. I mean, if they needed a stuntman, they'd say, 'Let's take old Walt... he can entertain us at night!"

Music lead to some interesting encounters. "I'd play out on the sets a lotta times... I was playin on some picture we was makin' at Paramount, and Dino joined me!"

Dean Martin?

"Yeah! Sang three or four songs! I was singin' to my cowboy friends and he (came by and) says, 'Mind if I join in?!'"

Then there was the night Walt met Western music star Marty Robbins. "I'm singin' in a joint and I knew who he was. He was there with a party... and during the intermission he asked me if he could play my guitar. I said, '*YES!*'"

Walt also kept his friends entertained with his drawing. That skill lead to a steady gig as an advertising cartoon artist, including ten years with Levi's, where he

Lots of Hollywood stars liked Walt's work. Gene Autry, Charlton Heston, and Audie Murphy were among his buyers. And by then Walt had a partner to help – his wife Marge. They'd met when she heard Walt playing music in the restaurant-bar where she worked.

"I hear this guitar playin' and I look in the bar... And there's a guy sittin' on the bar and he's playin' a guitar and he's singin'," tells Marge. "And I really liked it."

They went out for coffee that night in 1964, and were together until the day Walt died.

"They were like Frick and Frack," says Marge's son John. "But to me, Walt was the guy, when I walked in the house... he's sittin in the chair... legs crossed... with either a newspaper or a pad... sketching."

Walt never went anywhere without a magic marker. He sketched on everything. And dinner plates were a favorite canvas. "He would sit down at the Pickwick (a restaurant in Burbank, California) and take one of their plates... and he'd pull his pens out and he'd just start drawing," says longtime friend Jim Nichols, as he shows me one of those decorated dishes. "And here's an original Walt Larue done at breakfast one morning."

Walt was a regular visitor at Nichols' Burbank home, and a favorite guest at the Western style backyard parties Jim and his wife Dana host for their friends from time to time. "He would sit out there and he'd play his guitar for an hour," Jim reminisces. "...Just play and tell stories... and everyone just gravitated to him. Then he would take out his pen and he would start drawing on whatever."

Jim and Dana have quite a collection of Larue art, including Thank You notes from Walt and Marge that always came with an original Larue drawing. But what Dana remembers most is the kind of person he was. "He always had time for everybody. He made *you* feel important," she shares. "And I thought, gosh, that really humbles me... 'cause I thought he was such a fabulous man."

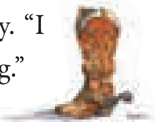
"And Marge... He always spoke highly of her. He always treated her with such gentle respect. He was a true gentleman."

Kiva Hoy talked to Walt once a week after her stuntman husband Bobby Hoy passed away. Walt and Bobby had been friends since the 1940s. "I remember Walt's genuine caring about people," she tells me. "You felt better after talking to Walt than you did before. He was a great guy."

I met Kiva at an exhibit of Walt's art at the OutWest Western Boutique and Cultural Center in Santa Clarita, California, after Walt's death in 2010. His empty saddle was displayed along with his timeless art. Even at age 91, his time was too short. But it was time well spent.

"Must have been a fun life!," I say as my phone call with Larue came to an end.

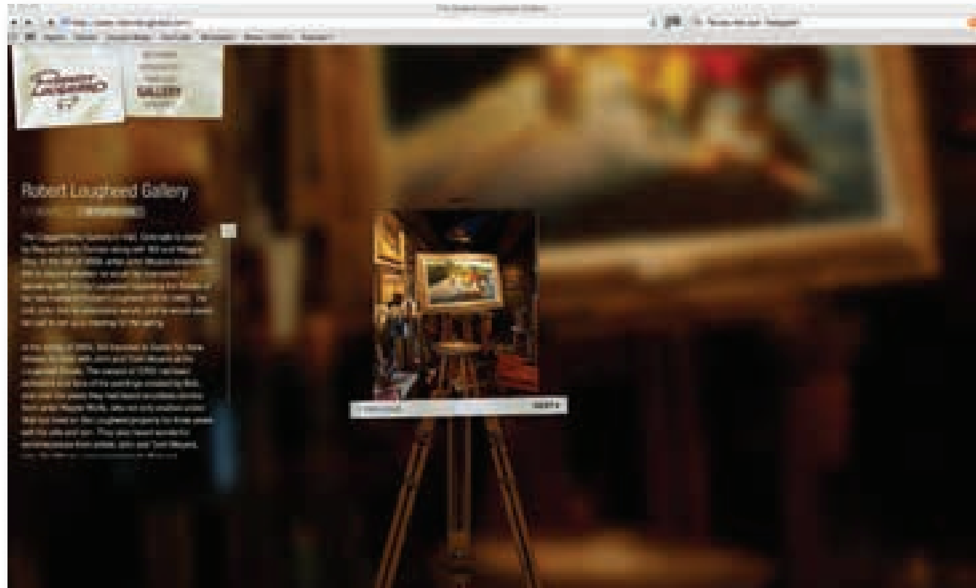
"Yeah... it was good," Walt says quietly. "I wouldn't trade the life I've lived for anything."



THE WESTERN WEB

A look at all things cowboy on the information superhighway.

Painter and illustrator Robert Lougheed was one of the most influential figures in Western art, and countless contemporary artists, both within and outside the Western genre, count him as a mentor.

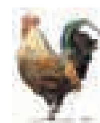


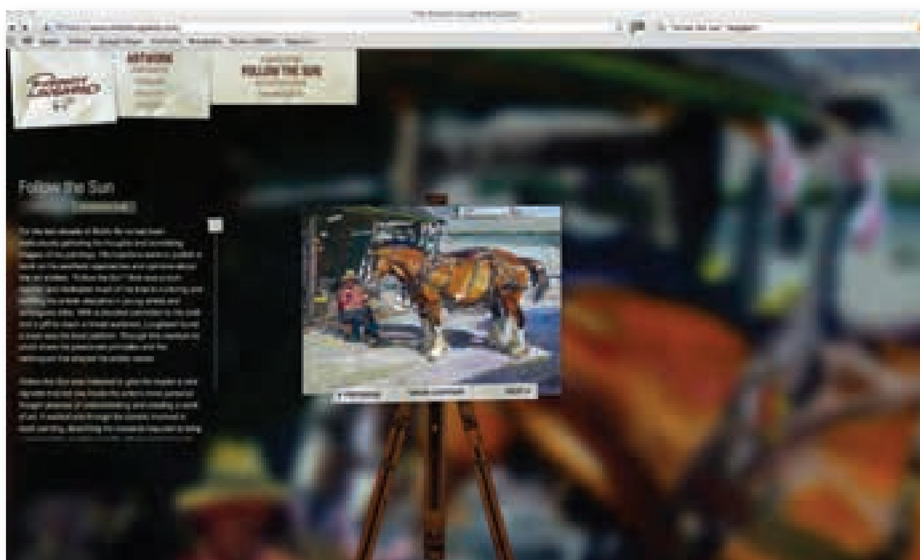
At www.robertlougheed.com, visitors can experience online the Lougheed Studio, a branch of the Claggett/Rey Gallery in Vail, Colorado.

Born in Ontario, Canada in 1910, Lougheed began illustrating while growing up on the family farm. He studied at art schools in Toronto, New York and Montreal, and worked extensively as an illustrator throughout the first half of the 20th century, producing commercial images as well as editorial work for publications such as *Reader's Digest* and the *Saturday Evening Post*.

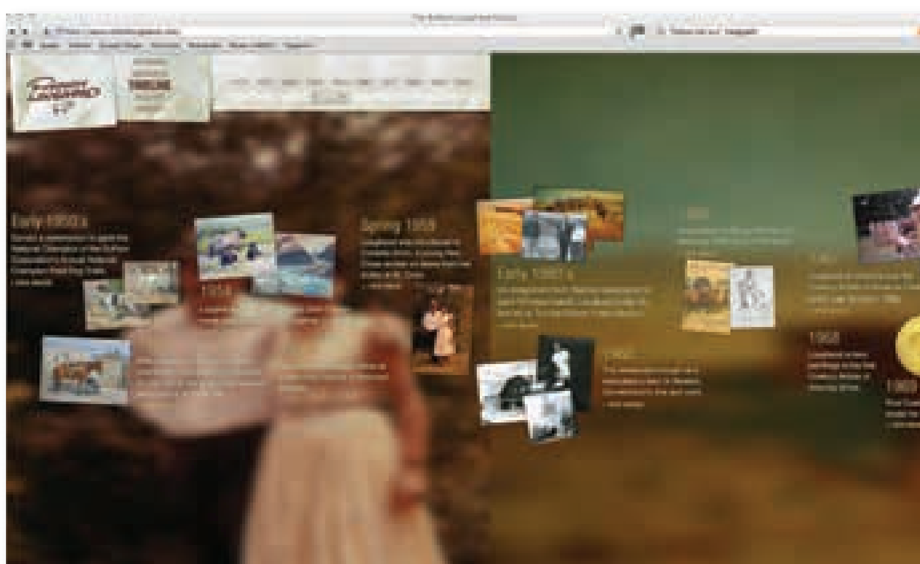
In the 1950s, Lougheed began traveling in the American West, painting landscapes, wildlife, people and horses. His body of work led to an invitation, in 1967, to become a member of the Cowboy Artists of America. Subsequent works by Lougheed would win no less than 15 gold medals at CAA exhibitions.

During his career, Lougheed actively mentored younger painters. In the latter years of his life, he invited promising artists to join him on annual month-long excursions to a British Columbia game farm, where the group "painted from life," working at easels to create images of the landscapes, flora and fauna they saw before them. Many of those students – among them Harley Brown, John Moyers and Terri Kelly Moyers – went on to become prominent artists in their own right.





The site includes numerous galleries documenting Lougheed's various artistic interests.



The site's timeline offers an alternative view of Lougheed's career and biography. Links open galleries related to specific points on the timeline.

Lougheed passed away in 1982. Collections of his work are maintained by the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, the Eiteljorg Museum of Art, and the Phoenix Art Museum, among others.

The Claggett/Rey Gallery in Vail, Colorado, is home to the Lougheed Studio, a gallery and museum devoted to documenting Lougheed's life, works and ongoing influence. Now, though, fans of Western art, and of Lougheed in particular, can view scores of his paintings, and delve deeply into his biography at www.robertlougheed.com. The beautifully designed site features intuitive navigation through a wealth of inspiring imagery and insightful written material covering everything from Lougheed's influences to the approach he took to his work. It's a unique digital archive and tribute to one of the West's premier artists.

Follow the Sun: Robert Lougheed, a book by Don Hedgpeth, recently earned a Western Heritage Award from the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. The book, published by the University of Oklahoma Press, is both a biography of Lougheed and a chronicle of his work and legacy. To order, call (970) 476-9350.

Barranada shirts feature classic styling, top-notch construction, distinctive fabrics and exciting colors. Mother of pearl buttons display our logo.

Presenting Barranada's New
WINNER'S CIRCLE SERIES

All bets are on Barranada's newest collection of American-made, classic tailored shirts. Barranada's timeless tradition of refined quality makes these four new styles top picks for the Winner's Circle.

BARRANADA

Visit our website to find your closest retailer or to order online.
www.Barranada.com 866-693-2323 308-382-2920

MADE IN THE USA

Wrangler® and Country artist Jason Aldean Launch "New" Retro Jean

Wrangler® Western Wear announced the launch of a new jean collection backed by popular country rock entertainer, Jason Aldean. Styled with fresh designs, updated fabrics, contemporary trim details, a lower rise and two fit options – boot cut and straight leg – the Wrangler Retro jean line is set to hit shelves this month. "I've been wearing Wrangler jeans for more than a decade now, all the way back to when I first started playing clubs in my teens down in Georgia," said Aldean. "There's nothing cooler than a good fitting, worn-in pair of Wranglers." www.wrangler.com

Barranada "fits" the West

Barranada – Spanish for "bar none" – defines itself as a shirt that can go from the arena to the boardroom. Owners Gene and Barbara Graves purchased the company several years ago after falling in love with the cut, quality and fit of Barranda's outstanding shirts. "Our core clientele prefers a more tailored, dressy look", says Barbara. "We meet their needs with beautiful fabrics exquisitely tailored in men's and ladies' shirts that deliver the look, fabric and fit." www.barranada.com

made of AMERICA™ STETSON.
STETSONAPPAREL.COM

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Mike Tatsey

A vocational agriculture teacher on Montana's Blackfeet Reservation combines real-world, hands-on lessons with teachings about tribal culture.

By Tom Moates

"Indian people are hands-on learners," says vocational agriculture teacher Mike Tatsey, himself a member of the Blackfeet Nation. "That's how we learn. That's the way our kids learn the best."

Tatsey has become renowned for some unique practical experiences he incorporates into the classes he teaches at Browning High School, a public school on the Blackfeet Reservation in Browning, Montana. Many consider his hands-on teaching methods innovative, but they also harken back to earlier days of the West.

"I'm a vo-ag teacher, so I teach animal-science, vet science, fish and wildlife, ag leadership. I'm also the FFA advisor," Tatsey explains. "Then I have one class that's pretty unique to any high school: I teach horseshoeing."

In addition to learning farrier skills, high schoolers in Tatsey's classes brand cattle, preg check cows and butcher buffalo. Then there are the field trips he lines up, like an eight-mile trail ride into the Rocky Mountains and a wintertime bus trip to a remote corner of the reservation to bugle for elk.

"We have all kinds of fun," he says. "Right behind the school, there's an alley, and we brought in a hydraulic squeeze chute. I back up a horse trailer, unload a cow, put her in the chute, and let kids preg test her to get hands-on experience for our animal-science class."

Ninety-eight percent of Browning High's 500 students are Blackfeet or Native American. Tatsey teaches students from ninth through twelfth grades.

Students from Browning High School, on the Blackfeet Reservation, learn horseshoeing
as part of Mike Tatsey's vocational agriculture program

photos courtesy Mike Tatsey

Tatsey supervised his students' butchering of a buffalo as a means of learning about the animal's anatomy and importance in the Blackfeet culture

The region is largely a ranching community, but the majority of the school's students live in town; and, many of those who live outside of town don't live on ranches. Tatsey grew up on the reservation, on his family's ranch. When he was young, his father had sheep, cows and horses.

"I just fell into the teaching deal," Tatsey says. "My mother died when I was in high school, and my sisters sent me to college. I ended up with a scholarship that was in the education field, and I was already in agriculture, so I just put two and two together and ended up with an ag ed degree."

Out of college, Tatsey taught at a small school on the reservation, then spent 13 years as director of the Blackfeet Tribe's water-resource program. Four years ago, he returned to teaching.

At the center of Tatsey's teaching philosophy is the belief that many of life's lessons can be gleaned through

the hands-on experiences he provides students. Tatsey keeps a personal herd of beef cattle, as well as Longhorns for roping. He recently brought 10 Longhorn calves to school to be branded and castrated by his students.

"Some kids grabbed the calves and held them down, other kids branded them," he says. "Another castrated them. We had three or four classes from the high school come out and watch. Everybody enjoyed themselves. It was a quick little branding, but the kids got to do something that day that they'd never done before."

Tatsey also emphasizes with his students the realities of being able to make a living. The 1.5 million-acre reservation is home to around 350 ranches, providing opportunities for young people who know their way around livestock.

"Like with the horseshoeing deal, I told my students that even if they don't shoe horses as a profession, there's always somebody looking for a shoer," he says. "If you learn how to do it, you can shoe your own horses, and if you ever get a little bit hungry, you can put your shingle out and shoe a few here and there.

Tatsey also dovetails into his curriculum lessons on Blackfeet traditions and culture. He recently asked the tribe to donate to the school a buffalo from the Blackfeet herd. His class butchered the buffalo and discussed the animal's role in tribal culture.

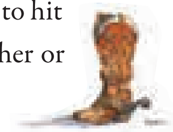
"One of the cultural people here on the reservation performed a ceremony before we shot the buffalo," Tatsey explains. "One of the kids in the ceremony – the person that killed the buffalo – was painted, then we sang an honor song before the buffalo was shot."

Tatsey's class butchered the buffalo, giving them the opportunity to learn about the animal's anatomy and the way in which buffalo have long been used by the Blackfeet.

"One of the delicacies for our ancestors, and for some of our older people today, is raw kidney," Tatsey says. "I sliced the buffalo kidneys into little pieces and told the kids they could have extra credit if they tried a bite of raw kidney. One of the elderly ladies that live close to the school cooked the intestines and tongue and brought them back to us so we could have a little feed with all the kids. They got to taste traditional food that people used to eat a long time ago."

The class also makes "dry meat," a traditional Blackfeet jerky, often working with elk or deer confiscated from poachers and donated by Montana's wildlife authorities.

"A lot of these kids have never experienced any of this – butchering an animal, preg testing cows, branding," Tatsey says. "It's kind of a hook, so they get interested in the rest of the class, which might not be quite so interesting to them when we have to hit the books. It makes it fun for them, whether or not they ever do any of this again."



Tom Moates' most recent book is *Round-Up: A Gathering of Equine Writings*.
Learn more at www.tommoates.com.

Clay Wright and the Art of the A-Ha

A Utah horseman offers enlightenment

By Jayme Feary

Clay Wright's horsemanship students describe him this way: A "leader to the horses." "Horses listen to him [and] people want to follow him around, too." He's "a spiritual man," a person with "purity of soul." But Wright's place in the high desert near Elmo, Utah, looks nothing like a sweat lodge, temple or church. It's a hump in the desert, a brick house the color of alkali with a series of metal pens and corrals. The only pronounced colors are green patches of irrigated grass and a purple layer in the distant hills. Out back, an old F250 and a plain white gooseneck sit next to a former crop duster hangar with massive sliding doors.

From high above Wild Cattle Ridge, the wind on the leading edge of a front cuts down across the desert and against the hangar. Inside, the music of Enya plays softly. At the far end, the doors are parted like the Red Sea and the gray light is streaming in, casting a horse, a woman and a man in silhouette. The man is standing with his arms crossed, the tassel of a stampede string on his flat-topped hat cinched tight under his chin. The hat nods as he says, "Very good," and nears the woman. Now the face has features, eyes as blue as ice cubes and a cayenne mustache that moves when he speaks. "There you go."

He is responding to student Judy Harris, a willow of a woman with hair like corn silk. She stands in front of her gelding, Buck, holding both ends of the bit with her hands and concentrating as if her life depends on it. "Focus on the feel," Wright says. "It's like the feel of the horse holding your hand." Judy and Buck have been at this routine for two days – for years, really – and Buck

photos by Jayne Feary

One driving principle in Clay's program is leadership: the notion that horses follow leaders.

Clay works with a student at his Utah ranch.

is continuing his tomfoolery. Intent on doing her best, Judy maintains her focus, believing that additional concentration, effort and persistence will yield better results. So Wright keeps changing the exercise and conditions and hoping that Judy will improve her skills and – finally – grasp the most important lesson. The three student spectators already know what she must do.

Or Wright could tell her the problem, but he has learned the a-ha comes from within. He's a master of the Socratic form of questioning that asks students to explain the concepts they are learning. Why doesn't he simply tell her what she needs to hear? "People think you're going to give them the answer," he says, "but they have to find it themselves." So Wright coaches Judy, asks questions, listens, and waits.

Sunshine breaks through the clouds that had been gathering over the desert, and the clinic moves into the outdoor arena. Like the weather and land, horses have taught patience to Wright, who settles in with Judy as if waiting for a change in seasons. He knows the moment of truth will come, that the person with the problem is often the last to know. He learned this fact the hard way.

Regarding his past, he shakes his head as if he can't believe his stupidity, his emphasis on showmanship and results. As a young horse trainer, he would drive into a town, walk into a café, and sit down to sip coffee with stockmen. He'd offer to start any horse in three or fewer hours, and after deliberation the ranchers would settle on a particular colt and snicker. Wright would ride that colt – and all the others. His demos inflated his reputation and increased his business. He was proud, but pride comes before a fall.

Training colts progressed to showing, an activity that rewarded his results-first methods. But sometimes life has to cold-cock a person to get his or her attention. That blow came in the form of an Appaloosa stallion, which Wright pulled over backward onto himself, snapping his lower leg and breaking his collarbone and several ribs. Two weeks in traction convinced him the win mentality had taken more than a physical toll. "I'd lost something," Wright says. "My horses weren't my friends anymore."

He languished in the hospital for three months and then hobbled on a cast for nine, during which time he searched for answers. Then he met Ben Quinters, who took him to a Ray Hunt clinic. "They put me on the path I'm on now," Wright says. He studied every horse author he could find – Tom Dorrance, Henry Wynmalen, Nuno Oliveira, and Philippe Karl – and attended clinics such as those by Tom Dorrance and Ray Hunt. He studied

with masters such as dressage expert Ellen Eckstein, whom Wright credits as his most valuable mentor.

