The Journal of the American West

Ranch & Reata

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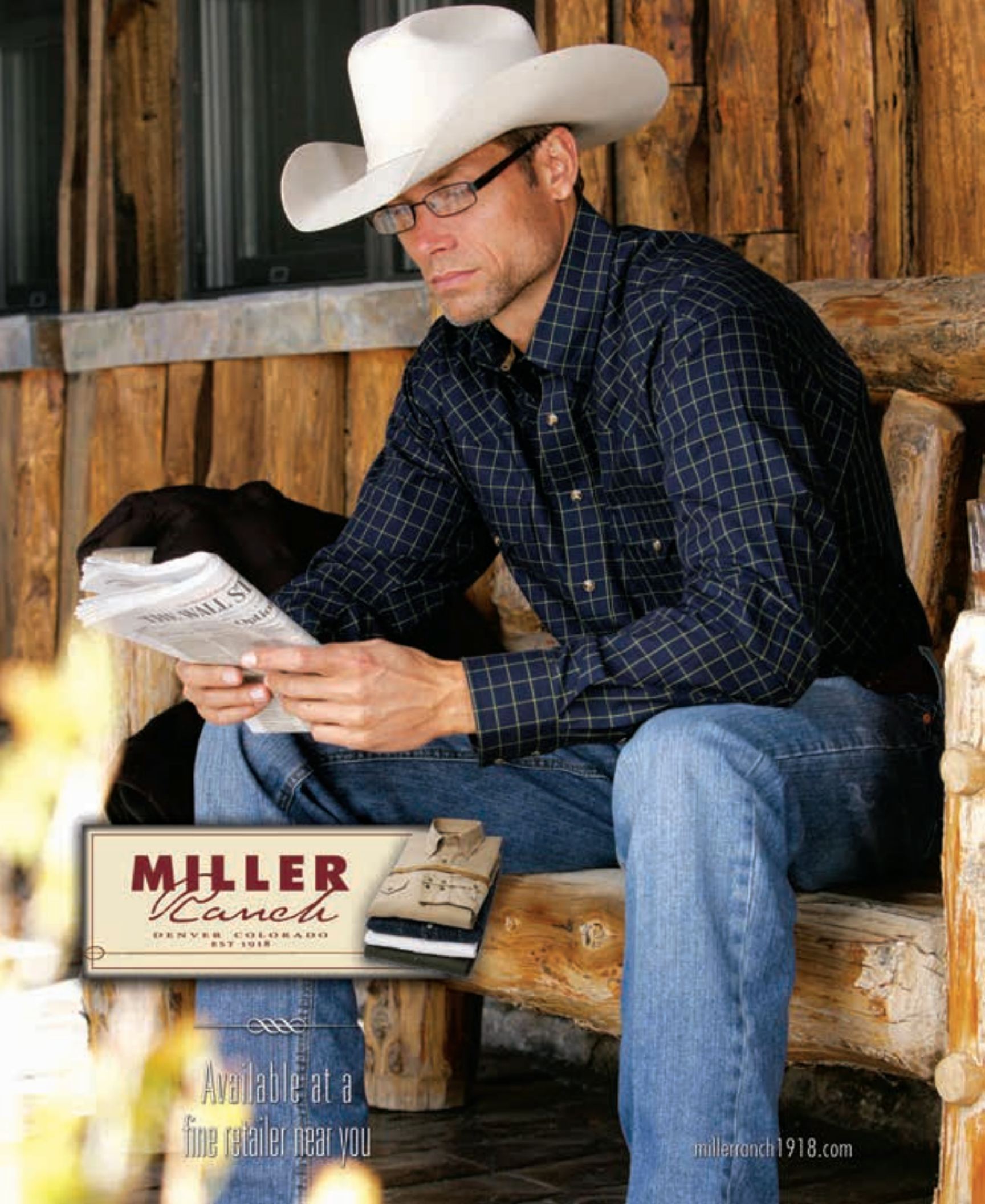
Mud & Mayhem: Bev Pettit's Rodeo Photography

Reviving the Art of American Watchmaking

Language, Landscape & Laughter: Poet Doris Daley

Western Artist Roy Andersen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EDITOR'S NOTE

Plan B

By A.J. Mangum

Squinting against the blinding morning sunlight that poured westward down Bozeman's main drag, I balanced my coffee cup atop the roof of my rental car and unlocked the driver's-side door. The morning's pre-interview rituals were complete. I had risen early to double-check equipment, ensuring camera batteries were fully charged and audio gear was ready to use. Interview themes were listed neatly in my notebook and bookmarked for quick reference. Everything I needed to get the story – a profile of Montana watchmaker Jeffrey Nashan – was meticulously packed in a soft-sided case that rested on the car's back seat.

