The Journal of the American West

Ranch & Reata

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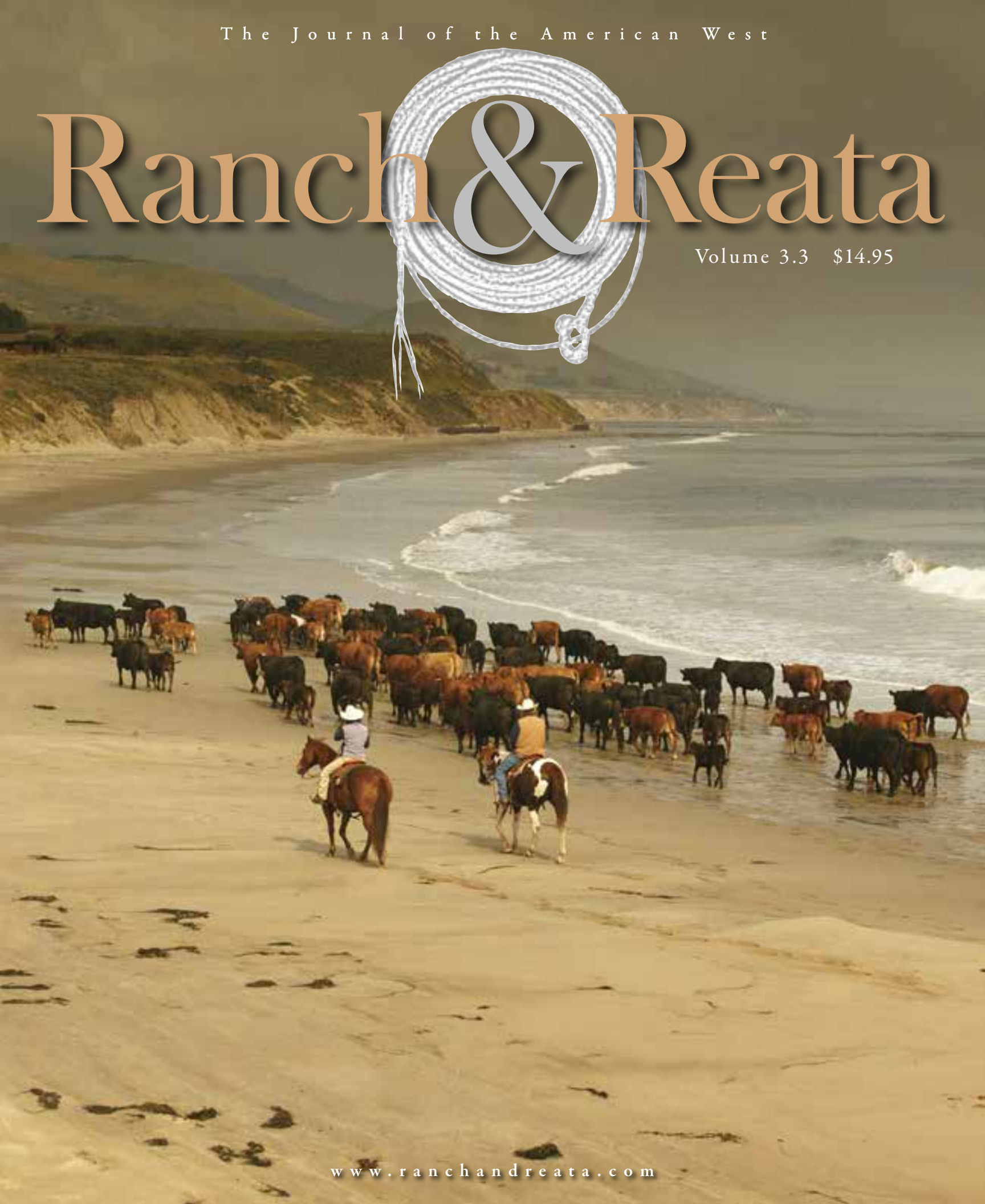
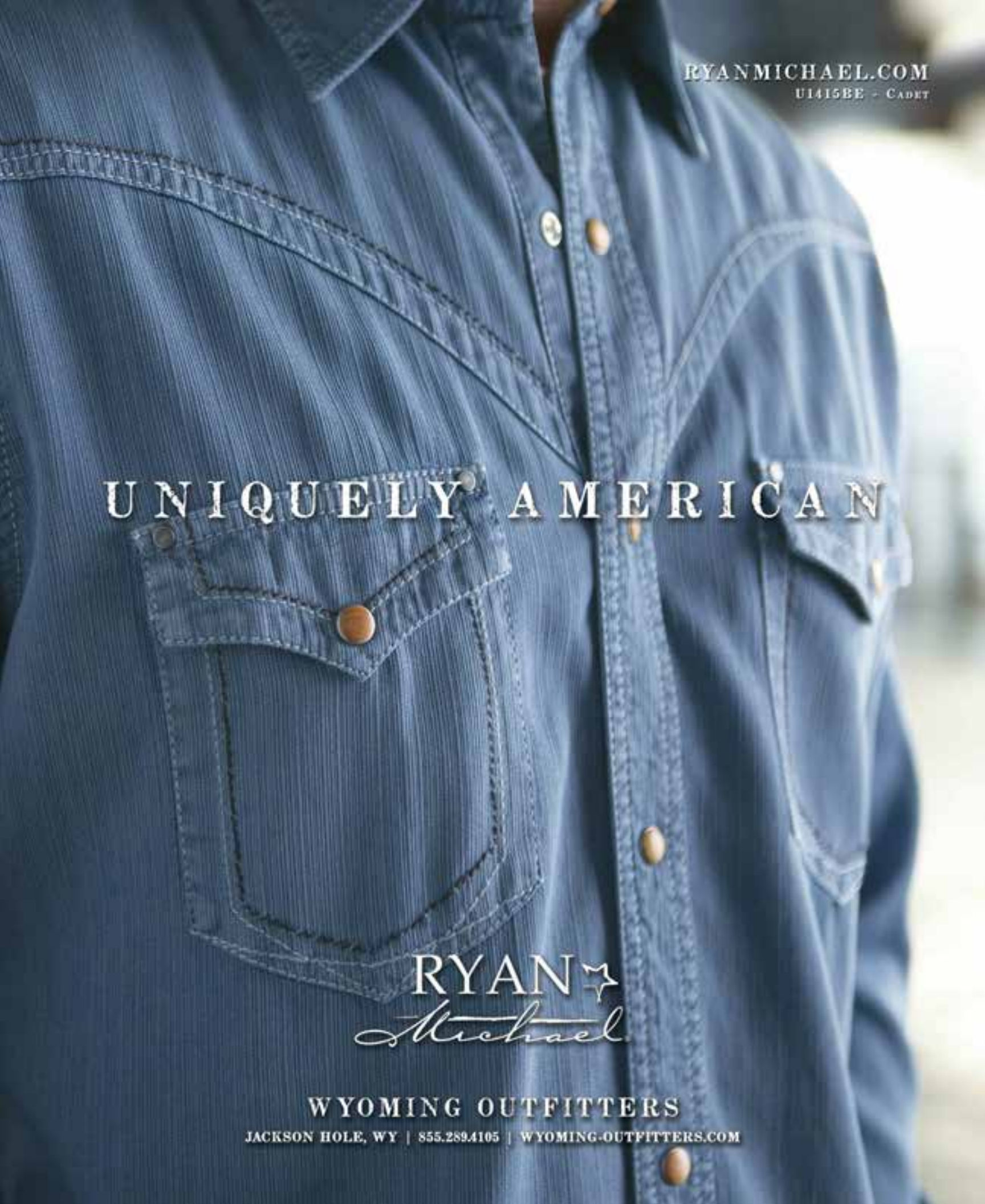


www.ranchandreata.com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FRONT GATE

photo by Mehosh Dziadzio

A cowboy's life. John McCarty, ranch manager at California's Hollister Ranch.

Hollister Ranch, Gaviota, California
By Mehosh Dziadzio

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by Mehosh Dziadzio

Ranch & Reata

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Extracurricular Works

By A.J. Mangum

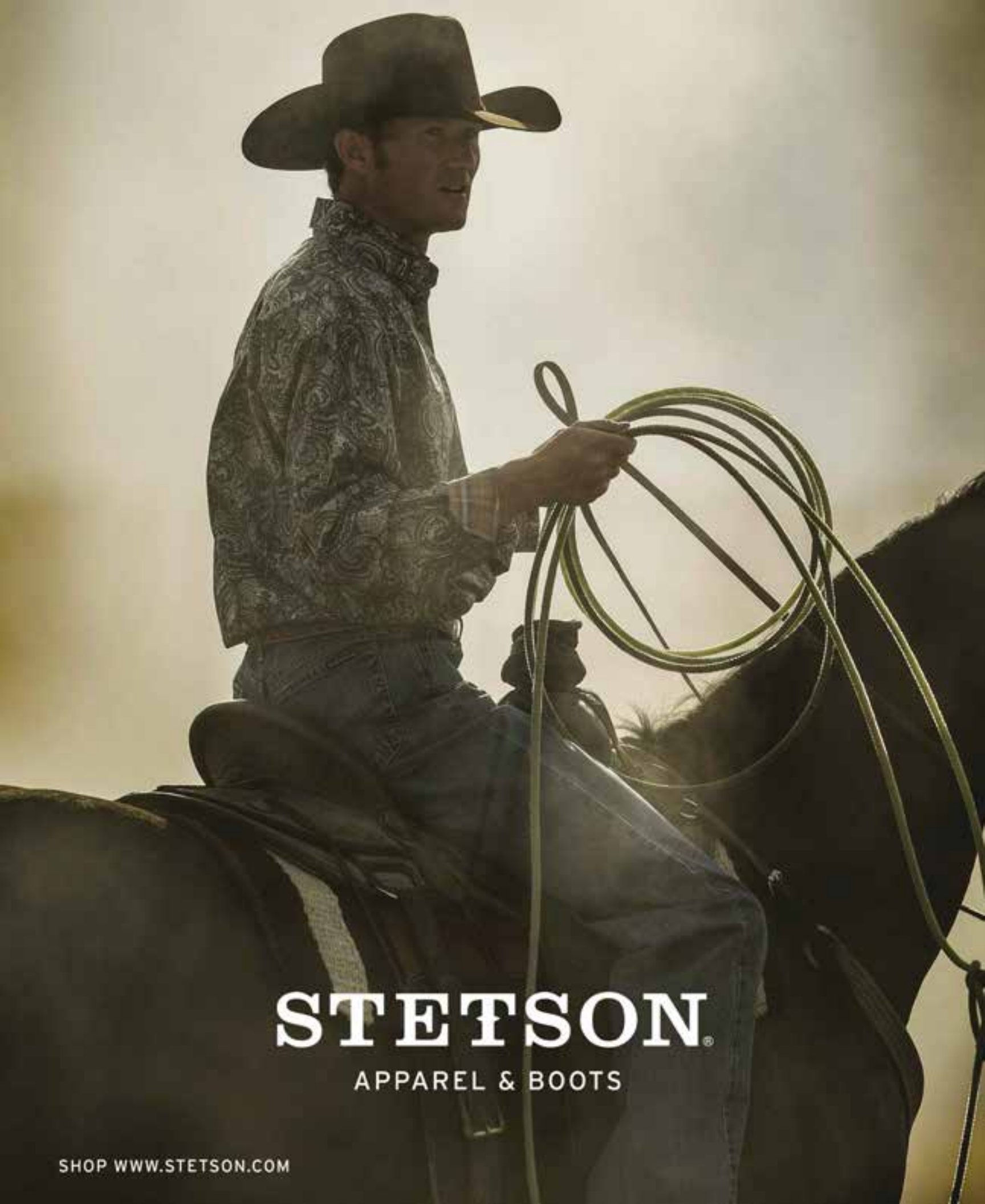
Allow me to let you in on one of the publishing world's darker secrets. Many of the magazines you see on newsstands – perhaps even the *majority* of those magazines – go unread. Moreover, they aren't even intended to be read, and are planned and produced with the expectation that their content will be, at best, scanned and skimmed.

In the belief that reading – the actual comprehension of sentences and paragraphs – has become too time and labor intensive, the editors behind these magazines employ a long menu of formats (chief among them lists, charts and quizzes) that ensure writers don't really have to write, and that readers don't really have to read. This "Denny's menu" approach has plagued the profession for at least a generation. As a result, gifted magazine writers, always a rare breed, have become even more uncommon as the demand has increased for list makers and chart architects.

From this magazine's beginning, we've honored a commitment to the written word, and to publishing

material that's meant to be read, rather than just browsed. We're fortunate to have contributing writers for whom writing – in its traditional, old-school, defiantly unformatted, sentence-and-paragraph, storytelling sense – is a calling, a compulsion, and a revered craft.

Even when they're not at work on stories for *Ranch & Reata*, many of our contributors are at their keyboards, working on a variety of projects, including other journalistic works, essays, and even novels and screenplays. I'd like to devote some space to a handful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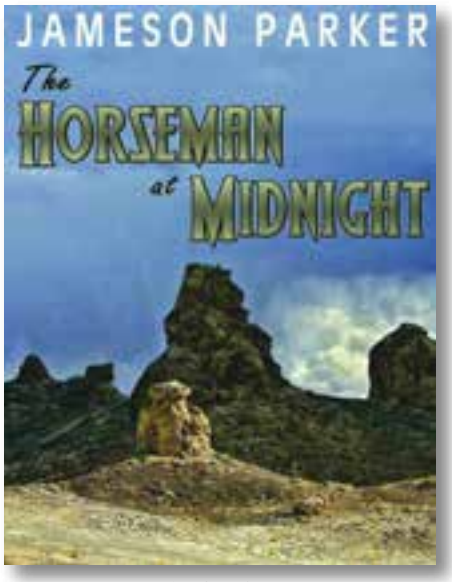
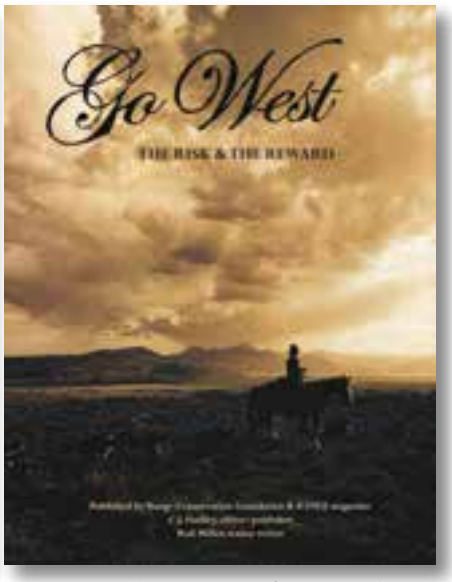
of recent "extracurricular" works from three of our regular contributors.

Earlier this year, musician, folklorist and broadcast producer Hal Cannon, author of this issue's "Larger than Himself," traveled with his wife, author Teresa Jordan, to the central Asian country of Turkmenistan, as part of a tour promoting the American cowboy culture. Hal chronicled his experiences in a fascinating blog that can be found at www.halandteresa.wordpress.com. Hal's posts offer rare insight into a society defined by generous people living in an authoritarian climate. Readers can vicariously share the lessons Hal learned about Turkmenistan's equestrian traditions – in particular its pride in the Akhal-Teke breed – and the common bonds that link stockmen around the world.



Jameson Parker's *The Horseman at Midnight* is a modern western thriller centered on a young runaway and his cowboy grandfather.

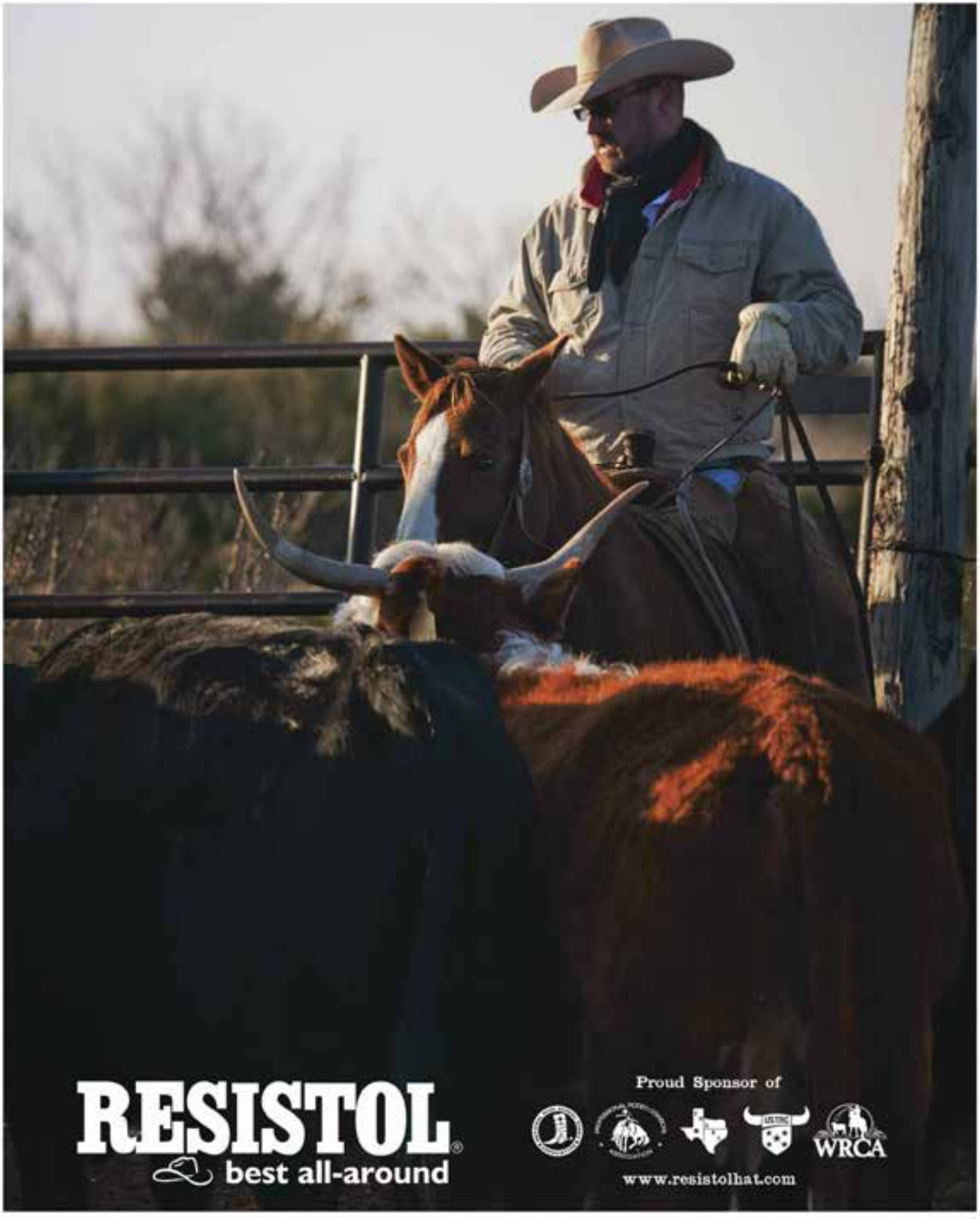


Rod Miller, author of this issue's "Screaming in Pink," served as senior writer for *Go West: The Risk & the Reward*.

Journalist, poet and novelist Rod Miller, who wrote this issue's "Screaming in Pink," about chariot racer Tori Gibbs, has several books to his credit, the most recent being *Go West: The Risk & the Reward*, for which he served as senior writer. Published by the Range Conservation Foundation and *RANGE* magazine, *Go West* includes essays about the pioneers who set out to begin new lives on the frontier of the American West. Rod's work examines their motivations, the unimaginable challenges that awaited them, and the notion of leaving behind everything familiar to begin anew in an alien land. The 128-page hardcover also features landscape, wildlife and ranch images from some of the West's leading photographers, and is beautifully designed by John Bardwell. It's available via www.writerrodmiller.com, where you can learn more about Rod, as well as his latest novel, *Cold as the Clay*.

And, *R&R* contributor Jameson Parker, author of the memoir *An Accidental Cowboy*, has released his latest novel as an e-book. *The Horseman at Midnight* is a thriller about a young runaway who bonds with his cowboy grandfather on a remote ranch, as the two face threats from dangerous criminals. In review-speak, it's a gripping page turner (or screen-scroller, in the digital age) in which the values and spirit of the West take center stage. The e-book is available for Amazon's Kindle and Barnes & Noble's Nook. Learn more about Jameson at www.readjamesonparker.com.

As a general reminder, check author bios at the end of each *R&R* story for details on our contributors' other projects.



THE CHOICE OF COWBOYS SINCE 1927

Hollister Ranch Grass Fed Beef

Ranching in the far west can sometimes allow for fencing only on three sides. Kidding. But coastal ranches do have an environmental advantage with the Pacific Ocean as a border. The incredible image on our cover by Mehosh Dziadzio shows folks from the Hollister Ranch Cooperative moving part of their cowherd up the beach. A unique vision, to say the least, but the Hollister Ranch is rather unique in itself with its 14,000 plus acres located in central Santa Barbara County along the Gaviota Coast. The owners of the ranch created the Hollister Ranch Cooperative back in 1973 and as an owner group has been raising cattle there for over 38 years.

Graced with grass-rich coastal hills and steep, oak-filled canyons, cattle have been raised there since 1794. So with respect for that history, ranch manager, John McCarty – whose been on the ranch for four decades – uses traditional

photos by Mehosh Dziadzio

Hollister Ranch: Cowboying on the Gaviota coast

stock handling methods with a modern twist – cowboys on horseback and herding dogs, but with much more attention to keeping the rangeland healthy and raising animals that will produce healthy, tender and flavorful beef. And with over 20 major pastures across the ranch, cattle can be moved around to take advantage of the best grass conditions throughout the year. McCarty's method could be defined as slow equals fast, "We take great care when we move or handle our animals to keep them as stress-free as possible. Our rangeland stewardship and careful animal husbandry practices is part of what produces the best tasting, most tender, healthy beef you can buy!" And that's the point. Hollister Ranch Co-Op Grass Fed Beef is locally available, in and around Santa Barbara County and even though the ranch itself. It is so unique, its model of creating a more natural, reduced-stress environment is gaining favor with both cattle producers and consumers across the country.

Packaging as special as its contents

"For our product, if we can handle cows where they're quiet and laid back, the meat is usually more tender," McCarty explains, "they're not stressing out, so there's no adrenaline running through their bodies. All this adds to the flavor and tenderness of the meat, and that's huge. " Proof is in the doing, as last year the co-op harvested close to 35,000 pounds of grass-fed beef, all raised in open pastures and strictly hormone and antibiotic-free. The meat is sold under two labels: Single Source Beef, which is ground from a single animal for higher quality, and the superlative Cowboy's Pick selection.

For more information about Hollister Ranch Cooperative Grass Fed Beef, call 805/567-5099 or visit www.hrcooperativebeef.com.


Ranch manager, John McCarty

Western Silversmiths, a Series

Comstock Heritage

By Jason Maida,
Buckle Aficionado and Historian

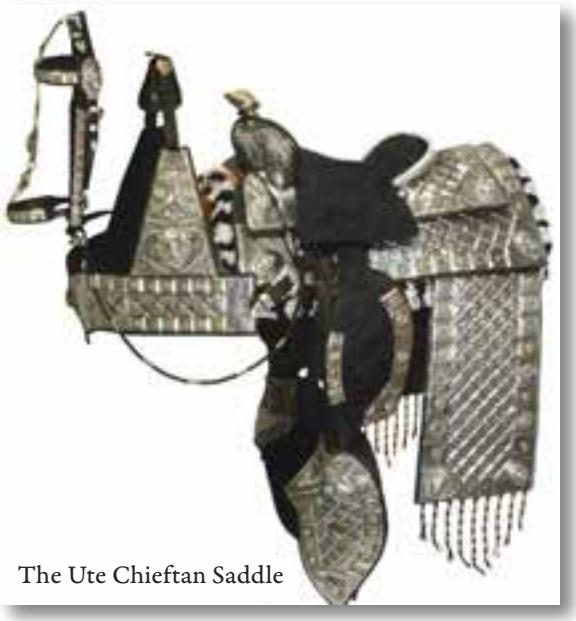
Way off in the high-desert town of Carson City, Nevada, artisan James Stegman is where he usually is,

Artist/craftsman, James Stegman

hunched over his jeweler's bench working on a buckle or concho or a something made out of sterling silver, gold or some combination of the two. Either that or the master silversmith is forming metal on the shop's drop hammer – a rather medieval looking contraption that is in essence – a rock on a rope. It works like this. One places a forming die upon drop hammer with a piece of silver or gold on the die. A large flat weight is hoisted up via a sort of Rube Goldberg looking conveyance of motor and clutch. When Stegman lets go of the rope, the weight plummets down forcing the metal into the die with the sound of a Chrysler running into a wall. Appropriate as the drop hammer itself is fashioned from a 1939 Chrysler differential. "We like the old ways here in Nevada," Stegman smiles, again without looking up. The process Stegman and the others utilize in the Comstock Heritage shop hasn't really changed much since the whole enterprise started back in 1886. For over 125 years, members of his family have been doing exactly the same thing – building silver items, one at a time. Many made on similar, simple, physics-based machines. Stegman is of a third generation in his family to follow down this artisan path. "Our family has, in a sense, been involved in different aspects of this business," he says, peeling off his magnifying eyeglass. "My late father, Howard, made different buckles than his father, my grandfather made things besides buckles, as did my

Buckles that are more than buckles

uncle and great uncle. There are so many tools here that you could go in countless directions with this business. But as some continuing a family tradition, the biggest inspiration I get is from the knowledge that we (and the company) have been around for this long – 125 years, and that brings a calm to me, frankly, to what sometimes can be tense business situations." He grins, "Additionally, my grandfather Christian and great Uncle Herman started their company as C & H novelties. That title makes me smile, and I like to think I'm continuing what they had started. Although in the 1920s "novelties" had a different meaning, but I think it conveys a sense of whimsy, which I like."



The Ute Chieftan Saddle

Oval trophy buckles that make a statement

Herman and Christian Stegman were born in San Francisco in 1896 and 1899. Both pursued journeyman trades and while Christian worked as an engraver and in 1936 started the Acorn Manufacturing Company, which specialized in saddle and bridle silver – at the time called Spanish Ornamentation. One of the first customers was Keyston Bros. in San Francisco – at the time the west's largest distributor of western saddles and gear. "Herman helped support Christian's efforts," James continues, "As he helped not only Chris, but his family as well, by playing piano in local roadhouses. Later Herman would prove to be an even bigger blessing as he designed and constructed most of the tools, dies and machinery they used." Stegman looks around his shop, "Many of those tools we still use today."

The Stegman's work paid off as Acorn became a major supplier for companies such as the Visalia Stock Saddle Company. In 1949, a big change took place as the company acquired the legendary silversmithing company Irvine and Jachens, started in 1886 by J.C. Irvine, when the business went up for sale due to a partner's death. This acquisition enabled Acorn to grow and to continue to produce the quality of saddle appointments and other items that the two companies had been known for.

"Saddle silver is still an important part of our business and is growing with the greater interest in classic saddle and vaquero-style gear. We sell almost all of our saddle silver via the Internet through Oldcowdogs.com, and because we have an older style, we split that business between custom work and reproduction/repair work. As everything is hand-made, one-at-a-time right here – we are rarely the least expensive, so we

make sure that what we produce is of the best quality and weight. If someone is missing a piece from an antique saddle that our company worked on, say in the early 1940s, we not only have the tools but also the experience to make the missing piece match once it's replaced on the saddle."

While saddle silver is where they started, over the years the company has evolved and diversified. In the early 1970s, Christian's son, Howard, moved the company to it's present location in Carson City, Nevada – just nine miles from the historic Comstock Load. Since the early 1980s, the western silver business has changed and evolved even further. Today James Stegman and his wife Donna, run the business in all of its incarnations yet the basis of what is a 125-year legacy of silversmithing is very much a part of daily life at the Comstock Heritage shop.

Saddle and bridle silver

"We realize we must perform at very high levels of expertise for our customer," explains Donna Stegman. "We become a true partner in business with our select group of retailers that we make things for. It means we work directly with their customers as well. That way we can build a much stronger relationship – customer, store, and maker. It makes for a strong and supportive customer base."

James adds, "Our customers are attracted to the art of what we do, and we do our best to give personal and unique touches to each piece. Not always immediately visible, these are often small nods to the person purchasing the piece – an extra horse head here, a monogram there. We are able to work these things in where not everyone knows they are there. It's the reason why someone will wear solid gold even though they are the only person that knows it, they know it and that's the point. It functions well because we work with the end customer. Traditionally, our buckles need to be sold. It's the reason we work so closely with our retailers. I think our product will always need to be picked up and examined before buying, it's one of the reasons we put so much into not only the front but the back of the piece as well. I feel that there will always be retailers for us. We make a personal product for that very reason. Furthermore, our pieces sell best in resort locations where people are enjoying themselves and wanting to take something home of heirloom quality. As long as there are places like this, our retailers will continue to thrive. Of course, this doesn't mean you don't need a web presence, you absolutely do. We have worked closely with our retailers to make sure we have the best possible representation online."

"Surviving in this business for as long as we have is a function of quality and lots of customer care and understanding," says James Stegman. "And," he adds, "new and evolving design, as taste changes." He still creates trophy buckles and saddle silver but is working on new designs all the time. Over the past five years, he has been able to really stretch in terms of ability and style and has moved in the direction of primarily making one-of-a-kind pieces. "We do make some styles repeatedly," he says, "but the custom nature appeals to both my nature and our customers'. I especially enjoy adding to our line by finding or making unusual gift items for the hard to please, we will continue that as well, maybe for the next 125 years or so." Visit www.comstockheritage.com

James Stegman remembers his father, Howard

"Comstock's patriarch, Howard Stegman, passed away this past January, very peacefully in his favorite chair, may we all be so lucky. The Western industry lost an icon and a legendary Silversmith. For me, and so many others, Howard will always be remembered for his easy going style and fun loving personality. He was an exceptional silversmith, my father and friend."

Evolutionary Skin Care, For Women Who Choose to Really Live

Working in the California desert alongside her husband, a noted cosmetic dermatologist, skin expert JoAnn Foxx quickly realized just how many women were being forced to compromise their outdoor life to retain youthful looking skin. The long-time horsewoman responded by creating a unique line of skin care products taking advantage of natural, protective bio-elements. The results of using FoxxMD Evolutionary Skin Care are visible on her skin, still clear and luminous after decades outdoors. Compromise? Not a chance.

www.drfoxxmd.com

Top Drawer Shirtings

Barranada Shirt Company is known in the horse world and beyond for its well constructed high-quality button-down shirts that never go out of style. Recently, Barranada added The Cobalt shirt to its Crown Jewel collection. If you desire a true treasure, look no further than this majestic royal blue shirt in a tone-on-tone diamond pattern. The Cobalt is 100% fine cotton, made in the U.S.A. and available in men's and women's sizes. *Ranch & Reata* readers can enjoy special pricing on the Cobalt now through November 30, 2013. Regular price $130.00, $97.50 for *R&R* readers with code RR25 at checkout.