When Wright applied his new approach, the horses gave him less resistance and he felt more settled about himself and his work, but business decreased. Undeterred, he began to teach what he was learning. "I wanted to help people understand what I'd found," he says.

Nowadays the ego and showmanship are behind him. He doesn't own a fancy rig on which his name and portrait are pasted larger than life. There are no Clay Wright corporate sponsorships, no Clay Wright merchandise, no Clay Wright certification program. He's simply himself, a man working with horses and people like Buck and Judy.

Outside in the sunshine, the mood feels optimistic, and Judy bears down. "The horse doesn't understand a method," Wright says. "It understands feel." Another exercise and another. The clouds re-envelope the desert, and Judy's face tightens as if she has had a facelift. By quitting time, Buck is shaking his head and swishing his tail.

By morning, the clouds have settled over the land like a pall and the wind is gusting to 50 mph. Spanish guitar music blares from the speakers. The hangar is shaking. Wright works Judy and Buck for a couple of hours before stopping and escorting her to one of several laminated sheets of copy paper lining the walls. Each sign displays a quotation from one of Wright's teachers. He points to a quotation and asks Judy to explain it. When she finishes,

With competitive urges quieted, Clay now works to share with students the discoveries he's made about horses.

he disappears and returns carrying a wooden fence post that he drops onto the sand. Judy is to stand in front of Buck and use the bit to guide him lengthwise down the post, keeping it between his legs. Buck steps across, and Judy concentrates, trying again and again – at least a dozen times.

Horseman Clay Wright counts Ray Hunt, Tom Dorrance, Henry Wynmalen, Nuno Oliveira, Philippe Karl and Ellen Eckstein among his chief influences.

The wind is whistling around the corner of the building, and the tin is clattering as if it will peel away. Buck's ears are pinned flat and he is shaking his head, but Judy is focused on the post. Suddenly Buck bites Judy's arm. Her eyes widen as if they're going to pop out of her head and her jaw drops. Wild with anger, she flails the tail of the lead at Buck and chases him at rope length around the arena. Buck looks shocked and sprints in a circle as far as the rope allows. With Judy storming behind, they are whirling like a cyclone around the arena.

Wright is slapping his thighs and laughing, and the spectators applaud as if their team has just scored the winning touchdown in the Super Bowl. But the reactions make no sense to Judy, who in her mind has lost control. She droops her shoulders, grabs her knees, and stands there heaving. When she understands, she lets out a sigh 11 years in the making and shakes her head as if she has just read a message an airplane has written in the sky: horses respect leaders. She throws back her head and laughs, and Wright embraces her. Buck is standing at attention.

Before she retires for the night, Judy explains Wright's teaching. "It's about the horse," she says. "But we end up, as a by-product, becoming a better person." She knows she has passed a significant milestone.

Morning is slow in coming. At dawn, a wall of rain clouds has rolled down from Wasatch Plateau. In Judy's window, the light switches on. Out in his pen, Buck pivots like a weathervane and tucks his hindquarters into the wind. The hangar stands empty and silent except for the pitter on the tin roof, but the words on the sheets of paper speak loudly. Even in Wright's absence, his steady energy pervades the place and his words hang in the air like dew: "You don't have to wear a mask. Be who you are."

Wright's students – especially Judy – are learning the physical and emotional concept of feel. They are improving their horsemanship and learning where to go to discover life's greatest lesson: "It's something that's inside you and the horse." Wright's words echo across the desert, up through Price Canyon, to Soldier Summit and beyond. "You have to find it yourself. It's your journey."

Upcoming Clinics

Buck Brannaman, www.brannaman.com
Aug 5-8, Sheridan, Montana; (406) 842-5603
Aug 20-23, Kiowa, Colorado; (719) 541-5550
Sept 2-5, Eagle, Colorado; (970) 524-2320
Sept 9-12, Decorah, Iowa; (507) 896-3933
Sept 16-19, Bay Harbor, Michigan; (231) 439-7100
Sept 23-26, Pittstown, New Jersey; (908) 238-9587
Sept 30-Oct 3, Reidsville, N. Carolina; (828) 891-4372

Peter Campbell, www.petercampbellhorsemanship.com
Aug 1-10, Wheatland, Wyoming; (307) 322-4478
Aug 13-16, Eastend, Saskatchewan; (306) 295-3844
Aug 19-22, Dundurn, Saskatchewan; (306) 492-2217
Aug 26-28, Winnipeg, Manitoba; (204) 222-6295
Sept 2-5, Brandon, Manitoba; (204) 761-7750
Sept 9-11, Big Rapids, Michigan; (231) 349-2364
Sept 16-19, Negley, Ohio; (724) 663-5339
Sept 30-Oct 3, Fremont, Nebraska; (402) 427-5244

Tom Curtin, www.tomcurtin.net
Aug 5-7, Billings, Montana; (406) 669-3158
Aug 26-28, Big Timber, Montana; (406) 579-6654

Montana-based clinician Jon Ensign conducts September clinics in Colorado and Vermont.

Jon Ensign, www.jonensign.com
Sept 3-9, Alamosa, Colorado; (719) 588-7796
Sept 22-25, Guilford, Vermont; (802) 380-3268

Kip Fladland, www.lariataranch.com
Sept 17-18, Larered, Kansas; (620) 804-0340

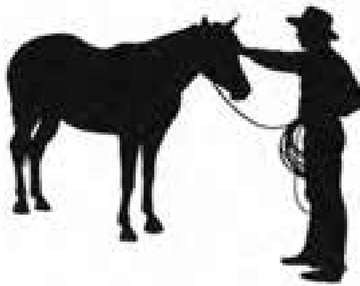
Buster McLaury, www.bustermclaury.com
Aug 4-7, Red Owl, South Dakota; (605) 985-5493
Aug 26-28, Idaho Falls, Idaho; (208) 317-1472
Sept 15-18, Del Mar, California; (858) 688-5022
Sept 22-25, Big Bear Lake, California; (909) 963-9405

Bryan Neubert, www.bryanneubert.com
Aug 4-6, Durango, Colorado; (970) 883-5595
Aug 19-22, Limerick, Maine; (207) 793-4101
Aug 25-28, Perryville, New Jersey; (908) 238-9597
Sept 9-11, Townsend, Tennessee; (423) 400-6667
Sept 23-25, Freeport, California; (916) 607-8854

Ricky Quinn, www.rickyquinnclinics.com
Aug 4-7, Reidsville, North Carolina; (828) 894-5783
Aug 12-14, St. Michaels, Maryland; (443) 786-7560
Sept 24-26, Philomath, Oregon; (541) 953-4415
Sept 29-Oct 2, Salinas, California; (831) 596-5858

Dave & Gwynn Weaver, www.thecalifornios.com
Aug 31-Sept 4, Fossil, Oregon; (541) 384-2191

Joe Wolter, www.joewolter.com
Aug 5-7, Lodge Grass, Montana; (406) 639-2219
Aug 12-14, Platteville, Colorado; (303) 506-9934
Aug 26-28, Chetek, Wisconsin; rajakranch@yahoo.com
Sept 3-5, Waterbury Center, Vermont; (802) 244-7763
Sept 16-18, Pueblo, Colorado; (970) 380-9360
Sept 23-25, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin; (920) 856-6335

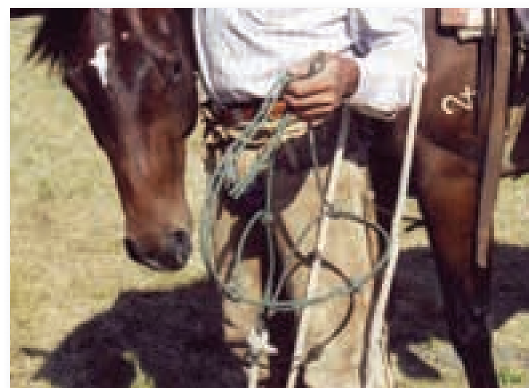


A VISIT WITH BUCK BRANNAMAN

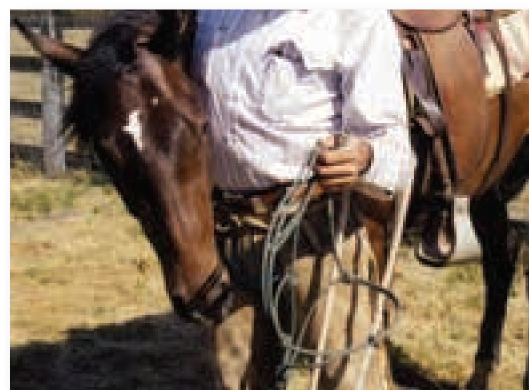
From the Beginning

One of the great things about traveling the country and working with folks in my clinics is all the young horses that I get to work. So I thought I would start this little series of writings at the beginning of the process – getting young horses ready for haltering. It's funny that in every colt class or horsemanship class that I do, many people have problems putting a halter on their horse. So here's the approach I use to halter a young horse, that works pretty well.

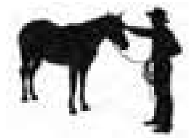
Here's how I like to have the halter arranged as I approach the horse so that you're prepared, when the window of opportunity is there, is open, and the horse says he's ready to be caught, you are prepared to do so. As I approach the horse, I put my arm around his neck and I'm in a position to lift the halter on. But I like to put my thumb behind the horse's jaw on the right side to encourage him to hunt up that nose band. When I touch him with my thumb there pressing in, he'll want to tip his head to the left rather than tip his head to the right in an evasive manner. Then in just a very short period of time, a few times of haltering the horse, they're hunting up that halter and helping you to get it on. Of course, I'll either tie it or pull the knots through, however the halter happens to fasten. But it's real



Step 1



Step 2



important to me that that person be arranged properly when they approach the horse to put the halter on, and that they lift the halter on by reaching over the top of the horse's neck.

I also want to mention the wrong way, and that is putting the halter on nose band first. That makes the horse lift his head in the air, which is going to give you a problem haltering later on, and putting the bridle on and off as the action will start driving the horse's head up. It can be very dangerous flipping that half of the halter over a horse's head. It can scare the horse and it's a good way to get caught on top of the head.

Letting the horse soak on some things before moving on can very be important in working with young horses, as they begin to figure out what you want. The horse may not have come through 100% the way you wanted the horse to come through, but he made a change for the better. If you are able to give him some time to soak on this and let this penetrate, let him sort of digest what's taken place, quite often after a little bit of time, the physical response from the horse will come out better than what it was when you left him. But if you don't give a horse time, time to concentrate on what was occurring, the new action that you have going on with the horse may well negate what just took place. So what was maybe a positive response in a horse can just be lost instantaneously by presenting a new problem too soon, because the horse has to disregard what just happened in order to deal with the new problem at hand.

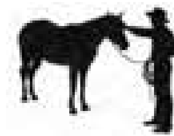
I think that's real important when it comes to working with children as well. If they don't have enough time for an idea to penetrate and be committed to memory, if they have too much thrown at them to soon, it'll make a kid shut down and overwhelm them where the kid will quit, rather than having it be at a pace that the kid can understand. I think anybody who's an effective teacher in an elementary school particularly understands the pace at which a

Step 3

Step 4

photo courtesy A.J. Mangum

Buck Brannaman



Step 5a

Step 5b

Step 6

kid can learn and how crucial it is that they don't overwhelm the kid and destroy the try. That same idea applies when working with a young horse.

You can throw too many tasks at him too soon and destroy the try in the horse. Letting the horse soak, choosing the moment in time to be very quiet as a rider and allowing the horse to think is another instance where this timing is a factor. Because timing this moment – or span of time, I should say – to time that when the horse is soaking on something good is crucial to the development of the horse. But you also have to understand that if you've been fighting and doing battle with the horse – maybe he's been in a frame of mind of bucking, or if not bucking, he was on the verge of bucking you off or running away, and let's just say you got discouraged and you wanted to quit on him, so you turn him out in the pasture and you didn't want to ride him anymore. You have to understand when he gets turned out in that pasture, he's soaking there too. You left him in that state and he's going to soak on what just occurred, he's going to build on that and quite often, if you ever decide to work with him again, he may well be worse off than where he was when you turned him out. So it can be a negative or a positive depending on where you leave the horse. If you stopped at a positive point, you probably can leave the horse. For example, you might start a two-year old and ride him all through the summer into the fall and if you've got some good stuff going on by fall, quite often you'll be able to turn him out for the winter and when you get him back in in the spring, he'll be a better ride then than he was in the fall because he soaked on something positive all winter long. Quite often that's the case. So you might make sure that the last word you have with the horse is something that's good for both of you – even when it's just about putting on a halter. Everything matters.

To learn more about Buck Brannaman and to view his clinic schedule, see his books & DVDs, and for information about the Award winning documentary, "BUCK" visit www.brannaman.com.

RYANMICHAEL.COM
№ Q1183PBB - Marine

UNIQUELY AMERICAN

PINTO RANCH
HOUSTON, TX - 713.333.7900 | DALLAS, TX - 214.217.6200 | LAS VEGAS, NV - 702.228.3400 | PINTORANCH.COM

The Ballad of the Rainbow Man

By Tom Russell

"When the earth is dying there shall arise a new tribe of all colors and creeds. This tribe shall be called the Warriors of the Rainbow and it will put its faith in actions not words."

Hopi Prophesy

In 1598 the Spanish explorer, Don Juan de Onate, crossed over the Rio Grande on an Andalusian stallion, claiming all territory north of the river for the King of Spain. The historic crossing took place near what is now the border of El Paso/Juarez. The Onate expedition had crossed the scorching Chihuahua desert with pilgrims, soldiers, cattle and horse herds. They rested near the banks of the river and celebrated the first

photos by Colin Bridge

thanksgiving. This was years before the Plymouth Rock landing and that *official* Thanksgiving Day back east. This was the cowboy version.

My wife and I live a few miles from this historic crossing point in El Paso, and our hacienda is located along the original El Camino Real, the pathway of Onate's expedition followed to the North, towards what is now Santa Fe. We irrigate our acres of the Rio Grande. One day,

perchance, maybe I'll dig up one of Onate's swords, or an ancient Spanish spade bit out here in the sand and river mud of my small pecan orchard. I'm a dreamer, songwriter, and painter, and also a casual collector of *things western.* Objects and historical footnotes which serve as touchstones back through our great history: Horse bits, Navajo rugs, pottery shards, *old reatas*, kachinas, folk songs. Things of this nature.

In West Africa, teaching school years ago, I purchased four horse bits in a street stall of a market place in a Nigerian village. They looked like something Genghis Kahn might have employed on his wild little ponies. I brought them back to America, and my horse-trader brother *Pat* had them carbon-dated at the University of California. The bits turned out to be hundreds of years old. Moorish bits, hammered out of rough iron during Onate's time. Since we can link the cowboy tradition back through Spanish American horsemanship and further on back to the Moors, these are touchstones to the long and intriguing story of the evolution of the cowboy-west. I'm always keeping an eye out for pawn shops and antique stores where I might unearth a cryptic link; always seeking the last great trading post where my collection will come into focus. The pilgrimage led me to the Rainbow Man in Santa Fe.

The Rainbow Man symbol represents *the omnipotent grace of the Great Spirit* for many North American tribes. The depiction of a rainbow arching over a human figure with upraised arms can be traced back to cave paintings from around 4500 B.C. Scientists named the ancient icon *The Indalo*; *a* prehistoric symbol found originally in the "Cave of the Signboard," located in the northern province of Almeria, Spain. I'm sure there are also wild horses and bison figures running

across the walls of those caves. The origins of western art. Painted by the first cowboys.

I heard about the Rainbow Man shop from the great American poet and bronc-rider Paul Zarzyski. Paul and I have composed songs together, and I've written the introduction to a powerful new collection of his work: *51: 30 Poems, 20 Lyrics, 1 Self-Interview*. Paul knew of my interest in Native American, Mexican, and Spanish culture. He also knew me as a painter, collector, and trading post-aficionado. He suggested I take a visit up Onate's Camino Real, to the Rainbow Man shop in Santa Fe.

The Gallery sits on the Southeastern corner of the historic central square, on Palace road, in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The square is the setting of the world famous Indian market and we're now at the very heart of the cultural Southwest. Fanning out from all corners of the square are some of the finest western art and craft galleries in the world.

I walked into the Rainbow Man one summer afternoon, and walked out *different* three hours later. If great art is supposed to change you, then I'd been to the mountain and talked to Geronimo. I was overwhelmed. Mexican ritual masks, Spanish Folk Art, Hopi Kachinas, Navajo Folk figurines, Native American pottery, Pendleton trade blankets, Indian pawn jewelry, and

Edward Curtis gold tone photos. *For starters*. Each separate room was a verse in an epic ballad of the historic west, and the owners, Bob and Marianne Kapoun, knew the providence of every object in the place. They're able to sing these histories up, like the Aboriginal song-line-walkers sing up the old songs and myths of Australia as they wander over ancestral terrains. In fact, the Kapouns have written books on trade blankets and Edward Curtis photography. But I'm jumping ahead of myself.

Until the Rainbow Man experience, I knew very little about what I'd collected. Book research gives you a flat overview, and I picked up objects in my travels through gut instinct and a "*what the hell*" feeling that this particular object was *speaking* to me. The Kapoun family became spirit guides. They've kept alive that trading post feel I was seeking – this sharing of knowledge between cultures. Buyers and sellers; tradesmen and craftsmen. The Kapouns share their expertise and passion for what they've learned on their journeys and this informed enthusiasm washes over each object they've gathered into their shop.

Bob and Marianne have supported Native culture in the Southwest and always attend yearly tribal rituals. They travel deep into historic Mexico two or three times a year and buy from craftsmen at the source. As I walked through these rooms filled with art, I half-expected to see onetime New Mexico residents D.H. Lawrence or Georgia O'Keefe

Bob and Marianne Kapoun

peeking around a hidden corner, welcoming me to the hidden and ghostly Southwest. The real deal.

I'll let Bob take over the tour for a moment: "The Shop of the Rainbow Man," he says, "first opened its doors in 1945. Hal and Gwen Windus, who had worked at Zuni Pueblo during the war years, were eager to open a gift shop in Santa Fe. They featured hand-crafted Native American items to Lalique crystal. They chose the name for the shop from the Zuni legend of the Rainbow Man as being the great protector of their world. Gwen Windus sold the store to Marianne and me in 1983 and we've owned it ever since. We shortened the name to The Rainbow Man, and we're proud that there has only been two owners in 66 years."

Prior to buying the shop, Marianne's expertise was in old pawn jewelry and Bob's was vintage photography. They combined these two areas and added Navajo, Hispanic and Mexican folk art to the mix.

"What we love about The Rainbow Man," says Bob, "is that nothing is purchased for the store from a catalog. We buy everything from vintage collections, contemporary artisans, or just great discoveries that we've found in our travels. The real joy is in the buying. Knowing that by buying from contemporary crafts people we are helping keep their rich traditions alive is very rewarding."

"Living in Santa Fe," he continues, "is living in history. We love the fact that three cultures, Native American, Hispanic and Anglo are all mixed together. I was fortunate to visit Santa Fe right out of college with a degree in photography. My first experience was visiting a Pueblo dance. Seeing a dance that had been performed for centuries was a life changing experience. Instead of being a contemporary photographer, I now wanted to collect and eventually sell vintage photographs. This led me to the work of Edward S. Curtis."