Armed with that hot cup of coffee, acquired from a local shop I'd taken time to scope out the day before, I settled into the driver's seat, ready to make the half-hour drive from Bozeman to Nashan's studio/storefront in Livingston. All was going according to plan.

Before I could turn the key in the ignition, my cell phone began to ring, its caller ID listing a number with Montana's 406 area code. With my interview an hour away, I braced myself for the kind of bad news brought by early morning calls.

The voice on the phone informed me that the interview would need to be delayed. Nashan, she explained, had been injured the night before in, of all things, a skateboarding accident. He was still up for a visit, I was assured, but his jaw had been wired shut.

I sat in the car, key still in my hand, dumbfounded by the layers of content offered within what remains one of the most memorable phone calls of my life. My reaction played out on three levels:

First, a *skateboarding* accident?

Second, a quick, mental re-sorting of priorities. Clearly an interview and photo shoot were not going to be on the day's itinerary. Despite Nashan's willingness to somehow power through the proceedings with a


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wired-shut jaw, I couldn't imagine complicating his recovery by taking him up on his offer to meet later in the day or even later in the week. Or later in the month. (How long, I wondered, do wired-shut jaws stay wired shut?)

And, finally, regret that an interview with such a colorful subject – a skateboarding cowboy watchmaker – would have to wait, even if for the best of reasons.

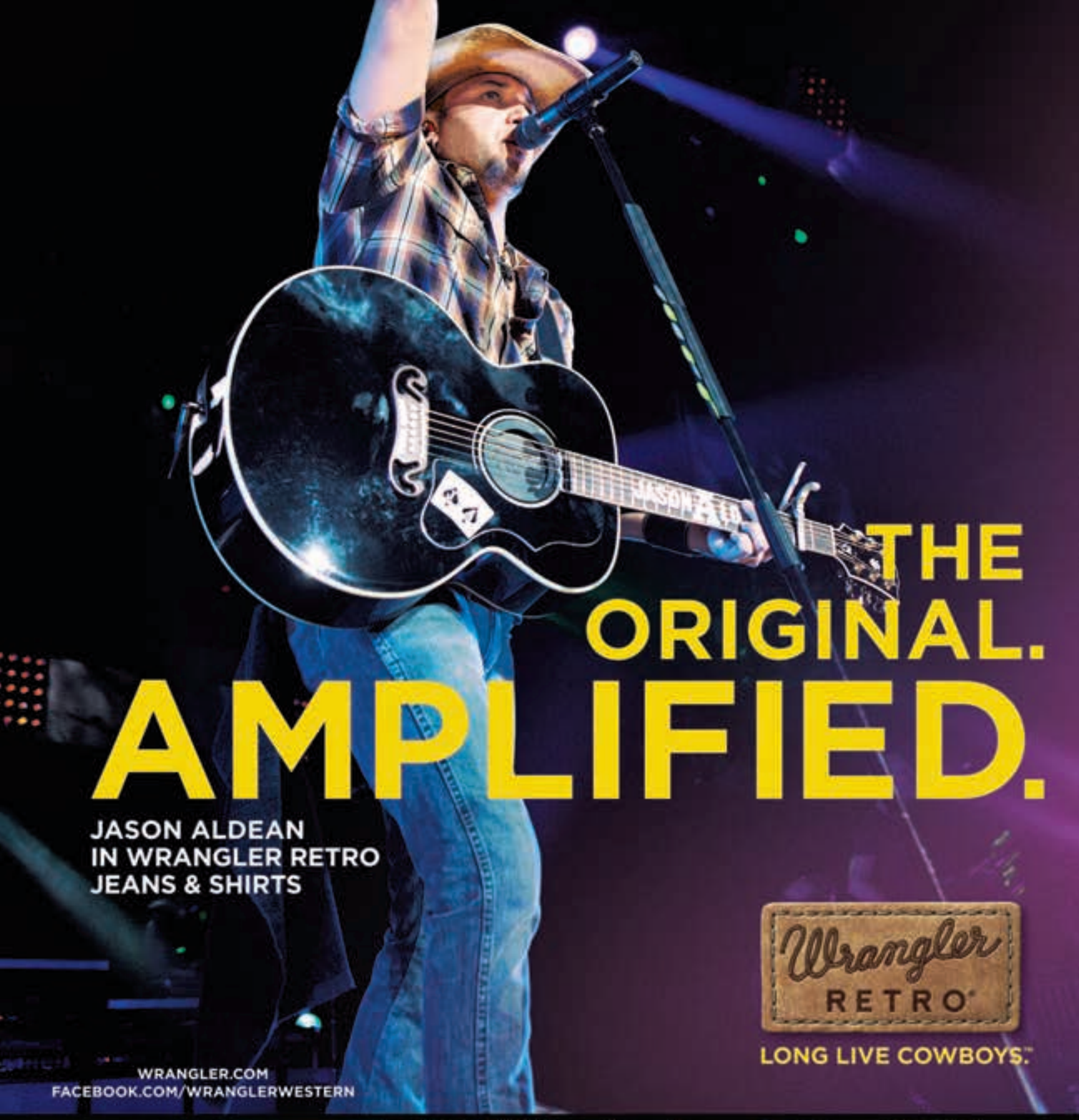
I explained to the caller that I preferred Nashan recover in peace, without any intrusion on my part, and assured her that my editorial interest wouldn't wither. The story would belong to another day, possibly another writer, but I'd see that it was told.