See all of Barranada's styles and shop online at www.barranada.com

Trappings 22

Hard to believe it was 22 years ago that the Dry Creek Arts Fellowship created "Trappings of The American West" shows – the first really great gear show that celebrated the cowboy crafts, art, photography and spoken word history – started down in Flagstaff, Arizona. It has evolved and moved a bit over the years – as we all have. This year Trappings "22" is being held at the The Phippen Museum in Prescott, Arizona and is chocked full of things to do – beyond seeing the exhibition. Here's a sampling. For more information and to see the list of artists invited to show, visit www.phippenartmuseum.com

photo by Adam Jabiel

Mother Hubbard saddle with full flower tooling and silverwork by Don Butler

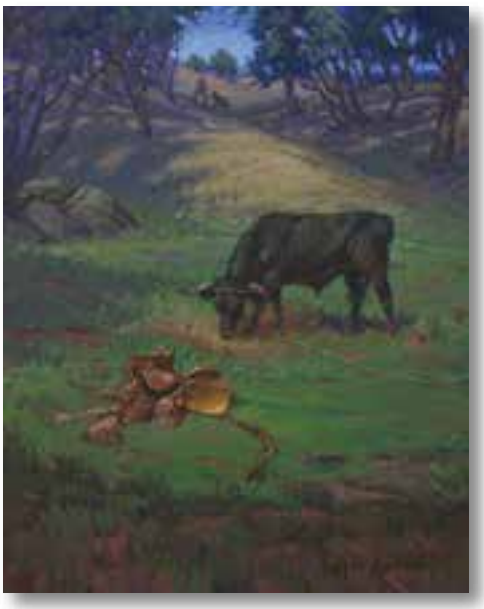
July 19 ***22nd Annual Trappings of the American West***
Opens with a Dry Creek Arts Fellowship and Phippen Museum Member's Preview Sale and Artist Reception. Members and Artists will enjoy exchange of conversation and the first opportunity to purchase fine and functional art of contemporary horse culture.

July 20 – October 20 ***Trappings***
Open to the Public Tuesday thru Saturday 10am– 4pm Sunday 1 – 4pm. Closed Mondays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day.

July 20 & 21, August 17, September 14, October 12 ***Tricks of the Trade***
DCAF artists will demonstrate their skilled crafts in the exhibition. This will include rawhide braiding, saddle making, horsehair hitching, engraving, drawing, sculpting and painting.

July 20 ***I Can See By Your Outfit***
Originally presented at the Smithsonian Institute's Renwick Gallery in 2003, DCAF artist and Emmy award-winning Costume Designer Cathy A. Smith gives us a humorous look at the historical evolution of the American Cowboy through his costume, equipment and horses.

"I believe I would know an old cowboy in hell with his hide burnt off. It's the way they stand and walk and talk."
– Teddy Blue Abbot, Recollections of a CowPuncher



The Trophy Saddle painting by Rygh Westby

July 27 ***Never Don't Pay Attention! The Career of Louise Serpa***
DCAF artist and rodeo photographer Mia Larocque will present an

When Two For One's No Bargain
by Rygh Westby

interpretive lecture about her mother Louise Serpa's work as a world renowned rodeo photographer. Louise spent 30 years photographing rodeos from inside the arena – the first woman ever granted that privileged position.

August 15 ***100 Years of Ranching in Yavapai County***

As part of the Phippen Museum's Third Thursday Catered Dinner Lecture Series, Prescott's own Gail Steiger will give a talk about his family who has been chasing cows locally for over 100 years. Gail will discuss how the cow business, the community, and the country have changed over the years. He might even throw in some songs and a poem or two, along the way.

"Buckaroo Collection" by Larry Fuegen

Intaglio print by Neil Hunt

August 31 ***A Grand Ride***

DCAF artist Tom Brownold will present documentary images based on his recent work at the Grand Canyon. His subject matter features the mules of the South Rim and their important historic transportation of supplies and visitors over the past century. Tom's captivating photographs were published for a book, *The Grandest Ride.*

Hand-engraved rail trophy buckle
by Neil Hunt

September 14 ***Riding the Rim – 11th Annual Cowboy Poetry Gathering***

Rygh Westby

Ten Poets from around the state will stir up the air, as only cowboys and cowgirls can with poetry, song and open range entertainment. Dr. Anita Nordbrock, Humanities Professor at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, has consulted with DCAF on the annual poetry gathering since 2006. This partnership has resulted in the preservation of an oral tradition that is always a favorite among *Trappings* audience members.

The Duke of Brandy

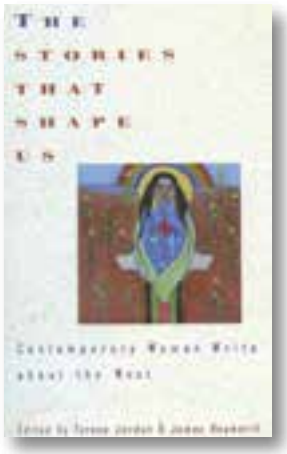
In May 2013 Ethan Wayne, son of John Wayne, announced the collaboration between John Wayne Enterprises and renowned Vintners of Hundred Acre Wines, Chris Radomski and Jayson Woodbridge, to launch Monument Valley Distillers.

"A craftsman of character, story and film, my father thrived on the focus of a new project or adventure," Ethan Wayne said. "I have no doubt he would have been proud to work alongside Jayson and Chris to realize his dream of distilling fine spirits."

Aged 24 years, the first spirit released by Monument Valley Distillers is a limited edition DUKE Special Reserve Brandy created to authentically honor John Wayne and his passion for American craftsmanship and quality. Monument Valley Distillers is an artisan distiller crafting small batches of superior bourbon, whiskey and brandy. For more information visit www.dukespirits.com.

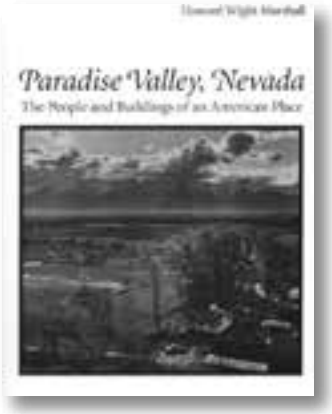
Some Fine Reads

The Stories That Shape Us – Contemporary Women Write About The West
Teresa Jordan and James Hepworth
W.W. Norton 1995 www.amazon.com



Originally published in 1995, this wonderful collection of some 25 essays about the West, are all written by significant women. Teresa Jordan, who wrote *Riding the White Horse Home*, (Pantheon, 1993) and James Hepworth, a teacher of literature, at Lewis-Clark College in Idaho, have assembled an anthology of writings by 23 Western women who explore their roots, face fears, and confront a number of issues – the expansiveness of the Western landscape and its "dreams of possibility" lie behind the stories included. A thoughtful and eloquent book, it celebrates a nearly silent voice in western American life, interesting to both men and women.

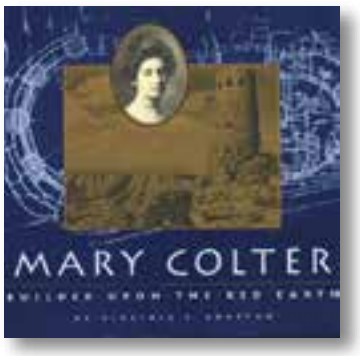
Paradise Valley, Nevada – The People and Buildings of an American Place
Howard Wight Marshall
The University of Arizona Press 1995
www.amazon.com



Author of the seminal, "Buckaroos in Paradise: Cowboy Life in Northern Nevada," Mr. Marshall has provided us with an answer – and an elegant one at that – to the question of how one settles and builds a life in the rather empty part of the

American West of north western Nevada. Constructing a ranching community in the middle of a dry, sagebrush plain is a tough go any way you look at it, but those "who came early" did not give up and in fact left us with a unique type of architecture that still exists and functions today. Howard Marshall loves the high desert and its people and his book is a celebration of their work ethic and desire to make life work. Their legacy is of one of hope and has great value today as civilization continues to try and inhabit "unusual" places.

Mary Coulter: Builder Upon The Red Earth
Virgina Grattan
Grand Canyon Natural History Association 1992
www.amazon.com



Mary Elizabeth Jane Coulter is someone you may already know. Many do not. You should and you will as beyond this review we will be doing a larger story on her and the work she did as an architect in the American South West, not just for the Fred Harvey projects and the Santa Fe railroad; but for the effects she had on a region and a people. The times were against her, as today she would have been a star, a star in the world of architecture. The fact that she accomplished as much as she did is a testament to her grit and talent during a time when women were not given a lot of opportunities. This book is a look at a remarkable person who worked on the frontier – literally and figuratively. She is a star.

Spirit Ranch
Richard Foxx
www.amazon.com

Here's a great read from author Richard Foxx – a perfect end-of-summer novel that combines intrigue, a mysterious desert ranch, murder and black ops.

Nicholas Morgan is a one-time cowboy and former black ops veteran whose just-purchased ranch sits out in the desert east of Palm Springs, California. As he looks deeper into the ranch's history he learns of the murder of a young woman there in the 1930s. It's an event that inserts itself into his life and relationships and we follow along as he is driven to uncover the mystery of the young woman's murder. A quest and a love story wrapped in the mystery of the eternal desert, *Spirit Ranch* introduces us to some larger-than-life desert types as its riveting story unfolds.

Lest We Forget, Dale Evans

Last issue we had an *homage* to Roy and Dale at the end of the magazine and we featured a superb shot of Roy Rogers by Adam Jahiel. We were inundated with emails about why Dale's picture was not included. Ask, and you shall receive.

Clinton Anderson will appear at this year's Snaffle Bit Futurity.

To Continue the Dance

The National Reined Cow Horse Association strives to keep alive the classic cattle working traditions of the vaquero.

The rider topped the grassy hill and stopped. The cattle before him would be moved to higher pastures before the sun shown overhead. As he moved toward the cattle the sun hit his saddle and bridle silver broadside, lighting up his profile in the early rays of dawn. The action to follow would be quiet and efficient and with little conversation. The horse knew his task and the rider allowed the skilled cow horse to make the graceful moves and sweeps that would contain the moving herd.

Such was the world of the *vaquero* and his bridle horses. A graceful world that was based on achieving skills through the "fullness of time." *Mañana*, the concept of "taking the time it takes" to accomplish something well, was the vaquero's approach to turning out superb cow horses. These were the legendary bridle horses that carried the spade bit and moved with effortless ease – appearing to know the cow's movements before the cow had chance to decide.

The purpose for these horses was to work the great cowherds of the Spanish Land Grant ranchos of California's central region. It was a non timed-based activity that gave the *vaquero* generous amounts of daylight to turn out great horses. The California reined cow horse and the *vaquero* ruled the great *Ranchos* and together were the keepers of the classic Pacific Slope cow culture. These finely trained horses worked the many great herds that traveled from Mexico to California. The horses effortlessly performed the tasks needed to safely take the cattle from pasture to market. During that time the *vaquero's* techniques and equipment were refined by these special horsemen that ultimately ended with a horse at his supreme and most respected state, that of a bridle horse.

It is that essence of the enduring grace of highly trained tasked horse and rider that the National Reined Cow Horse Association strives to continue. By the early 1900s the reined cow horse had gone from being necessity to luxury and there were fewer and fewer opportunities that could sustain the history and capabilities of these fine animals. At the time, most ranchers were in life and death struggles to survive the Great Depression. The trend continued through the Second World War as many people chose to discard the "old ways" as technology and changes came quickly.

Old ways died hard thankfully and throughout the early 1900s the classic methods of handling cattle horseback survived. Not in the light of the show ring but in the "back of beyond" of working ranches that survived over the years. A growing group of dedicated horseman and women have kept alive the tradition of these magnificent working animals.

Today the NRCHA exists to promote the style and technique of the vaquero – to make a "finished" bridle horse. To

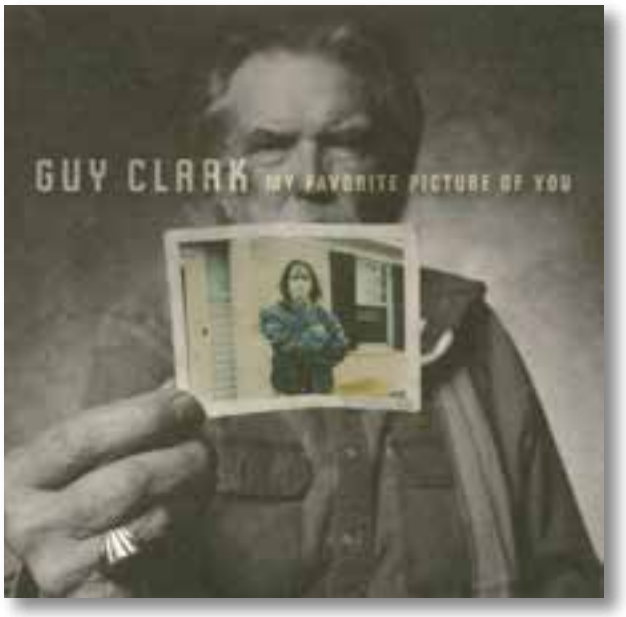
that end, his original training methods survive virtually unchanged. This approach continues to include a number of steps. A young horse of two or three years of age would be started in a mild snaffle bit. This would allow the young horse to be guided through "basic training" without undue pressure to the sensitive parts of the horse's mouth. Rather the skilled horseman would work the snaffle on the corners of the young horse's lips helping guide the youngster through the basic tasks of turns and stops. By the end of a year, or appropriate amount of training, the young horse should be able to perform, at all speeds, the necessary movements for basic cow handling tasks. The intent is to gradually take the young horse on to more skillful levels – from the snaffle bit into the bosal and then the two-rein and *bosalita* – that ultimately culminate into a finished horse that can effortlessly carry the bridle bit or spade bit. As the vaquero did years ago, the NRCHA believes that great horses are made and that it takes the time it takes. Time it does take, and time today can be expensive.

It was precisely to continue this long standing, careful development into the snaffle bit that the NRCHA decided to create an environment of financial incentives for trainers today to keep their young horses in the snaffle – longer – rather than rushing them into the bridle training stages that follow. In 1970 the first World Championship Snaffle Bit Futurity was created to show and celebrate these time honored training techniques. Held at the Cal-Expo fairgrounds in Sacramento, 27 horses competed that year. Today the Futurity, held every September now in Reno, Nevada (this year September 23 – October 5), has grown into a world-class event with hundreds of thousands of dollars in prize money with contestants and spectators from around the globe.

This year's NRCHA Snaffle Bit Futurity welcomes, Clinton Anderson – clinician, horse trainer and competitor – who will be sharing his colt starting technique in a three-hour demo showcasing groundwork exercises to prepare a young horse for a safe, first ride on Friday, October 4 from 1 to 4pm. Once in the saddle, Clinton will detail the steps he takes to allowing the horse to get comfortable with a rider on his back and the beginning stages of steering and body control. Anderson has dedicated his life to helping others realize their horsemanship dreams and keeping them inspired to achieve their goals. His Downunder Horsemanship Method of horse training is based on mutual respect and understanding and gives horse owners the knowledge needed to become skilled horsemen and train their horses to be consistent and willing partners. Contact the NRCHA at www.nrcha.com

Music, please.

Guy Clark
My Favorite Picture of You
Dualtone.com



As one of the most revered songwriters of his generation, Clark embodies the term "songwriter's songwriter." Clark co-wrote 10 of the 11 tracks on *My Favorite Picture Of You* and dug very deep for each performance on this truly inspired collection. The album's heartfelt title track was written for Susanna Clark, Guy's wife of 40 years, and a successful songwriter in her own right, who passed away in 2012. If a picture says a thousand words, then the cover photo of *My Favorite Picture Of You* declares an entire life. The cover depicts Clark, slightly blurred in the background, holding up an old photo of his beloved from the 1970s. According to Clark, Susanna walked in and found he and friend, the late Townes Van Zandt drunk, again. She stormed out of the house, which is when the Polaroid was taken. Timing, I guess. The song is a loving tribute that melts your heart while making you smile. Guy Clark has always made us smile by infusing his wry wit into thoughtful storytelling. Clark's vocals on *My Favorite Picture Of You* exude truth, wisdom and warmth, only touching on the insight he has gained from an extraordinary life. From the delicate sweetness of "Cornmeal Waltz" to the poignant story of the veteran returned a changed man in "Heroes" to the determined "Hell Bent On A Heartache," Clark delivers a standout album in a four-decade career overflowing with high points. Classic Clark.

Court Yard Hounds
Amelita
Columbia

Court Yard Hounds may not be on the tip of your tongue but the two artists behind the duo probably are. Sisters Martie Maguire and Emily Robison (they, along with Natalie Maines, make up the Dixie Chicks) decided to record a side project under a different name back in 2010. *Court Yard Hounds*, featured Robison for the first time as lead vocalist on the self-titled debut album for Columbia Records, the same label for which the Dixie Chicks has recorded. That first album has sold approximately 825,000 copies in the United States. The

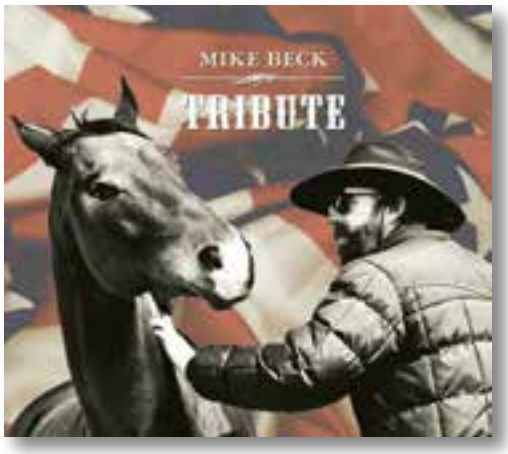
just released follow-up, *Amelita* seems to be assuring the duo that they may need to figure when, if ever, they will have time to return to the "trio" as this album might just be one of the best summer albums this year. Light and happy and crammed with fun, *Amelita* was this close to be on our Road Trip List this issue – beat out only by Willy Nelson. *Amelita's* title track features a great Tex-Mex flavor while other tracks remind us of summer fun and adventure. Nice job, ladies.

Pistol Annies
Annie Up
Sony

Pistol Annies is another "composite" group where the parts make up more than their sum. Individually, the "Annies" are Angaleena Presley, Miranda Lambert, and Ashley Monroe. The three girls have all adopted nicknames of their own – taking them beyond their singular personas: Lone Star Annie for Texan Lambert; Hippie Annie for Monroe; and Holler Annie for Presley (a nod to her Eastern Kentucky roots). They're all women of the South, but as Monroe points out, they each bring different musical influences to the group – Tennessee country from Monroe, Presley's Kentucky bluegrass and pure, rowdy honky-tonk from Lambert. Together, with hammer cocked, Pistol Annies takes no prisoners musically. "The music just came so easily," says Presley. "It kind of just spilled out of us." Neil Young says of the Annies, "I love hearing their energy. I recognize it from my youth, gives me faith in life and makes me feel. Feelings, once awakened, can take me anywhere. That's what these girls do – now happy, now sad, reliving the past again." *Annie Up*, the new album, like their debut album, *Hell on Wheels*, is full to the brim with attitude. You just want to hang around with these gals – fun will surely follow.

Cowboy Troubadour Mike Beck's Album Tribute Celebrates and Supports Veterans and Rescued Horses

Proceeds from September 17 release to benefit Joyful Horse Project's Veterans Program in Austin, Texas



On his new album, *Tribute* (September 17, 2013), Mike Beck imbues each song with the trail dust and vast vistas of his beloved American West, and celebrates the unique bond humans and the horse share. That bond holds even more significance for him since he helped develop a groundbreaking horsemanship program that pairs wounded veterans with abused or neglected horses so they can rehabilitate one another. Working with the Joyful Horse Project, an Austin-based nonprofit dedicated to holistic equine rehabilitation and education, Beck teaches intuitive horsemanship methods he learned from legends Bill and Tom Dorrance and others. When human and animal understand how to communicate with one another, they can establish trust – the unifying, harmonious bond that empowers both. And helps them heal. Beck is donating all proceeds from album sales to this therapeutic program. Recorded in Austin, *Tribute* offers 11 tracks of Beck's cowboy-themed Americana, ranging from folk balladry ("20 Bucks a Gallon") to bluesier tunes and honky tonkers. "I wanted the album to help both horses and people come together in true partnership," Beck explains. *Tribute* is the latest development in a partnership begun when Joyful Horse Project president Beth Rand approached Beck about starting the program. "Veterans are amazingly well suited to the challenge of working with these horses," says Rand. "By background and training, they are keenly aware of the bonds of trust required to perform any task with sureness and confidence. These unique talents help the horses overcome their fears and become more suitable for further training and adoption." Beck jumped on board immediately. "I knew we had the makings of a great story," he says. "It's a win-win for all involved." Horsemanship and music have long intertwined in Beck's world; he's worked at both in California, Nevada and Montana.

"Being a horseman and musician are similar in many ways. They're both about feel."

For pre-release album purchases and donations: joyfulhorseproject.org

For information and bookings: mikebeck.com

A Totally Gratutitous Photo of "Woody." Just Because We Like Him.

San Benito – 80 years of Tradition, Figure 8s and Rodeo Fun.

Nearly every weekend, somewhere in America, a community is putting on a rodeo. Now most are not NFR productions but what's even better is the support from within the community these hometown rodeos can nurture. This year marked the 80th year that the central California county of San Benito has hosted its Saddle Horse Show & Rodeo. With nearly a month's worth of events – it's always a hit. Whether folks tasted local wines, browsing through the local craftsmen – and women booths, or taking in the rodeo itself, all in attendance walked away from another outstanding month of events at Bolado Park. This year marked the opening of a wonderful little museum, right on the fair grounds, dedicated to the people who have supported and participated in the Rodeo. There are all sorts of framed images and memorabilia but the one stands out is the equal representation of women who participated in the event over the years.

photos courtesy Sharon Hanzelka

This year's trade tent was terrific as always as the artists and cowboy crafts that show up tend to truly focus on the area and it's always a grand time to see and visit with old friends – that wine tasting part didn't hurt either!

Probably the stand out aspect of this rodeo is the heart-felt participation of young people. These are skilled kids who obviously work around livestock so it was gratifying to see the "Best Dressed" class with horses turned out in their best bridles and gear – most all with *mecate* tied into the festive alamar knot. A wonderful sight and worth enough to guarantee we'll be back next year. So should you. Oh, did I mention they have one of the best Figure 8 ropings anywhere? www.sanbenitocountyrodeo.com

Speaking of Bridles

We checked in recently with saddle maker Doug Cox to see what was hanging on the shop wall. We were not disappointed. Here's a new bridle – already sold and way long gone to his customer but you can gain inspiration and order one for yourself. Contact Doug at www.dougcoxcustomsaddles.com

Vel Miller

One of our favorite western artists, Vel Miller has just completed a new book with cowboy poet and musician Gary McMahon. We have a sneak peek at the cover art for you. Vel illustrated Gary's writing and the book will be available shortly. www.velmiller.com and www.singingcowboy.com

Vaqueros de Los Olas: Surf and Turf

A friend told me once that Reno, Nevada was actually farther west than Los Angeles. I just shook my head. So, grinning, he showed me a map of the world and pointed out he was right – longitude wise. Look for yourself. The point is the West is a varied place filled with things that one may not expect. Vaqueros de Los Olas – loosely translated means "cowboys of the waves" – is a little company started by some folks with one foot in the stirrup and one foot on the beach. They ranch, work their cows and when the surf is up, they're in it.

The mission statement for their company says it all, "Embracing the heritage and traditions of the golden age of coastal ranching – from the backcountry to the waves, from horses to surfboards. We build functional, quality clothing and boards to encourage people to live the life they choose with pride, integrity and self-reliance." About all one could ask for. For information call 805/899-3537

Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum

Annual Benefit

Vaquero Show

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November 9 & 10,2013

Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum & Carriage House

Santa Ynez, California

For Information/Tickets 805.688.7889 www.santaynezmuseum.org

Portraits of American Craftsmen

A celebration of the handmade in America – from piano-builders in Queens to pipe-makers in Tennessee, with pictures and profiles of the noble craftsmen

By Tadd Myers

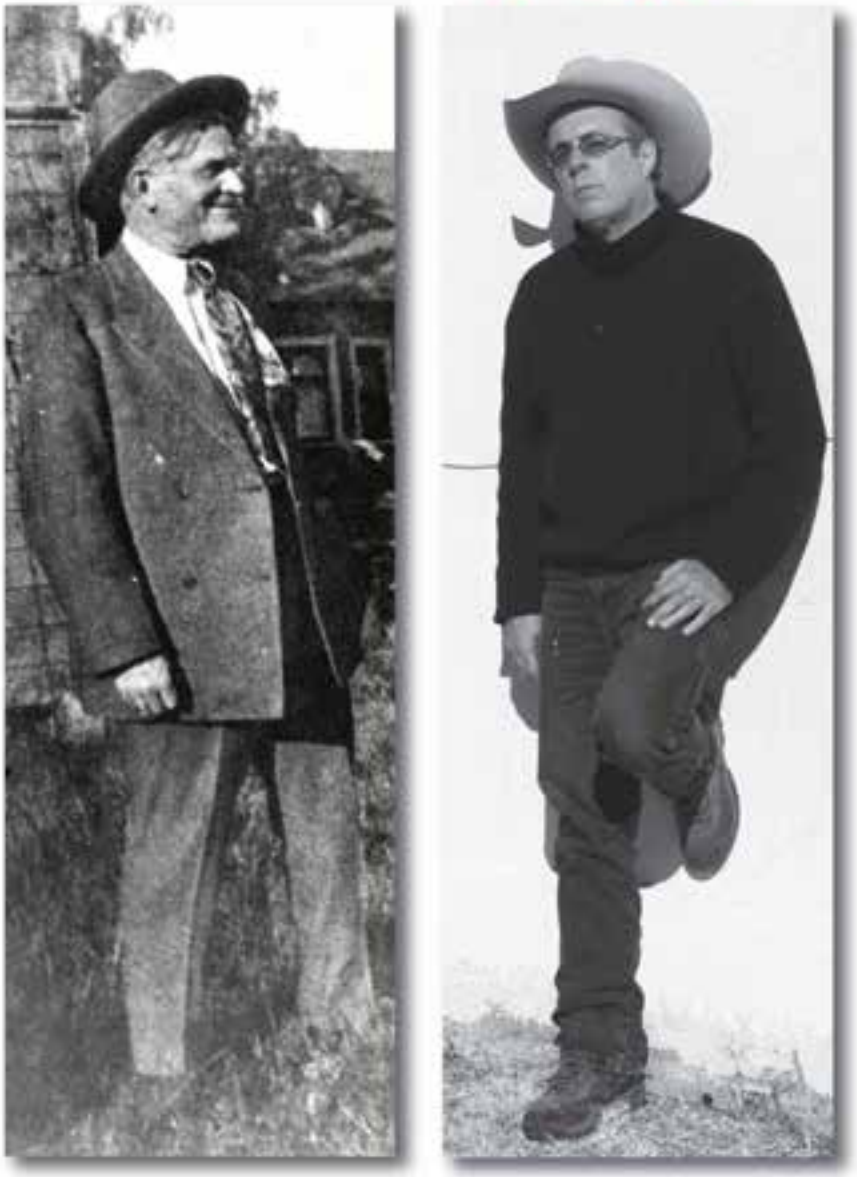
Lyons Press, November 2013

Award-winning photographer Tadd Myers is five years into a cross-country journey to capture images of the American craftsman engaged in his work. At a time when the public is growing disenchanted by the disposable items that litter the American landscape, the workers in Tadd's portraits are still using human eyes to guide human hands; the objects they make carry the souls of their makers. His beautifully rendered photographs and profiles celebrate the thriving American culture of true craftsmanship, alive and well in all parts of the country. Here is a collection of portraits that celebrate the people and products made in small workshops all over the country, with lyrical descriptions of what they make, who they are, and the tradition embedded in their trade.

The book project began as a commercial assignment to photograph Texas craftsmen carving various wooden moldings for a historic building. While working on the project, Tadd began to wonder how many other craftsmen in America were working with their hands.

"What started as a personal curiosity soon grew into something that feels much more important – an opportunity to record and preserve this aspect of American culture and tell the story of these remarkable people." This is an important book that will fill you with pride. www.globepequot.com

Russell's WEST.



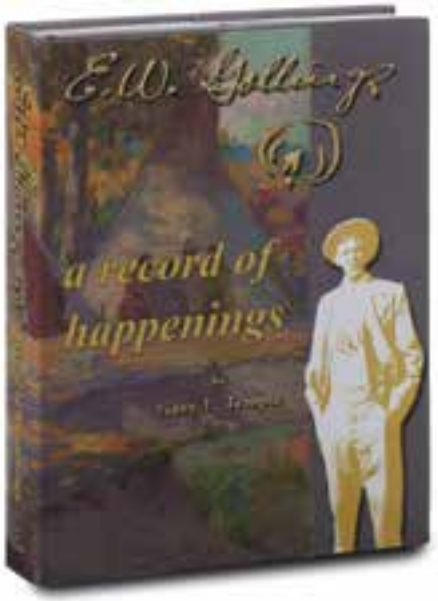
From Charlie's to Tom's
You'll find it here. Subscribe.

Ranch & Reata

www.ranchandreata.com

Bill Gollings Remembered

Gary Temple of the Meadowlark Gallery in Billings, Montana has researched and written extensively about the late artist, Bill Gollings. His newest collection is 254 pages of new insights into the life of Bill Gollings, artist and westerner. Within the book are extensive personal diary entries by the artist covering 16 years of his life, including personal in-depth analysis by the artist himself as to painting timelines, his thoughts on his life and career. Also included are newspaper articles about the artist going back to 1904 and the first-ever thorough analysis of his printmaking career from 1926 until his death in 1932. Quoting the author, "The reader is right there with me as we examine the thoughts and feelings of this wonderful artist. He was a tremendous draftsman and his printmaking career, although short, produced some phenomenal images." This is an amazing volume and is available in a trade and limited edition. Visit www.meadowlarkgallery.com



Empty Saddles

This spring, we found that three of the best had ridden on up the trail ahead of us. They will not be forgotten.

photo by Ron Dalzell

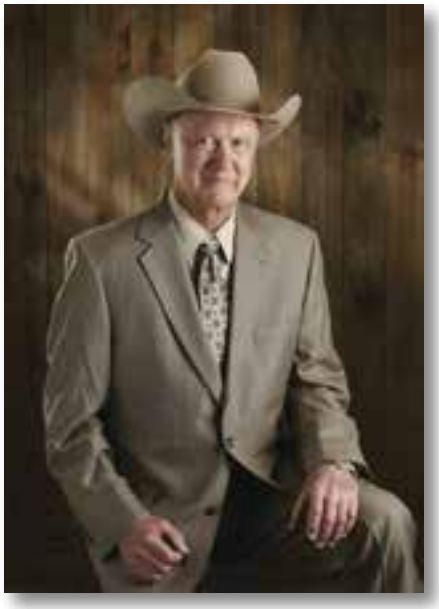
Richard Caldwell

photo by Jay Dusard

Jay Harney

photo by Julie Chase Baldocchi

Oscar Thompson



Gene Graves

AQHA Immediate Past President Gene Graves died June 14. Gene had been battling pancreatic cancer for more than a year, which included his AQHA presidential term.