I. The Curtis Collection

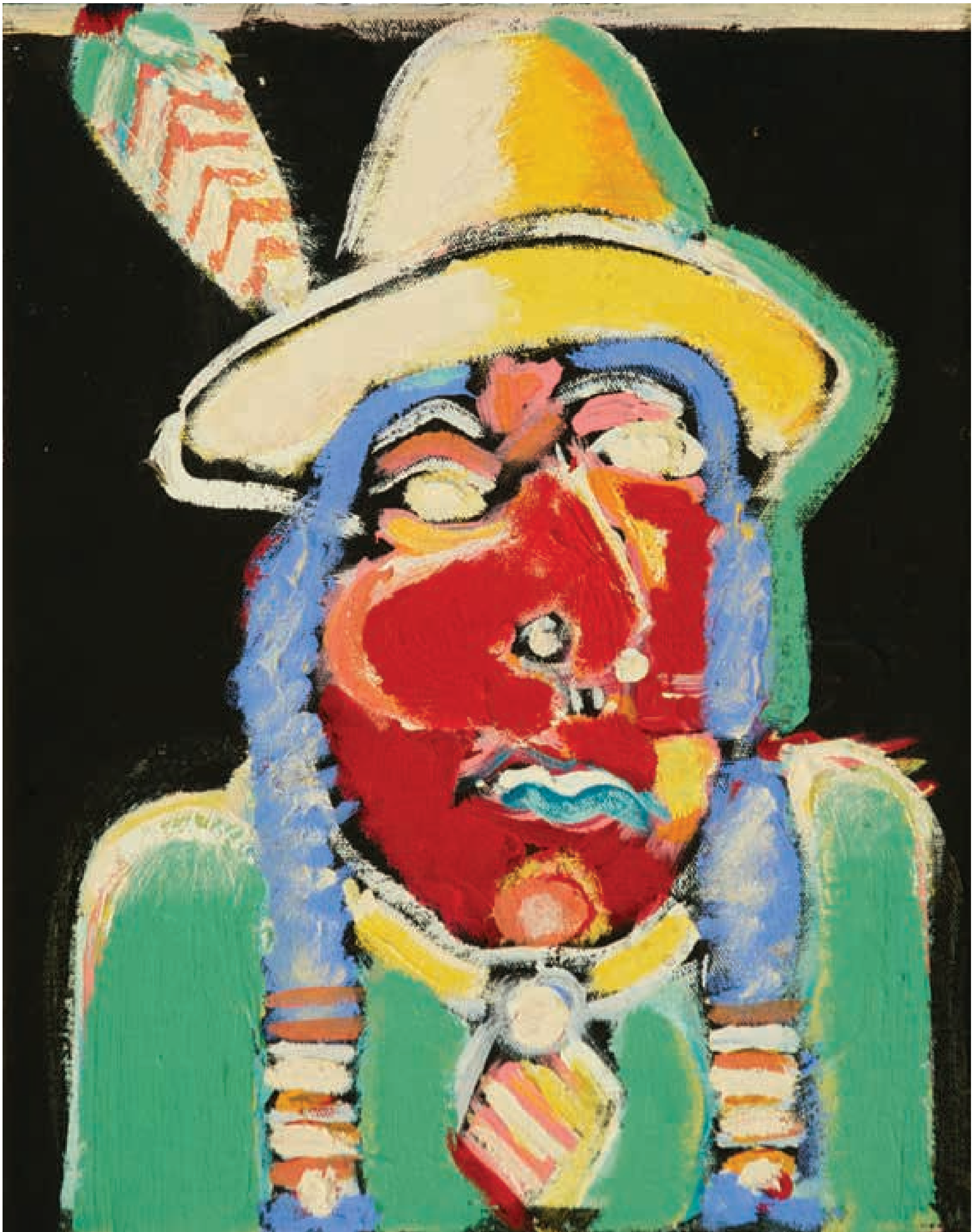
Edward S. Curtis (1868-1952) was the premiere early photographer of the North American Indian. J.P. Morgan offered Curtis $75,000 to produce a series on Indians, which ended up as twenty volumes and fifteen hundred photographs. Curtis eventually took forty thousand photographs of at least eighty tribes. He wanted to record the Native American way of life before it vanished. He also made cylinder recordings of Indian language and music. In many cases his material is the only documentation of tribal leaders and their history. Curtis lived until 1952, died in Whittier California, and is buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery. Bob Kapoun has written two books and a number of articles on Edward S. Curtis' work.

"Curtis," Bob says, "devoted his life to documenting virtually every major Indian tribe west of the Mississippi River, between the years 1898 and 1930. I became obsessed with his work, and I'm now considered to have the most extensive collection of Curtis' work for sale in the country. Curtis' unique gold tones (*a positive image on glass*) are the rarest of his work, and it's my area of specialization. Even after writing two books about Curtis, I'm still in awe of his photographs, and respect how difficult it was for him to create his documentation."

II. The Language of the Robe

"It is cold and we have no blankets. The little
children are freezing to death. My people...
have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no
food. No one knows where they are – perhaps
freezing to death...from where the sun now stands,
I will fight no more forever."

Chief Joseph, Nez Perce



Jicarilla Cowboy by Tom Russell

On an afternoon during a recent Christmas season I witnessed a moving encounter in the alley behind the Rainbow Man. A Pueblo woman, who'd apparently been trading with the Rainbow Man for many years, seemed to need a small cash advance for Christmas season. Bob hugged and visited with her, and helped her out. He probably wouldn't want me to mention this meeting, but it opened a small window for me; again and again I saw that Bob and Marianne truly have a warm and personal rapport with the local Pueblo people who trade with them.

Bob continues our tour: "Living in Santa Fe has allowed us to develop close friendships with many Pueblo people, and that's given us the opportunity to witness Pueblo dances. Indian people love Pendleton blankets and when watching a dance, be it summer or winter, blankets are an important part of Indian ceremonial life. This spawned a new interest for us of collecting Pendleton blankets, or the more historically correct term: *trade blankets*.

"We weren't content to collect just Pendleton blankets, and we actively sought out *any trade blanket*, which ultimately led to research about the entire history, which ultimately led to a full book. *The Language of the Robe* was the first book about the history of the trade blankets, and is considered today to still be the seminal study of these blankets. Eventually, we sold most of our stock to Dal Chihuly of art glass fame, who now can say he has the largest collection of trade blankets in the world."

III. Pawn Jewelry

The Rainbow Man also specializes in what is referred to as "pawn jewelry," Marianne Kapoun's area of expertise. This is Navajo jewelry that, historically speaking, was "pawned" at a trading post (*generally for safe keeping*) on the Navajo reservation. When that piece of jewelry went "dead" (*when it was no longer claimed*) the trading post would then offer it for sale to the public. This policy changed on the reservation in the 1980s. Today there is no '"old pawn" on the reservation, so the term now refers to vintage Navajo jewelry from the 1880s to about the 1940s.

In truth, most Navajo jewelry was purchased by tourists during this time period and comes available through estates or collections, not out of pawn. Anyone who's travelled across the Southwest, through the trading posts of New Mexico and Arizona, stopping at gas station souvenir stores along Western interstates, is aware of the huge amount of turquoise-studded jewelry available in the Southwest. It's best to know what you're looking at. A visit to the Santa Fe Indian market, or a chat with an informed authority such as Marianne Kapoun, will lead you to an authentic piece of Navajo-made jewelry fashioned by Native craftsman.

IV. Mask Makers & Hopi Kachinas

Twenty years ago I was walking with my guitar near the West Village in New York City and saw a Mexican jaguar mask in a shop window. It was made out of dried cow hide, and the whiskers on the Jaguar face were porcupine quills. A full-head mask. *Mexican juju*. The inside of the mask was well worn; used by teenage boys a ritual Jaguar dance deep in Mexico. That's all I found out at the time. It was a haunting piece that kept staring at me through that dusty New York window. *Take me out of here, amigo*. I had walked away but the mask called me back.

I bought the jaguar mask and it was used a cover art to a long ago CD of mine titled *Box of Visions*. The mask *looked* like a box of visions. Lately I found it again in a storage box, and put it on the shelf with a few masks I'd purchased in Mexico City. I'd recommend museums in the Mexican capital to

anyone interested in the cowboy/vaquero tradition and the the roots of Hispanic-American culture. *And Mexican crafts*. And these curious masks. The Rainbow Man has a fine collection. Ritual masks date back to 7000 B.C., so we're dealing with an ancient idea of masquerading and ritual transformation in early cultures.

"One of our greatest joys," says Bob, "is traveling throughout Mexico. We go down twice, sometimes three times a year. We love to buy in small villages; the arts and crafts made by the crafts people. While buying in these villages we've seen masked dances many times. It adds to the experience of finding the mask. Being collectors at heart, we've purchased old and new masks, but enjoy buying directly from the mask makers. Change is happening so fast in Mexico, that the old traditions are dying out quickly, so we feel we are in some small way keeping the spirit alive."

I've also asked the Kapouns to fill me in on the Hopi Kachina tradition. I've own a few Hopi pieces, and a strange pair of Zuni Kachinas that still have pawn tickets on them from Gallup, New Mexico, dated the 1970s. Each doll has its own story of creation and providence. I'd read, years ago, that Picasso became fascinated with the Kachina form around the same time that he discovered African ritual masks.

Bob says, "We love the world of the Hopi Indians in northeastern Arizona. From three high mesas, various villages have continually existed for centuries. The Hopi still do their Kachina dances, which represent their view of everything in nature, as well the supernatural. One can still see dances that might have a Kachina dancer representing an animal, such as a bear or eagle, or an ogre which comes out to scare the children into obeying their parents.

"Why these beautiful people allow us *Anglos* to watch one of their incredible Kachina dances is a mystery. But Hopi's have kindly explained to us that they dance for the *World,* not just for the Hopi people. We love this concept and are grateful to the Hopi."

Custer's Last Stand by Tom Russell

V. Blue Horse/Red Desert: My Own Art – Full Circle

Okay. I had this disparate but soulful collection of *things western* and one day, about eight years ago, I felt like trying to make my own art. I converted an empty horse stall on our property into a studio and began to paint. Horses, cows, Native Americans, bronc riders, boxers – whatever came into my head; ideas sent down by the muse. The muse will visit you, *sayeth Picasso*, but she'd better find you *working*. I also painted images of Kachinas and tried to capture the visages on Mexican masks. The paintings stacked up in that studio horse stall. It was all thereputic, and there wasn't a gun pointed at my head to sell anything. I was back being a three year old, enjoying the colors and keeping myself away from dangerous Juarez

Blue Horse by Tom Russell

cantinas down the road. We don't own a television. There is time to paint and write songs.

I turn up the Bob Dylan or Tex Ritter CDs, and paint away the afternoons. My favorite painter was Fritz Scholder – part Luiseño Indian who revamped the idea of "western" painting when the majority of western painters were making greeting card art. Scholder's Indians shook up the art world and angered many Native American critics. Thirty years ago. Now that Fritz is gone he's accepted and famous. There were at least four major Scholder exhibitions in the last few years and I went to all of them. His images of Indians are alive with paint, and sometimes brutal in their honesty. Blunt, tough love. I like his sense of color and edginess. I was slowly arriving at a certain personal, naive style, and I figured if I were lucky, I might find a gallery.

One day the Rainbow Man proprietors visited our hacienda and liked my work. Bob and Marianne said they'd take a few paintings back to the shop. Previous to this, they hadn't handled contemporary art. It's been two years, and there's now a Tom Russell room at the gallery. *Ole!* I don't contend that my work has the power of a traditional Kachina, or a Mexican tribal mask, or Navajo folk art, but I'm very pleased to have my paintings in

The Tom Russell room at The Rainbow Man

rooms that carry unfathomable western spirit. I've finally made it into the last trading post, at the center of the West. *Full circle*. Now I drive those paintings up the old Camino Real, through that long trail of cultural dust left by Don Juan Onate and his big Andalusian stallion.

"You use bold colors and brush strokes," says Bob. "We never know what to expect next when we get a new group of Tom Russell paintings. We sell quite a few of your paintings to people who don't know Tom Russell, the singer-songwriter, but buy the work because they like the art. For us at The Rainbow Man, Tom's paintings are a perfect fit." God bless these folks.

Our tour is winding down. Walk through these rooms one more time and consider that classic ballad of the West. *Navajo pawn jewelry, Mexican ritual masks, Hopi Kachinas, Edward S. Curtis photos – a few of my red and blue horses…* each room is a verse in that epic western poem resonating around that historic square in Santa Fe. The Spanish explorers, Mexican Vaquero, and Pueblo dancers are here, *amigos*, because their spirits linger in the shadows of these trading posts. Let us give thanks to the Rainbow Man Warriors, the tribe which watches over, and blesses, all of this history.

The Rainbow Man can be contacted at www.rainbowman.com
Tom Russell's art and music is available at www.tomrussell.com
Tom's book of art: *Blue Horse/Red Desert: The Art of Tom Russell*, is published by Bangtail Press.
The new album: *Mesabi* is on Shout! Factory Records.

The grape grows best in the farmer's shadow.

At Sarrloos & Sons, we approach wine making as a family. All of our major decisions are made over dinner tables or sitting on the back of tailgates of trucks in the vineyard, and flagging down a tractor at the end of a row so we can "chat." Pretty much we are a family that happens to make wine... to be honest, we are a family that grows wine - much closer to the truth. We grow wine. We steward our grapes each year with the clear understanding that these grapes will become wine. Not Juice, or jelly, or something you grab out of the fridge late at night, these grapes are wine. We take this very seriously, we don't have a company we pay to farm for us. We believe that the grape grows best in the farmers shadow.

And since you have read all this way, you should probably just visit our Tasting Room in Los Olivos, California and try our wines. It's the only way you will find out how good they really are as we only sell them there. You have come this far, we promise the trip will be worth it.

We thank you.

Saarloos & Sons
2971 Grand Ave. Los Olivos, CA 93441
www.saarloosandsons.com
805.688.1200

Painting From Life

Cowboy artist R.S. Riddick comments on art's narrative dynamic

By A.J. Mangum

Slicker Reunion, oil, by R.S. Riddick

An R.S. Riddick oil painting titled *Slicker Reunion* depicts a scene in which five cowboys take a break from their work to visit during a break in rainy weather. Three of the men are on horseback; two are on foot, their mounts hobbled in the background. The cowboys' bright yellow slickers stand out against the gloomy backdrop of muddy ground and cloud-blanketed foothills.

At the scene's edge, a coffee pot hangs over a small fire in front of a camp tent. One cowboy, his back to the viewer, stands facing the others, a steaming coffee cup in his right hand, which is extended as if to emphasize a

All Partnered Up, oil, by R.S. Riddick

Cowboy Contemplation, oil, by R.S. Riddick

The Cowman's Nighthorse, oil, by R.S. Riddick

point. He's telling a story, describing actions, perhaps repeating dialogue. The other cowboy on foot looks at the speaker with a blend of earnestness and respect, his head cocked to take in every word. The two nearest riders lean far forward in their saddles, caught up in the unfolding yarn; one grins broadly in anticipation of a punch line. The third rider, in contrast, leans away, exuding a certain stoicism as he, too, awaits the denouement of the speaker's story.

It's a quiet, but complex scene and a viewer can spend hours conjuring the subjects' backstories and filling in the blanks of their personalities, using for inspiration the relatively few brushstrokes that give the figures their postures and expressions. For Riddick, the painting's creator, the image's effect is an example of what he calls "art's narrative dynamic," an aspect of painting that's held him in its grip since his boyhood.

Ron Riddick grew up in southern California, in a home where art appreciation was a dominant theme. His father, the art director for Prudential Insurance, worked near the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. As a boy, Riddick frequently explored the museum's galleries, taking in the works of master artists from around the world.

"I was always fascinated with storytelling in art," he says. "No matter what it was – epic European paintings,

impressionists, Andrew Wyeth's quiet, introspective Americana – each painting was a viewpoint of the world that existed in the artist's day and the work impacted the culture that received it. Whenever and wherever you lived, it seemed, to tell the story was the reason to be an artist."

Today, Riddick, a member of the Cowboy Artists of America, is one of the West's most acclaimed painters. His works, known for their dramatic light and colors, often depict bucolic ranching scenes, peaceful moments between cowboys and stock that might otherwise go unnoticed, even by the actors populating them. Riddick finds in such scenes a certain poetry, an element he says is vital to great artwork.

Heads or Tails, oil, by R.S. Riddick

"If a painting doesn't have a poetic, thoughtful, human message, people will walk right past it," he explains. "It has to have something – some pain, some pathos, some narrative – so you'll keep going back to it. Sometimes it's not a *story*, per se. Sometimes it's just the poetry of the West – the mood and feeling of a landscape, a reflection in a mud puddle, the loneliness of a broken-down windmill."

Riddick, who developed his love for the West during childhood visits to an uncle's Idaho ranch, relocated from California to Arizona in 1980, motivated by the Southwest's landscapes, light and color. He settled in Tucson, a cowboy- and horse-centric setting in which he found artistic inspiration in the convergence of Anglo and Mexican cultures. The area, it seemed, offered an endless inventory of scenes – landscapes, characters and poetic moments – with which he could fall in love, and in which he could find his next painting.

To infuse his work with a scene's essence, Riddick paints "from life," working on location to capture moments as they naturally unfold, rather than relying upon photographs, memories or idealized re-imaginings of reality. The approach helps ensure a scene's inspiring elements aren't dulled with time. In the moment, working from life, an artist's priorities are clear as he works to depict the vital characteristics that first caught his eye – a vibrant color, a subject's countenance, light and shadow playing off the surface of water.

Slicker Reunion, depicting the four cowboys gathered around their storytelling companion, was inspired by a group of riders taking a break during a rainy afternoon at the Cowpunchers' Reunion, a

Tuckered Partners, oil, by R.S. Riddick

traditional family rodeo held annually in Williams, Arizona. The scene spoke to Riddick of camaraderie and friendship, and of short-lived moments of peace enjoyed before the rigors of work.

In Riddick's translation of the scene, the rodeo backdrop is replaced with mountain scenery. Rain has seemingly washed the air clean and, as four hands look on in rapt silence as the voice of a charismatic raconteur fills the morning, there's the suggestion of a slight chill, just enough to wage a minor battle with the warmth of a cup of coffee and the dying flames of a breakfast fire. The scene's initial inspiring element – a brand of bonhomie unique to the working West – remains intact, its storyline strengthened by the plot Riddick has crafted. It's the practice of painting from life, the artist contends, that both fuels the narrative essential to a great work and elevates a painting far above the low plateau of a simple depiction, transporting the viewer to that moment of artistic inspiration.

Cowboy Contemplation, oil, by R.S. Riddick

photo courtesy Ron Riddick

Ron Riddick has been a member of the Cowboy Artists of America since 1997. He calls Tucson, Arizona, home.

"Unless an artist pushes himself to paint from life, his paintings won't be the most exciting to look at," Riddick says. "Art must be good art, regardless of the subject, but what makes a painting good is the fact the artist thought out texture, proportion, equilibrium and *narrative*. And when an artist paints from life, viewers feel as if they're breathing the same air as the painting's subjects."

A.J. Mangum is the editor of *Ranch & Reata*, senior contributing editor for *The Cowboy Way*, and producer of the short-subject documentary series *The Frontier Project* (www.thefrontierproject.net).

The Frontier Project

The latest episode of this short-subject documentary series features segments on folklorist Hal Cannon, saddlemaker Rick Bean and artist John Moyers.

By A.J. Mangum

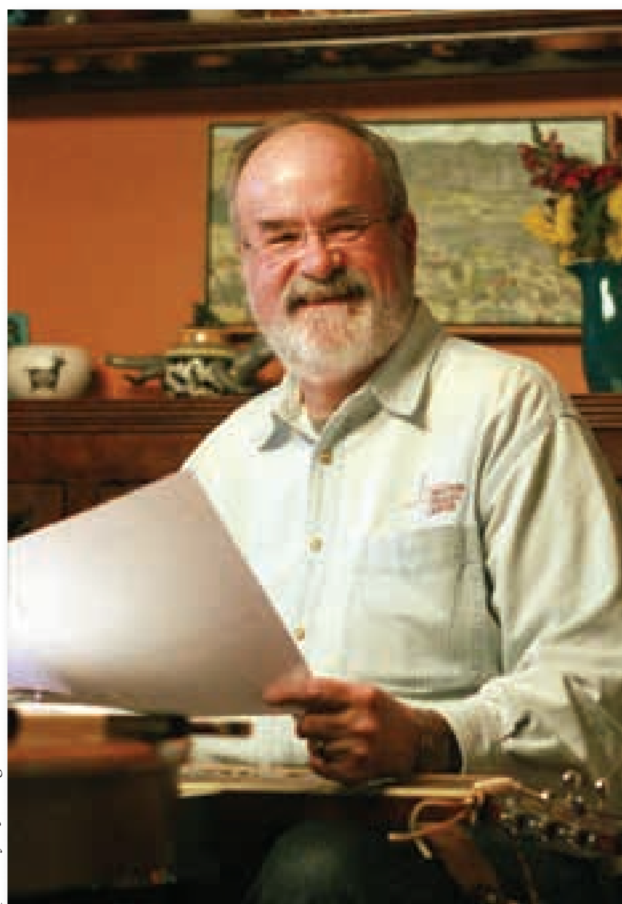
Launched in December 2010, *The Frontier Project* represents an addition to the western-media landscape: a short-subject documentary series on the horsemen, craftsmen and artists defining the contemporary cowboy culture.

In the series' fifth episode:

National Public Radio contributor Hal Cannon, the founding director of the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, held each January in Elko, Nevada, discusses his work as a journalist and folklorist. Also a musician, Hal shares two songs ("Desert Home" and "Soldier's Heart") from his self-titled CD, released this year on his label, Okehdokee Records (www.okehdokee.com).

Idaho's Rick Bean explains the path of his career as one of the West's leading saddlemakers. Bean, who built his first saddle as a teenager and launched his saddle business when he was just 17, is known for his intricate swivel-knife cuts, themed saddles, and incorporation of figures into his leather carving.

And, in an interview at his New Mexico studio, artist John Moyers sheds light on the process of "painting from



photos by A.J. Mangum

Journalist, folklorist and musician Hal Cannon discusses his work, and his new CD, in Episode 5 of *The Frontier Project*.

Also in Episode 5, saddlemaker Rick Bean, known for his intricate leather cuts, shares the story of his career path.

life" – using reality as one's muse. John also discusses his influences – ranging from the acclaimed painter Robert Lougheed to the mentors behind some of today's leading Disney animators – and discusses what he sees as one of the art world's greatest controversies, painters' and illustrators' overuse of photographs as artistic shortcuts.