The call ended and I finished the last of my coffee. With the day's schedule suddenly clear, I exited the rental car and walked back to the coffee shop for a leisurely second cup.

Contributor Melissa Mylchreest profiles Montana watchmaker Jeffrey Nashan in this issue's "Making Time."

photo courtesy Montana Watch Co.

Watchmaker Jeffrey Nashan, of Montana Watch Company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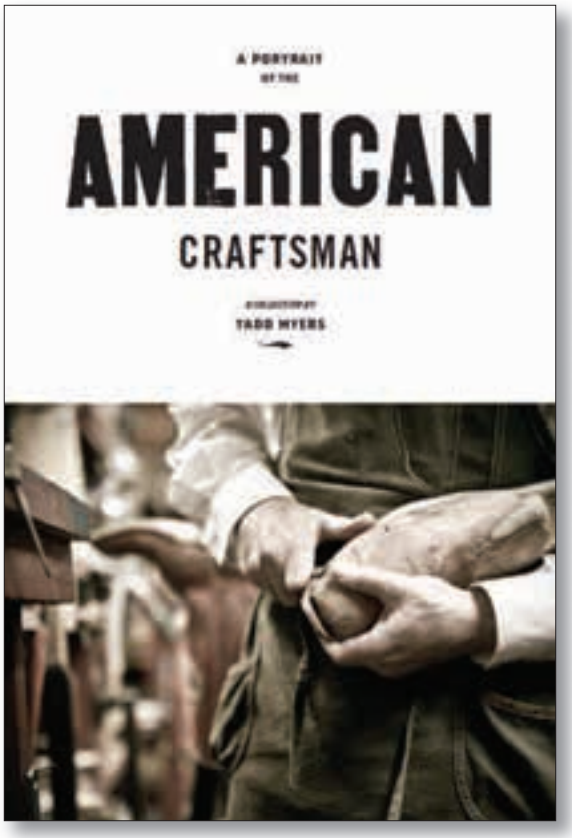
Jay Brown Stagecoaches

For nearly half a century, Weatherford, Texas, craftsman Jay Brown (1927-2011) produced some of the finest handmade stagecoaches ever built. A former vocational-agriculture teacher, Brown launched J. Brown Stagecoach Works in 1965 after restoring coaches that appeared in his daughters' trick-riding act.

He built stagecoaches according to the specifications of the Abbott Downing Co., the New Hampshire manufacturer credited with building the first stagecoach in 1827. The construction of each coach was such a detailed process, it could take months for a crew of three to complete the work. Basic models started at around $65,000.

Brown's stagecoaches caught the attention of collectors and museums, as well as Hollywood producers, who used the horse-drawn vehicles in commercials and feature films.

Despite Brown's death one year ago, his venture lives on as J. Wilson Stagecoach Works, owned an operated by his son-in-law, Jimmy Wilson. Learn more at www.jwilsonstagecoaches.com.



Jay Brown is one of the many craftsmen whose work is documented in photographer Tadd Myers' *A Portrait of the American Craftsman*. Learn more at www.taddmyers.com.

photos by Tadd Myers

Weatherford, Texas, stagecoach maker Jay Brown, with one of his creations

Photographer Tadd Myers documents Jay Brown's work in his book *A Portrait of the American Craftsman*, a collection of images and short essays about artisans ranging from saddlemakers to boatmakers. Learn more about his *American Craftsman Project* and download a copy of the book at www.taddmyers.com.