"Gene made the decision to continue with his presidency while undergoing treatment," said AQHA Executive Vice President Don Treadway Jr. "He was an effective, thoughtful president, who never let illness get in the way of thinking about what was best for the American Quarter Horse and the American Quarter Horse Association. His death is a great loss for the industry, and on a personal note, I'll miss him very much."

Gene was born December 10, 1937, in Clarks, Nebraska. After earning an education degree from Midland College, he taught school and coached for several years. In 1963, he married Barbara Bosselman of Grand Island. Gene was a pharmaceutical sales representative before returning to teaching and coaching in Grand Island. He earned a master's degree in counseling in 1969. Gene joined his father-in-law's business in 1975 and retired in 1999. Though they had ridden horses throughout their marriage, after Gene's retirement, he and Barbara became more involved in showing horses, buying a ranch near Burwell, Nebraska, where they raised yearlings and learned to rope cattle.

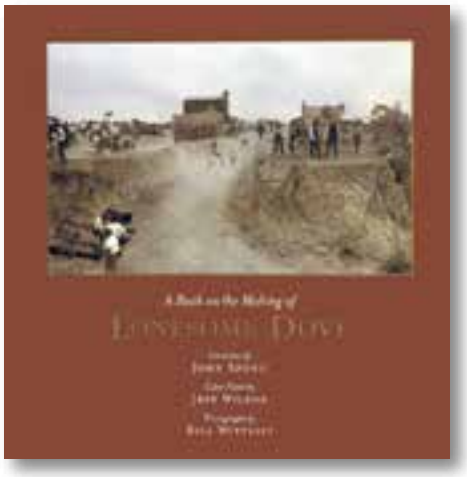
In 2006, Gene and Barbara bought Barranada Shirt Co. and began marketing the apparel to horse people.

A Moment for Us

For the second straight year, two-and-a-half-year-old *Ranch & Reata* magazine has won the General Excellence Award for its circulation category at the annual American Horse Publications (AHP) Awards in Denver, Colorado. Considered the "Oscars of the Industry," the AHP awarded *Ranch & Reata* the award in 2012 as well, over 12 other finalists. In addition, the magazine was awarded Best Cover in its category for issue #2.5. This is a remarkable achievement for a publication that premiered in April of 2011. We are thankful for the recognition we have received from the members of the AHP and we are very proud of the work of all of our contributors and the dedication of our Editor, A.J. Mangum, our Art Director, Robin Ireland, and our Associate Publisher, Buddy Purel. None of this would be possible without you, our dear readers, helping us to create each issue through your subscriptions. Our real win is having you as friends and supporters.

Thank you.

Errata



In Issue 2.5, in our Books to Find section, we ran a piece on the two wonderful books about the epic western mini-series, *Lonesome Dove*. *A Book of Photographs from Lonesome Dove* and *A Book on the Making of Lonesome Dove*. The folks from the University of Texas Press graciously gave us permission to use some of their images and we neglected to credit those images and we apologize for that oversight. All images were courtesy of the Wittliff Collections, Alkek Library, Texas State University-San Marcos. For more information about the Lonesome Dove Collection at the Wittliff, including the permanent exhibition – please visit www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/collections/lonesome-dove.html

Hamley Trophy Saddles: A Long and Storied Tradition

Hamley's has a long and storied history in building presentation saddles and trophy saddles. JJ Hamley became one of the organizers of the first Pendleton Round-Up, and as such, volunteered to donate a very special saddle as "the main prize." That was 103 years ago, and Hamley's is still building trophy saddles for the Pendleton Round-Up. Along the way they have built hundreds of trophy saddles for dozens of other rodeos including Cheyenne, Salinas, Omak, and the list goes on.

Hamley's still adheres to the same principles with the saddles they build today as they did 100 years ago. When William Hamley left Cornwall, England in 1840 as a journeyman harness and saddlemaker, he came to America and began building a reputation for superior quality, that has survived now for almost 175 year and has left Hamley's in the enviable position as the oldest surviving saddle company in America. Virtually all of Hamley's peers in the saddle business from the mid to late 1800s have quietly faded into the sunset one at a time. Hamley's was not far from joining them when two western preservationists, Parley Pearce and Blair Woodfield, came along and decided they just couldn't let that happen. With the firm belief that Westerners still relish quality handmade cowboy gear, they rolled the dice with several million dollars and restored this great western icon – from the beautiful old brick Hamley building that has been their home since the Oregon trail in front was still dirt, to the world class craftsmen they have assembled to build the gear that cowboys all over the world still relish – which carries on a tradition today that William Hamley believed in when he brought his skills to America 174 years ago. www.hamley.com

Brighton Saddlery Celebrates the Ladies and Fights Breast Cancer this October 17

The good folks at Brighton Saddlery in Brighton, Colorado have always thought that the ladies who shop at there are pretty darn special so they decided to celebrate with a pretty big party. At 4:00 p.m. on a Thursday in October we bring out the party food, the wine and fancy cheeses and open the front door wide. It's Ladies Night Out and busy women find their way to our front door to meet friends and family. They are sometimes surprised and delighted to see others who make this an annual event and travel quite a few miles from many of our mountain towns. It's a good time to catch up on the news, sample the many wines and shop for those cowboys and cowgirls on their Christmas list. The whole lock, stock, and barrel cowboy candy store is on sale. This is an American West Trunk Sale, games of chance and a real live auction. This is a real crowd pleaser because all the proceeds go to breast cancer research. The Ladies Night at Brighton is all about fun! Put this date on your calendar Thursday, October 17th at 4:00 p.m.
www.BrightonSaddlery.com

Wil Howe Bridle Horses: Up Close and Personal at Pendleton Round Up

For years, horseback, amidst the crowds and fan fair of the downtown Pendleton Round Up festivities, bridle horse trainers, Wil and Beverly Howe have been a unique addition. Always astride a couple of their handsome signature geldings for sale, they bring some true and real western Americana to folks, up close and personal. These horsemen share their horses, knowledge and good cheer on the streets while rigged out in antique 1800s and great basin working cowboy tack and gear. For more info on their horses for sale and bridle-horsemanship training www.wilhowe.com

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RENO, NEVADA

SEPTEMBER 24– OCTOBER 5, 2013

SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2013
- 8 am Herd Work: Open, Cinch Int. Open & Ltd Open Futurity Prelims

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2013
- 8 am Herd Work: Open, Cinch Int. Open & Ltd Open Futurity Prelims

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2013
- 8 am Herd Work: Level 1 Limited Open Futurity
- Herd Work: Non Pro, Int. Non Pro, Nov. Non Pro Futurity Prelims & Amateur Futurity
- Herd Work: Non Pro Limited Futurity

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2013
- 8 am Rein Work: Level 1 Limited Open Futurity
- Rein Work: Non Pro, Int. Non Pro, Nov. Non Pro Futurity Prelims & Amateur Futurity
- Rein Work: Non Pro Limited Futurity
- Horse Show: Open Two Rein

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2013
- 8 am Horse Show: Non Pro, Int. Non Pro, Nov. Non Pro Bridle
- Horse Show: Youth Bridle
- Horse Show: Youth Limited
- Horse Show: Non Pro Limited/$5kNon Pro Limited

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2013
- 7 am **Cowboy Church** with Dave Simmons Ministries
- 8 am Horse Show: Non Pro Two Rein
- Horse Show: Non Pro Hackamore
- **Run To Reno Finals**
- Cow Work: Non Pro, Int. Non Pro, Nov. Non Pro Futurity Prelims & Amateur Futurity
- Cow Work: Non Pro Limited Futurity

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2013
- 8 am Rein Work: Open, Cinch Int. Open & Ltd Open Futurity Prelims

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2013
- 8 am Rein Work: Open, Cinch Int. Open & Ltd Open Futurity Prelims
- Cow Work: Level 1 Limited Open Futurity
- Horse Show: Open Bridle Prelims & Ltd. Open Bridle
- Horse Show: Open Hackamore Prelims & Ltd Open Hackamore

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2013
- 8 am Cow Work: Open, Cinch Int. Open & Ltd Open Futurity Prelims
- 7:30 pm **Finals Draw Party** (Grand Sierra Resort & Casino)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2013
- 7:30 am **Finals Herd Work:** Cinch Int. Open & Ltd Open Futurity
- **Finals Rein Work:** Cinch Int. Open & Ltd Open Futurity
- **Finals Cow Work:** Cinch Int. Open & Ltd Open Futurity
- Open Hackamore Finals
- Open Bridle Finals
- 3 pm **Classic Yearling & Broodmare Horse Sale** (Pavilion)
- 4:30 pm **Old Timers Reunion** (Silver Legacy Resort Casino)
- 7:30 pm **Annual NRCHA Hall of Fame Banquet** (Silver Legacy Resort Casino)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2013
- 7 am Two Year Old Sale Preview featuring Water, Coffee, Mimosa & Bloody Mary bar sponsored by Reno Live stock Event Center
- 9 am **Select Two Year Old Horse Sale** (Main Arena)
- **Performance Horse Sale** (Main Arena)
- 1 pm **CLINTON ANDERSON COLT STARTING DEMONSTRATION** (Rodeo Arena)
- 4 pm **Finals Herd Work:** Non Pro, Int. Non Pro, Nov. Non Pro Futurity
- 6 pm **Finals Rein Work:** Non Pro, Int. Non Pro, Nov. Non Pro Futurity
- 8 pm **Finals Cow Work:** Non Pro, Int. Non Pro, Nov. Non Pro Futurity

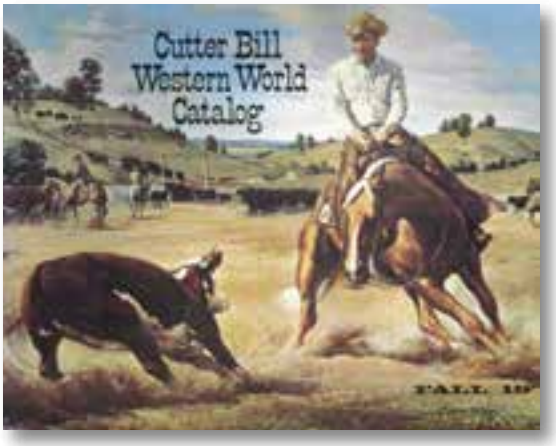
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2013
- 8 am Water, Coffee, Mimosa & Bloody Mary bar sponsored by Reno Livestock Event Center
- 9 am **Select Yearling & Broodmare Horse Sale** (Main Arena)
- 1:30 pm **Finals Herd Work:** Open Futurity Finals
- 5 pm **OPEN FINALS OPENING CEREMONY & RIDER INTRODUCTIONS**
- **Finals Rein Work:** Open Futurity Finals
- Raffle Filly Drawing
- **Finals Cow Work:** Open Futurity Finals
- **Closing Ceremony, Awards & Party**

Great moments in cowboy catalog history: Cutter Bill

Today we take for granted the concept of the "high-end Western store," but, some thirty-odd-years ago, the field had only a couple of players and Texan Rex Cauble's Cutter Bill Western World was just that – a new world in Western fashion. It was no feed store, but a luxurious Houston-based retailer inhabited by super-model-esque cowgirl femmes and chiseled, handsome urban Marlboro-types just stepping off their private planes looking for their next pair of unborn-albino-antelope boots. Cauble's Cutter Bill Western World, named after his famous palomino show horse Cutter Bill, didn't make it through the 1970s. The Cauble empire was brought down by "scandal, drugs, sex and greed," but Cutter Bill Western World opened the doors to what we call today "the Western lifestyle industry." Cutter Bill's stores and catalogs were aspirational and high-concept in their approach and design. The folks at the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame & Museum have been nice enough to share some of the rare images and pages found in various Cutter Bill catalogs.

images courtesy the AQHA Hall of Fame & Museum

Rex Cauble and Cutter Bill greet their fans.




flair for the unusual


THE
PRESS CLUB
OF
HOUSTON
MEMBERS ONLY

Maverick

Matt McClure is part of a new generation of cowboy artists leading a progressive movement in western crafts.

By Paul A. Cañada

Twenty-eight-year-old bit and spur maker Matt McClure has a reputation for a progressive approach to his work, and has been labeled by some of his field's leading artisans as part of a new wave of cowboy craftsmen. Ironically, while the Mineral Wells, Texas, craftsman has often broken free of conventional design constraints, his adoption of Old World traditions has also set him apart from his peers.

Wilson Capron, of Midland, Texas, is one of McClure's mentors, and one of his biggest fans. Regarded as one of the cowboy culture's most gifted and influential bit and spur makers, Capron has taught several workshops in which McClure has been a student. The two share an appreciation for European firearms engraving, incorporating the ornate and intricate method of metal decoration into their otherwise western pieces.

photo courtesy Matt Mcclure

McClure draws upon Old World inspiration in his ornamentation.

"Matt is often seen as a maverick," Capron says. "His pieces are a mixture of practical architecture and fine art. You might say Matt is a new breed of Texas craftsman."

The son of a New Mexico rancher, McClure's interest in cowboy crafts was born from necessity. As a working cowboy,

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photo by Paul Cañada

Matt McClure at work in his Texas shop.

he was naturally drawn to finer bits and spurs built by the West's leading makers. He found the costs of such work, though, out of range of his cowboy wages.

"Lots of my buddies would trade for this stuff," he says. "And I liked it, too, but I always thought it was way too expensive for me." McClure, who began making bits and spurs a mere five years ago, admits to being lured into the trade by a surprisingly common misconception. "I thought I could make bits and spurs cheaper, and possibly get rich making them. It turns out there isn't a lot of money to be made crafting bits and spurs. As much as I've invested in tools and education, I'd have been better off just buying what I wanted."

McClure spent the better part of two years trying to learn bit and spur making on his own. While attending college in Lubbock, he met Rotan, Texas, bit and spur maker Russell Yates, who agreed to mentor McClure through a brief apprenticeship.

The experience opened the younger craftsman's eyes; his chosen field, he learned, was much more complex than he'd imagined. McClure's subsequent educational efforts came to include workshops led by Capron and Yates, both members of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association. TCAA members include some of the cowboy culture's leading saddlemakers, rawhide braiders, silversmiths, and bit and spur makers. The group's workshops represent a stark contrast to the days in which aspiring gearmakers had to elicit knowledge from reluctant mentors, who often feared sharing their trade secrets.

Opportunities to study with the likes of Capron and Yates, McClure explains, have allowed him to move quickly along a learning curve that can take other craftsmen lifetimes to navigate. In working with such teachers, McClure has found inspiration and clarified his design philosophies.

"My engraving shows a lot of Wilson's style, and I like the design of Russell's work," he says. "Russell does a lot of work that isn't traditionally western. His designs come from architecture and other influences. He's an out-of-the-box thinker."

In 2012, McClure traveled to Argentina for three months, during which he studied the gaucho culture and its silversmithing techniques, spending time with such craftsmen as Pablo Lozano and Armando Deferrari.

"They do a lot of Old World silversmithing," he says. "I was amazed by the craftsmanship, and how

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people in the Argentine culture appreciate that art form. There are a lot of craftsmen in Argentina making a full-time living as silversmiths, compared to the few we have making a living in the United States."

Today, McClure spends as much time silversmithing as he does making bits and spurs. He views each discipline as an art form, and focuses on making one-of-a-kind pieces. Duplicates never leave his shop. Despite the respect with which he approaches his work, he's honest with himself about his commercial opportunities.

photo by Paul Cañada

Works in progress at McClure's Mineral Wells shop.

"Given the kind of work I make, and the type of person I am, I could never produce enough volume to make this a viable trade," McClure admits. "My enjoyment comes from designing and creating a finished product. Making several of the same thing isn't enjoyable for me, so I've never made two pairs of spurs or two bits the same way."

McClure uses social media to market his work, and has employed a progressive approach to technology in his design and fabrication. He uses CorelDRAW, a drawing program, to create precise patterns and shapes. Finished patterns are printed, then used to create templates. Prior to working with the software, McClure found that his hand-drawn designs could be off by as much as 1/16 of an inch.

Recently, McClure has begun mentoring makers new to his trades. Hunter Meinzer, of Weatherford, Texas, is among McClure's students. McClure now has an understanding of his own mentors' motivations, and the rewards that come with teaching.

"It's been fun to see Hunter progress," he says. "I get a lot of pride out of seeing him do as well as he does."

With existing inspirations that include his southwestern roots, his experiences in South America, and instruction from master craftsmen, McClure still seeks new sources of ideas. Of late, his efforts have come to include studying art history books.

"Ninety percent of what's out there looks the same," McClure says, "so it's getting difficult to create anything that hasn't been done before. I want to create pieces that haven't been made, work that doesn't even look like it belongs on a pair of spurs. You have to differentiate yourself if you want to get noticed."

photo courtesy Matt Mcclure

This set of McClure spurs bears the brand of Texas' 06 Ranch.

Paul A. Cañada is a writer based in Texas.

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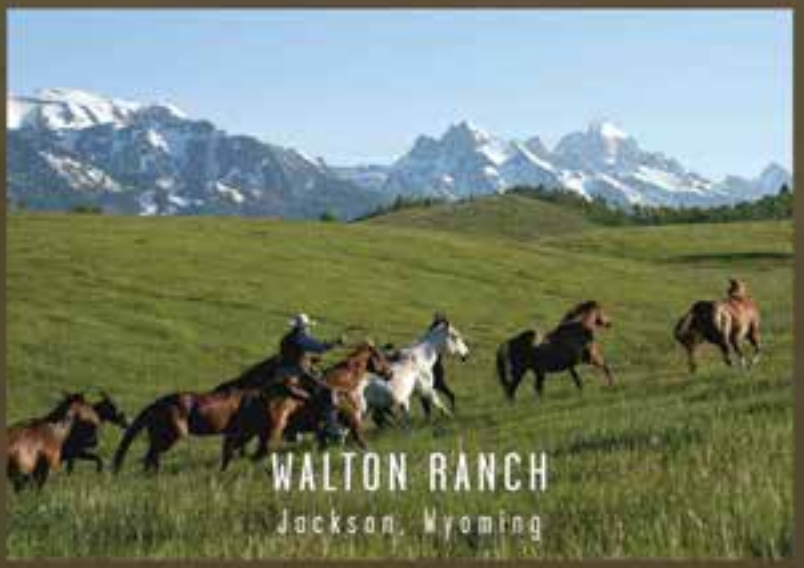
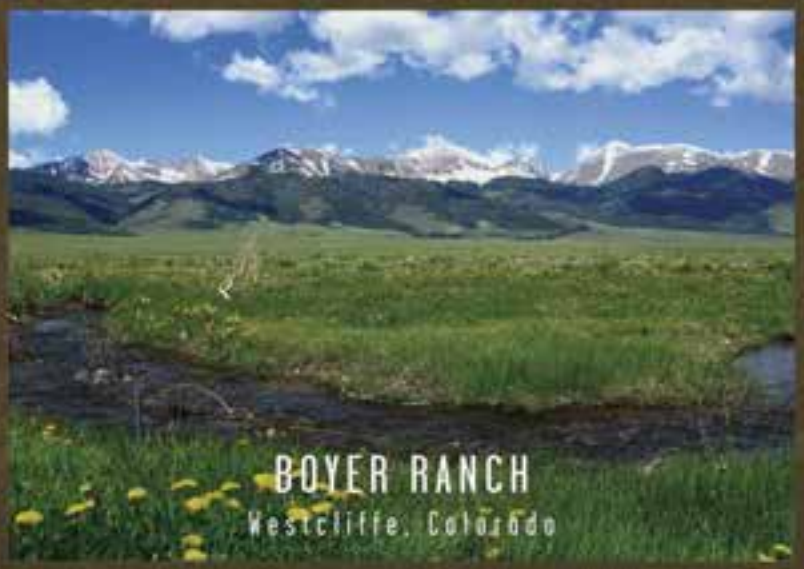
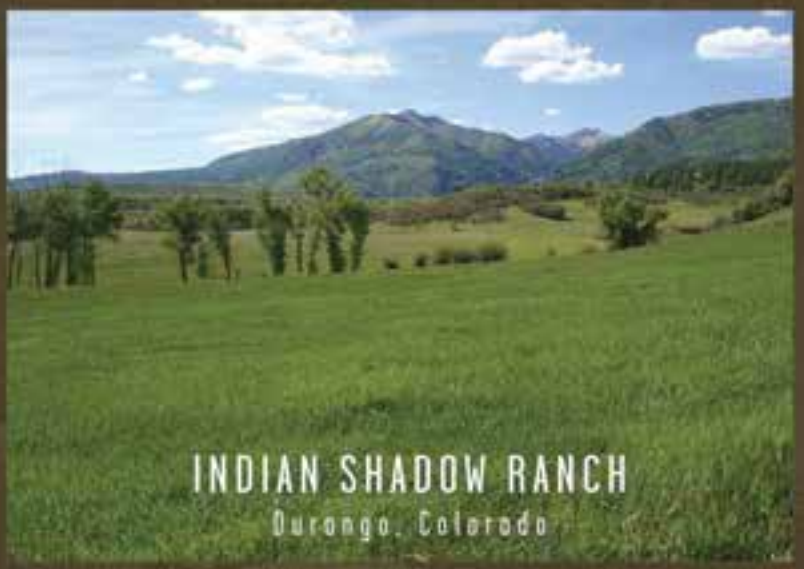


An exceptional property in an extraordinary setting, the 1,648-acre legacy ranch abuts three miles of the legendary Snake River, is surrounded by Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and is just ten minutes from the renowned Jackson Hole. $68,700,000. Ron Morris, 970.535.0881 or Billy Long, 970.927.3850



12,505 total acre cattle and hay production ranch rimmed by the Sangre de Cristo Mountains just 1.5 hours from Colorado Springs. Well watered with over 18 CFS of water rights, streams, ponds and wells irrigating 700 acres putting up 1,200 tons of premium hay. Runs 900-1,000 yearling cattle. $9,000,000. Ron Morris, 970.535.0881



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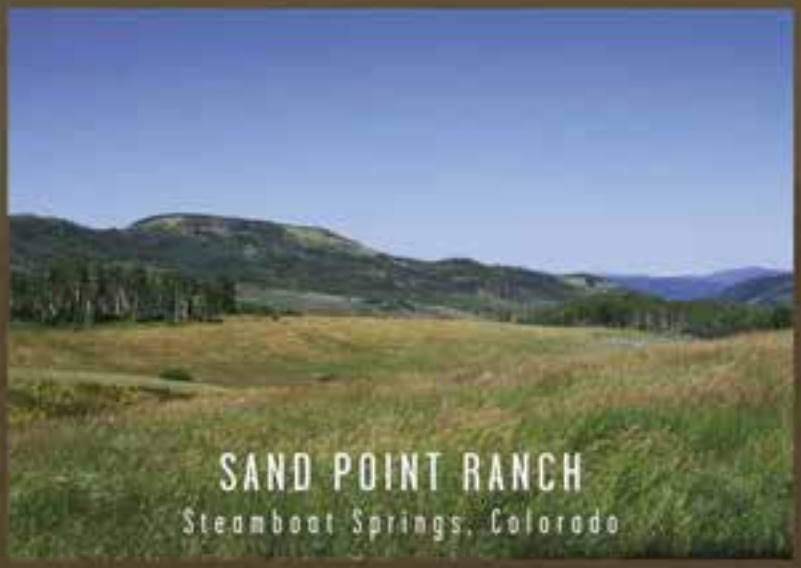

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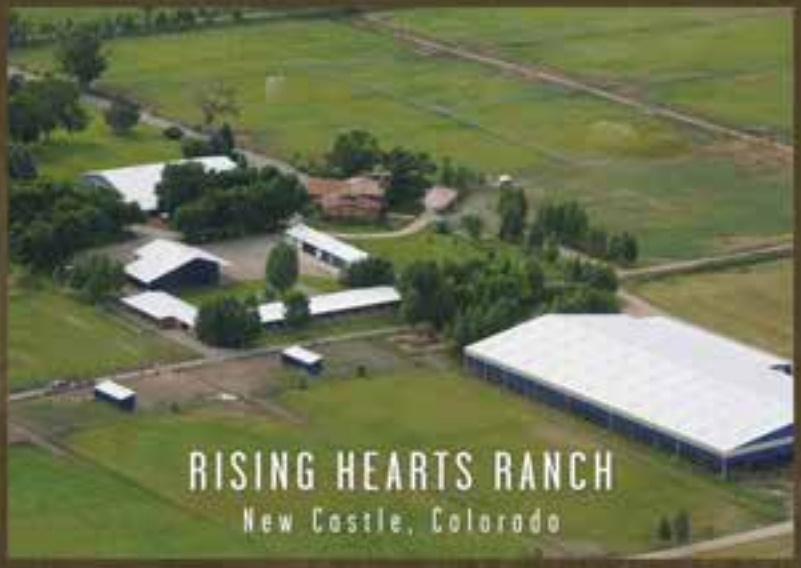

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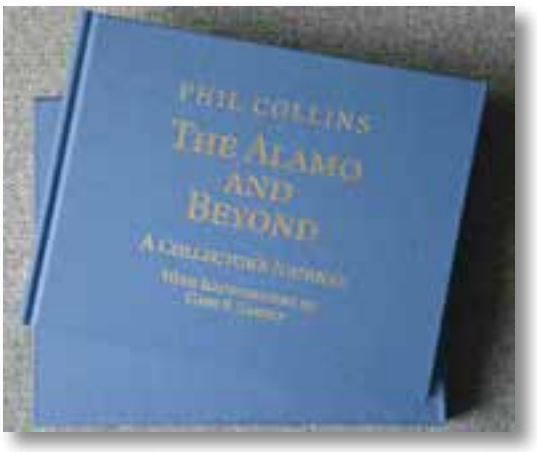
BOOKS TO FIND

The Alamo and Beyond: Phil Collins' Journey

When legendary rocker Phil Collins was a kid growing up in a London suburb, he would often sit in front of the family TV and watch – in black and white – Fess Parker as *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*. To say he became obsessed with Crockett, may not exactly fair but as he grew older Collins not only acted out the adventures of his hero, he often refought the Battle of the Alamo with toy soldiers. Well, maybe that's a little obsessive... And even though music came to dominate his life, it was this love of history – and Davy Crockett and the Alamo in particular – that was always near to his heart and mind.

Given that, and remembering the Alamo's history, one might be led to think that his song "One More Night" could have been inspired by the order of the Alamo's commander, William B. Travis that they hold "one more night" against the army of general Santa Ana. They did, in fact – they held for thirteen nights. Or that he considered that the opening lines of his huge hit, "In The Air Tonight," might have been in the thoughts of those brave two hundred men attempting holding back an entire army, bent on their destruction:

I can feel it coming in the air tonight, oh Lord
And I've been waiting for this moment for all my life, oh Lord
Can you feel it coming in the air tonight, oh Lord, oh Lord



Wherever the passion came from, when Collins encountered his first David Crockett autograph – he remarked, "I didn't even know this stuff was out there, that you could own it," Later, he received a birthday-present that would change his life: a simple receipt for a saddle and a bridle signed by an Alamo defender. From that point forward, the rock drummer began building an impressive

Alamo and Texas Revolution collection.

The Alamo and Beyond: A Collector's Journey, Collin's very handsome and articulate volume, presents an extensive collection that historian Stephen L. Hardin observes in his introductory essay, "the book is very much a portable museum exhibit." Here are artifacts, relics, and documents along with Collins' own words that take the reader through the joys of a collector as he lovingly describes each piece and what it means to him. This is more than a book about items that came from one of the most famous military battles in our country's history. It is a look into a journey of discovery, of one man's passion to understand and be part of – what he found to be – revered ground. The Alamo and what it means has been interpreted and dramatized by many – and regrettably a number of those interpretations didn't adhere to historical fact. And while the facts surrounding the siege of the Alamo still continue to be debated, there is no doubt about what the battle has come to symbolize. People around the world continue to consider the Alamo as a heroic struggle against impossible odds – a place where men made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom.

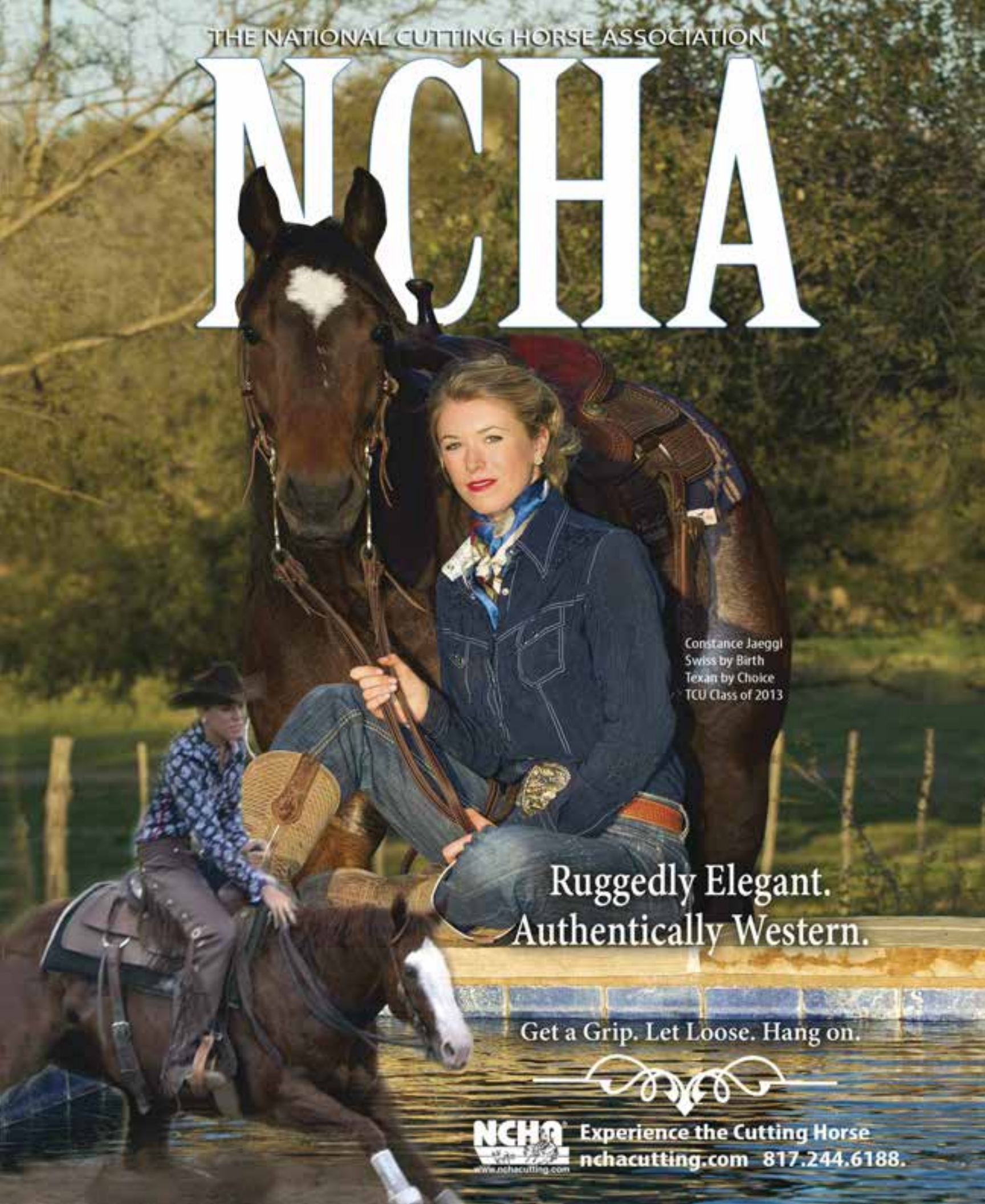
As Phil Collins himself states about his collecting and passion for the subject, "A few years after the Disney series, John Wayne raised the bar. His Alamo film, released in 1960, captivated me. Even though now I see much of it was

romanticized and liberal with the facts, I still go back and watch it. The Alamo story stuck with me, and there was no getting away from it. Playing the drums, the Alamo and Crockett filled my thoughts constantly. Unlike the fads that came and went for other young lads, my Alamo passion remained undimmed. I grew up believing the notion shared by in the Alamo movies, to "do the right thing," to be sure, and to "go ahead." I was and still am hooked on the history of what happened there, and as I grow older the fascination only deepens."