Episode 5 is available exclusively on DVD. View the trailer at www.thefrontierproject.net, where you can also sign up for *The Frontier Project*'s free e-mail newsletter.

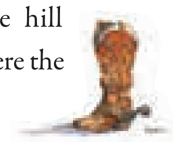
In Episode 5, Hal Cannon performs two songs – "Desert Home" and "Soldier's Heart."

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument

The photograph at right may just look like an expanse of prairie but it is a special place, a place where time stopped. Now a National Monument, the Little Big Horn National Monument memorializes the U.S. Army's 7th Cavalry and the Sioux and Cheyenne in one of the Indian's last armed efforts to preserve their way of life. Here on June 25 and 26 of 1876, 263 soldiers, including Lt. Col. George A. Custer and attached personnel of the U.S. Army, died fighting several thousand Lakota and Cheyenne warriors. Markers honoring the Indians who fought at Little Big Horn, including Crazy Horse, have been added to those of the U.S. troops. On Memorial Day, 1999, the first of five red granite markers denoting where warriors fell during the battle were placed on the battlefield for Cheyenne warriors Lame White Man and Noisy Walking. On June 25, 2003, an unknown Lakota warrior marker was placed on Wooden Leg Hill, east of Last Stand Hill to honor a warrior who was killed during the battle as witnessed by the Northern Cheyenne warrior Wooden Leg. Famously, Capt. Miles Keogh's horse, Comanche, a 15 hand buckskin gelding, was the sole survivor of Custer's column from the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

photos by Bill Reynolds

The Monument is located off of Interstate 90 between Billings, Montana and Sheridan, Wyoming on the Crow Agency in Montana. During your visit, make sure to stop by the Custer Battlefield Museum (www.custermuseum.org) just down the hill from the Monument and see the place "where the battle began."



Adrian

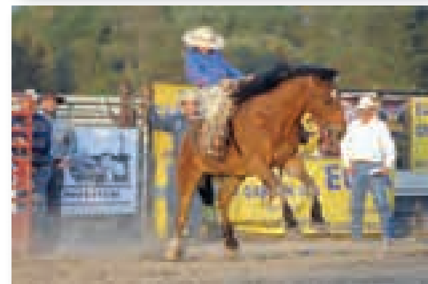
The Continuing Adventures of a Buckaroo Girl

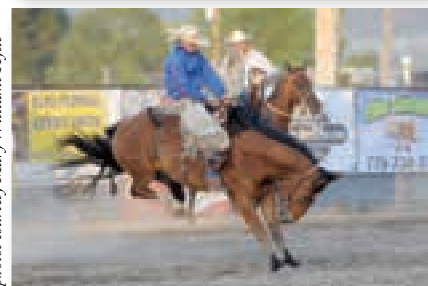
By Bruce Pollock

Ranch & Reata had the privilege to interview Adrian about her life and her new CD titled *Buckaroo Girl.* Adrian is one polite and gracious young lady. She lives on the family ranch in Northern California, one hour from the nearest town, and shares the work ethic and values of a true Western family. Adrian is refreshingly honest, authentic and true to the culture that inspires her music, her songs and her heart.

At 14 and 15, she wrote and recorded her first record, *HWY 80,* that includes one of our favorites, "Old Time Vaquero," resonating with the traditional cowboy culture all over the world of the Pacific Slope. Adrian has been heard on Range Radio for over 4 years and "Old Time Vaquero" is one of our top requests from here in the West Coast. At age 17 and 18, Adrian wrote and recorded *Boots & Pearls*, her sophomore effort, which revealed her vision to do something different – the folk-rock texture and inspiration of a Bob Dylan sound and a Rolling Stones cover. "It was amazing," she said, referring to the amazing experience of working with Tom Russell, an incredible array of musicians, and producer-engineer, Craig Schumacher, at the Wavelab Studios in Tucson, Arizona. Fast-forward to age 19 and Adrian today.

Her next release, scheduled for this August, *Buckaroo Girl*, will meld the sounds and texture of Adrian's musical heroes, including Bob Dylan,





photos courtesy Mary Williams Hyde

Mike Beck, Tom Russell, Marty Robbins, Buck Owens, Dwight Yoakum and the Bakersfield sound. However, this album is all cowboy and as Adrian says; "I want Cowboy music to be popular. I want the world to hear it and I want the world to understand that I live everything I write. I want the modern day Buckaroo to understand the lyrics and every hard working cowboy to know what I feel. I will never leave my people or my cowboy-cowgirl roots."

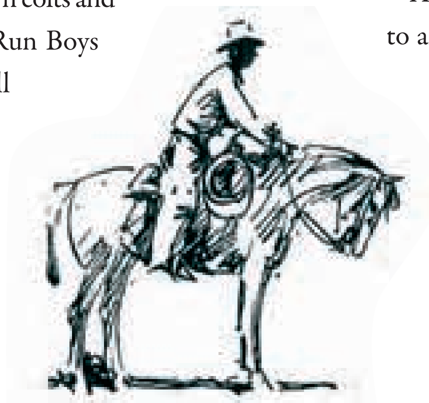
photo courtesy the artist

There are three tracks on the new CD that have special meaning.

"Buckaroo Barbie" was inspired by her sister, Elizabeth, a steadfast girl who breaks her own colts and paints her own nails...this song rocks! "Run Boys Run" reminds each of us that we are well saddled and fine by ourselves and that we never need to "settle", ever. Adrian and her dad, David, wrote "Branding Pen of my Father." Adrian and the sublime Waddie Mitchell, sang the words and it will, I'm certain, become a much-honored ballad.

As Adrian says, "'Branding Pen of my Fathers' is about the passing of traditions and the wisdom that keeps families together." Adrian is most grateful to her mother, Alison, and her dad, David, for keeping the cowboy way of life alive for their family.

Adrian's new CD, *Buckaroo Girl*, is a gift to all of us who enjoy real western music. She is, in fact, the real deal. Visit www.buckaroogirl.com and purchase this CD before your next cup of coffee. Both Adrian and her *Buckaroo Girl* CD are a double blessing. Enjoy.



Click to Listen to Range Radio

All About the Music

Cowboy and roots-based music thrives outside the mainstream.

By A.J. Mangum

On a warm summer afternoon, Scott O'Malley sips from a steaming cup of coffee as he settles into a seat on stage at the Warehouse Theater, a small concert venue attached to the Western Jubilee Recording Company's offices near downtown Colorado Springs. A trio of dormant microphones stand at the front of the stage, looking out upon the empty rows of an eerily quiet house.

The walls of the one-time railroad depot are lined with cowboy-inspired artwork, vintage advertisements

Guitarist and longtime Western Jubilee recording artist Rich O'Brien performs a solo gig – his first – at the Warehouse Theater in June 2011.

and, in one corner, all manner of stringed instruments. A few feet from the stage, a door leads to a narrow alley where a set of railroad tracks runs parallel to the building. The spur is overgrown with grass and long out of use, but nearby tracks are still operational.

agency focused on traditional cowboy and other Americana music, Scott has been at work prepping for an upcoming invitation-only performance at the warehouse by two of Western Jubilee's most revered recording artists, cowboy poet Waddie Mitchell and guitarist Rich O'Brien.

Cowboy poet Waddie Mitchell was instrumental in Western Jubilee's early days, introducing Scott O'Malley to such performers as Don Edwards and the Sons of the San Joaquin.

"The trains used to run more regularly," Scott says. "We used to look forward to getting a train whistle on a record. It was kind of *us*."

Stage lights illuminate Scott's face. His closely shorn white beard matches the color of his hair, which spills beneath the back brim of an "open road" style hat, suggesting the vestiges of a rebellious past. The founder and driving force behind both a record label and management

Music has long defined Scott's life. An Indiana native, he formed his first band while in junior high, spending his early adolescence covering Everly Brothers hits before being swept away by what he now calls "the folk scare," a shift that led to the 1964 release of an album of folk songs co-written with his grandfather. Shortly thereafter, he joined another band, the Buffalo Brothers, with which he toured showrooms for the

better part of the next two decades. In 1975, Scott traveled with two of his bandmates to Colorado for what was intended to be a six-week stay; he never left, basing himself out of Colorado Springs as the Buffalo Brothers continued to play clubs nightly.

Having long handled bookings for the Buffalo Brothers, Scott launched Scott O'Malley & Associates, a booking and management agency, in 1982. Early clients included bluegrass and folk musician Norman Blake, as well as Flash Cadillac, whose traditional take on 1950s-style rock and roll was immortalized via their portrayal of sock-hop band Herbie and the Heartbeats in the 1973 George Lucas film *American Graffiti*.

"Skip, jump to the early 1990s," Scott says. "I got a call from the acclaimed watercolorist William Matthews, who at one time had designed album covers for Warner Bros. and Capitol Records. He told me a guy by the name of Waddie was going to call. He thought I should visit with him. I remember thinking, 'What's a waddie?'"

"Waddie," of course, was Waddie Mitchell, a Nevada cowboy, poet and co-organizer of the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, held annually in Elko. Waddie introduced Scott to cowboy singer Don Edwards and the Sons of the San Joaquin, a vocal trio known for its "three-part cowboy harmonies."

"I'd always been a western fan, but they blew me away," Scott recalls. "I thought it was world-class stuff. We all shook hands and decided to grow old together." Western Jubilee Recording Company launched soon thereafter, its first release an album of gospel songs recorded by the Sons of the San Joaquin.

In addition to Blake, Edwards, Mitchell, O'Brien, Flash Cadillac and "the Sons," Western Jubilee has since added to its roster such acts as Cowboy Celtic, Michael Martin Murphy, Red Steagall and Wylie and the Wild West, and has released 44 CDs, as well as several video projects.

Cowboy music is a narrow niche market, one far removed from the mainstream country-western scene, which, as Scott points out, long ago lost its interest in the West. "There are a lot of cowboy hats out there," he says, "but only a select few really carry on the tradition." In such a market, domination of the music charts is never a realistic goal; that reality exempts Scott from a brand of aggressive hustling common to the music industry, and gives permission for a certain artistic abandon.

"It's always been about the music, and still is," Scott says. "We have a 'less is more' approach. Don Edwards calls it 'anti-produced.' There's no dictation from the label as to what the music has to be. We're here to capture what the musicians come up with. Sometimes the best records aren't ones you have to think about too much."

Despite roots music's low profile, mainstream interest in its sub genres – cowboy, bluegrass, hillbilly – occasionally spikes, often thanks to Hollywood efforts, such as Robert Redford's casting of Don Edwards in the 1998 film *The Horse Whisperer*. In a rare throwback to Saturday-matinee horse operas, Edwards sang on camera.

When the Coen brothers' 2001 film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* was in pre-production, its music producer, T-Bone Burnett, contacted Scott in search of Norman Blake, whose influence in bluegrass and folk spans more than 50 years. Blake recorded two songs for the *O Brother* soundtrack, including an instrumental version of "Man of Constant Sorrow," as well as his take on the traditional tune "You Are My Sunshine."

"At first, Norman wasn't too sure about driving from his home in Georgia to Nashville just to sing 'You Are My Sunshine,'" Scott says. "Thank goodness he did."

O Brother and its soundtrack sparked widespread interest in bluegrass music and led to three lengthy concert tours, on which Blake performed. He's since gone on to work with Burnett on other films, including the Johnny Cash biopic *Walk the Line* and the Civil War drama *Cold Mountain*.

"For the most part, though, these are steady niches, never big," Scott says. "Either people get it or they don't."

Scott O'Malley, of Western Jubilee Recording Company, photographed on stage at the Warehouse Theater in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

photo by David Pahl

And, for listeners who do "get it," there's no shortage of fresh material. Western Jubilee is currently in post-production on a second Michael Martin Murphy solo album. Recording sessions are underway for a new Sons of the San Joaquin recording, a quick follow-up to a February 2011 release. And, through its subsidiary, Plectrafone Records, Western Jubilee has developed a new outlet for "old-time country music," so far highlighting work by Norman and Nancy Blake.

"As far as where we are in the big picture of the recording industry," Scott says, "I don't think any of us are trying to be part of that big picture. We build it a record at a time, a fan at a time, and pass it along. Like all art, it'll probably become more desirable when we're all dead and someone discovers this cool music recorded in a funky warehouse down by the tracks in Colorado Springs."

A.J. Mangum is the editor of *Ranch & Reata* and producer of the short-subject documentary series *The Frontier Project* (www.thefrontierproject.net).
Learn more about Western Jubilee recordings at www.westernjubilee.com.

America's Horse in Art

America's Horse in Art returns to the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame & Museum in Amarillo with a list of 33 world-renowned Western artists providing 89 pieces for the fourth annual art show and sale, August 13 through November 12, in the Scharbauer Gallery. The signature piece for the 2011 show is a painting by renowned Western artist Steve Devenyns. The piece is titled *An American Icon*.

Tied Hard & Heelin' by Tyler Crow

Each piece of art – ranging from pencil drawings to sculptures – will be available for purchase on opening night. All remaining pieces will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis, beginning at 8 a.m. CDT on August 15.

Art sales will be available online at quarterhorsemuseum.com, by telephone at (806) 376-5181 and by e-mail at artshow@aqha.org, beginning at 8 a.m. CDT on August 15. The purchased artwork will remain on exhibit through November 13. Proceeds from the sale of the art will go to the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame to support its efforts to preserve the history of the American Quarter Horse. Participating artists in the show include: Brian Asher, Wayne Baize, Don Bell, Buckeye Blake, Teal Blake, Lynn Brown, Brenda Bruckner, Mary Ross Buchholz, Kaye Burian, Tyler Crow, Steve Devenyns, Mikel Donahue, Bruce Graham, Steve Harris, Harold Holden, Rick Jackson, Connie Johnson, Greg Kelsey, T. D. Kelsey, Earl Kuhn, Jan Mapes, Rick McCumber, Lisa Perry, Annette Randall, Jason Scull, Jack Sorenson, Edgar Sotelo, Buck Taylor, Herman Walker, Don Weller, K. W. Whitley.

High Tailin' It by Mikel Donahue

99 *Farenheight* by Brian Asher

Teamwork by Brenda Bruckner

Luxury Auto by Don Bell

For Sale by Owner by Rick McCumber

Saturday Night Hose Down by Jack Sorenson

Blue Intentions by Teal Blake

Brian's Gather by Don Weller

Est 2010

FIGUEROA MOUNTAIN BREWING Co

VISIT OUR TASTING ROOM FOR BEER AND GREAT FOOD

805·694·2252

45 INDUSTRIAL WAY • BUELLTON, CALIFORNIA 93427

WWW.FIGMTNBREW.COM

TASTING ROOM HOURS

MON | THU | FRI
4PM-8PM

SAT & SUN
11AM-8PM

OR BY APPOINTMENT
CALL TO BOOK PRIVATE TOURS

Tim Keller

On Telling Stories With a Camera

I take my photographs where I live, in beautiful, remote northeastern New Mexico. Growing up by the beach in southern California, I read my dad's photography magazines; he had a community college degree in photography but gave up his career dreams to get a "real job" when I came along. At 13 and 14, I shot surfers with a friend's 35mm camera and 400mm lens on a tripod, developing and printing the shots in his darkroom. In high school, I took a one-year photography course in the art department, where I learned composition and the mantra "simplicity is a virtue."

Along the way, I learned to write by struggling through Miss O'Brien's English classes, and I learned to love the country life when I worked summers on a sprawling ranch where my grandpa was the purchasing agent. It was a lot of building fences, and the hardest work I've ever done. I've been edging toward the outback ever since.

I always enjoyed getting good photographs, but I never bought a camera: I used hand-me-downs. At the end of 2007, I dove into photography, buying the just-released Nikon D300 digital SLR camera and some great lenses. I've been immersed in making pictures ever since. By the following summer, I couldn't look at a magazine without studying the photographs accompanying articles. Many of them I admired and envied. With others, I thought, "I could do better than that." That led me to look for subjects for photo essays, writing my own articles to accompany them, and submitting them to magazines.

My wife and I had moved to Des Moines, New Mexico, in 1999 – we wanted to get as far from civilization as possible without leaving New Mexico – so it hasn't been difficult to find great material to photograph and write: we're surrounded by ranching culture. Our county is bigger than Delaware and Rhode Island combined, yet it has just 4,000 people...and several times that many cows. It's easy to be inspired by both the land and the people.

If my vantage is that of an outsider, it hasn't hurt. I look for a good story, then I try to get close, and ask a lot of questions, until I know how to tell the story. I enjoy leading with my camera: I always process my photographs first, and they lead me into the writing. The photography is pure joy, easy and fun, whereas the writing is hard work. Even when I'm exhausted late at night, I'd rather process great new photographs than sleep. But for the writing, I have to be rested and fresh, with good coffee first thing in the quiet morning. After years of teaching high school honors literature and writing courses, I'm finally practicing what I've preached.

At their best, my photos should tell their own stories. The strongest images can stand alone. Those are the ones you want to frame and hang on the wall. Of course, my favorite of all is the next one, the one I'm about to find.

Many of the photos on the following pages were taken as I developed stories for a variety of magazines. After magazines finish their newsstand runs, I post my features at www.timkellerarts.com, where they remain available for viewing, along with the rest of my photography.

Brittany Begins
I met Brittany Rouse when she was working an auction in Clayton, New Mexico, where I learned that she trains colts on a ranch south of the Conchas River, north of Santa Rosa, New Mexico.

The Wait
This high school senior had driven solo across the top of New Mexico from his home in Crownpoint to the tiny Sierra Grande Horse Association youth rodeo playday at Des Moines. All I got of his name was DeMarquis.

Truth in Advertising

Saddle in Storage

Fuego
A branding iron is ready for use during the annual spring branding
on the Seward Ranch in the Chico Hills of northeastern New Mexico.

Feeding the Horses
As an approaching storm brings hope for rain, Darien Brown tosses flakes of hay to his horses, assisted by grandsons Kade and Kyle, who accompany and assist him two days out of every week.

The Brown Ranch
located along the Dry Cimarron River outside Folsom, New Mexico

Archie's Kitchen

Archie's Hat

Mary Lou's Office
Rancher Mary Lou Kern surveys the herd on leased land near her Maxwell, New Mexico ranch, with the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in the background.

"Horses and Life.
It's all the same to me."
Buck Brannaman
www.brannaman.com

Rounding Up the Literature of the West

Amid historic changes in book publishing, the western novel lives on.

By Rod Miller

Over the past century and more, the American cowboy has worked his way into the legends and mythology of the world. From humble origins as a horseback bovine babysitter, the cowboy has come to symbolize free-spirited independence, self-reliance, competence, chivalry and other such qualities here at home, and has become an international icon for America.

The iconographic cowboy is, most likely, a creation based on many factors – all stemming from the interest intrinsic to and inherent in mounted men, wide-open spaces, and the free and active life. And, here in America, wherever there's interest there's a commercial opportunity. So, feeding this fascination with the cowboy soon became the business of artists and promoters of all kinds. From the Wild West shows of Buffalo Bill and the 101 Ranch, to the paintings of Remington and Russell, to magazines and books, to movies and television, cowboy imagery permeated American popular culture and spread beyond our borders to captivate much of the world.

While often far removed from the drudgery and difficulty of the reality of ranch work and frontier life, these exaggerated, romanticized, and just-plain-invented artful renditions of the Old West captured the popular imagination early on.

Frontier stories of the American West go back to the work of James Fenimore Cooper and the early 1800s, when the western frontier was somewhere between the Appalachian Mountains and Mississippi River. But it was in the latter half of that century that stories of a more familiar Old West first emerged. Widely read dime novels glorified mostly fictional exploits of real frontier figures such as Wild Bill Hickok, Wyatt Earp, Buffalo Bill, Billy the Kid, Jesse James and others. Interestingly, most of those early-day heroes and outlaws remain popular today in the writings of both novelists and historians.

The first "modern" western novel is widely recognized to be Owen Wister's *The Virginian*, which rolled off the presses in 1902 to instant popularity. Wister set a pattern of hard riding and gunplay, a hint of romance, good guys and bad guys that was soon followed by Zane Grey, Clarence Mulford, Max Brand and Louis L'Amour.

The genre remains popular, with works by those

authors still in circulation, joined by novels by modern-day writers including Matt Braun, Frank Roderus, John Nesbitt, Robert J. Randisi, Max McCoy, Richard S. Wheeler and more, writing under their own and a plethora of pen names.

One of the most accomplished and acclaimed writers of traditional western novels today is Dusty Richards. Among his many honors are two coveted Western Writers of America Spur Awards. His *Sundown Chaser* won the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum's Wrangler Award for best western novel in 2010, and he's garnered many other awards and honors.