BY HAND AND HEART

Making Time

Montana watchmaker Jeffrey Nashan

By Melissa Mylchreest

In time. Down time. Never enough time. It's the great leveler, one of the few things against which we are all powerless. And yet, Jeffrey Nashan has found a way to make time – or at least, its measure – into art. As the founder and owner of the Montana Watch Company, Nashan creates unique, heirloom-quality watches on-site in Livingston, Montana. And over the 20 years that he's been involved in watchmaking and repair, he has developed personal philosophies not only about the aesthetics of measuring time, but also about what time itself is worth.

If it weren't for the harsh Montana winters, Nashan probably never would have found himself in the world of horology. "I was about to start yet another winter working outdoor construction," Nashan says, "when a friend mentioned that there was a clock-repair guy in town who needed help." While he didn't know the first thing about clocks, Nashan thought it was worth a shot. He remembers his initial misgivings ("I didn't think there was much future in it, especially for me."), but within a couple of weeks, he was hooked. "Clock repair is incredible, because you get to solve a new puzzle every day. It's like being a mechanic who gets a totally different car in the shop each morning. There's no manual, you're building your own tools, and you're solving all these problems."

It was during these exciting early days that Nashan first got a taste of the timepieces that would one day inspire him to start his company. "After working on clocks for a while, I graduated to working on watches," he says, "especially vintage American pocket and wrist watches, and they became my passion." These early watches piqued Nashan's interest not only because of their design and precise craftsmanship, but because of their rarity and history as well. "Around the turn of the century, America dominated the watchmaking industry.

Nashan got his start repairing clocks. Intrigued by the problem-solving nature of the craft, he graduated to watchmaking.

Watchmaking is intricate work. Nashan likens it to solving a mechanical puzzle.

The "Colt" version of Montana Watch Company's Bridger Field Watch

But since, it's all been shut down. There's very little horology going on today in the U.S." Beyond that, he felt that the decline of watchmaking in the country was part of a larger trend: "This type of artisanship is disappearing, everywhere. Especially in the world of watches, it has come close to disappearing completely. There just aren't guys working at the bench anymore."

Yet Nashan appreciated the timeless feel of those watches, the Old World style, the impeccable quality. He appreciated the attention, pride and time required to produce those tiny machines, and he believed other people might appreciate that sort of craftsmanship as well, especially in a brand-new, American-made watch. Together with his repair-shop partner, he took a tentative step into the world of watchmaking. "We designed our first watch, Model 1915, a transitional wristwatch," he says. "We made 100 of them, and figured if they don't sell, they'd be really expensive Christmas presents." But the watches did sell. And while the two budding entrepreneurs didn't make any money, they realized they had struck a chord with the public. "People liked them, magazines wrote about them," Nashan says. "We said to each other 'Hey, maybe there's something to this idea after all.'"

It was a good little watch and a good design, but it was still awaiting the details that would make it truly great. Nashan stumbled upon those details by chance one day in downtown Livingston. "I ran into an artist

friend, and she was wearing this bracelet that had all this fine engraving, really amazing stuff. I asked her who had made it, because it was significantly different than anything I had ever seen, in terms of skill level." She pointed him in the direction of Ernie Lytle, a rancher and engraver based in Wyoming.

A master of Western single-point engraving, Lytle was not only a craftsman of the highest order, but also the keeper of another dying art form. "I went to meet Ernie at the Western Design Conference in Cody. I showed him a watchcase and said, 'Whattaya think?'" Lytle was game, and the two started testing designs, talking with other artists, and experimenting with inlay, engraving, bluing and gem setting. Around the same time, Nashan began running cattle on his family's property, in cooperation with their old-time rancher neighbor. The stories and values of this neighbor, Nashan says, got him thinking about the Western aesthetic, and about the way in which prized possessions, such as saddles and guns – and watches – hold such symbolic value in the West. "I was looking at everything from really old cowboy stuff up to contemporary Western-inspired design that people might not call 'western' but is definitely of the west." Those musings, coupled with Lytle's artisanship and Nashan's horological knowhow, gave rise to timepieces that were as functional as they were beautiful.

Two years after they met, Lytle and Nashan returned to the Western Design Conference. They showed watches that were "done up to the nines," and waltzed away with the coveted Best Artist Jewelry award. The rest, as they say, was history.