The book is a jewel, filled with artifacts and writings by Collins and others. It gives a picture of a time and a place where hard decisions were made and lives were put on the line for beliefs. In a video being produced through monies being raised at kickstarter.com, we follow Collins as he went on the book-signing trail for the book's release in 2012. The link to watch that video is below. The book is published by the State House Press, an imprint of the Texas Frontier Heritage & Cultural Center, and is available through their website at www.tfhcc.com. Limited editions are also available signed and numbered by Phil Collins. The West is a place of passion, ideas and vision. It is unique, unique as the passion of one British rock musician who found kinship with the "King of the Wild Frontier."

Here is the link to www.kickstarter.com

http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/722972912/phil-collins-and-the-wild-frontier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Chipper Nance's Barbecued Pork

By Kathy McCraine

I met "Chipper" Nance last fall when he was day-working at the 20,000-acre Gray Ranch, on the Texas border in the southwestern corner of Louisiana. He was part of a crew of about 15 cowboys who swam their horses across the Intracoastal Waterway to gather 100 cows off Perry Ridge. Ranching is a little different in this marshy country.

photos by Kathy Mccraine

Texas cowboy and cook Chipper Nance.

Chipper, a gregarious barrel of a man, calls Orange, Texas, home, but when he's off from his regular job as foreman of a big equipment crew for the Orange County Drainage District, you can usually find him horseback with his black mouth and red cur dogs, helping ranchers up and down the Sabine River gather cattle out of the brush. In this brush-choked country, dogs that can bay up cattle and bring them out of the tangled thickets are a necessity.

Chipper learned to rope and ride at a young age from a well-known Orange County cowboy named Albert Adams Jr. He's also known for his pit barbecue and smoked sausage, thanks to 26 years spent running a smokehouse and meat market in Orange. He gave that up a couple of years ago, and today he leases a little place in the woods not far off Interstate 10, where he lives with his girlfriend, Jennifer Jordan, and her daughters, Sydney and Bailey.

A menagerie of animals keeps them all busy there.

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Besides 19 cow and hog dogs, he keeps 10 nurse cows for raising orphan calves (23 at the moment), two milk cows, 80 chickens, 20 goats, and four horses. All of his horses – Twenty-Three, Boarhog, Sport and Piglet – were raised on the Gray Ranch. Besides ranch work, he uses them to pick up bulls at local rodeos and bull riding events.

"I'm lucky I still got all my fingers, 'cause I've seen some wrecks in 35 years doing that," he says. "Those Gray Ranch horses can really pull, though, and I have not roped a bull I couldn't pull out of the pen."

Bulls aren't the only thing he ropes. Down here, where wild game is abundant, a lot of people get their groceries off the land. Wild hogs, which are rampant in the area, make good eating, and while Chipper may shoot or trap them sometimes, he prefers to capture them with a rope and his dogs.

In Chipper's modest trailer house, cluttered with rodeo photos, a huge stuffed boar head looms over the kitchen bar, staring glassy-eyed into space, it's tusked mouth frozen into a leering grin.

"Them dogs caught that one," he says. "Bayed him up over on the Gray Ranch on what we call the Chateau Ditch. He was a boar hog weighing about 600 pounds. The best way to catch one is to catch him around one front leg. Then you can pull him until he gets down, and you can get off your horse and tie him down. I've caught some bad hogs down on the Gray, but I have never got a dog kilt by a hog yet. You know, you won't ever lose a sorry dog, but you'll sure lose a good one."

Chipper had started our noon meal the day before on the handmade barbecue pit that sits under a big tree in his front yard, and the kitchen counter is laden with barbecued pork and chicken, smoked sausage from his personal smokehouse, and a big pot of beans. We eat it all under the gaze of that hairy boar hog, and it's easy to see why the

Gray cowboys raved about Chipper's cooking expertise.

His cooking is so good, in fact, one of them is said to have commented, "As soon as I get rid of my wife, I'm moving in with Chipper."

Barbecued Pork Shoulder

1 10-pound pork shoulder roast
Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning to taste
2 17.5-ounce bottles Kraft Honey Barbecue Sauce
1 stick butter
½ cup brown sugar

First you will need a good barbecue pit with a good firebox, one that will hold a steady temperature. Season the meat well with the Tony Chachere's 24 hours prior to cooking. To make the basting sauce, combine the Kraft barbecue sauce, butter, brown sugar, and more Tony Chachere's to taste in a saucepan, and heat 15-20 minutes. Place the seasoned meat on the pit and cook for 2 hours at 350 degrees. Baste with the sauce, wrap in heavy-duty foil, and cook on the pit for another 4 hours at 300 degrees.Remove the meat from the foil, cut the roast in 2-inch slices, and baste again with the sauce. Place back on grill for another 15-20 minutes, turning and basting until well browned.

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


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Your Horse's Feet, A Series

The Second Killer

By Pete Healey, APF

After colic, laminitis has been noted to be the second leading cause of death in horses. The way the industry treats it as a whole, it's amazing it is not the first. Even though colic is killer of horses, the success rate on treatment of colic cases is quite high. Laminitis is not near as prevalent as colic but because of the devastating effects it can cause, it goes near the top in mortality.

Both syndromes involve organ failure. One has a standardized system for treatment and the other doesn't. If you bring one hundred veterinarians together, their agreement on a treatment protocol for a colic would probably be over 80% whereas on a laminitis may be 20%. Why is this? Knowledge of the foot.

Colic is an everyday event with veterinarians and things happen quite quickly. If a colicky horse doesn't respond to medicine and diagnostics dictate a huge problem then surgery is the next option. This could all happen in a matter of hours. Laminitis on the other hand happens more slowly, it may take days to weeks to go from the acute to the sub acute to the chronic stage. The problem with this is that a lot of practitioners will try to "wait it out." This can cause a big problem in the outcome as the biomechanical and monetary clocks are ticking. On colic, decisions are made very fast, where on laminitis they are slow, mañana.

Being able to read where a laminitis case is going to go is the key to management success. Management success may be a return to complete soundness or just a pasture sound mare or stallion. Management success may also be euthanasia in a prompt manner before the horse suffers and the pocketbook is drained. So what is a good management system for laminitis? Once detected get a veterinarian that knows feet. They will stabilize the pain and inflammation with medication. Radiographs that show good soft tissue detail will provide the blueprint to mechanically stabilize the feet. This should be directed at decreasing lamina tension through the Deep Flexor Tendon and transferring weight from the toe to the heel. A venogram can be performed which shows the profusion of blood in the capsule. This is a great tool to see the vascular health of the foot. Knowing the vascular damage in the foot can direct mechanical therapy and using subsequent venograms can show if the therapy is working before clinical signs are present. Always on the forefront should be the goals of the horse and owner. The goals may differ from an owner who has an emotional attachment to their friend or the value of an expensive brood animal to an eight-year-old bronc. The veterinarian should explain costs and prognosis from the beginning. Most laminitis cases do not resolve themselves in a couple of days but rather weeks or months. Chronic cases can go on for years or the rest of the horse's life. Treatment needs to be aggressive enough so the horse never becomes a chronic case. This may require surgical intervention in the form on a tenotomy, which bisects the Deep Flexor Tendon to relieve laminar tension.

There are many veterinarians that specialize in this disease and offer consultation through email at a reasonable cost. When you're fighting something that is second on the death list, seek them out and get all the help you can.

To contact Pete, visit www.balancebreakover.com

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The Real and the Abstract

The art of Chris Owen

By way of introduction, I'm an artist painting contemporary western images. It's important to recognize that my work is not intended to be photographically real, or to depict completely identifiable objects. My goal is to engage the viewer, both through the subject matter and the abstract nature of each piece. Beyond a subject, the additional qualities of light, form and design make a work of art. I enjoy it when a person is drawn into a piece and becomes engaged in both the identifiable elements and the abstract elements that make figures expressionistic and alive.

It's the mystique surrounding the cowboy as a symbol that fascinates me. Cowboys depicted in my work are representative symbols, rather than portrayals of specific individuals or situations. The spirit and character of this larger-than-life icon is at the core of all that's good and right with the world, and I'm proud to play a small part in recognizing and promoting it.

My work requires knowledge of my subject matter. To that end, I ride, train and work with horses, and spend time on working ranches. I love the way horses look, and the way they move when they step out. I'm absolutely convinced that horses somehow give off positive endorphins. There's nothing grander than working cattle horseback, or riding a trail in the beautiful, unfolding panorama of the American West. Paradise.

Shades of Autumn. This image captures the rich tones and colors of autumn, and the gusty textures of the West, in a piece with dramatic lighting and a cowboy whose identity will forever remain a mystery.

Flight. Nothing is more magnificent than a horse as it runs through its natural habitat, with dust swirling in its path. The aura of this beautiful white horse represents the force of raw energy in nature.

Morning's Light. For most cowboys, an early morning is the beginning of a long day. They pack their gear, saddle their horses, and prepare for whatever the day might bring. This lone rider sits astride his horse in the early daylight. Perhaps he's waiting on other hands, or simply contemplates the new day.

Rough Country. Three hands work their way through a remote area of the ranch, searching for strays missed in the fall gather. Their gestures and motion are important in the composition. The lead horse and rider cautiously make their way through the area as the other riders watch for lost strays.

About Ready. A cowboy relies on his horse and is careful to keep him sound. In this painting, the cowboy is checking a horse's shoe before setting out for a long day's ride. Careful attention is paid to the rendering of the tack and chaps, as well as the anatomy of the horse and cowboy. Warm earth tones and dappled patterns of sunlight and shadow create a soft, quiet mood.

Almost Home. Although I began painting with gouache, a water based medium, I've expanded to oils on canvas. This piece was painted in oil, but I retained characteristics of watercolor gouache by keeping the work active and fluid, filled with soft transitions in color and value. Note the movement of the cattle and rider through the light-filled dust. The sense of the herd's movement through the swirling dust is an important aspect of the painting. The technique of subtle glazing, to create suggestions of different planes, was an integral part of the work.

Taking Stock. Cowboys make an effort to cover country. This rider has stopped after hours of riding to determine where he should go next in an effort to cover country that's not yet been ridden. The horse is happy for the break, but you can tell from his ears that he's attentive to the cowboy's next command.

Keeping the Grit. The cow boss is an essential part of the operation. He's earned the respect of the seasoned hands and the admiration of young cowboys. He makes certain that duties are carried out, and that the customs and principles of an outfit are upheld. He possesses the grit and fortitude needed to perform that task.

Comfort. I've employed rich textures to create a work that captures the essence of the cowboy lifestyle. Dynamic, flowing shapes and expressive brushwork give the work life and motion, and help move the viewer's eye around the page. The peaceful gesture and the relationship of the horses convey a feeling of gentleness and comfort.

Back to Your Momma. This detail of a cattle drive is set in front of an extraordinary array of limestone palisades, just southeast of Red Lodge, Montana. The terrain features a nearly unknown trail that winds its way among magnificent rock formations up to an elevation of nearly 10,000 feet. The star of the show is a little "bully" calf that's cut back from the herd, which exists unseen in front of the figures. His momma is back up the trail, and the calf has gone on the run, in search of her. After taking off after him, a cowboy is joined by another hand, who's noticed the calf's skill at zipping around a horse. The viewer of this painting is introduced to the scene after the calf has finally conceded and is being guided back to the bunch. The title *Back to Your Momma* is a statement I overheard an experienced Montana cowhand utter several times under similar circumstances.

The Storm. Here we see cowboys trying to make some sense out of bad circumstances. The forces of nature often upend cowboys' plans. One of the most alluring qualities of the painting is the depiction of the symbiotic relationship between horses and humans. This painting is quite dark and makes rich use of contrasts.

Learn more about Chris Owen's work at www.chrisowenart.com.

Screaming in Pink

Utah's Tori Gibbs is one of chariot racing's most successful competitors.

By Rod Miller

Tension trembles through the thin aluminum frame and fiberglass faring. Horses snort and paw, snaps and rings jingle. The gates spring wide. The driver leans into the start with the team, picks up their heads with the lines and lets them run into the bits, then spends the next 22 seconds or so "screaming like a girl."

That's how one driver describes the sport of chariot racing.

And that driver is Tori Gibbs of northern Utah's Cache Valley. She proudly admits screaming like a girl because she is one – or, rather, a young woman. As a female, she is a rarity in the sport. Even more so when you look at the list of accolades she's won speeding through dust and cold and snow and slush and mud and water and wind behind the eight pounding hooves of a pair of hard-charging Quarter Horses.

Chariot racing – or cutter racing, when riding on runners rather than wheels – is a wintertime sport popular in the Intermountain West. Fourteen local associations, spread across northern Utah, southern Idaho, and southeastern Wyoming, with a few other outliers, make up the organization that regulates the sport: the World Championship Cutter & Chariot Racing Association. Local associations schedule race meets throughout the winter, with the top performers meeting over the last two weekends in March to determine world champions. For the past several years, the finals have been run on the track at the Golden Spike Event Center in Ogden, Utah.

Although chariot (or cutter) racing is an ancient sport, the community of Thayne, in eastern Wyoming's

photo courtesy Tori Gibbs

Tori Gibbs, right, outruns two world champion teams.

Star Valley, lays claim to originating its modern variation. It seems that back in the 1920s, dairy farmers, just for the thrill of it, took up racing their milk wagons, set on runners for the winter, down the town's snow-covered main street. Over time, light horses replaced draft horses, lightweight chariots replaced creamery carts, and a sport was born, spreading throughout the region and becoming increasingly organized, with the first formal "world" championship races in 1964.

The course for chariot racing is a 440-yard straightaway, with teams blasting out of starting gates. Most races feature two or three, occasionally four, chariots. While many owners and trainers breed and raise teams, most of the horses hitched to chariots nowadays come off California's flat tracks, often costing a pretty penny.

Vic Johnson, of Ogden, served as WCC&CRA manager and secretary, and ramrodded the world championship event for 25 years until retiring from the post after the 2013 meet. "Many people, like myself, started going to California to purchase race horses," he says. While those horses run faster times, they've also run many right out of the game. "It's gotten expensive," Johnson says. "There's no prize money in chariot racing. We run after trophies, belt buckles, horse blankets and bragging rights. That's not much to put toward feed."

But many stay with it, for the competition, camaraderie and fun. "It's a family-oriented thing,"

Johnson says. "I've got five kids and they were at every race I went to. They help hitch the teams, cool out them out after they race, clean stalls, feed.

photo by Rod Miller

Tori took home the Iron Horse Award in recognition of the lasting success of her horse BJ Money Flight.

Families are in it all the way."

Family is what got Tori Gibbs into chariot racing. Her father, Terrill Gibbs, was a long-time trainer and driver in the sport – along with training horses for the flat track – until his untimely death from cancer in early 2013. He met his wife, Bonnie, at a race meet. Bonnie was a driver back then and ran her last race – and Tori's first – while pregnant with her daughter.

So, becoming a driver at age 16 seemed perfectly normal to Tori. "There was never a doubt or question as to whether or not I would race. It was mostly just a matter of when," she says.

"I was driving teams with my dad since I can remember. Even before I was strong enough to control the lines, my dad would hand them to me and hang on behind. And once I got older, he would let me drive the horses back to the barn after they were tired from training," Tori says. "Later, I was able to drive most of the horses – the older chariot horses we raced and colts we were breaking to the chariot. Racing didn't seem too far off."

Despite Tori's belief in the inevitability of her becoming a driver, seeing the lines in female hands at a race is a rare event. Vic Johnson says, "There are usually one or two women driving every year. It's hard. It takes a lot of strength to even drive a team, and if they get spooked and run off, not many men can handle them. If they get erratic, it's hard for a woman to straighten them."

Tori doesn't buy it. For her, handling a team is more a matter of finesse than strength. She's never experienced difficulty controlling her teams. It's a result, she believes, of working with a team, day after day, until she knows the team and the team knows her. The horses come to know what's expected, and she comes to know how to help them achieve those expectations.

"Each year is different, depending on what you think your horses need, but generally I want my team to have at least been in training for 60 to 90 days before I ask them for speed," she says. "Once they've been on the walker for a week, I might start jogging them at home with the work chariot every few days for a few weeks, then build up to a gallop until they're fit to go a few miles. When it gets closer to race time, I try to speed work them at least once and work them out of the starting gates before their first race."

When Tori says "at home" in the context of training, that's just what she means. Her backyard is a training facility many would envy. There's a large, well-kept barn for stabling horses, round corral, arena, walkers, a half-mile oval track and more. The location,

in northern Utah's high-mountain Cache Valley, only adds to the facility's beauty.

But, back to her training regimen.

Tori admits that her methods sometimes put her at odds with her teacher and father. "He would say, 'You've got to be tough. Make them do what you want. Don't baby them so much,'" she says. "With me, though, it's more a matter of working with the team rather than against them. A happy horse is everything with me. I'm a high-maintenance person and I guess I make my horses high maintenance."

That high maintenance approach includes some strict regimens. "I have a race-day routine almost down to the minute with everything I do," Tori says. "I don't do something at 10:30 because that seems like a nice, even time. I do it at 10:33 if that's when it's supposed to be done." Tori's routine accounts for which blanket a horse wears each day, how much to feed and water and when, how the harness is hitched, who helps and what they do, and so on, down to the tiniest detail. Tori says, "I get anxious on race day, worrying that I may have forgotten something or that something may not have been done right. I double check everything, twice. I don't talk much and I know I'm probably difficult to help sometimes, but I don't want to lose a race because I forgot to do something or because someone else screwed up.

"The start of the race is the most critical. You want to go in your gate at just the right time and have your horses set where they need to be. You have to figure out how each horse reacts in the starting gate and the best strategy to get them to stand still and look down the track. You have to decide how much line you need to give the horses when they break from the gate and be able to pick them back up and get them where they need to be after the initial jump," Tori says. Then, "Stay focused. Know where you are on the racetrack and what you, as driver, need to be doing. The horses can feel even the slightest movement of the lines or the driver moving in the chariot."

photo by Rod Miller

Two-thirds of a winning team: chariot racer Tori Gibbs and Counting On Beduino.

This is the part where "screaming like a girl" comes in. But all that screaming is not motivated by fear. "If you are going to stand in a chariot behind two horses and go full speed down a racetrack, fear is not an option," Tori says. "I can promise I have never been scared."

Tori took up tearing down the track at age 16, and has since raced every season but two. Over the years she has piloted nine teams. Three horses stand out.

BJ Money Flight was her first love. He was a

photo by Rod Miller

Tori aboard her racing chariot. High-tech chariots are engineered from lightweight aluminum and fiberglass.

seasoned and successful older horse, and he kept up his winning ways with Tori handling the lines. At age 10, he won the Iron Horse Award, which is at the top of Tori's list for happiest racing moments. But during the first weekend of the world championship meet one year, another team ran into Tori and the wheels of the offending chariot shredded the horse's leg, leaving her half a team short for the finals the following weekend.

Another trainer in her association offered Tori the use of a horse that had been purchased with high hopes, but that had never panned out. She accepted the offer, hitched up Mr Stylin and went on to win second place in her division, driving a horse she didn't know. She ended up purchasing Mr Stylin, who went on to a winning career with another of Tori's favorites, the only one she still owns, Counting On Beduino, or "Cob" for short. With his purchase, she says, "I felt like that proved I knew how to pick a good chariot horse, even if I spent my college fund to get him."

Tori has accumulated a treasure trove of horse blankets, belt buckles, trophies, cups, plaques and statuettes over the years, most engraved "First Place." She placed in the top three of her division at the world championships seven out of the eight years she's been driving.

Her competitors came to respect her ability. "She's very competitive, but horse-oriented, too," says Rick Johnson, president of the Skyline Association and a vice president of WCC&CRA. "She's always aware of where she is on the track, and knows what she has to do to get the most out of her horses. Some guys, they try to drive with the whip. Tori's not that kind of driver. She's one of the best I've ever seen. I'd put her up against the best of the best." But, he adds, "I'm not very objective. I've known Tori since she was tiny. She's sort of like a daughter to me."

If there was any resentment among racers competing with a girl, Rick Johnson doesn't recall it. "When she started competing, there may have been some nervousness with other drivers, but no more than with any rookie. I don't think anyone was ever nervous about her being a girl. I think if you asked other drivers, they'd look at her as serious competition."

That competition is what drives Tori when she's driving a team. And for her, being female is part of it. For every race, her team, her chariot and her self are trimmed with pink because, as she puts it, "When I beat someone, I want them to know they've been beat by a girl."

Rod Miller, a member of Western Writers of America, writes books and poetry as well as magazine articles. His latest novel is *Cold as the Clay*. Visit www.writerRodMiller.com.

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Game On

A veteran boot designer taps into school pride.

By Emily Esterson

Spend any time in Austin, and you'll come to own two things: a pair of cowboy boots, and an item with the University of Texas Longhorns' logo on it. That could be tee shirt, ball cap, sweatshirt, beach towel, dog toy or a garden gnome, complete with a longhorn logo on the gnome's pointy hat. And if you happen to stop in at Allens Boots, you can own both at the same time: handcrafted, embroidered cowboy boots with UT's orange longhorn on the shaft and toe.

photos courtesy Gameday Boots

Gameday Boots markets handcrafted cowboy boots embroidered with college logos.

Boot designer-turned-entrepreneur Marsha Wright didn't go to the University of Texas (she's a Texas Tech grad), but perhaps it was living in Hook 'Em Horns country that ignited the idea for Wright's exploding business, Gameday Boots. After all, Longhorn fans purchase more logo-emblazoned items than all other universities combined.

Gameday Boots was one of those kitchen-table business ideas that happened to hit at just the right moment. Originally, Wright and her daughter thought it might be a nice fundraiser for sororities to have a cowboy boot embroidered with the sorority logo and school logo. They'd sell them to the girls, Wright explained, who could then sell the inventory to new sorority sisters.

"We thought of a name, and I thought I would involve my kids, who could go sell to the sororities," she says. "We'd sell to the girls for the same cost as retail. When I was in college, we did car washes and everything to raise money for philanthropy. So girls could wear [the boots] to football games and get other girls to buy them."

As accidental as the business may seem, Wright is no rookie. If you own a pair of Old Gringos with an embroidered shaft, chances are Wright designed them. She's been designing embroidered boots for Old Gringo for seven years and still owns a stake in the company. During her time with Old Gringo, Wright noticed the fashion trend of young women wearing 13-inch-shaft, embroidered boots with short skirts and dresses. Adding a school logo to Old Gringo's embroidered designs seemed like it might have potential, but when she approached owners Ernie Tarut and Jan Ferry, they balked.


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Marsha Wright originally conceived Gameday as a sorority fundraiser. The company is on track to end 2013 with more than $3 million in sales.

"I had experience with this type of work," says Tarut. "I had no idea it would be what it became. I thought it was like a logo on tee shirts, a logo on hats. [Marsha] took it out and starting doing it herself. In hindsight, I would not have made the same decision."

Wright admits she might not have explained her idea as clearly as she could have, but in any case, Tarut now kicks himself for turning her down. Old Gringo itself was growing so fast, though, its owners might have been afraid a new venture would take away from Wright's popular work on core products.

Wright began talking to customers and friends involved in the boot business; one happened to be Stephen Greenberg, owner of Austin's South Congress Street landmark boot stop, Allens Boots. Greenberg had worked with Lucchese on custom products and understood the retail side of the business. He agreed to go into partnership with Wright, and the two began looking for a factory to manufacture the products. Having worked for Old Gringo, which handstitches its boots, Wright was a stickler about quality, so once again she approached Tarut, who agreed to manufacture Gameday boots in Old Gringo's factory in Leon, Mexico.

Before the first boot came across the border, though, Wright and Greenberg had to find out if there was a market for the product, research which would help them secure rights to school logos, a multistep, paperwork-intensive process. Permission to use school logos and colors comes from the Collegiate Licensing Company, which manages licenses of 200 school logos. Old Gringo made Wright some samples in its Leon factory, and she and Greenberg started visiting retailers. Twenty stores took immediate interest, which allowed her to bring an application to CLC.

Wright submits each design, including the exact school colors, thread types, and shaft, foot and embroidery designs. Then she sends the sample to both CLC and the university for approval. It's about a four-month process, but varies with each school.

College sports logo wear is big business, according to Marty Brochstein, senior vice president of the International Licensing Merchandisers' Association. The business generates better than $3.8 billion in retail sales and reaches into many retail categories (think of those garden gnomes).

"It's all about emotion and identification," Brochstein says. "It's a statement that this is part of me."

And schools themselves make significant money on the sales of logo-wear. Gameday relinquishes 12 percent of each $399 boot sale to the school. In the two years the company has been in business, colleges have earned in excess of $300,000 in royalties on Gameday products.

Brochstein says that apparel and accessories are the two main categories of licensed products, with apparel accounting for about 60 percent of sales, and accessories about five percent, with the balance consisting of miscellaneous items such as mouse pads, notebooks, iPad cases and the like.

These days, women's apparel is one of the fastest growing categories. It used to be that women's collegiate logo wear was just menswear sized down, but that's no longer the case. In fact, women's Gameday boots make up about 88 percent of company sales, even though the company launched both men's and women's products at the same time. The men's boot will be redesigned this year, and Gameday sales manager Jeff Green, Wright's brother, is expecting a 15 percent increase in sales on the men's side of the business.

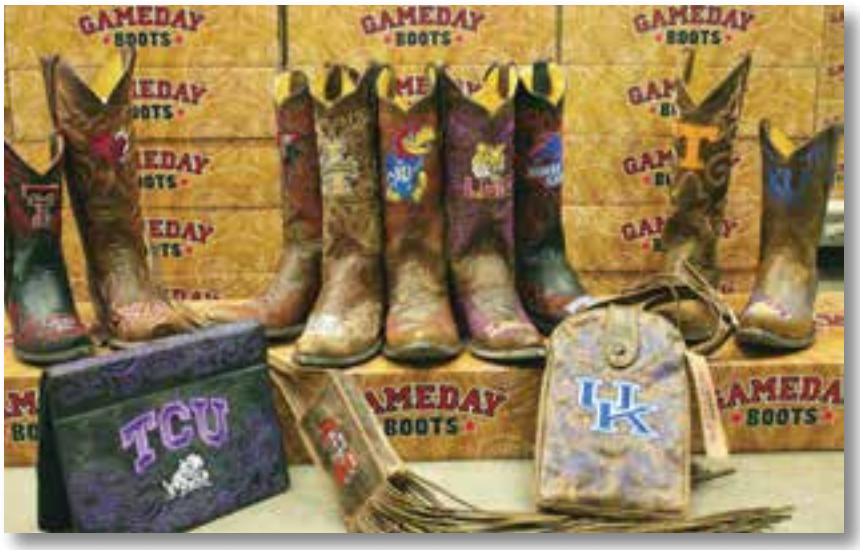
The company also designs and sells purses and iPad covers. Wright recently returned from Mexico, where she was working on a kids' line, Someday by Gameday. Green says the future is bright for sales. The company is hoping to add 40 more schools to its roster.

Wright's brother originally joined the company part time, to help launch what was going to be an Internet business. That changed quickly, he says, and he's now managing six independent sales representatives, with sales doubling each year. Wright, meanwhile, maintains control of the design and product development, and Greenberg's expertise is the retail portion of the business. Their partnership goes beyond Gameday; Greenberg and Wright are now a couple.

"This enterprise sparked our relationship," Wright says. "At first, I was like, 'You don't get involved with

your business partner.' But it happened."

Officially founded in 2011, Gameday is on track to end 2013 with more than $3 million in sales, twice what it made in 2012. It now stocks about 30,000 pairs of boots sporting logos of 105 universities. The company's explosive growth has not been without challenges. As with any entrepreneurial venture, Wright struggled with expansion – how fast, when, and how to manage it. The company has already caused Old Gringo to blow a wall out of its factory in Leon and launch a dedicated production line for Gameday, which has the same high quality standards as Old Gringo. And the company has already outgrown its Austin headquarters. Wright says they're about to break ground on another building.



Gameday also markets purses and iPad covers, and is launching a kids' line.

Wright spends a lot of time in Mexico these days, flying down when a new design goes into production.

"I get a school logo, and I digitize it," she explains. "Then I determine where on the boot it should go, and what design should be on the boot. Then I look at whether it's too big, too small, or if I should move it, whether the thread tension's too tight. Basically I'm looking at the total aspect of design."

In addition to college bookstores, Gameday boots are available in Belks, western wear stores and Neiman Marcus. Gameday does have competitors – just two, though, and each occupies a unique market niche, says Green. Both Nocona and Lucchese offer a college logo boot, with Nocona on the low end and Lucchese, with its exotic skins, on the high end. Gameday's niche – which Green describes as right in the middle – "is the young lady who has Daddy's credit card and he's not going to raise hell when he sees the charge."

Wright is proud of her work, which she values more than owning a successful business. She's seen plenty of Gameday boots at UT football games. She recounts being at a rodeo with her granddaughter when they spotted a woman wearing a pair of boots Wright designed.

"My granddaughter said, 'That's your boot! Tell her you made them!'" Wright recalls. "I just asked her where she bought them. She replied, 'I just love these, I got them at the Maverick.' Later I said, 'If I told her I designed them, she'd think I was just crazy.' She loved her boots and thought they were great. If I can make somebody smile in a pair of boots, we've done a good job."

Emily Esterson, based in Albuquerque, writes for and edits business and horse magazines. She is the author of *The Ultimate Book of Horse Bits*.