A resident of Arkansas, an auctioneer, rodeo announcer, and president-elect of Western Writers of America, Richards believes the continuing popularity of the traditional western novel hinges on the timeless notion of the hero. The western hero, he says, must be "someone you'd like to ride across the sagebrush sea with. They must be honest, if with no one but themselves, and as tough as a cornered badger." But, he says, heroes needn't be, shouldn't be, perfect. "They need flaws. They may drink, they may smoke, because in the 1800s we didn't know that was going to kill us."

photo courtesy Dusty Richards

Dusty Richards' latest Western novel is *Wulf's Tracks*.

Richards is also a big believer in authentic detail. Some western novels fail because "the people who write them have never been there. They don't know horses, for instance. They gallop them for miles, and somehow it doesn't kill them." He tells of one noted writer who attempted a western novel. "He never did put up his horse or supplement feed him. He damn sure didn't know a single bush along the trail – called them all pines, when they should have been junipers."

And there are other common flaws. "Firearms are important. Before 1872, they carried cap and ball pistols; after that, cartridges were available but many still did not use them. Most rifles were short ranged, too." But, he says, too much detail can slow the story. "Some people spend too much time involving some weapon in great detail, and I don't find that all that interesting."

An oft-heard criticism of the traditional western novel is too much emphasis on gunplay and violence, and not enough attention to ranch work. Richards says, "Gunfights are like car chases in action and adventure movies. People expect them. They are part of the myth." As for the absence of day-to-day cow work, "I suspect many writers have never castrated a bull or hot-branded a hide. They write it off as, 'We worked cattle.'"

Changes in the way books are published and distributed are a concern to Richards and other western authors. Many of the big New York paperback publishers are cutting back or eliminating traditional westerns. Electronic books are still finding their way to readers as distribution methods and formats are sorted out. Librarians cry out for westerns while publishers

seem reluctant to provide them. No one knows what the future holds, or how it will affect the traditional western novel.

Richards is optimistic. "There are lots of fans," he says. "While there are fewer large publishers still in the game, I think small publishers and e-book makers are going to fill the void. We will see. But the western will be around for a long, long time."

As long-time editor of *Roundup Magazine*, official publication of Western Writers of America, Candy Moulton has a front-row seat from which to watch the book business. Her take on the traditional western?

"The 'traditional western' novel – a story involving cowboys, gunfighters and primarily men in the West from 1850 to 1890 – remains a staple of writers," she says. "There seem to be just as many books written and published reflecting that type, although the publications are coming more from self-publishing ventures by authors than from what I consider mainstream publishers based in New York."

photo courtesy Candy Moulton

Candy Moulton is editor of WWA's *Roundup Magazine*.

But there's more to today's western literature than shoot-'em-up stories. There are historical novels of a more literary bent that also tell stories of the West, and author Lucia St. Clair Robson finds success in that arena.

"I don't try to define what's a western and what isn't," she says. "When they notified me, back in 1983, that *Ride the Wind* won the a Spur award, I was astonished to learn I'd written a western. I write about people and events that catch my attention. I've set four of my nine books in the American West because adversity makes drama and drama makes good reading. Frontiers present plenty of adverse conditions. The western frontier is the best example of that."

In addition to her 1983 Spur Award, Robson was a Spur Finalist in 2003 for *Ghost Warrior*, and is this year's winner for *Last Train from Cuernavaca*. Also this year, *True West* magazine named her the "best living fiction writer."

In addition to adversity, Robson believes the West offers the storyteller something else unique: "The rich, exotic, often violent mix of cultures. Anyone who thinks only Anglo, Protestant males resided in the West is clueless. The best westerns recognize the diversity and the fractious situations it created."

When asked about the future of book publishing, Robson says, "The bigger question is, what's the future of reading? I doubt that the western's readership will return to pulp-magazine and dime-novel levels, but I do think the West will always fascinate readers." It fascinates her, she says. "After researching American history for 30 years, I continue to be surprised by the colorful, mostly little-known characters who appear."

Important though it may be, there's more to the West than history. And Candy Moulton sees that reflected in western writing.

"I see an increasing number of novels about subjects that are truly western, but are more contemporary in

nature," she says. "Examples of this are the Joe Pickett series of books by C.J. Box, which focus on a Wyoming game warden, and the Walt Longmire series by Craig Johnson, which are centered on a Wyoming sheriff in contemporary times. A commonality of those two series – besides their Wyoming connections – is that both have a degree of mystery and the authors are recognized not only by Western Writers of America, but also by Mystery Writers of America."

photo courtesy C.J. Box

C. J. Box is author of 13 Western mysteries, most recently *Cold Wind*.

For C.J. Box, writing about the West seemed natural, as well as a necessity. "I grew up in Wyoming seeking out novels that were either set there or written there. Sadly, there weren't many, and of those I could find I was often disappointed," he says. "It seemed some of the authors – although wonderful writers – didn't have a good feel for the contemporary West. I didn't know if my writing would ever find an audience, but I vowed that I'd attempt to portray the contemporary West from the inside-out and feature characters, themes and situations that were as real to the place as I could."

The late Tony Hillerman – WWA member and two-time Spur winner – gets Box's praise for pioneering the contemporary Western mystery. But, he points out, contemporary Westerns have more to offer than mystery stories. "There seems to be quite a lot of them out there," he says. "I'm thinking of recent novels like Thomas McGuane's *Driving on the Rim* and even Cormac McCarthy's *No Country for Old Men*. Both are contemporary and set in the west."

From the beginning, Box has found considerable success with his contemporary novels of the West. "I was pleasantly surprised at the critical and popular response to my first novel, *Open Season*. It won more 'best first novel' awards than any other mystery novel to date, and the *New York Times* named it a "Notable Book.'"

Since then, he's won the Edgar Alan Poe Award for best novel, the Anthony Award, France's Prix Calibre 38, the Macavity Award, the Gumshoe Award, the Barry Award, and the 2010 Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association Award for fiction. All told, he's written 13 novels, and his work has been translated into 25 languages.

Does Box plan to continue writing western novels? "Absolutely. The region is so rich I haven't even scratched the surface. Plus, I think I know it better than anywhere else I can think of. I'll leave the gritty urban novels to the gritty urban writers."

She doesn't claim ownership of a crystal ball, but Candy Moulton sees a growing future for the western novel.

"While there has been a decline in the number of novels about the West by New York publishing houses, there is a continual output by writers who are finding other ways to bring their novels to the public," Moulton says. "There are writers publishing with regional presses, and certainly some of the regional presses are producing very fine books that receive critical acclaim."

And, of course, there's the growth of e-publishing.

"We are just beginning to see the impact from e-publishing, and it is unclear what the long-term effects

will be," Moulton says. "I do believe more people are reading than ever because it is so handy to buy a book online and take it along with you in a compact e-reader.

photo courtesy Lucia St Clair Robson

Lucia St. Clair Robson, author of Spur Award-winner *Last Train to Cuernavaca*.

With the interest in e-books, I'm confident there will be an increase in western fiction in the near future."

Moulton says that, "for writers, and writers' organizations, the challenge will be to find those readers."

The opposite may also be true. With more self-published western novels, more releases from regional presses, and the coming flood of western e-books, how will readers find well-written, highly readable western novels, whether traditional, historical or contemporary?

Moulton's first suggestion is no surprise. "*Roundup Magazine*, published by Western Writers of America, runs dozens of reviews of new books in each issue." She also recommends independent bookstores, "because the owners and employees of those stores have access to new books by the men and women who write novels about the American West and they can give personal recommendations."

Dusty Richards, Lucia St. Clair Robson and C. J. Box are just three of hundreds of authors who write, and intend to continue writing, about the American West. More than 600 professional authors claim membership in Western Writers of America, and a fair share of them write fiction. So, finding people to write about the West isn't going to be a problem for the foreseeable future. They'll keep writing about the West as long as people keep reading about the West.

That side of the equation is up to you.

Utah writer Rod Miller is author of a recently released collection of cowboy poetry, *Things a Cowboy Sees and Other Poems*, as well as a limited edition chapbook of Shoshoni Indian poems, *Newe Dreams*, and an Old West historical novel, *The Assassination of Governor Boggs*. See him online at www.writerRodMiller.com.

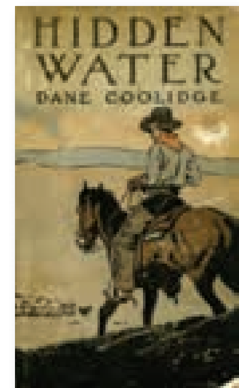
WESTERN READS

Hidden Water

By Dane Coolidge

Publisher's Note: *Western writer and photographer Dane Coolidge (1873-1940), cousin of our 30th President, Calvin Coolidge, grew up on a small citrus ranch in Riverside County, California. His was a life filled with the knowledge of knowing old-time cowboys first-hand and wrote over forty western novels and non-fiction books.*

This book was published in 1910 and is a thrilling story of the Arizona cattle country, told by a writer who knew the country and understood the real spirit of its life. The story concerns the classic strife between cattle and sheep men for the possession of the great grazing ranges, and is told honestly and authentically without exaggeration. We will be serializing the story in several issues. Here is Chapter Four.



CHAPTER IV

DON PABLO MORENO

On the edge of the barren mesa and looking out over the sandy flats where the Salagua writhed about uneasily in its bed, the *casa* of Don Pablo Moreno stood like a mud fort, barricaded by a palisade of the thorny cactus which the Mexicans call *ocotilla*. Within this fence, which inclosed several acres of standing grain and the miniature of a garden, there were all the signs of prosperity–a new wagon under its proper shade, a storehouse strongly built where chickens lingered about for grain, a clean-swept *ramada* casting a deep shadow across the open doorway; but outside the inclosure the ground was stamped as level as a threshing floor. As Creede and Hardy drew near, an old man, grave and dignified, came out from the shady veranda and opened the gate, bowing with the most courtly hospitality.

"*Buenos tardes, señores*," he pronounced, touching his hat in a military salute. "*Pasa*! Welcome to my poor house."

In response to these salutations Creede made the conventional replies, and then as the old man stood expectant he said in a hurried aside to Hardy:

"D' ye talk Spanish? He don't understand a word of English."

"Sure," returned Hardy, "I was brought up on it!"

"No!" exclaimed Creede incredulously, and then, addressing the Señor Moreno in his native tongue, he said: "Don Pablo, this is my friend Señor Hardy, who will live with me at Agua Escondida!"

"With great pleasure, senor," said the old gentleman, removing his hat, "I make your acquaintance!"

"The pleasure is mine," replied Hardy, returning the salutation, and at the sound of his own language Don Pablo burst into renewed protestations of delight. Within the cool shadow of his *ramada* he offered his own chair and seated himself in another, neatly fashioned of mesquite wood and strung with thongs of rawhide. Then, turning his venerable head to the doorway which led to the inner court, he shouted in a terrible voice:

"*Muchacho*!"

Instantly from behind the adobe wall, around the corner of which he had been slyly peeping, a black-eyed boy appeared and stood before him, his ragged straw hat held respectfully against his breast.

"*Sus manos!*" roared the old man; and dropping his hat the *muchacho* touched his hands before him in an attitude of prayer.

"Give the gentlemen a drink!" commanded Don Pablo severly, and after Hardy had accepted the gourd of cold water which the boy dipped from a porous *olla*, resting in the three-pronged fork of a trimmed mesquite, the old gentleman called for his tobacco. This the *mozo* brought in an Indian basket wrought by the Apaches who life across the river–Bull Durham and brown paper. The señor offered these to his guest, while Creede grinned in anticipation of the outcome.

"What?" exclaimed the Señor Moreno, astounded. "You do not smoke? Ah, perhaps it is my poor tobacco! But wait, I have a cigarro which the store-keeper gave me when I– No? No smoke nothing? Ah, well, well– no smoke, no Mexicano, as the saying goes." He regarded his guest doubtfully, with a shadow of disfavor. Then, rolling a cigarette, he remarked: "You have a very white skin, Señor Hardy; I think you have not been in Arizona very long."

"Only a year," replied Hardy modestly.

"*Muchacho!*" cried the senor. "Run and tell the señora to hasten the dinner. And where," he inquired, with the shrewd glance of a country lawyer, "and where did you learn, then, this excellent Spanish which you speak?"

"At Old Camp Verde, to the north," replied Hardy categorically, and at the name Creed looked up with sudden interest. "I lived there when I was a boy."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Don Pablo, raising his eyebrows. "And were your parents with you?"

"Oh yes," answered Hardy, "my father was an officer at the post."

"Ah, sí, sí, sí," nodded the old man vigorously, "now I understand. Your father fought the Apaches and you played with the little Mexican boys, no? But now your skin is white–you have not lived long under our sun. When the Apaches were conquered your parents moved, of course–they are in San Francisco now, perhaps, or Nuevo York."

"My father is living near San Francisco," admitted Hardy, "but," and his voice broke a little at the words, "my mother has been dead many years."

"Ah, indeed," exclaimed Don Pablo sympathetically, "I am very sorry. My own *madre* has been many years dead also. But what think you of our country? Is it not beautiful?"

"Yes, indeed," responded Hardy honestly, "and you have a wonderful air here, very sweet and pure."

"*Seguro*" affirmed the old man, "*seguro que sí!* But alas," he added sadly, "one cannot live on air alone. Ah, *que malo*, how bad these sheep are!"

He sighed, and regarded his guest sadly with eyes that were bloodshot from long searching of the hills for cattle.

"I remember the day when the first sheep came," he said, in the manner of one who begins a set narration. "In the year of '91 the rain came, more, more, more, until the earth was full and the excess made *lagunas* on the plain. That year the Salagua left all bounds and swept my fine fields of standing corn away, but we did not regret it beyond reason for the grass came up on the mesas high as a horse's belly, and my cattle and those of my friend Don Luís, the good father of Jeff, here, spread out across the plains as far as the eye could see, and every cow raised her calf. But look! On the next year no rain came, and the river ran low, yet the plains were still yellow with last year's grass. All would have been well now as before, with grass for all, when down from the north like grasshoppers came the *borregos–baaa, baaa, baaa–* thousands of them, and they were starving. Never had I seen bands of sheep before in Arizona, nor the father of Don Jeff, but some say they had come from California in '77, when the drouth visited there, and had increased in Yavapai and fed out all the north country until, when this second *año seco* came upon them, there was no grass left to eat. And now, *amigo*, I will tell you one thing, and you may believe it, for I am an old man and have dwelt here long: it is not God who sends the dry years, but the sheep!

"*Mira!* I have seen the mowing machine of the Americano cut the tall grass and leave all level–so the starved sheep of Yavapai swept across our mesa and left it bare. Yet was there feed for all, for our cattle took to the mountains and browsed higher on the bushes, above where the sheep could reach; and the sheep went past and spread out on the southern desert and were lost in it, it was so great.

"That was all, you will say–but no! In the Spring every ewe had her lamb, and many two, and they grew fat and strong, and when the grass became dry on the desert because the rains had failed again, they came back, seeking their northern range where the weather was cool, for a sheep cannot endure the heat. Then we who had let them pass in pity were requited after the way of the *borregueros*–we were sheeped out, down to the naked rocks, and the sheepmen went on, laughing insolently. *Ay, que malo los borregueros*, what devils they are; for hunger took the strength from our cows so they could not suckle their calves, and in giving birth many mothers and their little ones died together. In that year we lost half our cows, Don Luís Creede and I, and those that lived became thin and rough, as they are to this day, from journeying to the high mountains for feed and back to the far river for water.

'Then the father of Jeff became very angry, so that he lost weight and his face became changed, and he took an oath that the first sheep or sheep herder that crossed his range should be killed, and every one thereafter, as long as he should live. Ah, what a *buen hombre* was Don Luís –if we had one man like him to-day the sheep would yet go round–a big man, with a beard, and he had no fear, no not for a hundred men. And when in November the sheep came bleating back, for they had promised so to do as soon as the feed was green, Don

Luís met them at the river, and he rode along its bank, night and day promising all the same fate who should come across–and, *umbre*, the sheep went round!"

The old man slapped his leg and nodded his head solemnly. Then he looked across at Creede and his voice took on a great tenderness. "My friend has been dead these many years," he said, "but he was a true man."

As Don Pablo finished his story the Señora opened the door of the kitchen where the table was already set with boiled beans, meat stewed with peppers, and thin corn cakes–the conventional *frijoles, carne con chili*, and *tortillas* of the Mexicans–and some fried eggs in honor of the company. As the meal progressed the Señora maintained a discreet silence, patting out *tortillas* and listening politely to her husband's stock of stories, for Don Pablo was lord in his own house. The big-eyed *muchacho* sat in the corner, watching the corn cakes cook on the top of the stove and battening on the successive rations which were handed out to him. There were stories, as they ate, of the old times, of the wars and revolutions of Sonora, wherein the Señor Moreno had taken too brave a part, as his wounds and exile showed; strange tales of wonders and miracles wrought by the Indian doctors of Altár; of sacred snakes with the sign of the cross blazoned in gold on their foreheads, worshipped by the Indians with offerings of milk and tender chickens; of primitive life on the *haciendas* of Sonora, where men served their masters for life and were rewarded at the end with a pension of beans and *carne seco*.

Then as the day waned they sat at peace in the *ramada,* Moreno and Creede smoking, and Hardy watching the play of colors as the sun touched the painted crags of the Bulldog and lighted up the square summit of Red Butte across the river, throwing myserious shadows into the black gorge which split it from crown to base. Between that high cliff and the cleft red butte flowed the Salagua, squirming through its tortuous cañon, and beyond them lay Hidden Water, the unknown, whither a single man was sent to turn back the tide of sheep.

In the silence the tinkle of bells came softly from up the cañon and through the dusk Hardy saw a herd of goats, led by a long-horned ram, trailing slowly down from the mesa. They did not pause, either to rear up on their hind feet for browse or to snoop about the gate, but filed dutifully into their own corral and settled down for the night.

"Your goats are well trained, Don Pablo," said Hardy, by way of conversation, "They come home of their own accord."

"Ah, no," protested Moreno, rising from his chair, "It is not the goats but my goat dogs that are well trained. Come with me while I close the gate and I will show you my flock."

The old gentleman walked leisurely down the trail to the corral, and at their approach Hardy saw two shaggy dogs of no breed suddenly detach themselves from the herd and spring defiantly forward.

"*Quita se, quita se!*" commanded Don Pablo, and at his voice they halted, still growling and baring their fangs at Hardy.

"*Mira*," exclaimed the old man, "are they not bravo? Many times the *borregueros* have tried to steal my bucks to lead their timid sheep across the river, but Tira and Diente fight them like devils. One Summer for a week the *chivas* did not return, having wandered far up into the mountains, but in the end Tira and Diente fetched them safely home. See them now, lying down by the mother goat that suckled them; you would not believe it, but they think they are goats."

He laughed craftily at the idea, and at Hardy's eager questions.

"*Seguro*," he said, "surely I will tell you about my goat dogs, for you Americans often think the Mexicans are tonto, having no good sense, because our ways are different. When I perceived that my cattle were doomed by reason of the sheep trail crossing the river here at my feet I bought me a she-goat with kids, and a ram from another flock. These I herded myself along the brow of the hill, and they soon learned to rear up against the bushes and feed upon the browse which the sheep could not reach. Thus I thought that I might in time conquer the sheep, fighting the devil with fire; but the coyotes lay in wait constantly to snatch the kids, and once the river was high the *borregueros* of Jeem Swopa stole my buck to lead their sheep across.

"Then I remembered a trick of my own people in Sonora, and I took the blind pups of a dog, living far from here, and placed each of them with a she-goat having one newborn kid; and while the kid suckling at one teat the mother could not help but let down milk for the puppy at the other, until at last when the dog smell had left him she adopted him for her own. Now as the pups grew up they went out on the hills with their goat mother, and when, they being grown, she would no longer suckle them, they stole milk from the other she-goats; and so they live to-day, on milk and what rabbits they can catch. But whenever they come to the house I beat them and drive them back–their nature is changed now, and they love only goats. Eight years ago I raised my first goat dogs, for many of them desert their mothers and become house dogs, and now I have over a hundred goats, which they led out morning and night."

The old man lashed fast the gate to the corral and turned back toward the house.

"Ah, yes," he said musingly, "the Americanos say continually that we Mexicanos are foolish–but look at me! Here is my good home, the same as before. I have always plenty of beans, plenty meat, plenty flour, plenty coffee. I welcome every one to my house, to eat and sleep–yet I have plenty left. I am *muy contento*, Señor Hardy–yes, I am always happy. But the Americanos? No! When the sheep come, they fight; when their cattle are gone, they move; fight, fight; move, move; all the time." He sighed and gazed wearily at the barren hills.

"Señor Hardy," he said at last, "you are young, yet you have seen the great world–perhaps you will understand. Jeff tells me you come to take charge of the Dos S Rancho, where the sheep come through by thousands, even as they did here when there was grass. I am an old man now; I have lived on this spot twenty-four years and seen much of the sheep; let me advise you.