"That's when I found my niche," Nashan says. Parting ways with his watchmaking partner, Nashan, along with Lytle and a handful of other artisans, took those early designs and expanded them, as far as their imaginations could go – and found an enthusiastic market waiting for them. While the nascent company originally intended only to build and sell specific lines of watches, they soon realized that clients preferred the opportunity to design their own timepieces. "We had shotgun enthusiasts and Bulino enthusiasts, people who wanted Western-inspired engraving and bright-cutting and contemporary engraving," Nashan says. With the addition of master engravers Chris DeCamillis and Diane Scalese, and leatherworker Howard Knight, they realized they were ready to tackle just about any design that came through the door. "So we started telling our clients the sky's the limit. 'What do you want us to build?'"

This watch from the Highline Aviator line features a Bulino-engraved dial

Today, 95 percent of Montana Watch Company's work is custom orders, each watch designed in

conversation with the customer. Some watches are built to commemorate an event, while some faceplates are engraved with portraits of clients' companions – beloved bird dogs or favorite horses. Some clients create their own proprietary designs and have watches made for their families, knowing no one else in the world will ever own the same watch.

This opportunity to design a highly personalized heirloom, Nashan says, is what makes the company unique. "We're very close with our clients," he says. "They're really hands-on in the creation of their watches, and they talk with us on a regular basis. Sometimes they call us up just to see how the fishing is." In order to maintain such close relationships with his clients, Nashan says the company will only build between 75 and 100 watches per year. "I could probably do more than that, and really crank them out, but that's just not what it's about."

The Buck Brannaman Miles City Pocket Watch, by Montana Watch Company

What it is about, and what clients appreciate, is the fact the company and its artisans embody those qualities that spoke to Nashan in the very beginning: craftsmanship of the highest quality, thoughtful design and, above all, dedication to creating timepieces that will last for 10 or 20 generations. "The way Ernie does western single-point completely with hammer and chisel, just as traditional engravers have always done. The camaraderie and collaboration between our artists, just like in the old days. It's all really inspiring," Nashan says.

And the people who seek out Montana Watch Company do so for those very same, inspiring reasons. "So many of the folks who buys our watches have a fundamental appreciation for hard work," says Nashan. "So this idea of artisanship is really meaningful to a lot of our clients. Just knowing that a master craftsman has put a certain amount of his time – of which there is only so much – into each piece. It's a really simple idea, but the results are incredibly special."

The Model 1930, by Montana Watch Company

Melissa Mylchreest is a writer living in Montana.
Learn more about Jeffrey Nashan's work at www.montanawatch.com.

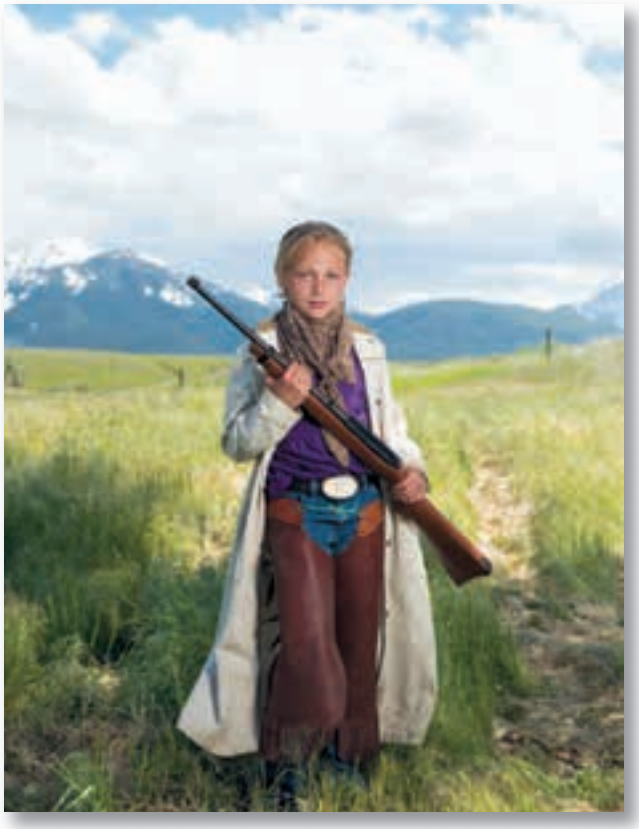
BOOKS TO FIND

Chicks With Guns

Ok, imagine a literary, new book pitch meeting on the top floor at some big-time New York publisher. Lots of suits mingling comfortably with corduroy-clad editing types, all sitting there drinking coffee out of delicate little cups, speaking in hushed tones about the "next big thing" in publishing and what the heck is with all this eBook stuff and...oh, sorry, I forgot where I was for a minute.