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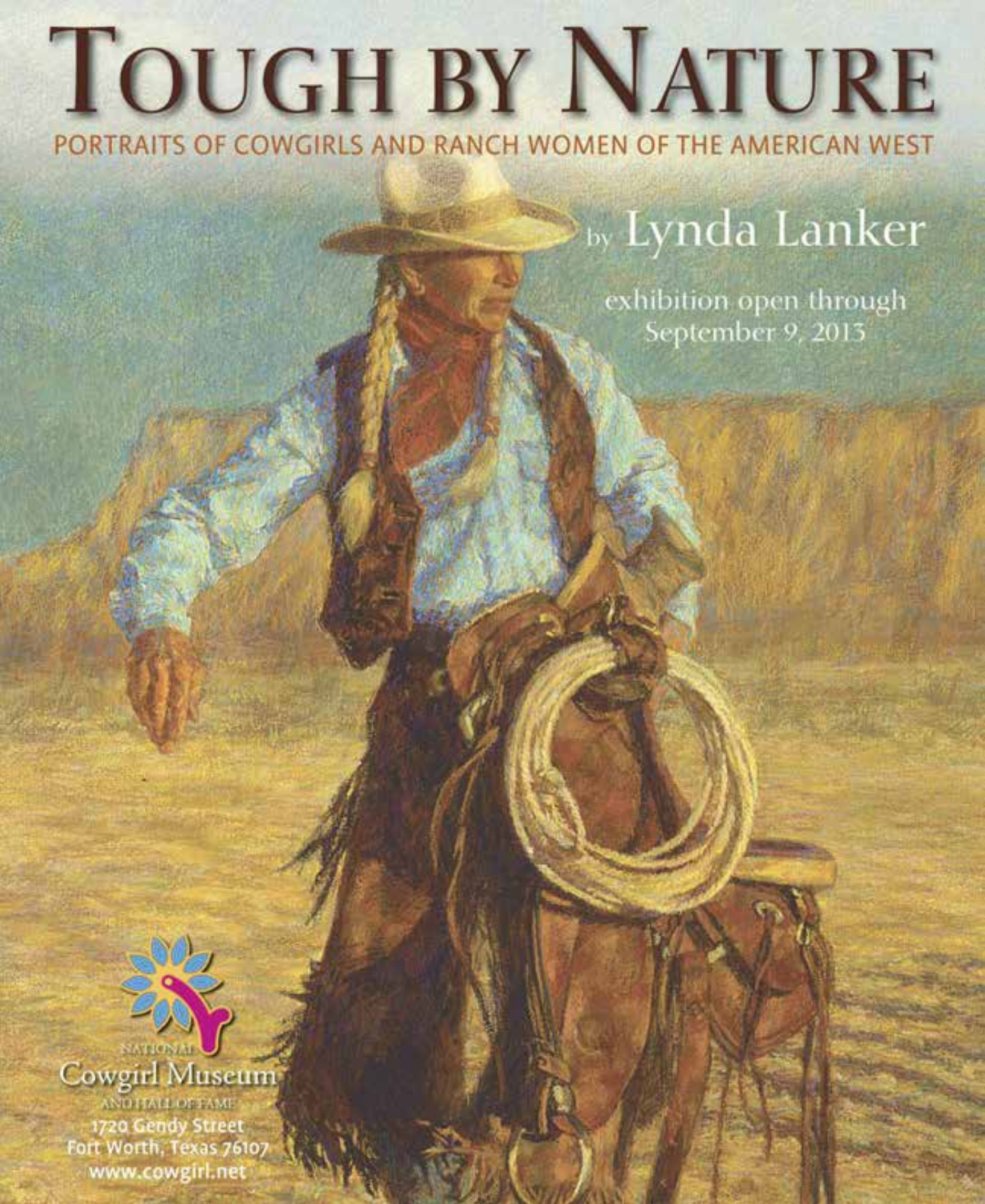

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Cowgirl Couture

Four western fashion designers earn mainstream recognition.

By Thea Marx

Western fashion has come a long way from its utilitarian roots outfitting stockmen in rural communities. With their use of natural fabrics and nods to frontier heritage, western designers are capturing attention on runways across the world. Here, we look at the work of four designers infusing their work with cowgirl flair.

"Fashion makes my heart sing," says designer Julie Ewing of Bastrop, Texas, known for her jaw-dropping, floor-length leather gowns embellished with jewels, feathers and French lace.

As a teenager, Ewing was bitten by the western bug and dreamed of becoming part of a vast landscape filled with horses and ranches. When she had a chance to realize that dream she immersed herself in rodeo and horse shows. Ultimately, that immersion led to a start in fashion, with her line of

Left: Julie Ewing's black lambskin peplum jacket features raw edges and a feather lapel and leather belt. A black suede handbag has silver specialty lace, jewelry accents, hand-cut fringe, and a rhinestone-encrusted bangle-bracelet handle. Center: Ewing's French vanilla lamb-suede dress also features raw edges, and is hand-beaded with gold pearls and crystals on hand-cut fringe. The moss lamb-suede handbag, with vintage steer head, has an array of gold, beads, crystals and pearls, as well as peacock feathers for an added touch. Right: Ewing's pearlized gray, lambskin-fringed jacket features embellished Parisian beaded lace, and freshwater pearl beadwork. The baby lambskin handbag has three-dimensional lace applique work, and bangle-bracelet handles. www.j-ewingdesigns.com

beautiful beaded halters, which became a rage on the show circuit.

"It was a far cry from fashion magazines I'd devoured growing up, or the Miss America Pageants that held my rapt attention, but it was a start," Ewing says. She went on to design custom jackets for the horse-show set, then rodeo queen outfits – including several for winners of the Miss Rodeo America pageant – and finally couture gowns and jackets.

With an eye for draping and embellishment, Julie set out on a path that would lead to runways, high-fashion shoots and a long client list. For inspiration, she looks to designers who create fashion light years away from the western genre: Alexander McQueen, Versace and Ellie Saab. Fabulous fabrics, in a rich array of color combinations echoed in nature, are her favorite, but she also looks for texture, movement and light reflectivity. That thought process leads her to work with uncommon, complicated embellishments, such as imported French lace, hand-stitched beads, exotic feathers, and semi-precious gems that provide a glitter factor to highly tailored, elegant pieces.

"I'm still enchanted by Audrey Hepburn coming down the stairs in her ecru gown in *My Fair Lady*," Ewing says. "I think my real love for fashion began in high school and has never stopped."

With the world of western fashion evolving, Ewing is evolving too. She's introduced a new line of high-fashion pieces that can be worn for more than black tie events or high-fashion luncheons. A line of handbags and belts is her newest offering. She describes the pieces as accessible high fashion for a market that craves something new, but might not have a couture budget.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would become a designer," she says. "The western industry has provided me with an opportunity to create my own look – a blend of the West with cutting-edge contemporary that's sophisticated and feminine."

Beautiful clothes created by her aunt and mother for paper dolls were the bedrock of Meredith Lockhart's fascination with fashion.

"I couldn't wait for Christmas to see the new designs and colors

Invited to design for New York City's 2013 From Scotland With Love fashion show, Meredith Lockhart created outfits around the theme of "A Highland Cinderella." Each of these pieces feature supple lambskin with custom embroidery, hand-painting, Swarovski crystals, and fabric from the Scottish mill Calzeat. The top hat, designed by Lockhart, is made by Greeley Hat Works; boots are custom made by DelaCav, and include Calzeat fabric; jewelry is custom, by the Meredith Lockhart Collection. www.meredithlockhart.com

they'd created," the designer says. "When I got old enough, I not only created doll clothes, but my own. It was fun to have pieces no one else had."

Lockhart was raised in a home filled with talent. Her mother was a musician, her father a jeweler. For Meredith, art was a natural part of life.

To help keep the family fed, her father opened several restaurants, so Meredith had a plethora of boxes at her disposal. Out of those, she built and decorated elaborate doll houses, an inspiration for her first career in the arts: interior design.

Having an inborn love of fabrics, Lockhart opened a drapery shop and eventually worked on projects for Fortune 500 companies. As a young mother, she wanted more time at home. She hung up her sample book and briefcase, and started sewing and hand-painting fabrics.

"On a whim, I loaded the car with my creations and went to Santa Fe," she says. "I found a sales rep, and that was the start of my wholesale business."

From there, Lockhart designed pieces for country music stars and rodeo queens, including several Miss Rodeo America winners and the Calgary Stampede royalty. The western motif was a natural fit for her. She loved horses and had ridden them since she was a teenager. She became immersed in the agricultural world when she married a farmer, and raised her son amidst cows and vast Kansas cornfields. Meanwhile, she continued to paint, draw and sew.

Lockhart's preferred material is leather, but she uses many fabrics, including those she hand-dyes or paints. She also embellishes many of her designs with embroidery, Swarovski crystals, and hand-painted designs. Recently, she worked with the Scottish mill Calzeat, using their luxurious chenille to make skirts for the New York runway show, From Scotland With Love.

Along with pieces on runways and in shows across the country, including Santa Fe Fashion Week and the Western Design Conference,

Lockhart has dressed regional celebrities, like *Arizona Country TV*'s Bobbie Jean Olsen and Miss Texas America. Her work has drawn national attention; the fashion-themed reality program *Project Runway* called her this spring, encouraging her to apply for the show.

"I'm passionate about designing, even on hard days," Lockhart says. "I'm excited about my jewelry line of hand-hammered copper and bronze pieces, featuring turquoise. Soon, I'll have a line of classic pieces in boutiques. I want the Meredith Lockhart label to be one that people can wear without ever being out of style."

Raised in a military family, Celeste Sotola found herself moving every few years, chalking up experiences and landscapes like most children tally winning soccer goals. One particular locale, Japan, influenced her so greatly that it resonated within her for years afterward.

"I would wake up each morning, look out my window and see Mount Fuji," she says. "That was my first experience with mountains, and I loved seeing them. Japan was a time in my life when every nerve was open. The culture shock happened at just the right time. It shaped me and my future."

Early on, Sotola was immersed in the arts, playing piano and dancing ballet. As an adult, she became a writer, painter, interior designer, multimedia artist and photographer. In Chicago, she created a gallery that was named the city's "best art experience." She was successful, creative and driven, yet something was missing: mountains. As a writer for an inflight magazine, she found a way to get to Montana and back to a mountain setting. The experience penetrated her soul, and she left Chicago.

"I walked away from everything – my home, my dog, my clothes, my friends," she says. "I came to Montana to be with Earl [her partner she met on her first visit to Big Sky Country]. I came to free my soul."

In the shadow of Sotola's beloved mountains, she developed a fascination with the clothes worn by the people around her.

"They weren't perfect. They were worn and seemed disheveled," she says. "My first thought was that everyone needed a good dry cleaning. She observed the western way of life from every angle she could find, then put her own spin on it, through fashion.

Inspired by mountain wildflowers, Celeste Sotola created this gown using hand-dyed deer suede in muted tones. Wildflowers on the dress are handmade, and the bodice is silk velvet. "I wanted a mixture of everything you might get when climbing a mountain," Celeste says. "I wanted a gown that you could spin in and have flowers at your feet." www.montanadreamwear.com

Her first project centered on hats: hats spattered with paint, rubbed with dirt, shot full of holes. They were a hit, and found homes in exclusive boutiques. Sotola found a niche creating pieces "infused with an intrepid spirit of self-sufficiency."

Sotola's buckskin designs found their way into fashion editors' hearts and wowed runway audiences. She won Best Collection and Best Art to Wear honors at the Western Design Conference, the People's Choice Award at Cody High Style, and Best Country Chic Designer at Dressed to Kilt in New York City.

Then, just as it seemed Sotola's career was peaking, Earl passed away, leaving the designer's heart broken. Tucked away in the corners of her studio was a project the two had been working on together, one that took on more importance with Earl's absence. Sotola's latest creation, she says, tells the story of women and their role in building, and softening, the West.

"Homestead women are the bedrock of feminism," she says as she laces a wedding gown. "With my work, I'm tracing the roots of their impact on the West. These gowns tell a story in images, materials and workmanship."

Each of Sotola's gowns celebrates a homestead, one chosen from more than 200 she's documented on film. A homestead's poignant image is printed on silk, then integrated into the garment, with materials that tell the story of the woman who lived there, the woman Sotola imagines wearing the piece. The collection will debut in late 2014, first at Cody's Buffalo Bill Center of the West, then at other museums worldwide.

"Without Earl, I feel akin to the women who left everything behind and had to rely upon themselves to survive," Sotola says. "This project was ours, and reflects so much of our lives and the lives of those I've come to admire."

"Leather has an amazing feel to it," says Angela DeMontigny. "Working with it is in my DNA." The designer is of Canadian First Nations heritage.

DeMontigny infuses her designs with gorgeous colors and textures. The results have earned her worldwide acclaim and placed her in the spotlight as a stylist and cultural advisor for the upcoming film *Fearchaser*. She's working to create a costume – one with native influences – for Chinese R&B star Ayi Jihu.

Surrounded by the influences of music and theater

Angela DeMontigny's fully lined Element Denim jacket, in turquoise and chocolate goat suede, features a snap front closure and cuffs. It's worn with a matching lambskin-fringed mini in chocolate. The Element City Bag is in safari hair-on-hide, with turquoise and brown full-grain leather trim. www.youngnativefashion.com

Where The West Lives.

Photo: Jenny Gummersall

The Legend. Lan Tyson
April 2013

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from an early age, DeMontigny also found inspiration in her mother's fashion sense.

"I loved her high heels," DeMontigny says. "She was my first major fashion influence." Of Cree, Chippewa and Metis heritage, DeMontigny grew up in an environment in which her mother painted and played piano and her father was an accomplished musician. The family was also involved in amateur theater.

From the age of 12, DeMontigny knew she wanted to be in the fashion industry. She would sit in class "sketching dresses instead of listening to the teacher," she says. "I had my own fashion identity before I entered high school."

DeMontigny first worked as a make-up artist, then as model, before learning to produce fashion shows. Ultimately, she decided she wanted to be the creative influence behind the scenes. She attended design school, then began creating her own lines. Early in her career, she showed avant garde designs on runways at the Western Design Conference and Cody High Style.

"I love western culture and try to merge western lifestyle with eastern sophistication," she says. "I want my designs to be wearable anywhere, by anyone."

DeMontigny says her primary influence is her native heritage. She was instrumental in developing the Canadian Aboriginal Design Council, and continues to advocate for Canada's aboriginal cultural producers. In 2010, she produced four days of shows for the first Aboriginal Fashion Week, held during the Vancouver Olympic Games.

The designer is at work on a ready-to-wear line, Young Native Fashion, which fuses her cultural influences with modern fashion themes.

"Right now, it's the calm before the storm, and we're preparing like mad for next year," DeMontigny says. "I'm planning shows in places such as Moscow and Myanmar, as well as North America. It's going to be a busy year."

Thea Marx is a writer and western-design specialist based in Wyoming. Learn more at www.theamarx.com.

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NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

Out of Africa

The 2013 FFA Global Outreach: Africa (FFA GO: Africa) program was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for six college-age students to travel to Burkina Faso, a small landlocked country in West Africa, June 22nd through July 7th. While there, the participants learned how smallholder farmers fight hunger and poverty through sustainable agriculture. Partnered with Catholic Relief Services, an international humanitarian agency, the group experienced firsthand the reality of food insecurity, agriculture and conservation issues in a Sub-Saharan African country where the average annual income is at or below $1,500. FFA GO: Africa is a program of the National FFA Organization made possible through a generous gift from the Howard G. Buffett Foundation to the National FFA Foundation.

Read the following pages to get a taste of what the group experienced during their travels. You can read more about their trip by visiting the National FFA Blog on FFA.org.

Day 1: Bonjour a Burkina Faso!
June 24, 2013

The FFA GO: Africa team has arrived in Burkina Faso! After 25+ hours of travel from Washington D.C., we slept well last night in Ouagadougou, the country's capital, and woke refreshed and ready for our first day in-country with Catholic Relief Services.

This morning we were welcomed at the CRS headquarters in Ouagadougou by Adjavon, Amidou and Bangre. They taught us about their work in Burkina Faso. Adjavon left us with powerful words when he said, "As you put your foot in our country, you become our ambassador."

From our orientation at CRS, we loaded the Land Rovers and traveled to the National Agronomic Research Centre of Kamboinse. The Burkinabe are learning that sweet potatoes are a powerful tool in fighting malnutrition, and researchers are working to increase vitamin A and beta-carotene levels to improve nutrition and develop weevil resistance in sweet potatoes.

We were inspired by their commitment to results. Kirby said, "The biggest thing I enjoyed about the visit was their interest in not just producing food but producing nutritious food." Tessa made a great connection and noted that we often face the same research challenges in the United States. For example, as pests evolve, it is hard to ensure that plant varieties remain resistant. The Burkinabe researchers are fighting the same

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problem. It was interesting to see how even though on opposite sides of the globe, agriculture is still universal.
– Bradley Coleman (Louisiana), Kirby Schmidt (Minnesota), Laura Frazee (Montana), Nicole Liles (Florida), Tessa Ries (Minnesota), Whitney Barnes (Wisconsin) and Trisha Bailey (adult leader)

Day 2: Resilience and farm women
June 25, 2013

As we conclude our second day, I sit on my mosquito net-covered bed in a room with no AC, open air, cement floors, one power outlet and a shower with spiders in it and can do nothing else but grin, thinking about our day and the people we met.

Today we met the extension agents of Burkina Faso, comparing the issues and challenges we face as agriculture educators. We spent the rest of the day working in two villages, learning farming techniques and meeting the humble, resilient people who farm here. They are resilient as they face the hardships of poor soil, unpredictable and extreme weather patterns, little funding, and malnutrition and yet greet strangers smiling ear to ear, treating them like honored guests.

And I thought I was a tough woman... until I met the Burkinabe women. With babies wrapped around their backs, they dig six- to seven-inch deep holes by hand with a pick ax in alternating rows for a few acres... real farm women. Oh and it is 100 and some degrees Fahrenheit with a bazillion percent humidity.

At the first village we visited, before we left, we recognized one of the village women who farms sweet potatoes and also participates in CRS's Savings and Internal Lending Communities. Bradley gave her an FFA pin, and she had him attach it to her dress collar as she was holding her sleeping baby. She beamed at him, head back, chest up...proud. All the women in the village were beaming. It was a win for them, all the women of the community.

Bradley Coleman shakes the hand of a sweet potato farmer and member of a CRS Savings and Internal Lending Community after giving her an FFA pin.

I think as agriculturists we can sympathize with many of the issues facing Burkinabe farmers; we are really not so different. We all fight drought, floods and the balance in our bank account to put food on the table.
– Laura

Day 3: Familiar words in a different world
June 26, 2013

As the sun began to set in the village of Tipoli, a young boy stood and told our group, and the entire village of about 100 people, of his motivation to be in agriculture. His French teacher told him, "Even though people may tell you that pursuing a career as a farmer is 'stupid', in reality it is the best life you could choose because who else will produce our food?" Despite the

A vehicle drives team members across a dam in the early rainy season.

common perception of farming as a last resort career, the young man proudly stated that his teacher's words motivated him even more to be a farmer.

"I want to do what my father does, and I want to develop new techniques for farming in my village. People need to eat. That is why I believe in my future in farming."

Tipoli village farmers look at the drawing Kirby Schmidt made of them during a meeting with the team.

His words seemed all too familiar, as pursuing a career in agriculture can sometimes be looked down upon. Farmers are stereotyped as "stupid." Yahoo.com even predicted as dismal the future of careers in agriculture. However, there is a common bond we share, although miles apart. We all engage in the honest pursuit to produce food, feed people and develop the communities that have given so much to us.

– Kirby

Day 4: Rain, rain…come and stay!
June 27, 2013

As Americans, we are familiar with the experience of drought and can relate to the Burkinabe as they pray for rain. After exiting our vehicles on Day 4, we saw three community members plowing their red and dry sandy soil with small hand hoes. This visual made us thankful for the convenient and fueled plows that work 27 rows with a single swipe of the field. Star-struck by

FFA GO: Africa team member Tessa Ries meets a toddler in Burkina Faso.

the diligent work of both men and women in the hope of feeding their family, the team hopped in and experienced the work ourselves. As we struggled, the Burkinabe snickered and smiled as we realized our pace was like that of a tortoise.

Tired from the labor, we slowly stand to see the community members pointing at something behind us.

Before the rain rolled in, team members were challenged to a friendly hand tilling competition.

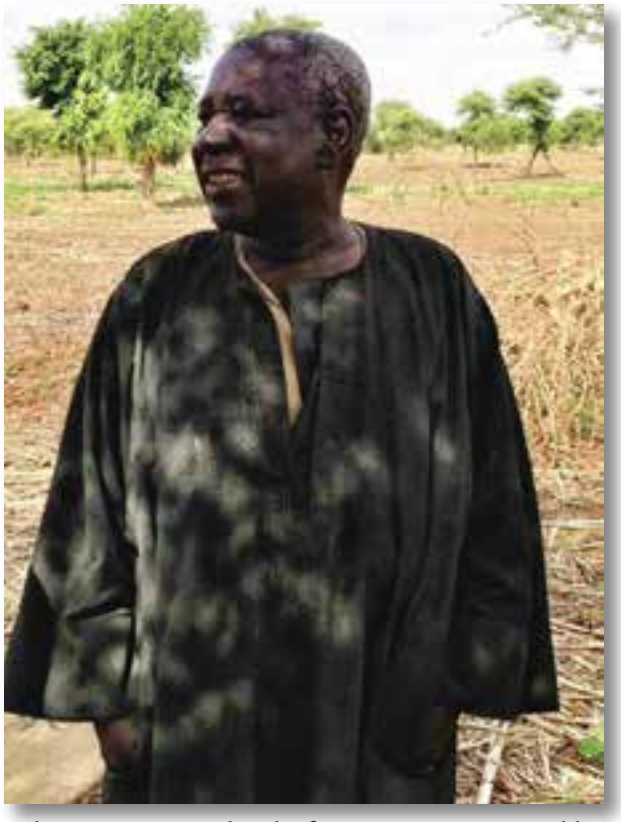
As we turned around, the puffy wide spread of black pearl clouds floated in – faster and faster. The village members started to jog with smiles and excitement to shelter. Dust started to fill the air, reminding us of a "Dust Bowl Experience" that our generation only reads about in textbooks. As the rain chased us to our Land Rovers, the doors quickly slammed shut and we drove close to a building to avoid the powerful wind.

Steam started to fog the windows, while the noise of large rain drops pounced on the roof. The team quietly thought about the joy and blessing this rain had brought to the families who have worked hard preparing for this rainfall.

– Bradley, Kirby, Laura, Nicole, Tessa, Whitney and Trisha

Day 5: Innovation to bring home
June 28, 2013

The women stood proudly as we drove up to their parboiling group. They greeted us with smiles and excitedly showed us the parboiling process. This process includes a series of steps: boiling the rice, letting it soak overnight, steaming it in the morning, letting it dry in the sun and finally, sending it to the mill. Parboiling is very important because it separates the paella from the grain while attaching the lemma that contains important nutrients. The women in this group are much respected among the community due to the high



This innovative Burkinabe farmer practices renewable farming techniques and focuses on resource management to decrease erosion, increase soil organic matter and produce better crops.

Team member Whitney Barnes stands in a rice paddy near the small community of Bogandé in eastern Burkina Faso.

nutritional content in the rice they sell. The women's relationship with each other is important, and the income they gain allows them to pay for their children's school fees and medical expenses, buy clothes, and increase the nutrition for their families. Their group has increased their self-esteem, leadership and pride in agricultural work, just as FFA does for students in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

– The FFA GO: Africa Team

Day 6: The tables have turned
June 29, 2013

One of the common themes of our journey is that villagers often ask for our ideas on how they can improve their production practices. They seek our opinions and wish to learn from us. Although this is flattering, the honest truth is we don't always have an answer for them. What we do at home can't always be applied because everything here, from the soil to the climate, is drastically different. However, the tables have turned on us today, and we are the ones who learned something valuable.

After awaking to another beautiful morning in the quaint village of Bogandé, we traveled to a village that has adopted CRS's SILC program. Our skilled drivers took a turn off the main road onto a dirt path toward the village. This seemingly never ending road was filled with twists, turns, bumps, bridges, mud, and was definitely the road less traveled. After a good 30 minutes of being jostled around in the Land Rovers, we finally reached the village huts and were in for a surprise. Immediately, a huge crowd of villagers ran toward the vehicles waving, clapping and chanting, a welcome more grand than one would ever experience in the United States.

Feeling right at home, we met underneath a shady tree with well over 100 of the Yarga Lampiadi villagers

Team members participate in an SILC meeting at the remote village of Bogandé.

and began learning about their SILC practices, somewhat similar to our banking system but on a much smaller scale. The program allows a group of 30 women to come together based on friendship and trust to save their money. By pooling their money, they are able to issue loans with a 10 percent interest rate. The SILC box is kept safe with three locks, and the keys are distributed to three respected women. At the end of an eight-month cycle, the women distribute the money they saved plus interest collected. This helps them begin to break free from poverty to buy livestock, food, medicine and school supplies for their children.

– Bradley

Day 7: Donkeys, cattle and sheep…oh my!
June 30, 2013

We spent our last night in Bogandé and made the trek to Fada this morning to experience the livestock and grain markets. It was a nice transition from the small-town Burkinabe lifestyle to experience the hustle and bustle of the larger city of Fada.

The market in Fada is a central location for the trade of cattle, sheep, donkeys and goats—the primary livestock commodities of Burkina Faso. People come from as far as the neighboring countries of Togo, Benin and Niger to trade their livestock and make purchases. Because so many people come to the livestock market, many vendors will bring other products to sell, such as food, clothing, shoes and technology, making it a huge weekend trade location.

At the market, we had a literally jaw-dropping experience. Animals are not transported in Burkina Faso like they are in the United States. It is not uncommon to see three or four goats tied together in a basket on a bicycle or sheep piled in the backseat of a van. But the most shocking thing we saw were the Brahman cattle riding on the top of a van. We not only saw these cattle sitting on the van, but we witnessed how they got there! With a rope attached to the neck of the animal, one man stood atop the van among other cattle and pulled, while others "bench-pressed" and lifted the cow up from the ground. We're talking a full-grown animal here! We all stood in awe with our mouths gaping open, trying to process what just happened right before our eyes.

It is safe to say that this market was unlike anything our team members had ever experienced before.

– Bradley, Kirby, Laura, Nicole, Tessa, Whitney, and Trisha

The team takes in the action at the bustling Fada livestock exchange.

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Day 8: Division of labor
July 1, 2013

Today we traversed the area of Gayeri, which required a police escort as the roads are notorious for roadside robbery. Our destination was a village 40 kilometers past Gayeri so that we could speak with farmers and the community. We drove on treacherous roads... my stomach might have been permanently relocated thanks to the serious air we were catching!

The village women spoke about their plight with water availability, something that is a relative non-issue in the United States. In this village the nearest well was two kilometers (about one and one-quarter miles) away and it provides water for more than 300 people. Often they arrive at the well to join a line of 30 people attempting to pump water, and then turn around and walk back with heavy buckets.

We asked about the division of labor between men and women in the village and most people laughed. They said both men and women fetch water and participate in farming, but only women cook. I was compelled to ask, "Why?" Once again, there was laughter. However, the women took it as an opportunity to really share about all they do in their communities and families.
– Laura

Day 9: Rock On
July 2, 2013

Our time in eastern Burkina Faso wrapped up this morning, and we made our way from Fada N'Gourma back to the capital city of Ouagadougou. Today was a change of pace; we did not tour any agriculture but rather experienced the art, culture and granite boulders just outside of Ziniare and Laongo.

For the past 20+ years, artists of the world have gathered annually for a symposium at the naturally occurring granite hot spot to carve out incredible pieces of art. What was once a hard, non-descript surface of granite has now been crafted into the smooth, distinct features of a mother and her child.

At face value, it just looks like a bunch of rocks, abstract shapes or etches in stone. However, as we approached each of the more than 100 sculptures in the garden, we experienced a strong, unique message. Many of the sculptures emphasized the agriculture, slavery, role of women, human nature, and unique culture of the Burkinabe people.

A sculpture that really spoke to me was one that, at first, I didn't realize I was standing on. Quite simply, it was a large, dead tree branch lying on the ground and next to it was its reflection carved into the earth's granite. The sculpture didn't have intricate designs, people or a complexity of 3-D form. It was just the outline of a tree branch. Our tour guide explained that the sculptor wanted to emphasize human life. Even after we die, just like the tree branch, we still leave an imprint wherever we have gone of the decisions we have made (good or bad). Everything that we do has an effect on everyone and everything that comes after us.

I couldn't help but reflect on the time we have spent in Burkina so far: just nine days, and we have experienced so much. Although our meetings with the Burkinabe farmers were brief, they were some of the most honest and authentic experiences I have had. They left an imprint on each of our lives and etched memories and feelings we will never forget.
– Kirby

Day 10: What will you do?
July 3, 2013

After a peaceful evening and a wonderful breakfast, we left the hotel at 7:30 a.m. to drive six hours to our next destination: Banfora.

Along the way, the group stopped at the Le Centre

Agricole Polyvalent de Matourkou – a two-year university of agriculture. The school offers various programs to prepare students to become future extension agents, technicians, engineers or advisors. Most of the CRS members we have traveled with attended this school.

Many students are drawn into agriculture and the school because they can be placed in government jobs or work for a Non-Government Organization (NGO) once they graduate from the program. The government offers a competency test that rewards students who earn a certain score with an all-expenses-paid opportunity to attend the school. Students who want to work for an NGO are still allowed to attend the school; however, they must pay the price of tuition. This is the only school that accepts students with government scholarships in agriculture.

The group engaged in a discussion about the culture and surroundings we have experienced over the past 10 days, and we wondered about the progress Burkina Faso will make in the next 10 years. Each one of our team members will bring back to America their unique perspectives on what we have seen and learned.

As the day wraps up, we have checked in at our hotel in Banfora. Many of us are enjoying the first swimming pool of the trip. Each hotel room here is a one-room villa that looks out on beautiful scenery that is different from the other parts of Burkina we have experienced thus far.

Until Later,

– Bradley, Kirby, Laura, Nicole, Tessa, Whitney and Trisha

Boys to Men

Roy Sanders uses a lifetime of cowboy skills to turn troubled city boys into self-reliant young men.

By Tim Keller

Out on the northwest boundary of his 175 acres above Trinidad, Colorado, Roy Sanders and his boys are building a fence with reclaimed wood fence posts. The four boys, aged 16 to 18, haven't done this before, so Roy demonstrates each step along the way, beginning with hole digging. On the way out they stopped to turn an ancient downed tree into firewood. Roy has spent a half-century steeped in the myriad skills it takes to keep a ranch going, but these are city boys just learning how to work.

Roy shares a laugh with his foster sons. "This is my life," he says. "This is what I do. This is my family."

Cowboys are known for raising cows. Roy Sanders raises boys. Through a quirk of fate 11 years ago, he transformed a vagabond life of cowboy camps and rodeo arenas into that of a single foster parent running a group home for wayward boys. It's proved a marriage made in heaven. Think *My Three Sons*

crossed with John Wayne's *The Cowboys*.