"When the sheepmen come across the river do not fight, as Don Jeff does continually, but let them pass. They are many and the cowmen are few; they are rich and we are very poor; how then can a few men whip many, and those armed with the best? And look–if a sheepman is killed there is a law, you know, and lawyers–yes, and money!" He shrugged his shoulders and threw out his hands, peeping ruefully through the fingers to symbolize prison bars.

"Is it not so?" he asked, and for the first time an Americano agreed with him.

"One more thing, then," said Don Pablo, lowering his voice and glancing toward the house, where Creede was conversing with the Señora. "The *papá* of Don Jeff yonder was a good man, but he was fighting Texano–and Jeff is of the same blood. Each year as the sheep come through I have fear for him, lest he should kill some saucy *borreguero* and be sent to prison; for has angry fits, like his father, and there are many bad men among the sheep-herders,–escaped criminals from Old Mexico, *ladrones*, and creatures of low

blood, fathered by evil Americanos and the nameless women of towns.

"In Sonora we would whip them from our door, but the sheepmen make much of their herders, calling them brothers and *cuñados* and what not, to make them stay, since the work is hard and dangerous. And to every one of them, whether herder or camp rustler, the owners give a rifle with ammunition, and a revolver to carry always. So they are drunk with valor. But our Jeff here has no fear of them, no, nor decent respect. He overrides them when the fit is on him, as if they are unfanged serpents– and so far he has escaped."

The old man leaned closer, and lowered his voice to a hoarse whisper, acting out his words dramatically.

"But some day–" he clasped his heart, closed his eyes, and seemed to lurch before a bullet. "No?" he inquired, softly. "Ah, well, then, you must watch over him, for he is a good man, doing many friendships, and his father was a *buen hombre*, too, in the days when we all were rich. So look after him–for an old man," he added, and trudged wearily back to the house.

"A FINE HAT
FITS LIKE A GOOD FRIEND."

– Charles M. Russell

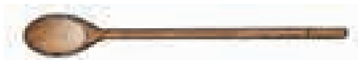
KEVIN MURPHY

Hatter

3569 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, CA 93460

805.686.4790 kjmurphys.com

Mike Oden's Beans-in-a-Hole



By Kathy McCraine

Mike Oden

In the West we're all familiar with pit barbeque. But beans-in-a-hole? That was a novel idea for me until Arizona/New Mexico rancher Mike Oden explained his unique underground recipe.

Mike grew up on the 7 Up Ranch, north of Prescott, Arizona. His grandfather, Sam McElhaney, who started the McElhaney Feedyards in Wellton, Arizona, started putting the ranch together in 1949 when he bought the Triangle HC Ranch from Harry Knight. Knight had performed as a bronc rider and trick roper with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. He started Arizona's first guest ranch in the big Ponderosa Pine country 40 miles north of Prescott in 1925.

By the 1960s McElhaney had bought up neighboring ranches to put together the 44,000-acre 7 Up. Mike spent summers there when he was growing up, and it's there that he got interested in Dutch-oven cooking. He eventually bought out the family ranch, sold it, and started Mike Oden Cattle Company with ranches in Williams, Arizona, and New Mexico.

When he and his crew are working cows, he likes to bury these beans in a hole in the evening. The next morning he can go out to gather cows, come home anytime between noon and dark, dig up the pit, and enjoy a great meal. He also likes to cook for family gatherings and special events.

One weekend this past April, Mike cooked for Arizona's chapter of the Ranch Horse Association of America at Ben Balow's arena in Skull Valley, Arizona. Mike, who has also developed a serious ranch-horse program, was just named

regional director for the organization, which sanctions competitions in 14 states.

"The RHAA is more of a cowboy kind of deal than some of the other ranch-horse competitions," Mike says. "There's more emphasis on roping and cow work." Which explains why the 15 or so cowboys who showed up for the clinic by RHAA president Jim Frank Richardson of Bard, New Mexico, and Jack McComber of Rocky Ford, Colorado, were sure enough the real deal.

It was a beautiful, sunny spring day after a particularly long, cold spring, and at lunchtime, everybody gathered outside the Balow house, under giant cottonwood trees as big around as box cars. Ben, a two-time world champion reining horse trainer, flipped hamburgers on his oversized grill while Mike cooked up his beans and Dutch oven peach cobbler.

The following recipe for cooking the beans in a hole can easily be adapted for cooking on top of the stove (if you don't want to dig a pit).

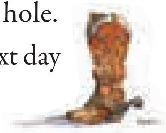
Beans-in-a-Hole

3 pounds dried pinto beans
1 pound pork shoulder, cut in pieces
4-5 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tablespoon dried oregano
2-3 tablespoons chili powder
Salt and pepper to taste

First you will need to dig a hole in the ground 2½ feet deep and about 20 inches in diameter. Be sure your ground is dry. Fill the hole to the top with mesquite wood or other hardwood and burn 2 to 3 hours, until burned down to coals with a white crust over the top. Be sure all the wood has burned down to coals. About 1/3 of the hole should be filled with coals now.

Place beans in a deep 12-inch Dutch oven and fill almost to the top with water. Add the pork and the seasoning. (If cooking on top of a stove, cover at this point and bring to a boil. Then simmer several hours or all day. Don't add salt until beans have cooked at least one hour, or they will be tough.)

If cooking in the hole, cover with a tight lid and place on top of the coals with a wire around the pot for lifting it out. The pot will take up another 1/3 of the hole and should have about 4 inches of space around it. Cut a piece of tin the same diameter as the hole and set down in hole directly on top of pot. Shovel dirt on top of tin to fill top 1/3 of the hole. Make sure there are no air leaks and no smoke coming from the hole. Leave to cook overnight and pull out the next day when you're ready to eat. Serves 25-30.



Kathy McCraine is the author of *Cow Country Cooking: Recipes and Tales from Northern Arizona's Historic Ranches*, available at www.kathymccraine.com.

Available at a
fine retailer near you

millerranch1918.com

Larry Bitterman
Old Frontier Clothing

Fashion Designs for the Clothes "Horse" in Every Cowboy

By Jayne Skeff

It's a heady experience sitting with Larry Bitterman in his design studio in Los Angeles – he takes multi-tasking to an entirely new level. Surrounded by mannequins dressed in the finest wool frock coats accented with rich silk ties, he has one hand on the phone while he's holding his newest line of shirts, talking excitedly about the latest patterns and exquisite details in their styling right down to each button – buttons that he personally selects. His passion for what he does is infectious and, in short order, just sitting there, you are transported to another world – a richer, more elegant era – the mannequins seem to come alive and his designs begin to tell a story. "Years ago, working my way through college at a clothing boutique in Georgetown, the manager, who I now realize was my mentor, taught me that clothing can create a story." And create a fashion story Bitterman did, and has been doing for over twenty years.

Larry Bitterman

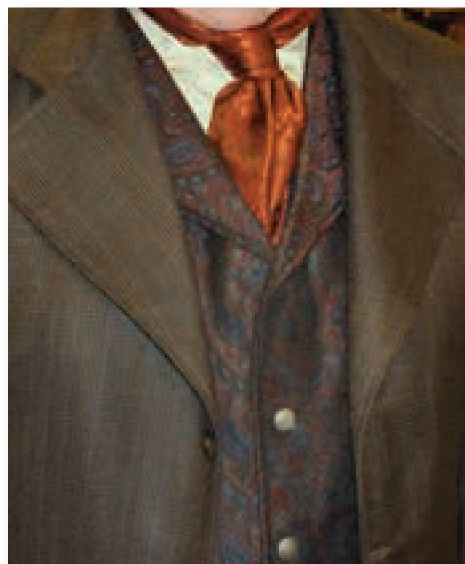
His vision is at the root of what he creates – his styles are steeped in elegant, classic Victorian traditions but he has the rare ability to take these

designs and add just the right amount of evocative, sexy and hip to give them a modern-day edge. His rare ability to do this is likely the combination of his diverse life experiences. Born and raised in Manhattan, he "embraced the New York lifestyle" from an early age. Never really any connection to the Western world growing up, he recalls, "I did grow up riding horses though. I spent a time riding at stables – riding English – not Western." On to college then law school, Larry was a practicing attorney in Los Angeles for a few years, living the LA lawyer lifestyle, wearing Armani, not Old Frontier. Then, in a fluke occurrence, friends of his wife invited him to visit them on their ranch outside of Los Angeles. That weekend changed his life. He became completely captivated by the "richness of the Western" lifestyle. In chatting with him, he uses the word "reincarnated" to describe this experience. His life would begin evolving in a completely different direction – exit Larry Bitterman, ESQ, enter Larry Bitterman fashion designer. But "there were no clothes to wear that reflected the rich elegance of this Western lifestyle." And that's where this all began. "I'm a clothes horse at heart. I love getting dressed to go to the theatre or out for the evening. What ever happened to getting dressed up to go out?" he questions. There's nothing more elegant than sporting the finest ensemble that turns heads. You walk taller and feel like that proverbial "million bucks." "I love wearing one of my frock coats, vest and silk tie when I'm back in New York and out on the town. The whole look routinely turns heads and people stop and ask me where I got them." It's because it's an image that exudes romance and for a minute, people step into a chapter of the book the story tells.

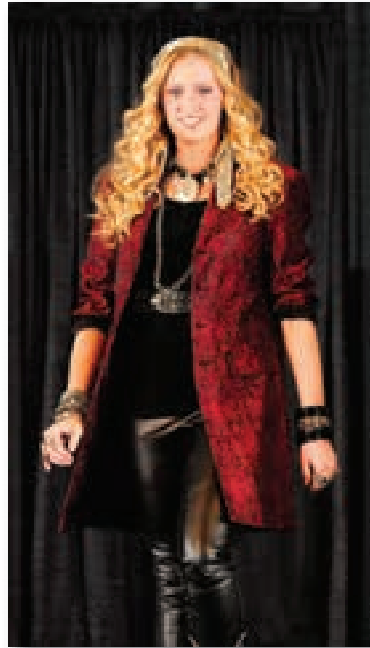
"There's a cowboy in everyone," he believes. You don't have to own a horse or live on a ranch to embrace this rich lifestyle. Maybe your horse is an iron steed or the jet you fly, but there's a cowboy inside and Old Frontier Clothing has the styling and designs to create that unique persona – pure class and elegance. Maybe it's Western or maybe it's a flash back to the classic Virginia gentleman, but it's there and all in 21st century terms.

Larry designs and oversees the creation of every piece in his line. His attention to perfection, detail and styling has gained him long-term clients and relationships with the likes of Kenny Loggins, Randy

When was the last time you got dressed up to go out for the evening?
From the trousers, to the silk tie, rich vest and elegant coat –
women of all ages love a man in Old Frontier clothing.



Miss Rodeo America 2011, McKenzie Haley



Travis and Michael Martin Murphy. His clothing designs have been used in major motion pictures such as *Tombstone* and *Lonesome Dove* to name just a few in his credits.

Lisa Sorrel of Sorrell Custom Boots once said, "cowboy boots are high heels for men." Well, Old Frontier Clothing is the elegant dress to go with those heels.

But ladies, fear not, Old Frontier Clothing has a line for you as well. Rich brocades are used to create the feminine version of the frock coast almost reminiscent of the tailored smoking jackets of the 30s. Take a second look at the silk ties and rich cotton shirts – throw on a gorgeous belt with your boots and jeans and your look will turn heads too.

What's next for Larry Bitterman and his unstoppable desire to create and design exquisite fashions steeped in the richness of the Western lifestyle? His upcoming line, called Lawrence Scott Designs, takes his classic Victorian styling and spins it with a bit more edge, a bit more urban, but without ever losing one ounce of elegance and sophistication.

Elegance and sophistication – that's the Western lifestyle and that's what Larry Bitterman designs. www.oldfrontier.com

Jayne Skeff is President of DesignAmerica Foundation and JSLS Media. She is also a freelance writer for several western publications. She can be reached at jayne_skeff@designamericafoundation.com

Superb Furnishings and Accessories for your Home on the Range

Dennee's
of Santa Ynez, Ltd.

3569 Sagunto Street, Santa Ynez, Ca 93460 805.686.0842
219 Avenue I, Riviera Village, Redondo Beach, Ca 90277 310.540.0437

Legend

Riding the long trail with Texas' Boots O'Neil

By Paul A. Cañada

The colors of Palo Duro Canyon are breathtaking in the half light of early morning, but as any experienced hand will tell you, beauty can be deceiving. In Texas' rugged Panhandle, trouble can sneak up on a person faster than a rattlesnake's strike.

The crew of 14 packed up camp and were on the move. Cowboys drove the remuda of saddle horses across the river bed, with three camp wagons trailing. Pulled by four stout work horses, the chuckwagon held the lead, followed by the hoodlum wagon carrying gear, supplies and three large barrels of water. Bringing up the rear, two young broncs pulled the bedroll wagon, driven by the youngest cowboy in the outfit, 16-year old "Boots" O'Neil.

photos by Paul Canada

O'Neil has spent the last two decades working for the Four Sixes Ranch, where he's regarded as a mentor to the outfit's other cowboys.

The young boy sat atop a saddle perched precariously on four bedrolls. Confident he had matters well at hand, O'Neil pulled a pinch of tobacco from a pouch and began rolling a cigarette. A more experienced cowboy might have known better, or at least shown more dexterity, but young O'Neil had no cares and the drop of a single rein was quickly detected by the broncs. In a flash, the young cowboy lost control. The team took off, passing the hoodlum wagon. As they overtook the chuckwagon, the cookie yelled, "Jump off, son! Jump off!"

O'Neil complied, eating a mouthful of dust and scuffing himself up as he tumbled head over heels. The team overturned the wagon and drug it upside down, spilling bedrolls in the river bed. The horses drug the wagon a bit further before settling.

Certain he would be fired, the boy dusted himself off and waited for the tongue lashing. Nothing was said. Instead, the men righted the wagon and collected the gear.

The crew made the four-mile trek and set camp at Sand Creek. Although O'Neil took a bit of ribbing from the other hands, the boss never spoke to the boy about the

Once skeptical of what he considered non-traditional approaches to horsemanship, O'Neil became a convert to the colt-starting methods of Ray Hunt.

accident. The lesson stuck and a much older O'Neil remembers the details as if it happened yesterday.

"We called those two broncs Scar and High Brown," says O'Neil. "The two horses pulling the hoodlum wagon were Pigeon and Badger. And the names of the chuckwagon team were Tommy, Jerry, Hyena and Dopey. Sixty years have passed since I have been around those horses, yet I remember them well."

O'Neil survived that memorable summer in the Palo Duro and went on to make cowboying his livelihood. Today, the 79-year old continues to get up early in the morning, saddle his mount and ride out to meet the cattle. His six decades in the saddle mark the transition between the great Texas cattle drives and modern ranching.

Billy Milton O'Neil was waiting for the school bus

O'Neil prepares for a day of work.

for the first time on a warm fall day in 1939. The dusty bus stopped and its doors swung open. The apprehensive young lad hesitated. Leaning out, the bus driver shouted, "Get on up here, Little Boots." The name stuck.

O'Neil was one of eight O'Neil children. His father, J.L. ("Boots"), and mother, Bernice Andis O'Neil, lived on the Davis Ranch in Gray County, where J.L. made a living as a cowboy.

Their ranch house had no electricity or indoor plumbing. While the living room of the modest O'Neil home had a gas heater and gas lights, the bedrooms had neither. Like most rural Texas families, the kids bathed in a tub, in front of the kitchen stove where Bernice heated the bath water.

Talk of cattle, horses and ranching always made its way to the family dinner table. Stories of renowned cowboys, like local legend Tom Blasingame, entertained the O'Neil boys. Strong, quiet and humble cowpunchers proved to be lasting role models. O'Neil and his brothers Joe and Wes seemed destined to cowboy like their dad.

In 1948, 16-year-old Joe and 15-year-old Wes earned their first pay as cowboys. The two were hired by the RO Ranch to break 20 head of untouched broncs at $20 a head.

"Four-hundred was a lot of money at that time," says O'Neil. "Other than a quarter to go to the picture show with, it was the first money either one of us had."

In 1949, 16-year-old O'Neil quit school and went to work for the JA Ranch in Texas' rugged Panhandle country. His experience with the JA outfit began a long career working for some of the largest ranches in the Panhandle. After the JA, he moved on to work for the Matador Land & Cattle Company, W.T. Waggoner Estate and Four Sixes Ranch.

A pair of spurs can serve as a biography and resume.

The runaway wagon was just one of many life lessons O'Neil learned while driving cattle across the Panhandle. The unforgiving country and strong men that worked it helped shape his character. While at the JA, he worked with Blasingame. At the Waggoner Ranch, O'Neil rode with G.L. Proctor.

"You can ask 50 cowpunchers in this country and probably all will tell you G.L. was the best they had ever seen," O'Neil says. "He didn't like to be in the front or draw attention to himself. He could rope, ride, punch cows, count cattle and ride broncs with the best of them, but

you wouldn't know it from listening to him. He was eight years my senior and the best cowpuncher I have ever known."

All four men left a lasting mark on a young and impressionable O'Neil. They were skilled hands who led by example, not words. Their quiet, modest nature and self-control stuck with O'Neil throughout the years.

Working the Panhandle's vast canyon land in the early 1950s wasn't much different than driving Texas cattle to Kansas railheads during the mid-to-late 1800s. For nearly a hundred years, chuckwagon cowboys have worked months at a time in rugged country and under extreme conditions. Life on a crew was far removed from the romantic tales depicted in western novels, songs and films.

"People don't realize how tough it was working out there," O'Neil says. "Back then, the chuckwagon was out all summer. We worked seven days a week and 90 days straight. Nobody got time off or headed back in until the job was done."

Coffee and soft ground to place a bedroll were luxuries. Baths, taken in water troughs, were far and few between. Camp was moved every three to four days. The extreme Texas weather proved most discomforting and posed the greatest risk to the crew.

On the hottest nights, cowboys combatted the heat and mosquitos by stretching wet dew tarps close to their bedrolls and sliding between the two. The morning following a heavy downpour, they rubbed soap on their socks so they could slide into their wet leather boots. Whether it was blistering hot or bitter cold, raining or snowing, chuckwagon crews kept pushing the herds forward.

Despite unbearable weather and occasional blow-ups between horse and rider, O'Neil was where he wanted to be. However, the seasoned hand is quick to tell how rogue thunderstorms had him second-guessing his occupational choice.

"I remember we were catching the next morning's mounts from a remuda of 150 to 175 head of horses," he says. "A thunderstorm was approaching and we hadn't had a chance to put up the rope corral. So, 10 of us encircled the remuda and pitched a lariat rope to the man next to him. I held my rope in one hand and my neighbor's in the other, creating a make-do corral."

Two cowboys were catching and staking down the next day's mounts. Lightning bursts were jumping from cloud to cloud, with an occasional strike reaching the ground. Unexpectedly, the air over the remuda exploded in a bright blue light.

"I am not sure if a bolt hit the ground or struck a nearby object, but I remember it well," O'Neil says. "It knocked several horses and two men to the ground, and the remuda bolted and jumped our ropes."

A number of men, including the cook, who was leaning against a metal tent pole, complained of headaches. Most of the crew had burns under their arms where they held the wet rope. The remuda took off running and was a good distance from camp.

"I remember waiting for the wagon boss to shout, 'Get after 'em boys,' but instead he told us to let them go," O'Neil says. "We let the storm blow over before collecting them. Just before dark, we had caught a horse for each cowboy. We were fortunate no horses or men were killed."

In 1953, O'Neil went to work for the W.T. Waggoner Estate's spread near Mosquero, New Mexico. His tenure was quickly cut short when he was drafted into the Army. After completing his training, O'Neil was sent to Korea. Although the armistice ending the conflict was signed earlier that year, the situation was still dangerous. O'Neil served with the 135th Combat Engineers and was charged with building barbed wire fencing and barriers along the demilitarized zone, still

rife with North Korean land mines.

Returning home, O'Neil day-worked for the RO Ranch before eventually returning to the Waggoner outfit. While he was with Waggoner, his respect and admiration for brand inspector Alan Jefferies grew and after five years with the outfit, he decided to pursue a career as a brand inspector.

In 1960, he graduated from the Texas Department of Public Safety's Sheriff's School; in 1962, he graduated from the Field Inspectors School. After receiving a special Texas Ranger commission, O'Neil went to work for the Texas and Southwest Cattle Raisers Association as a certified brand inspector.

While recording brands at the Cottle County courthouse in Paducah, O'Neil met Nelda Young. The two dated for about six months and then married in November 1962. Together they had a daughter, Lauri, now Mrs. Darrell Colbert. Lauri gave the O'Neils their only grandchild, Rachael. Sadly, in October 2006, Nelda succumbed to cancer after a valiant fight.

Veteran Texas cowboy Boots O'Neil passed up retirement long ago and, at 79, still begins each day early, on horseback.

After four years with TSCRA, O'Neil began getting restless. Routine visits to inspect cattle at the large ranches reminded him of his time on the cattle trail. The toughest moments came when he sat down to have dinner with the crews.