But imagine a pitch meeting for a photography/coffee table book on women of all ages holding – no, almost caressing...firearms. What? Well, that is exactly what photographer Lindsay McCrum has delivered, and quite cool it is. The appeal of her book, *Chicks With Guns* (Vendome, $45), may be obvious to some, but others, not so much. Ms. McCrum, a former landscape painter, crisscrossed the United States, photographing female gun owners. The results are here, in painterly images that neither glorify nor vilify their subjects.

As the venerable *New York Times* described, "Some of the photos, of well-heeled and finely



cheek-boned women holding shotguns, hunting rifles, pistols and other weapons, look as if they might have first appeared in *Town & Country* or *Garden & Gun*. Others depict young women with tattoos and defiant stares. A few verge on cheesecake."

Cheesecake, I think not. Maybe in the *New York Times*, but in the West, these images seem as homey as ranch moms holding the mail. "*Chicks with Guns* is filled with images that are strikingly beautiful, yet often have a haunting or unsettling quality," writes former federal prosecutor Stephen L. Meagher, in his opening of the book. "In our time, few subjects provoke the range of emotions that guns do. Thoughts as varied as policies to prevent violent crime, the romance of the Old West, and even the implications of children playing with toy guns come to mind. No matter what images are evoked, the reality is that in this country, fifteen to twenty million women own guns. The sight of women with ostensibly deadly weapons (they are actually unloaded) challenges our preconceptions about the female or maternal role."

As for Ms. McCrum, "The only thing I can shoot is a camera." And a great job she does with her weapon of choice. This is a great read and fun to have around the house.

The book may be purchased at order.chickswithguns@gmail.com

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THE WESTERN WEB

A look at all things cowboy on the information superhighway.

When it comes to linking mainstream audiences with the traditions and culture of the American West, no entity outperforms Oklahoma City's National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. One of its modern tools is a video interview series, *The Cowboy Podcasts*, hosted by Don Reeves, the museum's McCasland Chair of Cowboy Culture.

The online series features conversations with some of the West's most intriguing personalities. In past episodes, actor Tom Selleck reflects on his work in western films; musician Michael Martin Murphey shares the history of the museum's Cowboy Christmas Ball, which he headlines each year; and silversmith Scott Hardy and painter Tim Cox explain the importance of art and traditional crafts within the cowboy culture. Other guests have included sculptor Herb Mignery, rodeo cowboy Jet McCoy, Ranger Doug Green of the musical group Riders in the Sky, and chuckwagon cooks Sue Cunningham and Jean Shepherd Cates.

In an episode of *The Cowboy Podcasts*, actor Tom Selleck reflects on his work in western films.

Wonderfully produced, with top-flight camera work, audio and editing, the series offers viewers rare insight and commentary from some of the West's most notable figures. Videos typically run between 10 and 20 minutes, and are archived at nationalcowboymuseum.org/info/MuseumPodcast.aspx, where viewers can click to subscribe to the series via iTunes.

Silversmith Scott Hardy (left) and painter Tim Cox discuss the importance of art and traditional craft in the cowboy culture.

Musician Michael Martin Murphey shares the history of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum's annual Cowboy Christmas Ball.

Ranger Doug, of Riders in the Sky, explains the resilience of cowboy music.

Touching the Earth:

An Interview with Lynn Miller, founding publisher of *The Small Farmer's Journal*

Oregon-based publisher, Lynn Miller is best described as a renaissance man. A journalist, a farmer, an artist and a teamster – in the original sense of the word – a driver of work horses. He and his father established the *Small Farmer's Journal* in 1976. It is a unique piece of journalism – an award-winning, international agrarian quarterly. As the website for the *Journal* describes itself, it is "more like a community odyssey than a periodical, *Small Farmer's Journal* is packed to over-full with more information than you might find in three or four conventional magazines." It is a subscription model and is supported 100% by its readership – a true clarion of free speech in the best old sense of the phrase. An exciting platform for engaging far-flung ideas about anything pertinent to the small family farm experience. Livestock, Crops, Barns, Farming Systems, Equipment, Recipes, Kids pages, Marketing, Poetry, Stories, and Political Updates; but above all it is the sense of hope that comes from within the *Journal*'s pages. That our future as a country and a planet is in direct relation to how we all grow our food and the respect we have for

Lynn Miller

Dumptruck by Lynn Miller

Pride by Lynn Miller

those who do. If there is an underlying message Lynn Miller brings, it's that we can all be a part of the solution and that we all are responsible for realizing the importance of local, small farming. Understanding the value of the small farm is really understanding "family" – both on an individual level and in the greater sense of how we all fit within the family of man.