Roy was a troubled child himself, his divorced parents moving him back and forth between Oklahoma and Idaho, when his great-uncle Jack Hancock took him in to grow up on Hancock's 200,000-acre ranch in southern Arizona. Roy started the third grade in the two-room school at Wikieup. "I know what it feels like to be a boy living away from home," he says.

Most of what he teaches boys today was learned at his uncle's side. "He was the greatest person I've ever known, and the greatest influence on my life," Roy says. "He was an old-time cowboy born in 1885 on a west Texas ranch. He left home on horseback at 14 to start cowboying. Pancho Villa captured him along the border and took him south, eventually releasing him because of his age. He walked 50 miles north to New Mexico."

Hancock homesteaded in Arizona, growing his big cattle ranch. "He taught me pretty much everything I know," Roy says, "including his values and work ethic." After Roy graduated from Kingman High School in 1974, he began cowboying throughout the West, working on the cowboy crews of big ranches, including the MC and ZX in Oregon and the Sweetwater and Spanish ranches in Nevada.

"I've always liked horses that buck so I'd volunteer to ride the rough string," he says. For 18 years, he rode saddle broncs in rodeos across the West, dividing his years into thirds. "As soon as spring branding was over, I'd leave and go ride the rodeo circuit. In the fall, I'd guide hunters in the North Absaroka Wilderness outside Yellowstone. Come winter, I'd go back to work on a ranch, usually south, somewhere warmer like Nevada or Arizona."

In 1991, he moved to Colorado to run the 38,000-acre Seven Lakes Ranch, near Trinidad, running 200 mother cows plus 1,500 yearlings in the summers. He had 14 horses and took in others to train.

1999 was a bad year. The ranch was sold, and his wife and kids moved away. Roy moved into Trinidad and took a job driving trucks in the gas fields.

photographs by Tim Keller

Roy has cowboyed throughout the West, guided hunters, and competed on the rodeo circuit.

"I'm an avid reader," he says. "One day, I couldn't find the *Denver Post*, so I was reading the *Pueblo Chieftain* when I saw an ad saying they needed foster parents. I thought, man, that would be great. I get along great with kids. I didn't think they'd take me because I wasn't married, but I passed the background checks and took in my first boy in 2002. They asked me if I'd take another one. The next thing I know, it turned into a full-time deal. I switched over from a foster home to a group home. If I'd found the Denver paper that day, this never would have happened."

When he took in his fourth boy in 2004, Colorado's Department of Human Services told Roy he'd have to get a bigger place. He bought raw land near

The family photo. Roy Sanders (center) with his four foster sons.

Hoehne, and he and his boys have been building a ranch ever since, the snow-capped Spanish Peaks majestic in the west, Fisher's Peak marking the way to New Mexico in the south.

"With my uncle, if we needed something done, we did it ourselves," Roy says. "I'm not a master of any trade, but I can do about anything. That's what I try to teach the boys. The main thing I teach them is how to work. The boys and I have done everything except set the house. We dug and installed the septic system. I taught them how to pour concrete and we framed up the footing for the house. We did the cistern for the water supply. We wired the garage for light. They learned how to weld and we built the barn and the corrals and arena." Today they're stacking firewood and building a fence.

Ranging in age from 14 to 18, the boys are in the legal custody of DHS. Some have been in trouble with the law and have probation officers. Some have been taken from bad home situations. To date, Roy's had 27 boys from all over Colorado, and all but one were city boys.

"When they get here, most have no idea how to work," he says. "They're all just used to hanging out, and playing video games. Here, we don't have video games. We concentrate on actual skills that they're going to be able to use for jobs."

One of the boys says, "Living here opened my eyes. Roy teaches you to be yourself. At home I tried to fit in too much. It led me to trouble."

"When the boys get here, they lack self-confidence," Roy explains. "They've been trying to be what they think everyone else wants them to be. I teach them to just be themselves. Be a good person, do your best, be honest, and then people will like you for who you are instead of what you think you need to be."

The boys stay with Roy until they graduate from Aguilar High School; many go on to college.

"I believe in an education," Roy says. "They can't get through life without it. That's huge to me. I push them to do their best in school. A lot of them come without that background of being in school and doing well. It takes them a while to realize, 'I can do this, I can go to school and I can get good grades.'"

Roy's longtime DHS supervisor, Janell Miller, says, "Roy is more caring and giving than anyone knows. He takes those boys and treats them as his own. He guides them and teaches them skills that will benefit them for a lifetime. He puts his own needs aside and he's there to assist the boys at any time. My only wish for Roy is that we could clone him and have every foster parent as wonderful as he is."

But Roy doesn't put his own life aside as much as Miller imagines. "This is my life," he says. "This is what I do. This is my family. This is as much the boys' home as mine." They go everywhere together, from grocery shopping to camping trips in the high mountains. Roy's Dodge crew cab seats six; his horse trailer has a living

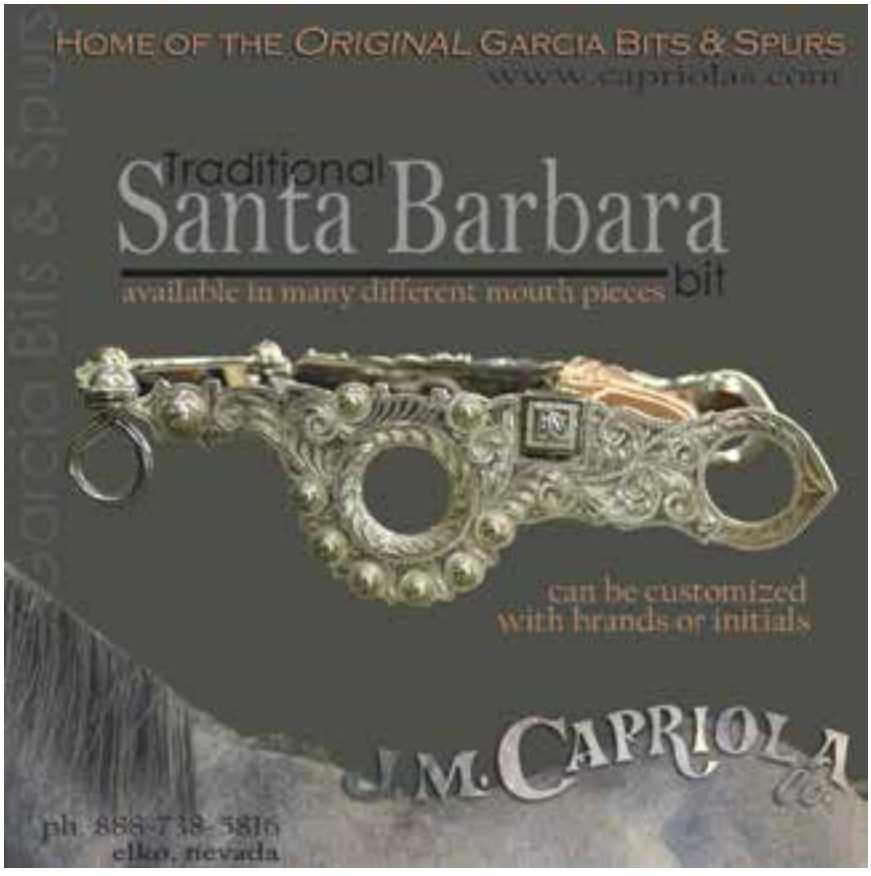
As Roy's family grew, he needed a bigger home. He and the boys are at work building a ranch in southern Colorado.

quarters. "We've been to Elitch Gardens in Denver and the Albuquerque zoo. We went to Las Vegas, Nevada, to pick up a couple horses I bought."

Roy still trains horses and zigzags three states every year to compete in team roping. The boys learn to ride and rope. "I knew Ray Hunt in Nevada," Roy says, "and I learned a lot from him about training horses, working with their minds, making the things you want them to do easy and things they're doing wrong hard. Living here, these boys change their mindsets, too. They don't want to be in trouble anymore. That comes from giving them something to do."

In the arena on a recent Saturday afternoon, the boys trade off roping and driving a four-wheeler with a mechanical roping calf. Roy shows the newest boy how to hold the rope. "We call each other brothers," one boy tells a visitor. "We look at Roy as our dad." They're earnest in learning to ride and rope, but as the sun sets over the Rockies and they walk their horses back to the barn, the camaraderie, easy smiles and rippling laughter are non-stop. One is graduating in May, going on to Trinidad State Junior College. He fancies buying his horse, Catfish, from Roy.

Roy laughs heartily, kidding the boy about his penniless state. They share the long walk to the house where they turn on the lights and clean up for dinner. The boys learn to cook and take turns making dinner. Along with the other chores and the laughter, it's all part of growing up here at Roy's place, here in Roy's family.



THE FRONTIER PROJECT

Ranch-Raised

A New Mexico cowboy shares his thoughts on the virtues of bringing up a family in ranch country.

By A.J. Mangum

It's a Saturday afternoon on the Las Madres Ranch, outside Santa Rosa, New Mexico. Bill Riggins reins a two-year-old colt to a stop near a corral adjacent to the ranch's barn. A stout, redheaded cowboy, Bill has just ridden the colt on a prowl through a herd of cattle grazing in a nearby pasture. He unsaddles the young horse, mindful of the position of the sun as it edges its way to the western horizon. Each Saturday, of late, presents a scheduling challenge, one Bill is determined to overcome.

The ranch is home to the Riggins' family's cattle and horse operations. Since the mid-1990s, the outfit has been home for Bill, his wife, Laurie, their 15-year-old daughter, Taylor, and their 13-year-old son, Tyler. In recent years, Laurie and the kids have spent school-year weekdays in Fort Sumner, where Taylor and Tyler attend Fort Sumner High and where Laurie works as a dental assistant. The family reconvenes at the ranch on Sundays. This time of year, Saturdays revolve around the region's high school basketball schedule. Taylor and Tyler have games today. Bill's determined not to miss them.

"I've vowed to get to all the kids' games," he says. "Sports in America can get out of hand, but if it's done right, it can be a huge thing. It keeps the kids active, teaches them to have goals."

Bill arrived at the Las Madres as a bachelor, having just left a job starting colts at Colorado's T Cross Ranch. A year later, he and Laurie married. Within a couple of years, they were a family of four.

The ranch – what Bill calls a "straight grass and cake outfit," meaning it requires no hay – runs Angus cattle, utilizing a growing herd of older cows, mostly teenaged animals, with the idea of breeding for longevity. Artificial insemination and embryo transfers increase efficiencies.

In recent years, the Riggins family has backed off of its horse program. The virtual end of the U.S. slaughter market, Bill explains, "took the bottom out" of the horse business. The prospect of marketing a horse only after investing in it several years of feed, care and riding prompted a change. Where Bill once rode a half-dozen colts each day, he now rides no more than two.

From the family's earliest days on the ranch, Taylor and Tyler have been integral to its operation. Taylor's introduction to ranch work came at an early age. When she was five years old, Bill put her behind

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photo by A.J. Mangam

New Mexico cowboy Bill Riggins runs the Las Madres Ranch. His family spends school-year weekdays in town, reuniting with Bill on weekends. Among ranch families, such sacrifices aren't unusual.

the wheel of a pickup truck hooked to a trailer carrying two horses. Bill was horseback, preparing to move cattle, and needed the truck and trailer waiting for him at the far end of a pasture. He gave Taylor a quick driving lesson and the two reconnected a mile and a half away.

"Her mother wasn't too proud of me after she heard about it," Bill admits. "But any time you can put responsibility on kids without too much pressure, I think it's great."

Years later, when Bill suffered a back injury, he drafted Taylor to help him saddle and unsaddle horses so he could keep up his riding schedule. Taylor usually accompanies Bill when it comes time to "neighbor," or help neighboring ranches gather and brand cattle.

Tyler sees his role on the ranch as that of protector. A county road cuts through the property, and drivers can be less than respectful, leaving beer cans and other litter along the road. Tyler polices the roadway during his frequent small-game-hunting excursions.

"He had a basketball tournament this past Friday and Saturday," Bill says. "Afterward, he wanted to come straight home to the ranch. It was a horrible day, with the wind blowing 40 miles per hour, but there was work that needed doing. He jumped right in. It's my same attitude: Let's do what it takes."

Both Taylor and Tyler know the ranch's routines and management needs. Likewise, they understand responsibility, and the need to think for oneself, better than most teenagers. When they're sent to check salt for the cattle, they know to check levels in water tanks, eyeball windmills from the ground up, ensure that gates have been shut, and take note of *how* they were shut.

"Every day, I consider the ranch and this open space a blessing," Bill says. "Tyler can take his .22 and go hunt rabbits. Taylor can saddle up and ride. I give them fencing projects and let them take the truck. They feed on that. I can't imagine raising them any other way."

With its full days and no shortage of work, the ranch, Bill asserts, has been an invaluable tool for him and Laurie in raising their children, fostering in Taylor and Tyler a real-world sense of responsibility. The kids' roles on the ranch ensure that livestock stay safe, healthy and marketable, directly affecting the family's livelihood.

"There's something about survival out here," Bill says. "You have to get up, get around and get it done. I think it leads to a purer life. On a ranch, you're not trying to keep your kids entertained all the time. You have work to do. That all has an effect. You see it in the way a ranch kid behaves in public. It's the responsibility – taking care of the horses, the cattle, feeding. I think it'll help them in whatever they do in life."

Other challenges of parenthood, Bill acknowledges, are universal: preparing kids for life beyond the family home, teaching them to take care of themselves in new environments, and helping them get ready for new chapters in their lives.

"I don't know where they'll go in life," Bill admits. "But I know they'll take with them some important lessons. For one, we've instilled in them the ethic that if you start something, you finish it. If we're moving cattle, or if they're playing sports, they know they need to see it through. They don't have to be the best, but they have to finish."

Bill says he's not yet contemplated what life will be like once his son and daughter have both left home for college. Perhaps it seems too distant an event, or maybe his days are full enough without such imaginings. Even without hectic weekend schedules built around high-school sports, though, odds are Bill and Laurie will have plenty of distractions to prevent "empty nest syndrome." Laurie has begun producing an annual 10-team, all-women's ranch rodeo in Fort Sumner. Meanwhile, Bill has four mares turned out with a stallion this spring, with the hope of once again ramping up the ranch's horse program. He expects many more days in the saddle in the years to come.

For the moment, though, Bill's conjecture about the future is limited to what might unfold over the next few hours – the drive to Fort Sumner, the kids' basketball games – and the promise of a well-earned weekend with his family.

Heavier thinking can wait until Sunday evening.

"Ranch-Raised" is an excerpt from the new e-book *Undiscovered Country: Selected Journalism*, by A.J. Mangum and published by The Frontier Project Inc. The e-book, priced at $4.99, is available for the Kindle and Nook, and on iTunes. See all ordering options at www.frontierprojectinc.com/category/e-books.

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Jihan Murad, Esq. riding Urbanus © Flying Horse Photography 2012

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A VISIT WITH BUCK BRANNAMAN

Being Successful with Horses and One's Self

Part One.

My horsemanship clinics offer me so many opportunities to watch how folks operate around their horses, and I am always fascinated by the different human and psychological characteristics these folks are discovering about themselves, working through issues with their horses. So many folks take a lesson about working with a horse and turn it into a lesson for themselves. Many don't even realize the inner troubles they need to work on, but working with horses always seems to bring personal issues into focus for most of my students.

I am always thinking about the things that are important in making a person a good horseman – no surprise there – but those things are also necessary in a finding a good companion or friend – someone real desirable to be around. Over the years I have found eight solid characteristics or qualities that horses have that I believe effective humans should have as well:

1. Intuition. Intuition is a gut feeling about something intangible, an unspoken sensitivity to what you're dealing with. As a result of evolution, horses and other animals have a natural ability to sense the emotional state of people and horses around them. In fact, they seem to have instinctual gut feelings about just about everything they come across. Unfortunately, people often don't listen to their inner voices the way animals do. I think it's very important to be open to your instincts, because it helps us get in touch with things that aren't on the surface. Whether men like to admit it or not, women seem to have quite a bit more of this instinctual inner knowledge, although I believe men can acquire it. I often joke that "A man can acquire intuition if he listens to his wife long enough," but it's really more than that. Human intuition is a feeling of being able to look ahead and clearly see things in a very objective way. Everyone has a little of it, but I think women have a teaspoon more of it than men.

2. Sensitivity. When I speak of sensitivity, I'm talking about emotional sensitivity. Horses are very intelligent creatures, and emotional sensitivity is something that all intelligent, thinking creatures possess. Everything around us can impact us and our horses emotionally, in

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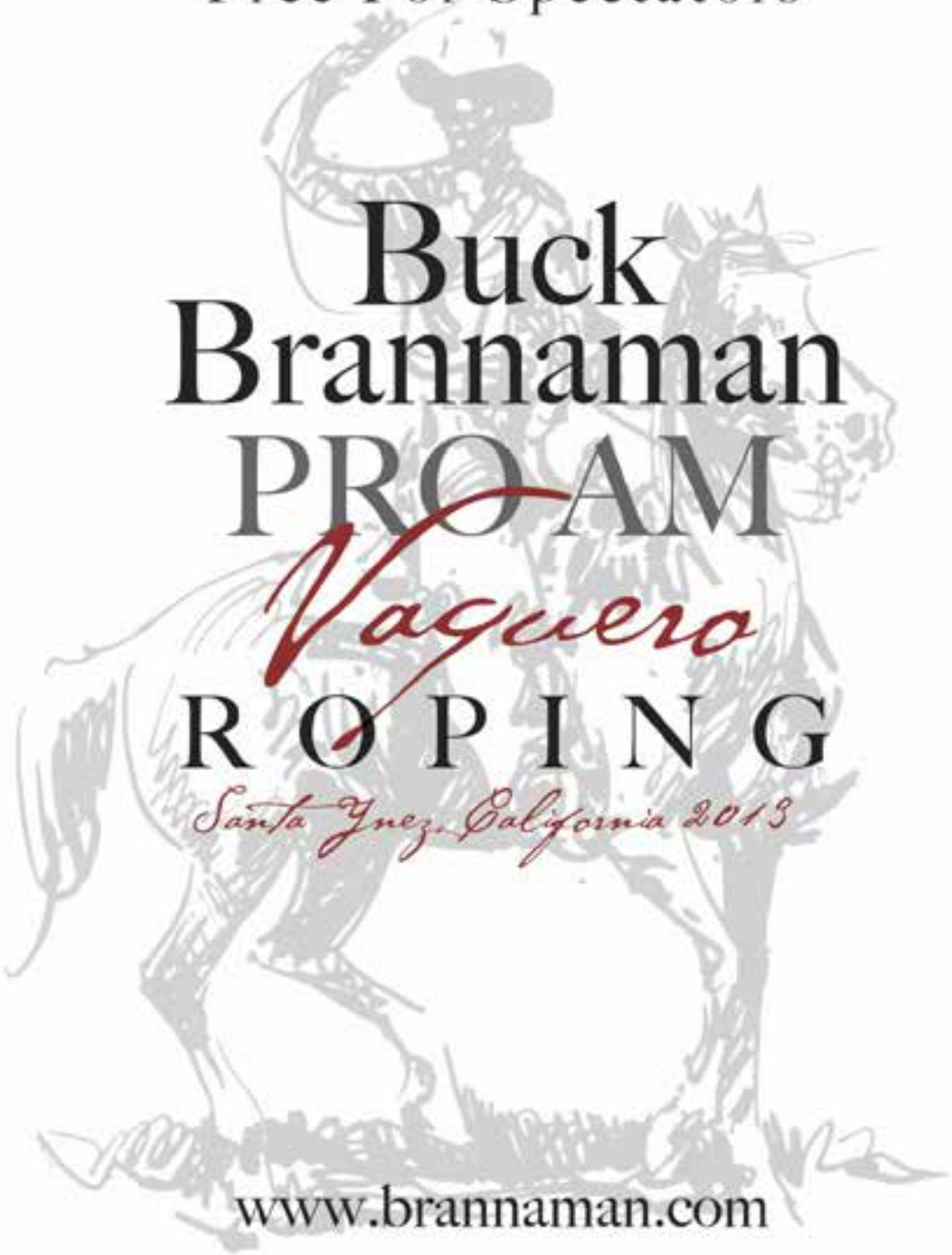

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some way. If we are sensitive and observant of our horse's emotions, we can better anticipate and respond to their movements and actions. The same is true of humans: If we are sensitive and observant of our own emotions and those of the people around us, we can better anticipate and respond to whatever comes our way. Now again, this is something that's going to weigh a little heavier toward the females, in terms of quantity. Truly, the female of any species tends to be a little more sensitive and nurturing than the male. This generally holds true for human beings as well – women are generally more emotionally sensitive than men. There are men who are plenty sensitive, but it's not a characteristic that's as strong in men as it is in women.

3. Change. This is the ability to back up, back down and alter course if necessary, as opposed to beating your head against a wall and doing the same old thing, hoping this time it might turn out different. Horses take each new thing as it comes, and are bright enough to think through a given situation. If the situation requires the horse to take a different course, he will generally take that different course, and this is what has helped keep horses alive through the ages.

We humans can be a stubborn bunch, and if someone's going to back down and change course, it's usually the woman and not the man. Women seem to be better able to change their minds about things, and men tend to get stuck on one idea and insist on staying there, come hell or high water. I think men are more inclined to be steadfast in their beliefs, even when their beliefs turn out to be wrong or foolish. Change just seems like one more of those things that women are better at. Now I know there are some men out there who've been married twenty or thirty or forty years who would argue that with me, and insist that women lose the ability to change as they grow older, but let's be honest – if you've ever been lost while driving in a big, confusing city with your wife, you know that she is more willing to change course (or stop and ask where the course actually is) than you are. This just seems to be our nature. The important thing to remember is, the ability to adjust your actions or outlook to fit whatever situation comes along is a great asset. Showing humility, respect, and lack of ego is not only a very pleasant and effective thing for people, horses react positively to it, too.

4. Presence. By presence, I mean the feeling that flows off of any person who truly believes in himself and his abilities, and who is at peace with himself and his environment – someone who humbly but truly believes. It's not about superiority or intimidation or aggression; it is about being confident and at peace with your life, where you are at that moment in time. A healthy, well-treated horse exudes this self-confident, calm, sure presence, just like a healthy, well-treated human does.

End of Part 1. Part 2 of this article will appear in the next issue of *Ranch & Reata*.

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Four Portraits of Women in the West

By Tom Russell

I've gained a deeper insight into our West through knowing these four women – each a pioneer in her own way. —T.R.

I A Hard Life a Long Way From Town: Claudia Russell

I feel that it's real easy for that guy to sit there in town and tell me how to live out here (on the ranch). I abide the law to a point, but I'm gonna survive. If it means breaking the law to survive, I guess that's what I'll do.

Claudia Russell, 2003

At her ranch, Claudia is surrounded by her heritage, a rare instance of the history of the place being commensurate with the history of the individual.

The Los Angeles Times, 12/5/82

It was past midnight. The bear was climbing up the second-story wall of the ranch house. Towards Claudia's bedroom window. She grabbed a rifle, opened the window, and fired a warning shot over the bear's head. The bear kept coming. "*That was his mistake*," she said later. She fired again and wounded him in the neck. The bear dropped down to the porch and took off across the yard, leaving a blood spoor which led toward the Cuyama River. Claudia, alone on her family's three thousand acre ranch, knew her responsibility. *Finish the job.*

She dressed, grabbed gun and flashlight, called her dogs, and started the pickup truck. The dogs tracked the bear down into the river breaks. The wounded bear had come to ground in the high reeds. Still alive. This sounds like Hemingway's short tale: *The Short Happy Life of Francis McComber*. If I were Hemingway I'd suddenly switch to the perspective of the wounded bear, waiting in the cane breaks. Smelling the human. Gathering strength for a last charge. But I'm not Hemingway. Nobody is. This was real. The woman is my sister-in-law, Claudia Russell. This was the second bear she'd shot trying to break into her house.

She was able to track the blood spoor and get the truck close enough to the bear to reach out the window with the rifle. She dispatched the bear. I am assuming the bear was eventually cut up into steaks or dog food and what not. She told me once: "*Wild pig makes good*

courtesy the author

Claudia Russell

sausage. Bear lard makes the best pie crust." She's told me a lot of things. Words that stayed with me, stuck in my mind, and resonated around in my gut. The grist for a hundred songs echoing with a woman's hard-earned personal history. True grit from the historic Cuyama Valley of California.

The country out there looks nearly the same as when the Spanish first rode through: oak trees, rolling hills, *Chamisa*, and Chumash Indian caves. Wild pig, turkey, bear, lion, antelope, elk, deer...The Spanish *vaqueros* established the old land grant ranchos and roped grizzly bears on the beach. The grizzly bear is gone from California. The ranchos have been cut up. There's a new age of *vaqueros* now – ranching survives.

"My family in this country goes back to the early 1800s," Claudia says. "They went to town once a year. They grew their own food. It was a hard life, a long way from town."

A hard life. Ongoing. I've walked across the ranch with Claudia through ancient Spanish Oak Trees – as she spoke of her history and picked up fossils and Chumash mortar bowls in dry creek beds. She once pointed up to the skeleton of a baby black bear that had been stranded in the high limbs of an oak tree. I've also stood with her on a hill next to her great grandmother's grave – a hill overlooking the Carissa Plains – the only grave for fifty miles. Her great grandmother walked all the way from Texas to homestead in California. She died out there on The Plains. *Working*.

Claudia, and her twin sister Kate, grew up on the historic *Chimeneas* ranch. Her father, Claude, hand-dug seven water wells. He ran a dual ranching and farming operation, back when a man could pull that off. He sent his cattle to the Los Angeles stockyards in freight cars, which ran out of Maricopa. He taught his daughters the way of the West. The world has changed. The basics of ranch life have not changed. "Cows are cows," Claudia says. "Grass is grass. We still pray for rain."

There is a deep Western story here, and I've struggled for twenty years to get it in song and film. I'll keep working. Writing it and rhyming it is easier than living it day to day. I've known Claudia for over three-quarters of my life. She's *family*. We've been friends long after my brother went down the road, moved on to another ranch and another relationship. My talks with Claudia have revealed poetic masterpieces of ranch wisdom – poetry carved from a life of family tradition, hard work, principle, frontier character, survival, and a love of the land.

courtesy the author

Ian Tyson and Claudia at Tom and Nadine's wedding in Elko.

Claudia Russell is a woman who speaks in direct Western tongue – unfettered with the idle jargon of the Internet age. She sleeps outside on the porch in summer, on an old iron bed. A gun at easy reach. Mountain lions have come near at night – almost nibbling on her toes and as they drank water from the pool a few yards away.

The work goes on. Through lean years and dry years. Los Angeles is two hundred miles and a century away. There were times when Claudia had to take a job in town at a *Burger Barn*. Rising at four in the morning for ranch chores, off to work, then back for ranch chores as the sun went down. She still takes occasional work as a cook for brandings, rodeos, and other wild Western affairs. She's a damn good cook. In the old style.

That wood stove in her kitchen belonged to her grandmother. It came across the country in the covered wagon of a frontier traveling salesman. A hundred thousand biscuits have risen-up in the cast iron insides.

Claudia ranched alone for years. But the task edged into the realm of the impossible. Cows bogged down in the mud. Bears. Runaway steers. Broken fence. Federal laws. Finally her son Jubal moved back in, to help out and raise a family with his wife Lauren. They all work together now – balancing the ranch work with odd jobs taken out of necessity. Cows are still cows. Grass is still grass. They pray for rain.

A hard life a long way from town. In a country where bear lard still makes good piecrust.

I jotted a few notes from our many walks. *Claudia's words*:

> *"My father taught me the way you walk through a country. You follow fresh animal track. That's where the water will be. You learned the name of every animal plant and bird."*
>
> *"Your ranch eggs have those big, high yokes...green grass makes a dark egg yolk."*
>
> *"We had a bulldozer out here. It hit a nest of rattlesnakes. We came out the next morning and there were five hundred rattlesnakes climbing all over that bulldozer."*
>
> *"Drinking and women and good horses are a man's entertainment out here."*
>
> *"I think there's a mountain lion eating the wild pigs down in the river near the barn."*
>
> *"I close that front gate and lock it and leave the world behind me. I'm tired of people telling me how to live."*

II The Basque Wood Stove – Rosalie Sorrels

We drank the rivers, we rode the twisters
We stumbled down to the ground
But we'll rake and ride, we'll spend our glory
On our last go round.

Rosalie Sorrels, **"The Last Go Round"**

They say she left Idaho with a guitar in the late 1950s, fleeing an abusive husband. She hit the road with her folk songs, long dark hair, and *give 'em hell* attitude. She stormed Greenwich Village. *Rosalie Sorrels*. Fifty years later we were sitting in the cabin on Grimes Creek which her father had built. Rosalie was reading a poem from Lew Welch as she checked the pork roast. She continued reading as she reached down and tossed another chunk of split-oak into the little Basque stove in the kitchen corner.

courtesy the author

Lew Welch had been a friend of Rosalie's. A Beat poet from the San Francisco scene in the 50s and 60s. One day he drove his car up to a back road in the High Sierra, left a note on the dashboard, grabbed his gun, and waltzed forever into the wilderness. *Gone.* Lew had been a cab driver, jack-of-all-trades, and fine poet. I named my first record album after his book of poetry: *Ring of Bone*. The drinking and depression caught up with him. They never found the body. Rosalie wrote a fine song for Lew Welch called "Going Away Party." I was thinking about Lew, and the song, as I stared at the Basque sheepherder's stove.

We were twenty odd miles out of Boise, Idaho – up a canyon off of Grimes Creek. Rosalie had a old dog named Lenny Bruce and a thousand or more books on the shelves and photos from her long, eventful life on the road. *Folk roads*. Hard traveled. That Basque sheepherder's stove fascinated me. She told me she'd bought it off an old trader, who'd inherited it from a Basque sheep-herder who'd kept it in his sheep wagon as he rolled through the back hills of Nevada, following the slow moving herds.

Rosalie Sorrels

This little stove is another linch-pin in my vision of the historic West. It connects back to the Spaniards, and in this case the Basques from the North of Spain. The herders were brought over to handle the migrating sheep. The "*Bascos*" had the ability to spend months and months alone with no one to talk to but a few sheep dogs and God. Their descendants built Basque restaurants in towns like Reno, Winnemucca, Elko, and even Fresno, California. And that Basque stove connects me to my visions of Rosalie Sorrels.

Recently I drove by the *Basque Hotel* in downtown Fresno. It has an abandoned *Jai Alai* court attached onto the side. Basque itinerants, in town for a few days rest,

courtesy the author

Rosalie Sorrels

could open their window and watch a *Jai Alai* match directly below them. Imagine that. A drink of Spanish brandy in your hand – shouting out bets to your neighbor in the next room. The Basque hotel dining rooms were (and still are) family-style eateries – serving large plates of lamb shoulder, pork chops, beefsteak, Basque beans, rabbit, and a Basque cocktail called *Picon Punch*.