"I listened to the men talk as we ate and I started missing that life," said O'Neil. "After dinner, they saddled up and rode off, and I'd get in my car. I longed to be outside riding and working cattle."

O'Neil left brand inspecting behind in 1964 and accepted a foreman's position, running the Waggoner's 40,000-acre Whiteface Division in Electra, Texas. The Whiteface was Waggoner's horse division headquarters.

O'Neil and his five-man crew broke the ranch's colts, and handled the mares and studs. During his 10-year tenure he sold about 800 head of horses.

In 1975, he moved to the Waggoner's headquarters at Zacaweista, Texas, and was promoted to foreman over all cattle operations. He supervised 40 men on approximately 500,000 acres. Throughout his five years at Zacaweista, O'Neil continued battling his deep desire to be out with the cowboys.

"I had some trouble with my superiors because I wanted to punch cows when I should have been focused on managing the ranch," he explains. "I regret that I didn't put everything into the job. I eventually left for a cowboying job."

Between the 15 years he spent with the Waggoner Estate and his joining the Four Sixes in 1989, O'Neil managed cattle crews for Quarter Horse pioneer Walter Merrick. When Merrick's Red Rocks Ranch scaled back its cattle operation, O'Neil returned to Vernon, Texas, and managed cattle for Robert Belew on a contract basis.

Interested in adding a certified brand inspector to their staff, the Four Sixes offered O'Neil a full-time position in which he would spend time working cattle. When O'Neil accepted the job, he was already an accomplished hand, but even experienced hands can learn a new trick or two. O'Neil had a talent for breaking colts the traditional way. However, when he arrived at the Four Sixes, he learned there was another way.

At that time, Ray Hunt visited the ranch every year to help start colts. Hunt's method was new to O'Neil and he initially resisted. Nonetheless, he watched and worked with Hunt.

"I was in my early 50s when I arrived on the ranch and I was against Hunt's method at first, but the horses changed my mind," said O'Neil. "The horses were better broke, gentler and more dependable. I learned the system was less physical on both horses and men. I was convinced."

O'Neil fit in well at the Four Sixes and has been working for the outfit for two decades. His knowledge of cattle and horses and his ability to manage crews have made him a valuable member of the staff. Cattle manager Joe Leathers refers to O'Neil as a unique and rare find.

"I can ask Boots to head over to another division and run it until I can find a replacement," Leathers says. "He knows how to work men and how to deal with any situation that arises. I don't have to worry about that ranch. When the ranch replacement arrives, Boots will load up his gear, drive back and return to cowboying here. That's how he is."

Like most of the Four Sixes hands and the townfolk of nearby Guthrie, Leathers sees O'Neil as a friend and mentor. O'Neil passed up retirement over a decade ago. The 79-year old still ropes and drags cows to the iron but, according to Leathers, O'Neil still worries he's not pulling his weight.

"I tell him every time he asks, 'Boots, you see more trotting across a pasture than most men see all day in that pasture,'" Leathers says. "His knowledge is extensive and he can tell what shape the country is in by looking at the condition of the cattle. You know, a young man will make a lot of tracks accomplishing the work that needs to get done, while an older, more experienced man will make less tracks and get as much or more done."

Billy Milton "Boots" O'Neil has spent a lifetime getting the job done under the toughest of conditions. Through it all, he has managed himself with dignity and control, and always with respect to his profession. O'Neil is a living icon, a legend.

Writer and photographer Paul Cañada lives in Texas.

California is our Heritage. Make it yours.

Ride the Range – 720 Acres of Big Sky Country
Amazing Wine Country Opportunity
Western Town, 3 older homes, wells, 4 legal parcels.
Presented by: **Kris Johnston** call **805-689-4777**
$8,400,000 (w/some seller financing)

Amazing Winery Opportunity
Own your own Award winning Winery and Vineyard. Presented by **Harriet Dahlstrom** call **805-252-1692** Price upon request.

A Ranch Out West – 102 Acres
Ideal Horse Playground. Home with views.
Presented by **Jon Ohlgren**
call **805-689-7839**
$1,949,000

Rancho Encantado de Nojoqui – 578 Acres
Enjoy Ranching Life in the Old California Style.
Presented by **Chuck King** call **805-680-4350**
$3,400,000

Proudly representing Unique Landmark Estates, Ranches, Wineries and Vineyards Big & Small

1090 Edison St., Suite 102, PO Box 420 Santa Ynez, CA 93460 805-691-9435 fax 805-691-9437

The Winchester Quarantine

During the 19th century cattle boom, tensions ran high in west Texas as southern herds infected with redwater fever threatened ranches in the state's panhandle

By Tom Moates

"Winchester Quarantine" is a curious pairing of words attached to an equally peculiar bit of Western history. The moniker congers up a split image: dusty, horseback cowboys standing sentry with repeating rifles over a herd of cattle infected with a dreaded disease; a veterinary staff in white coats taking blood samples to the lab and administering vaccines. Minus the modern medicine, it is a picture not entirely off the mark.

The Winchester Quarantine, instituted in the 1880s, was not an official quarantine of livestock sanctioned by any legal authority. Rather, it was an attempt by ranchers of the panhandle region of Texas to protect their cattle from a devastating illness by taking matters into their own hands. Armed mounted men, typically packing Winchester rifles – hence the lasting name of the episode – were hired to enforce the ranchers' decision to keep southern cattle drives out of their area.

The timing of the Winchester Quarantine places it smack in the middle of the great cattle boom – the famed era from 1866 to 1895 when more than 10 million head of cattle were driven from Texas to rail heads and markets in the north. Much of Texas, especially early on, was open land. The volatile situation sprang from the spread of a deadly disease that often decimated northern herds of cattle shortly after contact with southern herds being driven through their areas to destinations further north.

Many names were assigned to the terrible malady: Texas fever, Spanish fever and splenetic fever (after the lesions it caused to the spleen), but perhaps the most telling was redwater fever, derived from the red urine passed by infected cattle. Once contracted, the illness was nearly always fatal.

The underlying cause of the disease remained a mystery for many years, but the fact that southern herds were carriers was clear enough. Not only would direct contact between cattle transmit the disease, but northern cattle contracted the illness even when merely in close proximity to southern herds, or by entering areas previously but recently occupied by them. Later it would be discovered that ticks transmitted the disease.

Several disease-causing bacteria had been discovered by the 1880s, and Louis Pasteur already had produced some vaccines by this time. Fred Lucius Kilborne and Theobold Smith, working for the Bureau of Animal Industry in Washington, D. C., demonstrated in 1883 that Texas fever was caused by a protozoan they called, Pyrosoma bigeminum. Researchers today have

photo courtesy www.waynebaizeca.com

Shadows of Evening, by Wayne Baize.
Such pastoral scenes often led to armed confrontations during the Winchester Quarantine era.

renamed the genus of the microbe, *Babesia*, and the infections caused by it are referred to as babesiosis. Scientists now believe Texas fever in the 1880s was caused by either *Babesia bovis* or *Babesia bigemina*. These protozoa populate and destroy the red blood cells of the host. Ticks feed on infected cattle (typically remaining on a single animal for their entire life cycles) and then drop off the host and lay eggs; newborn ticks enter the world already carrying the culprit protozoan and are able to find and infect new hosts.

The germ theory being posed by some scientists at the time, however, still didn't seem to explain one critical point: if a microscopic organism caused Texas fever, why didn't the infected southern longhorns show any symptoms and die like their northern cousins? Only in modern times would it be shown that some calves are born enjoying a partial resistance to the infection, a protection lasting only several weeks. The cattle from warmer climates, where the presence of infected herds and carrier ticks were widespread, apparently suffered

photo courtesy www.waynebaizeca.com

A cowboy pushes cattle through a west Texas landscape in *Rimrock Drive*, by Cowboy Artists of America member Wayne Baize.

mild cases at a very young age; this revved up their immunity against the illness, allowing them to live with the pathogen kept in check within their bodies. They became carriers, but as they matured, they did not fall victim to the deadly onset of the full-blown disease as their northern bovine neighbors did. Only by human intervention did the southern cattle move into northern Texas, and thus the previously unexposed cattle succumbed readily to the disease.

Ultimately, in 1891, a quarantine line was established, with federal law requiring that all southern cattle moving north between January 15 and November 15 be shipped either by rail or boat, then slaughtered on arrival. In 1906, the federal government began a widespread and successful campaign of cattle-dipping to kill the ticks that carry the disease. The disease was eradicated from the United States by 1943, but is still a significant threat to cattle in some nations, including Mexico, and we maintain a permanent quarantine buffer zone between Texas and Mexico today. In the 1880s, however, a tiny tick and even tinier microbe had some mighty big Texas cattlemen at each other's throats.

Northern ranchers were rightly concerned and eager to protect their livestock. Keeping their herds at a safe distance from those passing through seemed a straightforward answer to the trouble. Since the highly contagious and deadly illness could bankrupt an outfit in short order, such high stakes made for high tensions and the implementation of extreme means to protect cattle.

The Panhandle Stock Association formed in Mobeetie, Texas, in July 1880. Charles Goodnight (a renowned cattle rancher, part owner of the large JA ranch, and half-namesake of the famous Goodnight-Loving cattle trail, which swept a westward route from Texas to Wyoming) is cited as instigating its creation. The idea was to organize cattlemen of the region to confront the serious problems of both cattle rustling and outbreaks of Texas fever.

The finer details of the history of the Winchester Quarantine seem somewhat vague, but the main points are clear. Texas cattle interests were split in two between the north and south. Meat packer agents at railheads around Kansas and Missouri were paying well for cattle and didn't care who supplied the beef for the enormous market back east. In fact, the demand likely could have accommodated all of the Texas cattle. The odd circumstances produced a kind of perfect storm leading to an inevitable clashing of interests between the two groups of cattlemen, with their fortunes, livelihoods and ranches hanging in the balance.

The Panhandle Stock Association, with Goodnight now president, decided to devise ways to isolate their cattle from the southern herds. One was to establish corridors as "lines of drive" to allow southern herds to pass through the panhandle region while remaining safe distances from the region's stock. According to a report published by the Texas State Historical Association, a mile and a half of buffer was figured on either side of the route, and water tanks were built to provide for the cattle moving through the country.

It is reported that in 1882, the Panhandle Stock Association met with cattle drivers in Dallas to either work out details of this arrangement or convince the southern drovers to circumvent the panhandle region altogether. Clearly cooperation was not universal, and southern cattlemen with seemingly healthy herds no doubt wanted the most direct path to a paycheck. Fewer miles meant fewer accidents and more pounds remaining on the hoof at the time of sale.

Another Association strategy involved holding southern herds in quarantine at the bottom edge of their region until after the first frost or later so the disease would not be passed on. Presumably, even though the cause of Texas fever wasn't understood at the time, it was realized that the disease was not transferred at colder times of the year, when the offending ticks are not at work.

The Winchester Quarantine marks the point where push came to shove in this turbulent time. Goodnight and Orville H. Nelson, of the Shoe Bar Ranch, posted armed cowboys as guards along a 45-mile stretch of trail where the two ranches met. The job is said to have paid $75 a month. These watchmen, according to the TSHA, "were instructed to use moral suasion, then bluff, but if both of these measures failed, they were to send for help from the nearest ranches to hold the recalcitrant drovers in check until an injunction could be obtained and served on the trail boss. Though this last resort took several days, it was always effective."

The tension of the situation was not lost between north Texas neighbors either. James Farber, in his 1950 book, *Texans with Guns*, includes a chapter on the Winchester Quarantine. He depicts the cresting hostility by quoting a letter written by Goodnight warning a neighbor not to drive his cattle across the JA

in the early 1880s: "I hope you will not treat this as idle talk, for I mean every word of this. My cattle are now dying of fever contracted from cattle driven through here and therefore do not have any hope you can convince me your cattle will not give mine the fever. This we will not speak of. I simply say you will not pass through in good health."

Efforts were made by panhandle cattlemen to obtain legislation for a lawful quarantine to protect their herds, but were unsuccessful. The Winchester Quarantine did maintain lines of quarantine for a few years with relative success, and came to include the collaboration of other notable ranches like the Spur and Matador.

By the mid-1880s, fencing crisscrossed the region. The open range rapidly closed. The new rigid-wire boundaries being imposed on the landscape provided a way to more easily control and contain the movements of cattle and men. The problems associated with transmitting Texas fever abated as a consequence. The Winchester Quarantine seems simply to have evaporated from existence into the mists of history, but only just before the entire era of the great cattle drives wafted likewise into mere memories of a bygone age.

The Winchester Quarantine in TV Westerns

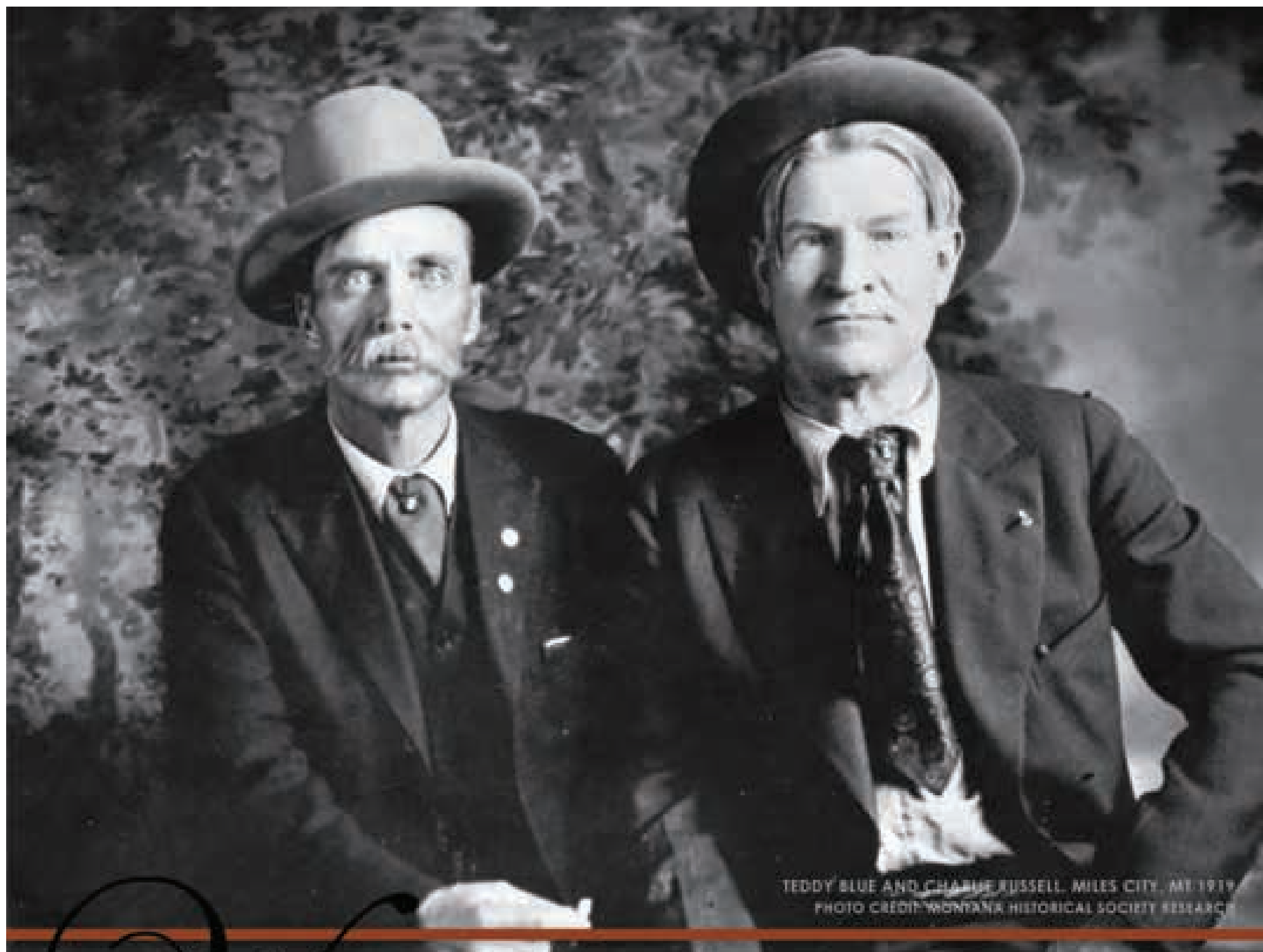
Hollywood writers during the golden age of TV and radio westerns did not miss the opportunity to draw on the historical episode of the Winchester Quarantine for a couple of their own entertaining programs.

An episode entitled "Winchester Quarantine" was produced for the TV series *Have Gun, Will Travel*, and aired in 1957. The catchy title was clearly plucked from Western history, but the plot all but ignored any facts. The fictional story was set in 1875, predating the actual Quarantine era. It pitted the protagonist gunslinger, Paladin, against a powerful rancher battling a Cherokee stockman whose cattle were thought to carry an unspecified disease. In the episode, Paladin quietly hires the local pharmacist to perform a scientific study on a dirt sample from the Cherokee's ranch and discovers the soil to be poisoned.

In 1961, the Western series *Cheyenne* also ran an episode entitled "Winchester Quarantine." This offering, however, follows historical events with surprising accuracy. The opening scene depicts the lead character, Cheyenne Bodie, losing his own small panhandle ranch due to Texas fever killing off his herd. A woman rancher from the south driving 600 head to New Mexico is stopped by the Panhandle Cattlemen's Association's armed guards. A debate rages between these two interests about whether or not the herd will pass through the panhandle.

To the writer's credit, tension builds between the Association's members as Texas fever spreads in their herds, and some, but not all, are willing to resort to violence to drive away the southern herd. If anything, this TV story compresses the facts too much: Cheyenne and the local veterinarian discover ticks on the southern cattle, theorize that parasites might be spreading the disease, and perform their own elaborate experiment to prove their theory. By the end of the show, the lead characters have concluded that dipping the southern cattle kills the ticks and solves everyone's troubles, and about 50 years of history is boiled down into 50 minutes.

Tom Moates is the author of *Discovering Natural Horsemanship, A Horse's Thought*, *Between the Reins*, and *Round-Up: A Gathering of Equine Writings*. Learn more at www.tommoates.com.



TEDDY BLUE AND CHARLIE RUSSELL, MILES CITY, MT 1919
PHOTO CREDIT: MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY RESEARCH

WE POINTED THEM NORTH

{AN AUTHENTIC WESTERN EVENT

ART SHOW WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 7th, 2011 AT THE CATTLE RAISERS MUSEUM FORT WORTH, TX
6PM - 8PM WITH LIVE MUSIC BY *'THE GILLETTE BROTHERS'* COCKTAILS AND HORS D'OEUVRES

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

BOB MOORHOUSE . BUCKEYE BLAKE . BRUCE GREENE . CHESSNEY SEVIER . DAVE POWELL
J.W. SEGLER . KIM MACKEY . MARK KOHLER . MIKE CAPRON
ROBERT 'SHOOFLY' SHUFELT . TD KELSEY . TEAL BLAKE

TO RESERVE YOUR TICKETS PLEASE CALL 817.253.0117 *(TICKETS WILL ALSO BE AVALIABLE FOR $25 AT THE DOOR)*
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS EVENT PLEASE VISIT ~ **WWW.WEPOINTEDTHEMNORTH.COM** | 817.304.0308

THIS EVENT IS PROUDLY SPONSORED BY ~ *MAGGIE CREEK RANCH . REATA CUTTING HORSES . OXBOW RANCH JOHN & ALLEE MOULDER . BILL & KRISTIN REYNOLDS . THE FORT WORTH CLUB . KERRY KELLEY BITS & SPURS MATT LITZ SILVERSMITHS . FRED'S TEXAS CAFE . THE DOUBLE DIAMOND RANCH*

Three Years Later

Texas ranchers struggle for years to rebuild cattle operations brought down in one fateful night.

By Paul A. Cañada

Bill White's family has been ranching in Texas' Chambers County for six generations. The 57-year old stockman has successfully run one of the largest family-owned cattle operations in southeast Texas for about 35 years. But then, in the eye of a hurricane, size doesn't matter.

Having seen the flooding and devastation Hurricane Humberto unleashed on Louisiana ranchers a year earlier, White wasn't taking any chances when the fast-approaching Hurricane Ike threatened the ranch in September 2008. Continuing a longstanding family practice for dealing with major storms, he moved cattle from the ranch's southernmost pastures to higher ground.

"Twelve days prior to Ike, Hurricane Gustav approached the coastline," said White. "We gathered up our cattle, moving them from the Trinity River bottoms in preparation for that storm. We had a lot of our work already done because of that and so preparing for Ike wasn't nearly as involved."

photo courtesy Paul Canada

Paxton Ramsey looks over the mangled remains of a chute damaged by surge waters along the Intercoastal Waterway.

After much consideration, White decided to send his calf crop to market. While he wasn't able to send all his calves before the storm made landfall, he succeeded at getting most out.