Along with the magazine, Miller oversees the *Journal's* website and a new a multi-media experiment called *Farm Drum* with his pal and equally renaissance-type, Paul Hunter. Hunter, like Miller, is a life-multi-tasker. A teacher, a writer, a poet, a fine printer, a musician and, oh yes, a farmer.

We sat down with Lynn Miller recently, just to visit, and to hear about anything and everything he was doing.

R&R: I understand you are beginning a new chapter in your life.

LM: Yea...that is true. It's odd, I had thought that if I kept my nose to the grindstone that sometime after I hit 60 I could start to enjoy the luxury of designing my daily work schedule around more of the ranch and painting some of the creative stuff. All of a sudden, I'm 64 and decided to take last nine months off. And I did do a whole lot more on the ranch and it was fantastic. Really fantastic but then I turned around and saw the pressure was building up behind the dam.

R&R: Well, sounds like it was time well spent even as everything else kept coming at you.

LM: Yes, so now, I'm just going pell-mell since I've spoken to you last. I've accepted an invitation to do a horse farming presentation in Calgary, then looks like I'm going to be doing some week long workshops and presentations in Mississippi, South Carolina, Michigan and another in Chicago.

R&R: Are these all related subjects you are speaking on?

LM: In Calgary a draft horse organization and ranching community want me to speak from various perspectives. And they haven't given me that outline yet. In Mississippi, I'm doing a week-long workshop we're calling it "Hang with Horses" workshop. We're going to be building equipment to demonstrate a process in Michigan. I will be the announcer for "Horse Progress Day" which is the Amish Annual Draft Horse Event.

I am aware it's a big event – and an even bigger honor for a "civilian" to be their chosen as their announcer. So if all goes as planned, I may be doing something similar at the Animal Power Fair in Germany and it's an event that draws upwards of 400,000 people.

A statement to the interest of animal power farming techniques in Europe.

R&R: Your publication, the *Small Farmers Journal* has truly spread the seeds of awareness regarding the logic of farming with animals, and frankly the Journal has always been very reminiscent to me of what Stewart Brand did with the *Whole Earth Catalog*.

LM: Ahh...there's a story in of that.

R&R: I had hoped so.

LM: (Laughs) Well, I went to school in San Francisco, graduate of the San Francisco Art Institute where I got my first BFA and my first MFA, then went to Oregon and got a second MFA in Painting with a minor in Special Education. But when I was in San Francisco, I was not one of the hippie generation, I was the one in rough-out Tony Lama boots and a cowboy hat that the prostitutes and the pimps, and the pushers all said "O o cowboy!"

R&R: You were Jon Voigt.

LM: (Laughter) Well, I like to imagine that I was part Jon Voigt's character and part Ratzo Rizzo...but when I was in San Francisco – I guess five years or so – there were a lot of us swimming around in that time and that space and then left in various directions and started similar, if not, parallel ventures. Mine has always been what you see in *Small Farmers Journal*, and we have been very consistent. Another fellow who started a publication about the same time was Richard Shuttleworth who founded *Mother of News*. As for Mr. Brand, I remember I did spend some time sleeping on Stewart's living room floor. It was quite an era with many things going on, at the same time. Wendell Berry was studying with Wallace Stegner in Palo Alto – imagine that class. No question a lot was going on with lots of diverse personalities – yet my passion for the actual day-to-day workings of farming and ranching have always stayed with me and they have informed all the choices that I have made with this journalism experiment that I think has only barely begun.

R&R: I am fascinated to see your reader letters, the positions that you take with them and the obvious interactive interest that comes from your readers. And like the *Whole Earth Catalog*, you are principally looked upon as a permission giver to readers.

LM: That's...I like the sound of that, from the beginning, there's been this little mantra in the back of my brain that says one of my responsibilities is to allow all voices. For years I've used this analogy. I see the journal as a "potluck supper" in the old fashion sense that here's an opportunity for you to have to – "HAVE TO" – sit across the table from a long-lost-relative, who you don't really like. And you may not take anything out of a neighbor's casserole, but you are all there at the table together. It has long been intriguing to me in my travels, and correspondence we get, meeting with people, visiting, that the audience we have feels passionate about this perception that the journal is written specifically for them. We have people from every economic, social, religious strata you can imagine. And all think the magazine is written for them. And of course, it is.

R&R: How many countries does the Journal mail to?