Up on Grimes Creek I looked into that Basque stove and told Rosalie I was reminded of an old folk song called "Spanish Johnny," which was built around a Willa Cather poem. It involves a rather homicidal Spanish cowboy named *Johnny* who liked to *sing to his mandolin,* after he'd butchered a few *compadres*:

Those dusty years, the bitter years
When we pushed the big herds through
I'll never forget the miles we spent
But Spanish Johnny knew
He'd sit beside a water ditch
When he was drunk on gin...
And those were golden things he sang
To his mandolin.

In the end, the boys hang Spanish Johnny...because *that hand so tender to a child, had killed too many men.* The bury him and ship his mandolin back around the horn to his folks in Spain. Yes, *Spanish Johnny* and little round Basque stoves that sing and sizzle. We're never that far away from Spain. Or deep song. *Cante hondo.*

Rosalie Sorrels continued reciting verse to me, that night, in the glow of the Basque stove. *Such a night*. I recall one morning in a railroad hotel in Toronto, Rosalie was sitting across from me in the restaurant and we were talking about drinking, and the ups and downs of survival on the road. We were both hung-over after a long night on the transcontinental train. Rosalie cleared her throat and declared:

"I told a friend once, 'I'm not an alcoholic. I'm a drunk. There's a difference.'"

"I'm with you," I said. I'd caught her full meaning.

I recall another night when I was on stage in New York City, singing Townes Van Zandt's great song: "Snowin' on Raton." A voice came out of the audience and leaped into the second verse. It was Rosalie.

Rosalie has recorded dozens of great records, collected traditional music, and chronicled the songs of the Mormon Cowboys. She's a living piece of folklore. Like that Basque stove. She's written one of our best modern Cowboy songs: "The Last Go Round," – inspired by a Ken Kesey novel about the Pendleton Roundup in 1911. Kesey was another of her friends.

I think of Rosalie Sorrels and that cabin on Grimes Creek and I find myself reaching out for the warmth of that Basque stove as my friend reads poetry. That stove represents, in an odd way, this woman's life: the deep traditions of the west, the rugged personality of objects collected from the journey, and the splendid isolation of living apart from the tribe – with a Basque wood stove for companionship, and a dog named Lenny Bruce.

I remember the pork roast was tender that night and the poems were recited between every course – from the salad and bread, on down to the cake and final brandy. The poems issued forth from earmarked, small-press books in cluttered shelves above the Basque stove. Poems written by her friends.

As I drove back into Boise I sang the last verse of a great cowboy song – Rosalie's song:

I have stumbled lost and wild
Onto sacred ground
I have loved just like a child
On my last go round...

III The Goddess at the Gates of Fear: Patricia McCormick

The doctor in Ciudad Acuña said: 'take her back to her own country to die.'

Patricia McCormick

Only bullfighters live their life full up...

Ernest Hemingway

I have a small, brown-tinted photo that I keep in my writing office. A picture of a pretty 20-year-old American girl in tennis shoes and rolled-up Levi's. Her dark hair is cut what they might have called a *flip* in the 1950s, or a West Texas *pageboy*. The girl stands erect. *Muy serio*! Grave and sober beyond her years. She's holding a ragged cloth, draped over a stick – a simulated bullfighter's *muleta*. The pass she's executing is *The Pass of Death*, or a *Manoletina*, invented by the great Spaniard, Manolete.

collection of William Reynolds

Patricia McCormick

Charging through the cloth is a Mexican boy with a Donegal cap turned backwards on his head. He's offering up a set of bullhorns, simulating a fighting bull running towards the red cloth. The year is 1950. The boy and the girl are *"practicos,"* practicing the *torero* trade. The girl's countenance indicates that she may know where the serious play will hopefully lead her – into the top bullfight rings of Mexico. Her name is Patricia McCormick and she remains a woman of legend in the North American *torero* world.

I was born in the City of Angels around the same time this young girl was practicing with slaughterhouse steers in Juarez. Manolete had been dead three years.

Patricia McCormick. Publicity Photo

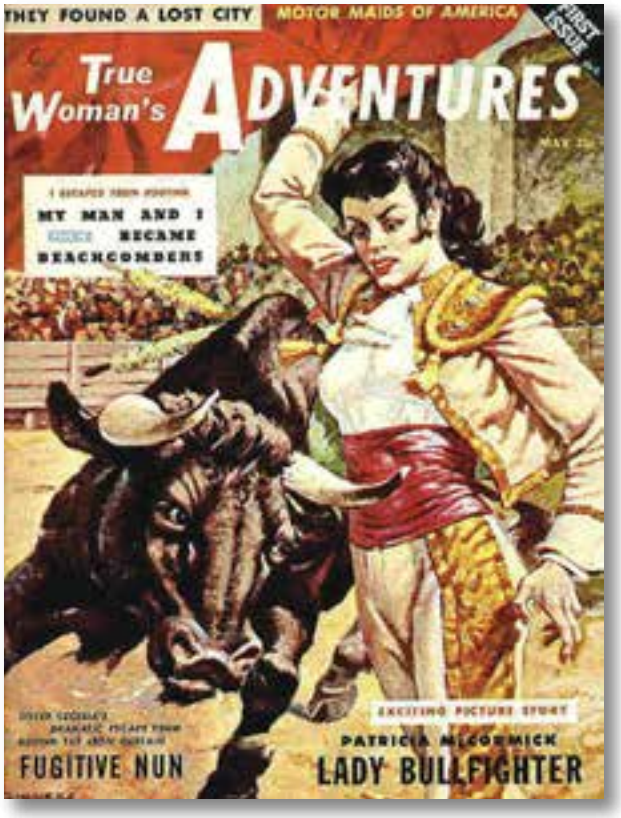
Killed by the bull *Islero* in Linares, Spain. Patricia was on her way into the minor bullrings of Mexico. Anthony Quinn, Gilbert Roland, and Orson Wells were drinking wine from goatskin bags at the *Tijuana Bullring by the Sea*. Those days and that sort of border romance have vanished – gone up in old cigarette smoke, political correctness, and drug wars. The bullfights, dog races, the Jai Alai games*, the world's longest bar* with fifty cent margaritas – it's all just an old Mexican postcard now.

I grew up and collected books on the bullfight. I loved to look at the photos. I attended amateur *torero* classes in Mexico and Spain. I stood before brave fighting cattle (small ones) waving my *muleta*. I got knocked over. I never forgot the photo of that young girl in the Juarez stockyards who went on to become a legend. Time moved forward. The Monumental bullring in Juarez was torn down to build a Wal-Mart. Where do all the old bullfighters go? The one's who lived?

Sixteen years ago I found Patricia McCormick's mailing address when she was living in Pebble Beach, California. Retired from teaching art. She was approaching eighty years of age. We began to write letters back and forth.

Do people write letters anymore? Letters such as these? This woman's letters were small masterworks. She'd been trained as an artist and has drawn and painted most of her life. The letters were often illuminated with her sketches of bulls and horses and *conquistadores*. Her words were always succinct and tinted with an elegant formality. She knew a hell of a lot about bulls, fear, *duende*, and the Spanish history of the West.

Here are some highlights from our letters: (*My questions in parentheses.*)



A question: How does a girl from the 1930s Midwest end up a bullfighter?

"I grew up in Kansas, Illinois and Missouri. Moved to Big Spring Texas when I was thirteen. Became a

Texan. I was 20 years old, in 1950, when I first seriously wanted to become a professional bullfighter. I was attending Texas-Western University in El Paso. I saw my first bullfight in 1937, at the age of seven, in Mexico City, while vacationing with my parents.

"They said it couldn't be done. I was a U.S. student from the other side. No money. No contacts. A female. An Anglo Saxon (*no temperament!)* and I didn't speak Spanish. And so I turned to the biographies of matadors to find a common denominator that could possibly offer a solution. The biography of Rodolfo Gaona was the answer. He was a poor Indian boy from the *pueblos* who had nothing but desire and fortitude. He went to Mexico City to stay – he hung around until they finally gave him a few lessons and discovered he had talent. The rest is history."

I found another early photo of you from 1950 titled: "Passing a range steer in the Juarez stockyard." The steer is almost as big as you are. I'm fascinated by a young girl practicing on slaughterhouse range steers. In a Juarez stockyard.

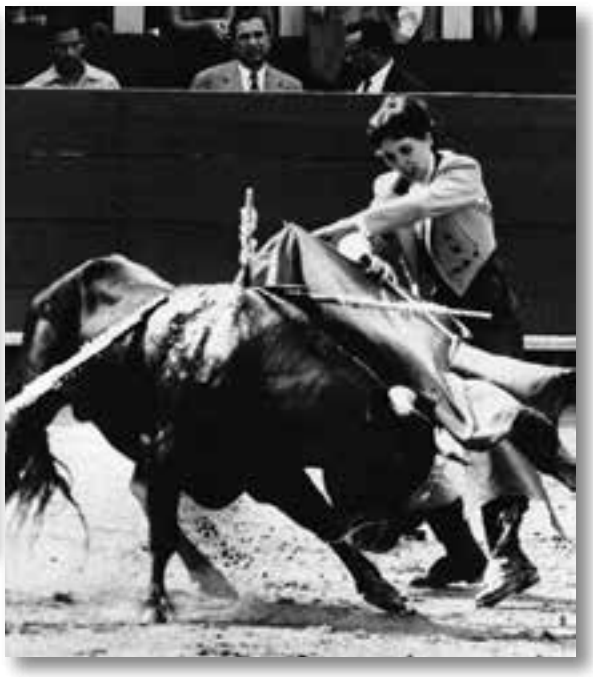
"It was probably a Hereford. The range cattle included everything that could be rounded up for the meat market. I only fought once in the stockyards and that's when the picture was taken. Never again. The cattle didn't want any part of us. Tin cans were thrown at them to get them to charge out so we could make a pass."

What about fear...in the bullring?

"The bullfighter takes with him two kinds of fear: the fear of the unknown, and the fear of failure. There is another kind of fear – a deep inward insecurity. Rodolfo Gaona was asked once in an interview what he feared most. 'That one bull, usually smaller and less brave, that can destroy in one afternoon everything you worked hard for, and leave your career in shambles.' It always struck me like a pending nightmare.

"I have the utmost respect for those magnificent animals. Their intelligence is above the average bovine species. Active, alert, fast moving with an aggressive instinct to charge anything that threatens, or what moves. This is the first concept in fighting the *bull de lidia*: It will charge what moves, rather than what is stationary."

You were gored and received the last rites of the Catholic Church in Ciudad Acuna, Mexico?



Publicity Photo

"I was facing small six year old bulls (very old for the ring) that knew "Latin" with lots of "*genio*" (temperament). Very difficult. They learned very fast and hooked on both sides. I made a mistake. A miscalculation in distance. A chance I took!

I don't recall receiving the last rites. I was unconscious from the sedation. They told me about it later. The nurses saw my religious medals, and a rosary laid out on the hospital end table. They thought I was a Catholic and sent for a priest. The time was well after midnight. He came and remarked, 'I don't know if she's Catholic, but it can't do her any harm,' and he administered the last rites.

There were two operations: One in Villa Acuña, Mexico, and the other one in Del Rio, Texas. The doctor in Acuña said: "*take her back to her own country to die.*" It was midnight. There was no ambulance available to take me across the river, so a hearse was used instead – accompanied by a police escort with sirens on a car-clogged bridge. If you can imagine that one!"

I'm curious about how and when the breed of Spanish fighting cattle arrived in the New World. We know that Columbus and Cortez brought horses and beef cattle. There were records of bullfights in Mexico as early as 1526.

"Cattle came into Mexico after the conquest because the Spanish soldiers demanded to eat beef. They were tired of eating wild turkey, corn, beans, tortillas and chili... and drinking *pulque*! They wanted wine. Grapes for wine. Wheat for bread. And olive oil. My understanding is that fighting cattle were brought in for protection rather than entertainment, but later there were accounts of bullfights from horseback in the later *haciendas* and *ganaderias.*

These haciendas were half-deserted, but acquired their own legal system along with their own armies, and local life revolved around them. Bulls were watchdogs. The notion was that no one would dare cross the territory where these bulls were kept."

The Spanish poet, Garcia Lorca, wrote several treatises and lectures of the concept of "duende" with relation to dance, flamenco, cante hondo (deep song), and bullfighting. What's your concept of 'duende'?

"The *duende* is an unexplainable mystery. I don't think even the Spaniard's know exactly what it is. It's hard to define. Lorca refers to it throughout his writing and it is referred to often in bullfighting and applies to the other

arts as well. I describe *duende* as the inner core of a person. A presence, a rare quality, that is capable of communicating itself outward, through a talent, like a spontaneous revelation. It thrills! It ignites! Like the passionate intensity of the flamenco dancer with all the *salero* (grace.)

"John Steinbeck called it '*the power and the glory*' when he reached it in his writing. Jo Mora, the writer from Carmel, describes the unexplained phenomena in his book on cowboys, *Trail Dust and Saddle Leather*, as 'that natural God-given *something* that's born in one and seldom acquired,' like the way some cowboys handle cattle – like magicians. Can it be acquired? I don't know. But it cannot be faked."

collection of William Reynolds

Patricia McCormick at 27, July, 1955. PR Photo.

And there you have it. *Some of it*. Patricia McCormick died in Del Rio Texas in 2013, the year I'm writing this. She'd fought three hundred professional fights and was gored six times. She died on the border, very near that bridge she'd crossed in a hearse sixty years ago, gored and given up for dead by Mexican doctors.

IV Our Lady of the Canyons: Katie Lee

Life is a river to me.
And if I'm going to be on that river, by God I have to check out what's going on, with me, and with total observation, finding out who I am, what the river is, what the side canyons are, what's in the rock – all that.
I have to know about that, or I don't know about me, and I sure don't know about the river...

Katie Lee

The Chapel of the Holy Cross sits up on a high red rock mesa outside Sedona, Arizona. A fine place to rest the spirit and contemplate eternity and the desert. My last visit was on a summer's day. Clouds floated across the high windows and the background music out of a little speaker in the rafters was Gregorian chant. The chapel sits on the rim of the canyon – glass and wood jutting up towards the heavens. The architects knew how to perch a structure within the landscape, without offending the terrain or violating the earth spirits.

I sat in that chapel, a few years ago, and followed the clouds and allowed the ancient chants to pass through me. A time to talk with the God of the desert, the rivers, and the canyons. The God of the Hopi and the white man. The God of cowboy songs. The God of wild things. And I thought about Katie Lee.

A few leagues away from the chapel is the town of Jerome, Arizona. In this old mining town, on the edge

of another canyon, is the home of Our Lady of the Canyons, Katie Lee. I've given her that title. Maybe it's too reverent. What the hell. For the purposes of this essay I might call her: *Our Lady of the Adobe and Dynamite Boxes.* She's a force of Western nature.

Katie Lee was the second woman to run the Colorado River (1953) – an award winning author, cowboy-folksinger, film actress, photographer, videographer, and wilderness adventurer. Like the Sedona chapel, Katie seems part of the high desert landscape – a living being whose presence in the West is ornery, and yet holy and monumental. Like a ninety year old saguaro. Or a non-denominational church perched on a cliff.

These cliff dwellings abound out West. I'd visited Katie Lee in a house, which seemed to tilt and sway on the canyon's edge – Noah's Ark balanced on the Mount, after the floods subsided. The house was full of books, guitars, and photos of old friends. There was an early photo of Katie, naked, stretching her hands up toward the heavens above Glenn Canyon – perhaps she was dreaming back to when the canyon and the river were still wild. Before the dam. It looked like an Alfred Stieglitz photograph. She was melting into the rock and sandstone.

This particular afternoon Katie greeted me from her writing cave below the house. She's always working on a book, song, opera or epic. Katie Lee, at the time, was 90 years old. That was a few years ago (as I write this) and she's still going strong. Who's counting? She looked maybe sixty-eight. *If that*. She owes it all to the right food, exercise, yoga, and a dollop of vodka at nightfall. Amen.

Lynn Miller

"And every painting a self-portrait, a signature, an elastic signature."

- Lynn Miller

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www.katydoodit.com

Katie Lee and Edward Abbey

She emerged from her writing cave and gave me a hug and a kiss. She was as lusty as ever. This was the woman (the *only woman* I think) who'd recorded my song "Gallo del Cielo," thirty years ago. That song about the one-eyed fighting rooster. She had the guts to take that one on. And nail it.

She's been singing since the 1940s – with folks like Burl Ives and Josh White and a hundred others. On TV, radio, and records. She's written three or four books on the West, including *Ten Thousand Goddamn Cattle*, a definitive and personal history of cowboy song.

Rumor around the canyon says Katie rode a bicycle naked through the streets of Jerome at age 80. She says it's true, but she wasn't celebrating her birthday. She was riding in honor of an old friend who had died. We laughed about it as we stood out on the porch, looking down on a lush garden of trees and shrubs from around the world. These were planted an nurtured by Katie's companion, Joey, a Dutchman she met in Australia when she was backpacking around the world thirty years back. When she was in her 60s.

Joey is a whole other story: a man who can make exotic and non-indigenous trees and plants grow anywhere. He also works in wood. An artist of the old school. My visit with Katie was sidetracked with trip up the side of the mountain to visit a house Joey was caretaking. The house had once been a Mexican Presbyterian church, built in 1939 out of old dynamite boxes that were discarded from the local mine. The current owners, over the years, had spread adobe over the boxes, and now the house is a weekend retreat filled with antiquities from around the world. *Adobe and dynamite boxes.*

I shared lunch with Katie that afternoon and we talked about the legendary cowboy singers and songwriters she'd known. In her words:

"Real Cowboys and good songwriters are seldom looped in the same *riata* –any more than real poets and good singers. I can name some good writers of cowboy songs, but that doesn't mean they were real cowboys. I'll tell you two older ones that I've actually ran into. One was Romaine Loudermilk *(rumored to have written the music to The Strawberry Roan)* and Gail Gardner *(Tyin' a Knot in the Devil's Tail).*

www.katydoodit.com

Katie at Pack Creek

"Probably the best one that I never ran into was Curley Fletcher. Later on I knew Travis Edmonson, Buck Ramsey, and Tom Russell. In my opinion the best Cowboy songs have been poems put to music by

somebody else. Cowboys? Well maybe. Badger Clark and Henry Herbert Knibbs were the turn-of-the-century best.

"My favorite old songs are 'The Town of Old Dolores,' 'The Border Affair (Spanish is A Loving Tongue),' and 'The South Coast.'"

We talked about songs for a long while and then both of us stared silently out across the deep canyon, toward the high desert rocks on the far rim.

"If you don't love the desert," said Katie, "if you don't understand it, didn't grow up in it, or know how to live in and with it, stay the hell out of it and leave room for those who can. If you aren't careful, it can, and will, kill you."

"Indeed," I said. Then we both agreed there were too many damn people out here, and stucco houses and fake gurus and fast food joints. And that set her off again.

"The West, eh! Our poor, poor over-trodden, developer-ridden, over-mined, over-logged, dammed, toxic dumping ground, wasted, Wild West! Filling up with humans that have no sense of place. People who are actually fearful of open space. Folks who don't know how to conserve the main thing that keeps them alive. Water!"

"Water," I repeated. She was on a roll.

"I'm most proud of the fact that I've had the stamina, the energy, the will to accomplish what I set out to do, using the limited talents I've had to do it with. The fact that with my music and books I've been able to turn a few heads toward an appreciation of natural things and places."

We chatted awhile longer. We stared at the desert. We said our goodbyes. I drove out of that canyon hearing Gregorian chant in my ears, and "The Strawberry Roan," and "The South Coast," and I thought of Katie Lee's house and the Chapel of the Holy Cross and all of it – perched, tilting, on high rocks. The living West seen at odd and marvelous angles. Vodka at sundown. Adobe and dynamite boxes.

Katie Lee.

Tom Russell's latest record: *Aztec Jazz (Live with the Norwegian Wind Ensemble)* is available from www.villagerecords.com. His art book, songbook, films, paintings and 29 CDs are all available via www.tomrussell.com or on Amazon.com

Something Larger than Himself

A tribute to George Gund III

By Hal Cannon

Many have credited the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada, with triggering a revival of cowboy culture. Since its beginning in 1985, poets, singers, craftsmen, folklorists and organizers have contributed to this revival not only in Elko but in towns all across the West. Today, events in scores of communities each year bring enthusiastic crowds together to celebrate ranch life and its traditions. Thirty years ago, the cowboy had become a cardboard cliché. Now, through the expressive power of music, poetry and art, the gatherings have helped overwrite an overworked cowboy myth with the reality and importance of life tied to the land.

At this point, the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering is such a well known and beloved event that it seems as if it has always been here. Things were different in 1984, when we were trying to make it happen for the first time. We approached the corporate sponsors behind rodeo and other cowboy events and virtually every one of them laughed us out of the room at the idea of a festival where cowboys would recite poetry. Individual supporters were no easier to find.

George Gund III was the sole exception, and it's fair to say that there would be no Western Folklife Center or National Cowboy Poetry Gathering if he had not put his money where his heart was. He saw the promise of the idea and was willing to take a chance. He passed away in January of this year, and it's fitting to reflect on the life of this amazing man whose vision and support did so much to remind us of the importance of rural traditions in a changing world.

George was not like anyone else I have ever known. The week after his passing, remembrances of him appeared in newspapers all across the country. In Cleveland, his hometown, he was remembered as the former owner of the Cleveland Cavaliers and as a patron of the arts. In the Bay area, his adopted home, he was lauded as a founder of the San Francisco Film Festival and the San Jose Sharks, the professional hockey team that dedicated their season to him this year.

Most tributes, including his obituary in *The New York Times*, talked about his world-class eyebrows, his unconventional ways, his Bohemian nature. Some talked about how he was a person of few words, most of which were mumbled and barely audible. But what all these various articles agreed upon is how wide his interests were, how many friends he had, and how generously he supported the causes and the people he loved. He was a man of deep pockets who was loved for his even deeper heart.

What most people don't know is how deep his love and understanding of ranching and the cowboy life went. At a memorial at Grace Cathedral in San

Francisco, Gail Steiger recited a cowboy poem and I was asked to sing an old cowboy song. In April, I had the privilege of singing for George again at a memorial at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, where his sister, Agnes Gund, has served as president of the board for many years.

George loved ordinary people from bellhops to hockey-playing kids to young filmmakers. He was deferential to everyone. Often people had no idea of his wealth. He did not put on airs. He loved cowboys and ranch people, and was involved from the beginning in the Folklife Center's attempts at "grass roots diplomacy" through international cultural exchanges with herding people around the world. He not only funded some of these efforts, but also acted as photographer and friend during fieldwork documenting Australian drovers and South American gauchos.

photo by Tom Miller

George Gund horseback on his G-3 Bar Ranch in Nevada.

In Elko, we know another aspect of George that few of his urban friends had the chance to experience. He was an avid rancher and attended the Nevada Cattlemen's meetings each year. He was interested in cowboy traditions, but also in the business and science of ranching. A horticulturalist who raised exotic fruits at his home in Palm Springs, he also developed an orchard at his retreat on Stuart Island in the San Juans, and raised heirloom tomatoes in the rooftop garden of his Central Park penthouse in Manhattan. In Nevada, he wanted to know the latest about breeds and new ways of grazing.

George got his first taste of cattle ranching after he got off a Marine ship and took a job working at a feedyard off the California coast in the Channel Islands. He was young, wild and adventurous. He had dropped out of high school to join the service, and when he got off the ship under the Golden Gate, he was primed for the wide-open spaces and independent spirit of the American West.

George never knew he came from great wealth until his father died in 1966 and he inherited a fortune. His father, George Gund II, was a brilliant and tough-minded businessman who also loved the West. He had made a wonderful collection of western art after the Depression. In his early years, he had ridden in the Reno Rodeo and had been a stuntman before moving back to Cleveland to go into banking. In 1968, George III founded the ranch that he named the G Three Bar, next to the Lee Shoshone Paiute Reservation at the foot of the Ruby Mountains. He and his first wife, Theo, made friends with the neighboring ranchers, both Anglo and native, and local women from the tribe crafted cradleboards for the young couple's two baby sons.

George loved to go into Elko to do a little gambling, have a couple drinks, and enjoy a good Basque meal. When the city fathers decided to move the railroad tracks that ran through the middle of town to a bypass route, Theo wrote a significant check to help the effort along, saying she didn't want to worry about George getting hit by a train when he walked between the Stockmen's Casino and the Commercial Hotel. Even as George was deeply engaged on the Nevada ranch, he was also making things happen in his other great loves, hockey and film. He's famous for smuggling independent films out of eastern Europe, before the Iron Curtain came down, and he was a pioneer in recruiting both basketball and hockey players from around the world.

photo by Robert Davis

Rancher and visionary George Gund III

I had the opportunity recently to reminisce about George with his longtime ranch manager, Tom Miller. We talked about the way George would swoop down from the sky several times a year, park the jet, and drive out to the ranch to get astride a horse and ride the steep canyons of the Ruby Mountains. Tom grew up near Seligman, Arizona, where his father managed the Yavapai. Tom has seen a lot of ranches, many owned by wealthy men. George was never one who wanted to bask in a vast kingdom of land. He didn't want to dabble in the lifestyle or play cowboy. Instead, he was sincerely interested in agriculture and wanted to understand the land in a way that benefited not only the ground, but the animals and people who depended on it.

I've heard several ranchers say the G-3 Bar may be the most beautiful ranch in Nevada, but Tom reminded me it's not an easy ranch: "The place is hard on horses, but it's rich and productive if managed well." It's comprised of eight steep canyons with lush meadows in the bottoms. When it came time to stock the ranch, George chose to run old-style red Simmental cattle. He figured they would do well in the mountains since they originated in the mountainous regions of Europe.

His hunch paid off. The Forest Service, which leases high country to the ranch, has been so impressed by the propensity of the breed to climb and graze on the mountaintops, rather than in the riparian areas below, that they have established a positive relationship with the ranch over the years. George also introduced a buffalo herd to the land and the resulting Gund Ranch buffalo has been in great demand at local restaurants in Elko.

When I asked Tom how George was with horses, Tom said, "Horses knew George trusted them," which meant that he could ride most anything on the ranch.

After talking about cows, horses and land, I asked Tom what he thought made George so

photographed at the V6 Ranch, Parkfield, CA, Spring 2013 by Kristin Reynolds

extraordinary. I was particularly struck when Tom told me that, with the exception of his father, Tom had learned more from George Gund than from any other person in his life.

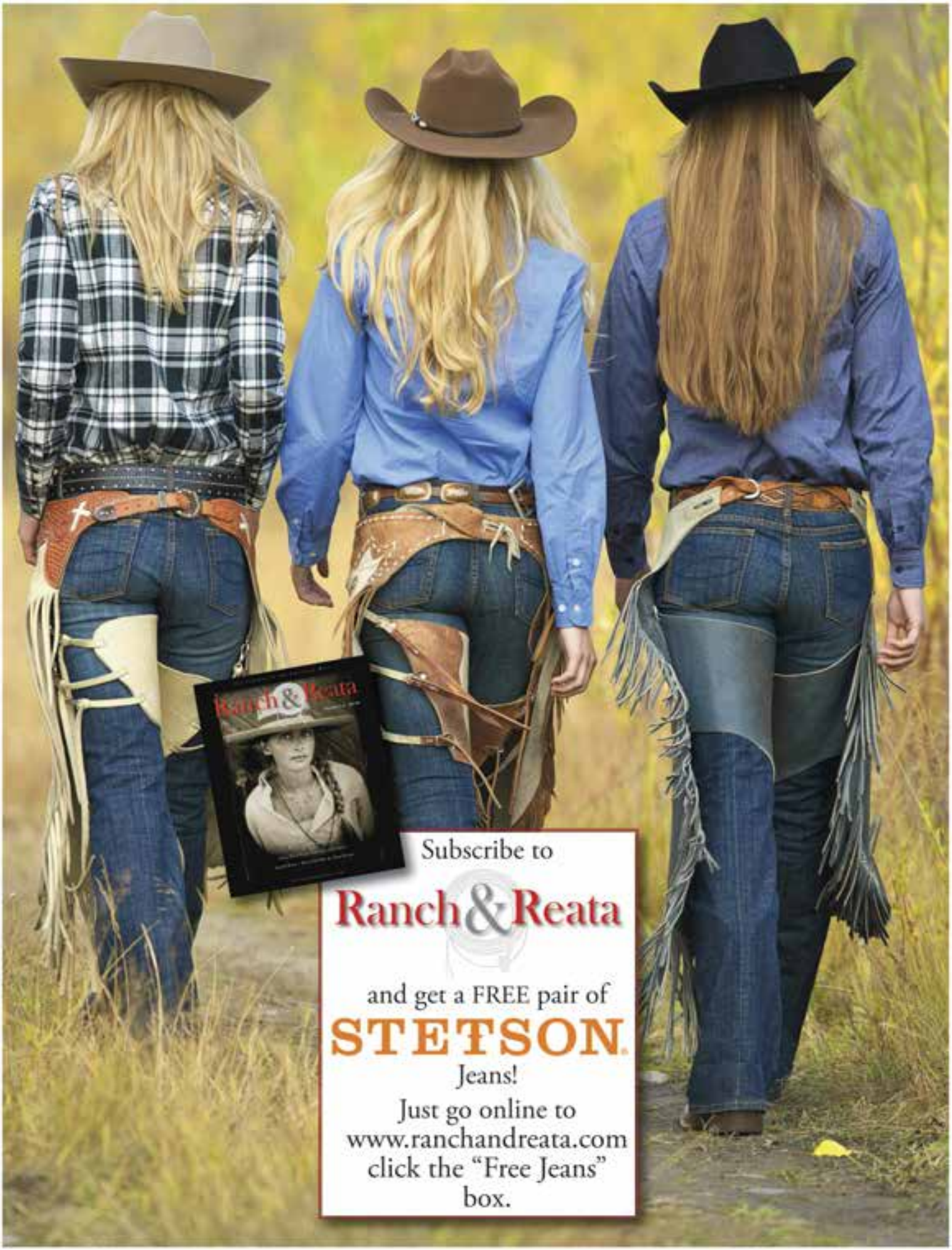
"Most of us can hardly handle our own home, our own block, neighborhood or community," Tom said. "George had the ability to handle the world. He knew the history, the details. He had an almost photographic memory and he understood how to fit everything together to make his vision. George always knew what he wanted to do, and it was up to me how to figure out the best way to do it."

Tom told me he's never known anyone who came to life with so much excitement and passion, and says George had another trait as well. "I've been around a lot of cowboys, a lot of rodeo, and I've never known anyone quite as physically tough as George." The only time Tom says he saw George struggle to pick himself off the ground was when George's son Greg died in a plane crash.

George was loyal. He treated the people he liked and trusted like family. His employees like the Millers – Tom, his wife Sharon and their two boys – were no exception.

At the memorial service at Grace Cathedral, George's beloved niece Catherine gave a eulogy attempting to capture all the facets of his life. She touched on his love of the Cowboy Poetry Gathering and the G-3 Bar Ranch. Afterwards, she came up to Tom and Sharon, who had driven from Elko to attend, and acknowledged that she could not fully express what the ranch meant to George. She realized no one could ever understand just how sacred the place was to him. Tom and Sharon, though, had a good idea.