"I had a premonition the storm might be a bad one," said White. "It turned out to be one of the luckiest things I ever did. Doing so cut back on my losses."

With most of the cattle moved to pastures near the

photo courtesy USDA

A horse is rescued from a flooded ranch.

ranch's headquarters, White was certain he was prepared for the worst. Still, the premonition weighed heavy on his mind. Just hours before Ike made landfall, White made a critical decision to go back out and open gates, allowing his cattle to find even higher ground if needed. Returning home, he waited to see what Ike would bring.

At its peak, Hurricane Ike's diameter was 450 miles and its winds reached 190 miles per hour. The storm's Integrated Kinetic Energy rating was the second highest rating of any Atlantic storm in the past 40 years. On a scale ranging between 1 and 6, with 6 being the most destructive, Ike earned a 5.2 compared to Hurricane Katrina's 5.1.

Sometime after 2 a.m. on September 13, 2008, the hurricane's storm surge slammed into Texas' Upper Gulf Coast with winds of more than 110 miles per hour. The surge produced a wall of water over 16 feet high. The destruction left in its wake would impact the region's cattle ranchers for years to come, and in some ways would change their lives forever.

The tremendous storm surge hit about 50 miles northeast of Galveston, pounding the Bolivar Peninsula.

photo courtesy Cullen Ramsey

A mix of surviving cattle representing many ranches and brands, rescued, rounded up and driven into non-flooded pastures.

Approximately half of Chambers and Jefferson Counties were underwater. Interstate 10 and State Highway 73 divided flooded and dry land.

Stephen and Liz Jenkins live just north of SH 73, outside of Winnie. Liz is a past president and lifetime board member of the Gulf Coast Quarter Horse Association and a medical services professional, while Stephen works for the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services division. The couple heeded warnings and evacuated their daughter and valuable performance horses north of the area.

photo courtesy Paul Canada

Chambers County resident and USDA employee Stephen Jenkins grew up in the area most affected by Ike. His face shows the resilience of this region's people.

A day after the storm passed, Stephen, a key member of the USDA's disaster-response team, returned to Chambers County. Arriving back home, he first surveyed the damage to his place and discovered it was minimal. The next day, he checked in at the USDA's command post in Beaumont.

One of his immediate tasks was to assess the situation for livestock. In an effort to get an accurate picture of the damage and locations of surviving livestock, Stephen and his colleagues completed fly-overs with the military.

"At that point, the water was still very high," he said. "I knew the area well, but found it difficult to get anywhere because of all the debris and high water. The debris was piled up everywhere and was deposited 15 feet up in the trees. I tried to picture in my mind just how high the water got."

The debris from gutted or destroyed homes, barns and pens, as well as uprooted reeds from coastal marshes, destroyed about 90 percent of the impacted area's fences. FEMA estimated that flood-waters deposited 25 million yards of debris in the disaster-declared counties. FEMA funding alone contributed $752 million to the removal of debris.

Dead livestock and wildlife, household appliances and propane tanks were mixed in the rotting debris. The chance of finding human remains and the presence of combustible substances slowed the cleanup process. The debris provided the only high ground in flooded areas and was full of poisonous snakes and alligators, making it tough for cattleman and relief workers to do their jobs.

Initial reports estimated as many as 20,000 cattle and horses were affected by the surge, and an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 adult cows drowned with an undetermined number of calves. Livestock swept north by the storm surge were stranded on what little high ground could be found, or were caught up in debris and drowned.

Three years later, Hurricane Ike is considered to be the costliest weather catastrophe in Texas' history, eclipsing the $3.5 million toll of Tropical Storm Allison. The National Weather Service directly attributed to Ike

photo courtesy Paul Canada

Paxton Ramsey looks over his herds of cattle and prized horses.

20 deaths, most due to drowning.

"Looking down at the damage from above, it was easy to see just how bad things were," said Stephen. "My immediate reaction was shock. You didn't know what you were looking at and it was quite devastating. I never want to see anything like that again, it was a terrible sight."

Bill White lost about 200 cows and just as many calves. Most of the cattle moved to pastures near the ranch headquarters survived by making their way to higher ground. The less fortunate bovines were swept up by floodwaters to the west side of the pasture and were caught up in trees and drowned. White estimated that just under 20 percent of his herd was lost.

"I know people who had cattle much further south and they lost 90 percent of their herd and in some cases even more," added White. "We consider ourselves very lucky. We were as prepared as we could be and suffered less loss. We're fortunate."

Paxton Ramsey runs a cow-calf operation and raises Quarter Horses on his Seven L Ranch in Chambers County. Though his mother's family have ranched the area for more than a century, he's relatively new to Southeast Texas, having moved to the area from Abilene a little more than five years ago.

Ramsey has a tremendous amount of respect for

White and so when the older rancher suggested he move his stock to higher ground, Paxton listened. Unfortunately, Ramsey and his hand couldn't drive the two stock trailers fast enough. The men eventually switched from relocating cattle to northern pastures to moving the ranch's prized Quarter Horses to safety. The men ran out of time before they could move two-dozen head of horses from the ranch headquarters and the remaining 150 head of cattle from a 4,500-acre pasture along the Intracoastal Waterway.

After the storm passed, most local ranchers waited for the floodwaters to recede. Others, like Ramsey, used airboats to survey their flooded pastures. What they found was unimaginable devastation.

Ramsey lost about half the cattle he left behind. Cattle that pushed inland to higher ground survived, while those entangled in debris drowned. A trail of dead cattle bearing his brand lay between the peninsula and where he found surviving cattle, seven miles inland.

"On top of the cattle I lost, I had nearly no production from the surviving cattle for about a year," explained Paxton. "They either aborted their calves or their calves weren't very good. The cows didn't breed back after that."

Government programs like FEMA helped cover freight costs associated with moving surviving cattle out of flooded areas, but locating grazing leases in other parts of Texas was tough. Thankfully, many generous ranchers outside the affected areas stepped up and offered pasture to ranchers in need.

Insured ranchers found that if they couldn't produce a paper trail proving what they owned and lost, they weren't going to receive reimbursement through government programs.

"There were a lot of ranchers who were good operators, but didn't have the paperwork because it was washed away with the house or office," said Paxton. "The burden of proof was on the rancher. It was really tough because there were a lot of people that didn't qualify, but should have."

photo courtesy Paul Canada

Alligators were found sick and dying, or dead on any high ground they could find. This gator is resting alongside an irrigation ditch running through valuable pasture.

Ranchers' losses weren't limited to stock. Infrastructure such as fencing, barns, pens, feeders, roads and bridges were completely destroyed, overturned, flooded or rendered unsafe to use. Confronted by damaged infrastructure, livestock losses, damaged or destroyed homes, predictions of low yields for flooded pastures and farm ground, and a retreating credit industry, many ranchers wondered if they could fully recover.

Three months after Ike's landfall, the Hurricane Ike Impact Report from the Texas Division of Emergency Management, reported an average of 27 percent of wind damages and an average of 63 percent of flooding damages were uninsured. According to the Insurance Services Office, a leading source of information about property and casualty insurance risk, Texans filed about

photo courtesy USDA

When ranchers and rescuers returned the day after Ike struck, they found surviving cattle and horses, washed inland by floodwaters, gathering along state highway 73. Rescue workers placed on the highway makeshift water troughs and donated hay. Doing so made it easier to round up the animals and sort them later.

800,000 windstorm claims, costing $9.8 billion and 44,000 flood insurance claims, costing $2.75 billion.

The storm surge damaged thousands of acres of pasture and cropland, over 143,000 acres of land in Chambers County alone, up to 14 miles inland. Optimistic predictions noted it would take a minimum two to three years for land inundated by saltwater to become fertile again. The key to recovery would be abundant rainfall, needed to leach salt from the soil and dilute the salinity of freshwater sources. Unfortunately, this didn't happen.

Like the USDA's Jenkins, Tyler Fitzgerald, an AgriLife Extension Service agent for Chambers County, was involved in the recovery process early on. According to Fitzgerald, debris was a major factor in one of the more lingering issues – the high salt content in soils that resulted from floodwaters.

"There was an unthinkable amount of debris carried inland by the surge," said Fitzgerald. "And then, as the floodwaters began to retreat, it was pulled back out through the path of least resistance, the ditches and canals that drain the area. The debris then acted as a dam, preventing a lot of the saltwater from draining off pastures and farmland."

While standing saltwater killed pest brush and shrubs, it also killed desirable grasses and important native habitat. Lacking competition, more salt-tolerant, undesirable species of plants grew up in place of the decimated vegetation. The scope of the problem varied between areas, depending on prior land use.

"In some cases, the undesirable species were immediately suppressed, allowing the desirable grasses to come back," said Fitzgerald. "On pastures where producers were unable to manage the problem, because they lost their equipment in the storm or had more pressing priorities, the weeds competed with the desirables and won out."

Many of the ranchers running livestock in the coastal portions of Chambers and Jefferson Counties found their freshwater stock tanks and other surface-water sources contaminated with saltwater. The problem persisted because of the unusually low rainfall experienced after Ike. When it finally did rain, the runoff washed salts from the surrounding watershed soils into remaining ponds and supplies.

Ike's surge waters took a good number of cows and

calves out of production. In a beef market driven by supply and demand; the combination of severe weather, wildfires and drought experienced throughout Texas in 2008 had a major impact on cattle prices. The demand for mother cows and calves in Texas soared, as did prices.

Of course, the downside of a strong market is the prohibitive cost for replacement animals, making it tougher for cash-strapped ranchers to rebuild. Many were unable to replace lost animals because of lack of financing. The country's financial crisis cuffed ranchers who, having lost a good portion of their productive cattle, were seen as too big a risk.

"A lot of people were relying on a good history of growth to get the money from their bankers to rebuild," said Paxton. "Deals fell through because the cattle put up as equity was far less than required, and bankers knew the following year's calf crop was going to be a weak one. They simply weren't willing to approve loans."

Three years have passed since Ike, and the region's cattle are back. While most of the perimeter fencing is back up, countless pastures remain without cross fencing needed to manage grass production. For the most part, soil and forage have recovered faster than experts initially thought it would, but in low-lying areas with poor drainage, the impact has been more lasting.

Salt-tolerant weeds remain a problem for some ranchers and farmers. Eradication can be costly and requires persistence. An unexpected blessing has been the significant role Bermuda grass has played in the region's recovery.

"Bermuda grass is one of the more salt-tolerant grasses and while it's not native, it does come up voluntarily from year to year," said Fitzgerald. "Some of the common Bermuda grasses and hybrid Bermuda grasses that were planted fared well, compared to other grasses. This was unexpected and has helped with the recovery situation."

While it's a tough time to get back in to the ranching business, it's a good time to have calves to sell. The calf market remains strong and Texas' persistent drought has kept the price of a good mother cow high. Many of the region's ranchers have taken advantage of the favorable prices by culling older, less productive cows from their herds.

"You would probably have a lot of trouble finding someone willing to stand up and admit it," White said, "but in a lot of ways, some ranchers were helped in the long run by Ike."

Hurricane Ike forced people to make improvements they might not have otherwise made, whether improving the quality of herds, refinancing or replacing aging structures. Some of the larger ranches made improvements in drainage, assuring water drains from pastures faster.

Today, many ranches are structured differently than they were before the storm. For example, Paxton has changed his pasture rotation. Today, he rotates cattle off the Bolivar Peninsula during hurricane season. Also, he now operates on pastures spread throughout the state, assuring he has ample pasture to relocate cattle.

Ranchers and farmers from this part of Texas are resilient, even stubborn, unwilling to give up making a living from the land. For many, it's the only livelihood they know.

"When you live in this part of the world, you know hurricanes are going to happen," said White. "There are certainly a lot of drawbacks to living down here, but of all of the places I have been in this country, I feel more at home right here. My family have been ranching the area for six generations and I am not going to be the first to stop."

Writer and photographer Paul Cañada lives in Texas.

A Western Moment

A Ride with Sandy Collier: 2011 Inductee into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame

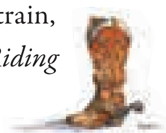
Sandy Collier holds a place of greatness in the reined-cowhorse world. She is one of those riders that stands out principally because of her grace and poise in the saddle. Her early years in the English saddle have left their positive imprint. Today, she is a highly respected horsewoman and competitor who started out far away from the world of western riding.

She grew up in Rye, New York, hardly a cow town, and after years of English riding – hunter/jumpers and three-day eventing – she left her home country after high school and spent time lifeguarding on Cape Cod and on the ski patrol in Vermont; then headed west at the ripe old age of 19.

Sandy Collier

She came to California during the "back to the land" period and lived on a remote ranch, breaking and packing mustangs in the Los Padres National Forest, driving a 2-horse hitch during apple harvest and cultivating a untold number of acres of corn with a single horse- drawn cultivator. The ranch was totally organic and self sufficient so anything she needed or wanted, she pretty much had to learn how to make. She learned how to make saddles, braid rawhide, hammer out horseshoes in a forge and nail them on, and how to weld. She learned to rope, milk and doctor cattle. She had a passion for medicine and performed lots of vet work at the ranch (caesarians on goats, spaying cats, gelding colts, fixing prolapses and just about anything else that needed to be done.) Her first Caesarian section was successfully performed on a goat while being coached by a distant vet on a 2-way radio!

Later, she moved to an avocado and cattle ranch on the southern California coast, just north of Santa Barbara and was charged with breeding the great sire Leo Bar as well as training the ranch remuda. It was there that she saw her first cow horse, learned about the *vaquero* tradition and was smitten. With the great horseman, Doug Ingersoll right down the road, the next logical step was to start training and showing reined cowhorses. After several years riding with Doug and refining her own skills, Sandy went to work for cutting horse trainer, Tom Shelly, in the Santa Ynez Valley. One year later in 1980, she hung out her own shingle as Sandy Collier Training Stable. The rest as they say, is history. Ms. Collier went on to be the first woman to win the NRCHA (National Reined Cow Horse Association) World Championship Snaffle Bit Futurity. She also won the AQHA World Jr. Cow Horse Championship and the NRCHA Hackamore Classic Championship. Today, she continues to train, give clinics and is co-author of the book, *Riding Essentials*. Congratulations, Sandy, carry on.



The National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame honors and celebrates women, past and present, whose lives exemplify the courage, resilience, and independence that helped shape the American West. This year's Induction Luncheon will be Wednesday, October 26, 2011 at the Will Rogers Memorial Center in Fort Worth, Texas. For more information please visit www.cowgirl.net.

Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum

Annual Benefit

Vaquero Show

Celebrating the Traditions of the California Vaquero

Fine Items for Sale from Noted Artisans and Dealers

Vaquero and Cowboy Trappings & Gear,

Bits, Spurs, Saddlery, Chaps, Braided Rawhide, Silver, Leather Goods and Accessories

Fine Art, Books, Sculpture & Collectables

November 12 & 13, 2011

Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum & Carriage House

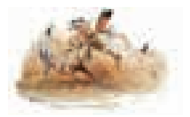
Santa Ynez, California

For Information/Tickets 805.688.7889 www.santaynezmuseum.org

Reading 2.0

As you make your way through this third issue of *Ranch & Reata* – be it the digital version or in the case of this issue – a limited edition print copy – we hope you are finding it as special reading it as we do bringing it to you. A couple of years ago it would have been impossible to read a magazine on a tablet or a phone screen. Granted it may be a little tough to enjoy the grandeur of this issue's photography on your iPhone but what we are celebrating are the access points. *Ranch & Reata*, as part of RangeWork's dual-media platform, enables readers open access to enjoy both Range Radio and *Ranch & Reata* just about anywhere. And as they do they will begin to see a startling evolution beyond the editorial offerings. The chosen advertisers found within the pages are starting to realize they can tell a story as well through the embedding of information, links and videos within their ads. You might have noticed as you turn a page in the digital version that parts of pages or entire pages have a fading "glow" about them. That glow designates a portion of the ad that is portal or link to additional information or content. An example in our last issue was the ad for the Old West Show and Auction held in Denver, Colorado. Brian Label, proprietor of Old West, smartly embedded his entire auction catalog as a sneak peek exclusively for *Ranch & Reata* readers. Now whether that tactic enabled more customers to either attend or go online to view the auction offerings, it surely gave greater depth to the

photo courtesy Teal Blake



reading experience of our readers.

And that, of course, is our intent dear reader to give you the next-level experience in reading about the West and listening to our very eclectic offerings on Range Radio. But above all we want you to enjoy the finest in content about the West. As usual, Editor A.J. Mangum has brought together a superb grouping of stories and images; features that help elevate the genre and get you thinking. Moving the needle forward.

In our "Books To Find" section, we spoke about the book, *Buckaroo,* another genre "needle mover" – a groundbreaking concept first published back in 1993. Editors Hal Cannon and Thomas West brought together the best of the best in cowboy poets, writers and musicians – mostly who had gained notoriety from the poetry gatherings held in Elko, Nevada each year – keyword, gathering. The idea of a book that included something one could listen to is not really new in publishing. Music books have included floppy, plastic "sound sheets" for years in band and orchestration sheet music. *Buckaroo*, was conceptually different. Beyond the fact that it had a cool, built in "button" in the cover that carried a cd, the cd's content was designed to support the reading experience beyond what was in the book with additional words and music added by the artists contained in the book. It gave a broad feel for the genre. It remains a classic experience and stands today as a unique blend of music, the spoken word and reading. *Ranch & Reata* and Range Radio take that idea to a much broader, more open mode of distribution but the effect is similar; giving one a true feel and immersion in the West – its people and its culture. We hope you enjoy the experience and thank you for your support. We're glad you're riding with us. BR

Scan this QR code with your enabled smartphone to subscribe to *Ranch & Reata* and view the enhanced online issue.

Get your free Range Radio app at iTunes.com

MY AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE IS

ONE OF FIVE MILLION

OWNING A REGISTERED AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE IS MORE THAN JUST HAVING A PIECE OF PAPER.

It's knowing his pedigree.

It's giving him a place in history.

It's giving him a better quality of life.

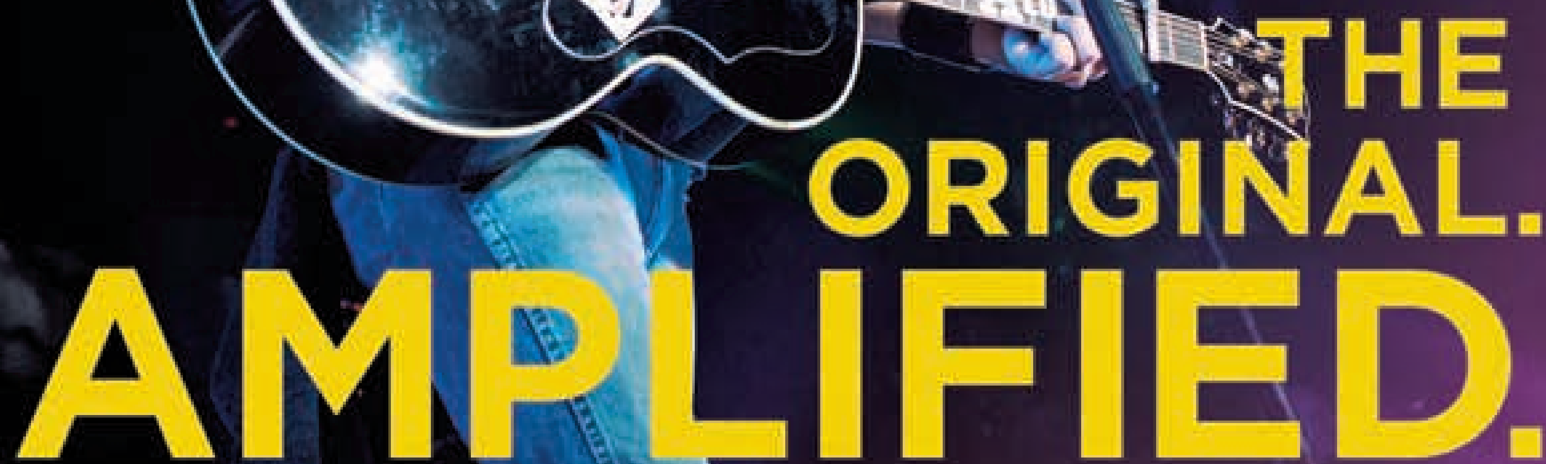
It's a connection American Quarter Horse owners around the world have.

AQHA | LIFE IS A RIDE

Join today by calling (800) 414-RIDE or visit *aqha.com/my-connection* for your free gift and be sure all your horses are registered and transferred. Nothing is as comforting as knowing your horse has the safety and security of a verified American Quarter Horse ownership.

Life isn't just a ride. It's your American Quarter Horse that gives you the ride of your life.

TEXT "HORSE" TO 66937 TO GET EXCLUSIVE NEWS AND CONTENT FROM AQHA.



WRANGLER.COM
FACEBOOK.COM/WRANGLERWESTERN