I remember going to a hockey game with George and asking him questions about the game and why it mattered to him so much. I came to understand that the score was never as important for him as being part of something larger than himself – a team. He loved the kinetic energy, the beauty and passion of the sport. The same could be said of his love of ranching, film and his many other interests. He had a bottomless appetite for the world in all its splendor.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THE HEN HOUSE

As summer steams, the ladies have flown the coop.

By Reata Brannaman, Nevada Watt, Ceily Rae Highberger and Hannah Ballantyne

In the midst of long summer days and wide-open country, the four little chicks have left the hen house. Summer has presented a long list of opportunities, from riding colts and hiking the Colorado mountains, to hauling horses down the clinic trail and helping injured cowboys off the arena floor.

It's common knowledge that many rough-stock competitors are vertically challenged, making up for it with perseverance and strong will. You can see how a tall blonde like Nevada Watt might stand out (or above) while behind the bucking chutes aiding the Justin Sportsmedicine Team. While some of us might be handling 60 feet of poly, Nevada is holding electrodes and ultrasound gel, learning from experts in her chosen field as part of an internship with Sheridan Physical Therapy.

photos courtesy The Hen House Archives

Nevada demonstrated the art of engraving at Weaver Leather's 40th anniversary celebration.

For those of you patiently awaiting custom silver goodies from Nevada... no worries. Before her summer excursion, she spent a month at home, working with her dad, Jeremiah Watt, and scratching silver.

Reata and her dad, Buck Brannaman

Leaving behind her beloved California hills, Nevada jumped into her trusty old Chevy, Betsy, for a 23-hour journey east to the Brannamans' ranch in Sheridan, her summer digs. Awaiting her was a trophy she'd been dreaming about for 19 years: a saddle – full floral and ready to stack some dallies on – built by her dad. From Sheridan, it was on to Ohio, into the heart of Amish country, to demonstrate the art of engraving as part of a celebration of Weaver Leather's 40th anniversary.

Reata, meanwhile, spent the first month of summer getting a good start on a bunch of colts that had been awaiting her return from Bozeman. Reata is a bit of a horse collector, and as her herd has grown, other herds have grown, thanks to her stallion, Movin Easy Whiskey. Entrusting her horses to the best chore girl anyone could ask for – her mother, Mary – Reata loaded her trailer with Sunbody hats, silk scarves and a cavvy of colts, and hit the road. As Nevada traveled east, Reata traveled west, on the clinic trail behind her dad, Buck Brannaman.

People always ask Reata what it's like having Buck as her dad. Her response never differs: "He's just Dad, and I'm here for the same reason you are, to learn."

Now back in Sheridan – where she's discovered Nevada has taken over her room, her mowing responsibilities, and a few pairs of her boots – Reata has recruited her friend to help add a few more rides to some colts, which should get rid of some of the squeaks that come with a new saddle.

A few hundred miles south, in Colorado, Hannah and Ceily have teamed up for the summer, spending their days recalling the cooler Bozeman climate while learning and living on the Uh-Oh Ranch, on the plains outside Kiowa. The Uh-Oh is owned and operated by Mindy Bower and Kevin Hall,

Ceily and Hannah enjoying the Colorado scenery.

Hannah and Ceily at work on the Uh-Oh Ranch.

who've created a unique, multifaceted operation that includes competitive stock dogs, sheep and a natural beef herd.

The ranch's main focus, though, is horsemanship, with a remuda of 25-plus, ranging from personal horses to young colts to outside horses in need of a little extra attention. As they get on up to six horses a day and soak up Mindy's expertise, Hannah and Ceily take in the kind of education that can occur only between semesters. Starting young colts drives home just how different each horse can be, and how a colt that hasn't been mishandled can be far ahead of an older horse with a bad history.

For Ceily and Hannah, though, it's not all work and no play, as they've donned ventilated facemasks to clear out the original homestead (finding some cool vintage shirts in the process) and enjoyed the pool purchased by Mindy to keep them from pining for the cooler Montana temperatures. They've also found time for off-the-ranch adventures: gasping for air at 13,000 feet while exploring the Front Range, cursing road construction while en route to a Forest Service trailhead, and marveling at the stark differences that can be found in range conditions. Mismanaged pastures evoke cries of "Look at that knapweed!" while beautifully maintained rangeland inspires an awe-filled "Look at that grass!" Such observations inspire these flown hens to return to the coop in Bozeman, reunite with their fellow hens, and apply what they've learned in the summer months.

Cow Country Landscapes

The vistas of the North American West can be both daunting and sublimely beautiful.

Text and Photographs by Jay Dusard

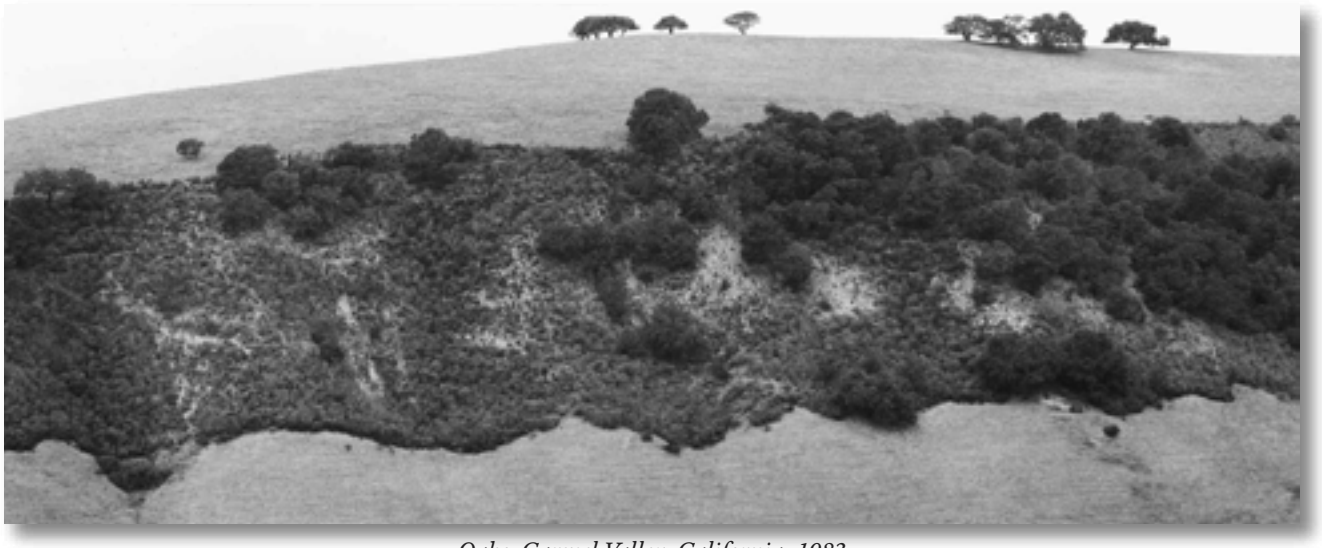
The cattle country of western North America is, for the most part, land unsuitable for tillage agriculture because of its roughness, steepness, climate or relative aridity. This is not to say that currently tillable land was not once cattle range. The same can be said of cities, subdivisions, golf courses and national parks. The range continues to shrink. What is left over is a lot of country that is eminently suited for wildlife and marketable livestock – working wilderness, if you will.

photo by Scott Baxter

Jay Dusard and Gordon Moroney, 47 Ranch, Arizona, 2012

West of the center of the state, some rather challenging country at the 4,000-foot level – just above the Lower Sonoran province.

Sonoran Desert Rangeland, West Central Arizona, 1979



Oaks, Carmel Valley, California, 1983

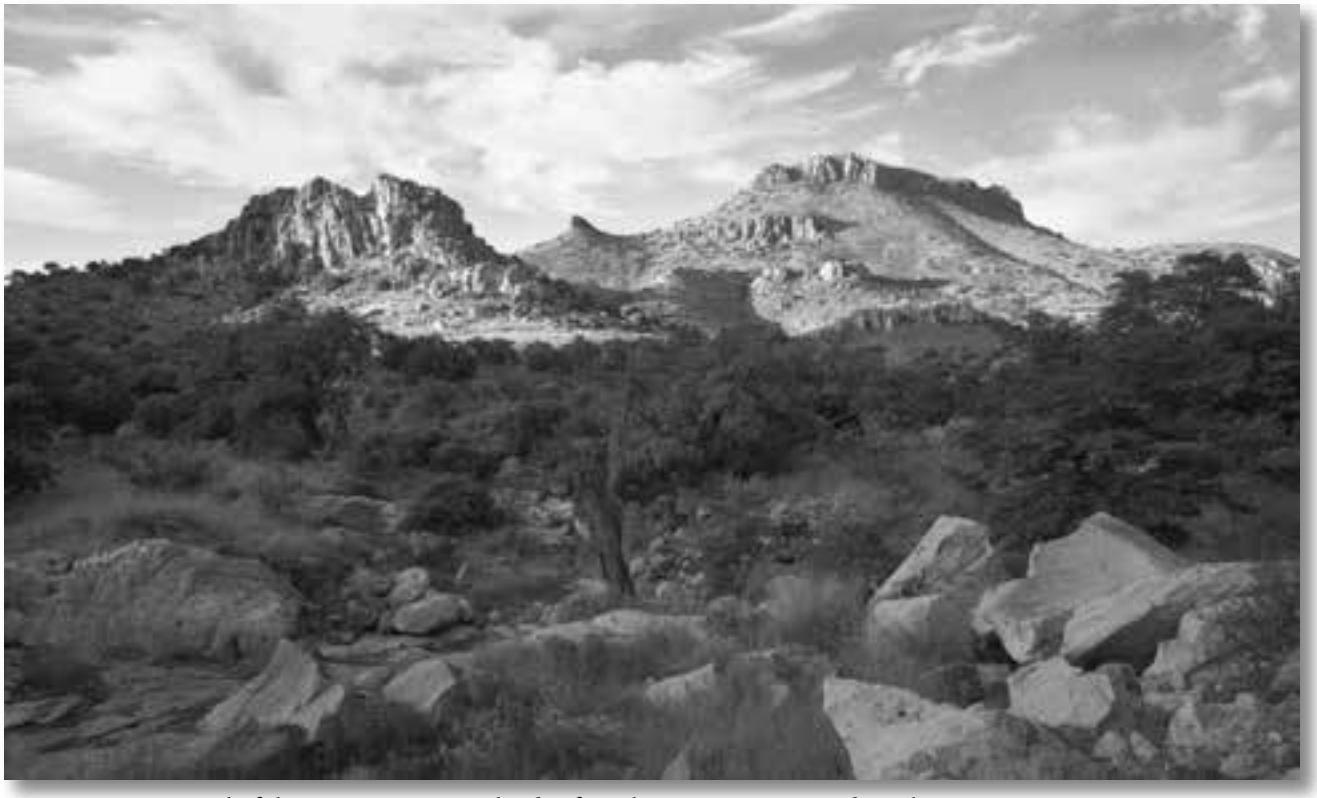
Part of the storied Pacific Slope of great ranchos, vaqueros, long reatas and grizzly bears. My friend, rancher and horseman Ray Berta, told me of being horseback up at those very trees on the skyline.

Windswept Oak, Santa Rosa Island, California, 1998

A small morsel of "paradise lost." For nearly a century Vail & Vickers owned the island and ran cattle, along with mule deer and elk, on lush coastal pastures that rivaled those in the heyday of the great mainland ranchos. Santa Rosa is now part of the Channel Islands National Park – with all grazers removed.

Early Morning, Alabama Hills and Sierra Nevada, Owens Valley, California, 2010

Mule Mountains, 47 Ranch, Arizona, 2012
This landscape may appear sweet and gentle, but don't let the "velour" fool you. The Mules are rough, dirty buggers. The grassy slopes are absolutely covered with huge, loose, jagged rocks, and the gentle looking gradients, when you and your mount are struggling to get above some rimmin'-out cow-calf pair, are frighteningly steep. And taxing. The fresh horse that offered to buck you off at the outset will be plumb out of the notion.



Typical of the mountain pasturelands of southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico.

Aiken Ranch, Chino Valley, Arizona, 1990

Granite Creek heads up in the Sierra Prieta above Prescott, roars through town when flooding, eases down the long slope through Chino, meanders some, then bursts through a massive wall of bedrock before entering the Verde River.

Dell Creek, Little Jennie Ranch, Wyoming, 2007
Spring runoff from the Gros Ventre Range rushes through cow-calf country on its way to the Snake River.

Rangeland in Winter, Alberta, 1991
The heart of Ian Tyson Country.

Abandoned Dugout, Adobe Ranch, New Mexico, 2000
A family of homesteaders most likely toughed it out here for a while. This high-country cow outfit is also home to elk, mule deer and, at times, "introduced" wolves.

Rangeland, North Sheba Crater, Arizona, 1966
Open country on the Colorado Plateau northeast of Flagstaff.

San Bernardino Valley and Peloncillo Mountains, Arizona, 1996
When I was discharged from the peacetime Army in 1963, here is where this pilgrim landed, having lucked into a cowboying job on the historic John Slaughter Ranch (now the Malpai Ranch). The Mexican state of Sonora is just out of the frame to the right. New Mexico is on the far side of the Peloncillos.

Best known for his classic book, *The North American Cowboy: A Portrait*, Jay Dusard has also extensively photographed the sculptural landscape of the American West.

Vaquero Horses

There is no bad horse for a good horseman.

Story and Photography by Arnold Rojas

To make a living riding. In the old days malicious people would often say of some old vaquero, "*Si se apea del caballito se muere de hambre*" (If he were to quit riding he would starve to death). The old-time rider never learned to do any other kind of work.

A vaquero followed his profession chiefly because he could make his living riding. The main reason, more often than not, for staying on one ranch, year after year, was that he had a string of good horses and was loathe to leave them for the ones of questionable merit which would be issued to him if he were to go to work on some other ranch.

When a vaquero reported for work on a ranch he was given a string. A string is a group of horses which varied in number from four on the poorer ranches to as many as twelve on a few of the larger ones. Six horses were considered a large string, however. Each string contained animals of different ages and degrees of usefulness and experience in the working of cattle, from green hackamore colts to old bridle horses.

In riding his string the vaquero learned the merits of his horses, their virtues and their vices, and how to best do his work with them. He was expected to finish training the colts and to ride each of his mounts in proportion to its age and condition, so that he would have a good horse at all times. For each was an individual with his own peculiar characteristics.

Each morning the vaquero chose the mount best suited for that particular say's work, roping, rodeoing, or parting out beef. The *mayordomo* never interfered in the vaquero's choice; the man was expected to know which horse to ride and that matter was left entirely to his discretion.

The vaquero willingly suffered any hardship, cold, heat, hunger, thirst, in following his daily work. He would obey any order whether it was to ride the roughest bronco or to plunge off the steepest mountain to lasso the wildest longhorn; but his string was inviolate. No other vaquero could ride a horse which belonged in his string without his permission.

Most range-riders took great pride in their mounts and never failed to have a favorite among them. They would often brag, to the infinite boredom of their fellows, on the excellence of their "top horse." The best and prettiest was always saved for the occasions when strangers came to visit the ranch, the cattle buyer parted out beef, or the opportunity arose when the vaquero could show off.

The horse kept for the long hard rides was usually a "chunky" individual, an "easy keeper" that would not gaunt up on a long hard day when a "one-gutted" mount would be so drawn that his rider would have to "tie a knot in his tail to keep him from going through the cinch."

The Arabs say that the worst enemy of a horse is fat and rest. The vaquero says that there is never anything wrong with a horse that wet blankets won't cure. Meaning, of course, blankets that are wet with sweat.

So, on the morning when he was faced with the prospect of a 20 hour day riding in the rugged Sierra,

Vaqueros of 1917: Puget, Boggs, Lupe Ortiz, Jésus and Pini. Don Jésus Lopez of the Tejon ranch would say to a man who was rough with his string, "Son, I have another little horse for you. Here is one that is a little impolite. Let us see if you can teach him manners." More often than not the vaquero met with disaster, because a rough man is not always skillful or courageous. Thus Don Jésus provided an object lesson to his crew while sparing himself the trouble of firing the man.

the vaquero would saddle some wall-eyed, hammer-head, cold-backed reprobate with sinews of steel that would buck whenever he got a chance. Such a mount would stay under his rider to the end of the longest day. A mean horse is a tough horse; the meaner the tougher.

Sometimes one rider would borrow a mount from another and sometimes one man would fall in love with another man's horse, and a trade would be effected, usually with the *mayordomo's* approval.

Don Jesus Lopez was faced with the perpetual problem of placing green colts in the vaquero's string and withdrawing the older horses. The vaqueros were always reluctant to take the colts in place of the well-trained cow-horses. Don Jesus would wait for the psychological moment to approach the rider on the subject of exchanging horses: when he had caught the man in some mischief and the vaquero was feeling a little guilty. Sometimes the opportunity came when the vaquero had ridden on an old horse too hard.

Don Jesus knew his vaqueros better than they knew themselves and used this insight into their characters to treat with them. He knew their pride and respected it.

The process of taking an old tried-and-true mount away from a vaquero and replacing it with a green colt was an undertaking which required a soft voice and much tact; a situation which called for all the old Don's innate courtesy. "He would approach us *muy despacito* (very gently) when he wanted to give us a colt," Lupe Gomez said, chuckling fondly. "One morning he walked up to me hemming, hawing and clearing his throat. I wondered what mischief he had caught me in. He said, "My son, you like to run your horse in the *Sierra* roping wild cattle. Now that is very dangerous and for that reason you should ride horses that are young and strong.

The palomino, second from left, is a pureblood Barileño mustang. Don Jésus bought only Barileños from the wild horse-hunters. This is a 1901 photo from Rojas' collection, which he gathered from old vaqueros and wherever else he could find them, sometimes taking snapshots of pictures he was shown in his friends' photo albums.

That horse (indicating one of those in my string) is getting old, he will fall down with you. Now I have a nice cold for you, one that is young and strong which I will give you in place of that old horse.' (A horse that was not old at all.)

"I put my saddle on that *bronco* in front of the barn and mounted him. He lit into bucking and he hit the ground so hard that he broke the bone-handles on a knife I carried in one of my pockets. While he was bucking he tore the rein out of my hand and Don Jesus yelled, *'La rienda, hijo, la rienda, jala la rienda!'* (The rein, my son the rein, pull up the rein!). But I was too busy trying to grab the horn to catch the rein.

"That bronco, his name was *El Pavo* (The Peacock), could buck so hard that he could throw me even when I pulled leather. All through his years as a vaquero horse, even when he was very old, he would buck if his rider hurried him when he was mounted in the morning.

"When Mandy (Jack) Leivas left the Tejon to go to Santa Rosa Island he left two colts which became hog-fat running with the *caponera* (saddle horses). One morning Don Jesus came to me and said, "Son, I want you to ride those two colts for me. I want them for my personal mounts. The reason I want you to ride them is because you never let colts buck and you always put a good rein on the horses you ride.'"

"From that time on I broke all the horses Don Jesus mounted; and you know that he always rode good one," Lupe said proudly. "The horses on the Tejon Ranch in those days were all good animals," he added, proving again the old adage that there is no bad horse for a good horseman.

"It is a poor vaquero indeed who speaks will of his horse and he who does so speaks of himself," Lupe went on.

"The horses on the Ranch were *Barileño* Mustangs.

Don Jesus bought them from the wild-horse hunters, selecting the best they had to offer. They were tough, and in more ways than once. It was a common practice to ride from the Tejon Ranch to Los Angeles in one day on one of those horses.

"*El tenia mucho cuidado con sus caballos* (He took a great deal of care with the horses). Whenever he caught a man abusing one – and I can say with all truth that seldom happened because the vaqueros raised on Tejon had all been brought up to know that it was a bad practice and would not be tolerated by the old boss – he did not stay long on that ranch, and the ones that were rough with horses were not Tejon-bred vaqueros.

"Don Jesus would wait until the next morning, when the men were catching their mounts. Then he would approach the man and say, '*Hijito, tengo otro caballito para ti. Aqui esta este* (indicating a horse in the corral) *que es un poco malcriadito. A ver si le puedes echar cuero.*' (Son, I have another little horse for you. Here is one that is a little impolite. Let us see if you can teach him manners.)

Don Jesus would stay near at hand to see the rough vaquero mount and ride the impolite *caballito*. If the man was hesitant about mounting, or the animal was more than he could handle, Don Jesus would call out to him, '*Subele sin miedo, hijo; subele sin miedo. Los caballos se asustan cuando uno les tiene miedo.*' (Mount him without fear, son; mount him without fear. Horses get frightened when one is afraid of them.) The rest of the crew would be sitting on their horses, watching the performance and grinning broadly at each other. They enjoyed the fine touch of sarcasm in the old *mayordomo's* voice."

More often than not the vaquero met with disaster, because a rough man does not necessarily mean a skillful or courageous one. And thus, the old Don would give an object lesson to his "little sons" and save himself the trouble of firing the heavy-handed vaquero.

If a horse got lame through his rider's carelessness, that rider would be given a much poorer horse. So it behooved the vaquero to take good care of his string.

"If a man liked to make horses buck, he would be given one or two that would give him all the buck he wanted.

"Don Luis Lopez was the finest reinsman ever known in these parts. He liked to show off his horses by stopping them in a long sliding stop. This did not please his nephew, the frugal Don Jesus. *Tio* (uncle), he would say, "Don't slide your horse so much. It wears out too many shoes."

Publisher's Note: The late Arnold Rojas, last of the vaqueros, was an intelligent, energetic, self-taught man who knew and loved the world of the California horse and vaquero, saw it vanishing, and described as much of it as he could in books such as *These Were the Vaqueros* and *Vaqueros and Buckaroos* as well as uncollected articles written especially for *The Californians* magazine. This superb magazine on California history was published by Jean and Michael Sherrell from 1983 - 1995 and we are pleased to offer some of the stories Mr. Rojas wrote for *The Californians* through the gracious permission of its publisher, Michael Sherrell. His late wife, Jean, edited the magazine and following each of Mr. Rojas' stories, they gave readers the following insight into his writings: "The atmosphere, detail, knowledge and expression he captured paved the way for us to reenter another era and ride with the vaqueros. Before he died, Arnold – always a generous man who gave gifts as if your acceptance was a favor – asked us to see that his world was represented correctly, as he recorded it in his writings, for as many people as possible, beginning with our readers. Arnold's stories are illustrated with photos from his own collection and other repositories of cowboys, vaquero and horse lore, as well as with original drawings by cowboy-artist-sculptor Jack Swanson, our friend and Arnold's." We thank Mr. Sherrell for allowing us to help keep Mr. Rojas' words alive.

Road Trip List

More classic must-have tunes for those early morning sojourns to the rodeo, a roping or drive to the office.

#23 Willie Nelson, *Stardust*

Sort of tough to think that this album came out in 1978. It's even tougher to think that it was in 1962 when Willie Nelson's first album, *...And Then I Wrote*, was released – he was 29 years old. Today at 80, Nelson's album of classics that covered genres from pop to jazz to country and folk has sold millions of copies, being certified platinum the same year it was released. Its ten songs consist entirely of pop standards that Nelson picked from among his favorites. Nelson

asked Booker T. Jones, who was his neighbor in Malibu at the time, to arrange a version of "Moonlight in Vermont." Impressed with Jones's work, Nelson asked him to produce the entire album.

This was a daring decision at the time for Nelson as this kind of nostalgic mix was not commonplace for a record industry that was much stronger back then. Executives at his label Columbia were wary as Nelson had positioned himself as an "outlaw" in the then rebirthing popularity of country music. But the album's sales would prove him right.

Released in April, 1978 *Stardust* was met with high sales and near-universal positive reviews. The singles "Blue Skies" and "All of Me" peaked respectively at numbers one and three in *Billboard*'s Hot Country Singles.

In 1979, Nelson won a Grammy Award for Best Male Country Vocal Performance for the song "Georgia on My Mind" and the album stayed on the *Billboard* Country Album charts for ten years, being certified "quintuple platinum" in 2002. We picked the album for our Road Trip List not only for the absolute classic tunes on the album but for the incredibly smooth track transitions. The album was released on vinyl and 8-Track cassettes and the single beauty of 8-tracks was that they "looped" – they just kept playing and didn't stop like the newer cassette tapes that would eclipse them. So with the 8-track playing through the old door-mounted speakers; miles would just slip with "blue skies shining down in me."

This album has been re-released several times and in 2008, Columbia Records issued a version of *Stardust* subtitled *30th Anniversary Legacy Edition*. The album contained a 16 track bonus CD of standards from

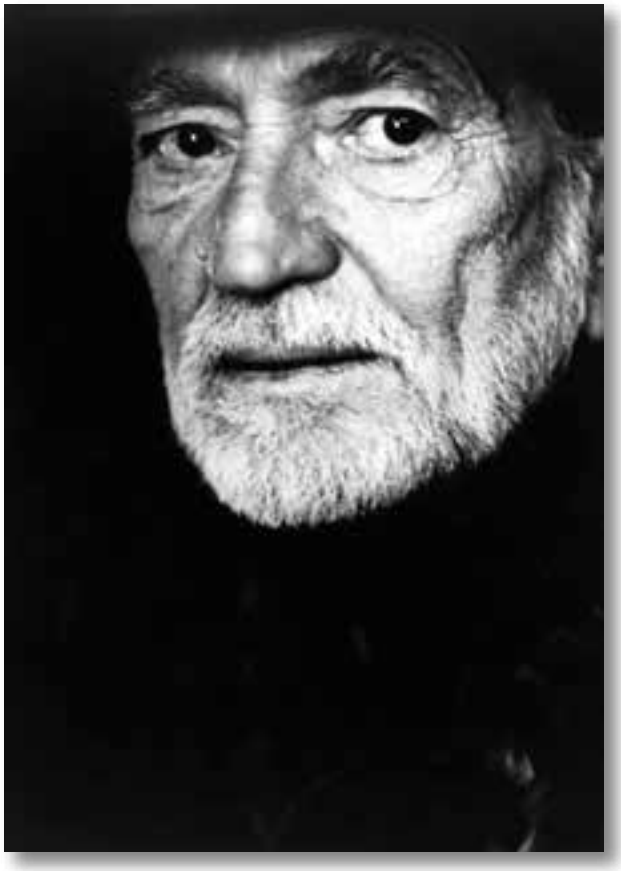
Nelson's other albums. None of the bonus tracks date to the original *Stardust* sessions and it's a great album but nothing tops the original ten songs that Nelson recorded – in just nine days – way back in 1977.

Here's Willie singing "Blue Skies" from a performance in London years ago: http://youtu.be/WSCplj40uuY

Blue Skies
By Irving Berlin, 1926.
(The song was composed as a last-minute addition to a musical by Rodgers and Hart)

Blue skies smilin' at me
Nothin' but blue skies do I see
Bluebirds singin' a song
Nothin' but blue skies from now on

Never saw the sun shinin' so bright
Never saw things goin' so right
Noticing the days hurrying by
When you're in love, my how they fly



Blue days, all of them gone
Nothin' but blue skies from now on

Blue skies smilin' at me
Nothin' but blue skies do I see
Blue days, all of them gone
Nothin' but blue skies from now on

Blue skies smilin' at me
Nothin' but blue skies do I see
Blue days, all of them gone
Nothin' but blue skies from now on

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Blue days, all of them gone
Nothin' but blue skies from now on

Western Moment

Celebrating Jay Harney

By William Matthews

Made Here, By Hand

I recently read a little piece on a U.S. company that ships old wrappers from cookies and energy bars to Mexico where they are stitched together into items such as umbrellas and messenger bags and then shipped back to the U.S. All this shipping done brought to mind a common question that looks us square in the face: Why can't we do that here? How many things do we still manufacture completely in America? Is there still a sense of pride in making things here, things that are indigenous, that belong to America?

Made in Montana. Buckle by Arne Esp

The answer, of course, is yes, but less – way less than there used to be. In the Western genre, the answer is a more definitive yes, and for that we should be pleased. There continues to be a booming entrepreneurial spirit in the West that encompasses a broad spectrum of crafts and artisan made products. Sure there are "Western" products made offshore – all sorts of boots and shoes and apparel and leather goods – but there are a growing number of customers who desire fine craftsmanship and a product that is taken from concept to completion by a small group of makers or a single crafts person here in the American West. From saddles, bits, and spurs to fine silver-mounted headstalls, we can see a growing appreciation of things made in America that focus on the ways and the tools of the cowboy.

Longtime Western historian and writer Byron Price spoke of this "craftsman renaissance" in his fine book, a tribute to all things western, *The Fine Art of the West*. He described the decline of the number of fine craftsmen who produced high-quality cowboy goods after World War II and the seeming disappearance of the atelier system of shop-employed craftsmen. However, he stated that the flame wasn't completely extinguished, actually – far from it.

"A few precious artisans and apprentices kept the flame of craftsmanship flickering, and on the eve of the twenty-first century, with the help of a growing cadre of collectors, dealers, scholars, and museums, we experienced a revival of interest in the fine arts of the West that continues today."

In addition to the collectors and scholarly aficionados Price described, further proof of the continued growing appreciation of Western craft is the fact that most of the finer items being created today are being used for what they were intended, not just catalogued in a museum or hung on a wall. Saddle makers, bit and spur makers, silversmiths, rawhide braiders, boot makers, hat makers, and all kinds of kitchen-corner creators are crafting items to support the activities of the cattle and horse business in this country. And so long as cattle continue to be tended from horseback, this appreciation of finely crafted gear will hopefully continue.

Made in California. Bridle concho by the late, great Ed Fields

Yet there may be an even more basic reason why we are seeing this increased appreciation of handcrafted western items. That being that our basic human nature leads us to believe our personal work is important. Whatever our individual tasks are, we maintain our uniqueness through the craftsmanship we employ. In his fine book on the subject of the hand-made, *The Craftsman*, author Robert Sennett explains his perspective. "'Craftsmanship' may suggest a way of life that waned with the advent of the industrial society – but this is misleading," Sennett writes. "Craftsmanship names an enduring, basic human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake. Craftsmanship cuts a far wider swath than skilled manual labor; parenting improves when it is practiced as a skilled craft, as does citizenship. It focuses on objective standards, on the thing itself."

The qualities that define each person's craft are unique to the individual. Equally important are the unique desires of each customer – the ends to which one plans to put the handmade item, making it a part of his or her life. One such customer, who has always held a deep respect for indigenous craft, is former President Jimmy Carter, who described his particular passion in his prologue to the recent book, *Craft in America*.

"Craft, both historical and contemporary, is all around us, and it recognizes and communicates much about what we are as a country," Carter wrote. "It is our identity and legacy. The things we hold most dear, often handmade, are a record of who we are as a nation. They stand for individualism and the satisfaction that comes from making something with one's own two hands."

America is a young nation by most standards. Yet as a country we still cherish the uniqueness of our regional cultures and celebrate their roots. The West, especially, holds a large part of our collective hearts. And as our national focus becomes more international, we can rest assured that somewhere – out there among the sage – someone is working with care and understanding on a fine silver bit or a pair of spurs that are destined for an appreciative customer. These Western craftsmen and craftswomen are keeping the uniqueness that lives and breathes in the American West alive, one piece at a time. BR


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