LM: 72. We have established a very loyal and beloved readership. And that those are the people that will stick with us. At the end of the day these are the people who will hang on no matter what the economy does or where it goes. But this is volume 35, after all. And yet we have many new people all the time who have never heard of us. We love them all.

There is both a pleasant aspect to this and a sad aspect. We are losing readers that are just dying of old age. Now almost on a weekly basis if not daily, folks that have been with us forever. But here's the thing that warms the cockles of my heart, we have readers now, whose parents grew up with the magazine. I use to be able to say now we have readers who were small children when their parents were reading the magazine. We now have readers, people who are 18, 20 years old, whose parents were children reading their parent's copies of the magazine.

Checking Tension by Lynn Miller

R&R: And are these young people, these are people involved in ranching and small farming...continuing on?

LM: Yes. And...and revisiting it. You know, it's kind of a family legacy issue, we have, as you might imagine, people reading the magazine whose parents lost the farm and/or the ranch, and they want to return to it. It's amazing. Here's a story that happened to me about 15 years ago, that's enchanting. I think you will enjoy the nuance of this. I went to the Waverly Draft Horse Auction in Iowa and was met there by an old farmer named Vernon Matson. A fellow in his 70s or 80s at the time, he's gone now, but he was delighted to be able to say that we knew each other and we were friends. So when I arrived, he grabbed a hold of my arm, and he said "I got somebody I've got to have you meet." He took me up to a great big guy who must have been 50 years old, in classic overalls, with the kind of face that looked like it never really wanted to look at anything unless it was a job to do. And Vernon said, "This is the guy I was telling you about, Pat. This is Lynn Miller." And the guy never looked at me and said "Nope." He said, "Damn it! This is Lynn Miller. This is the guy that started that small farmer journal! That magazine you like!"

And he said, "Nope." And he said, "Pat! Ask him!" and he didn't say anything and I said, "Well, I did start the publication in 1976." He turned so he wouldn't have to face me because he was embarrassed for me. When he told Vernon he said "A woman started that magazine a long time ago. How come I know? It was on my dad's kitchen table 35 years ago." At that time, the magazine was only ten years old. So in another words, he was saying it could be 80 years old or more. And Vernon just kinda of shrugged his shoulders "What do I gotta do to prove this?" And I said to Vernon, hoping that Pat

would hear me, "I said "Vernon, you don't have to do anything I'll take the compliment." Pat didn't reply, just walked off.

R&R: Do you find yourself having an increase in "civilian" readers, we'll call them, people who are aware of more sensitivity to locally grown food and the importance of that within our country?

LM: I'm not exactly sure what you mean when you say "civilian..."

R&R: Non-farmer types, people who are consumers.

LM: Yes. Definitely. And we've always enjoyed a percentage of our readership "a small percentage" but people who are peripheral, they will never try to farm, they didn't grow up on a farm. But for them what the picture that the journal paints is a picture that is agreeable beyond what they can understand. And what I keep coming back to is, that the journal seems to strike a nerve in our genetic memory. There's something that people see and feel there, that even though they may not have grown up with it, it feels not only familiar but comforting.

R&R: A memory or pull to a simpler life?...is this whole concept of animal power, is that circle coming back around?

LM: Yes and I definitely don't limit it to animal power, its always been a balancing act for us, to somehow defend the notion that the journal is about anything that applies to a "hand held" agriculture whether animal power fits into it or not. I recently got an e-mail from a woman who said, "We are not spring chickens, my husband being 53 and myself 42. We love what you are doing." (She picked the magazine up from a tractor store back East.)

"I don't know how it is we never saw your magazine." She goes on to talk about the fact that they have been farming now for about a couple of years and she said something that's quite telling. She makes reference to issues about nostalgia and the old ways and so forth. But then she says "I loved Lynn's posts on the website *What's a farmer to do?* I've all but pulled back completely from the online farming and organics forums and lists because of too much that comes off as a elitist's attitude regarding the right ways to do things."

From near manic soil and mineral testing to shipping kelp half way around the world, although there is some benefit to things in moderation, many people just take it too far. My depression-era grandparents would have deemed most of it madness and gone on with what they had always done "organic" gardening without all the fuss. Yeah, you're on the right track."

That gal's email spurred me to write down some thoughts – care to hear?

R&R: Absolutely.

LM: Not to get wrapped up in measuring these times against others, just suffice it to say that humans today are dealing with a bunch of bad stuff – a stalled economy, wars, food poisonings, climate mayhem, poverty, diseased information anarchy, and a completely dysfunctional government sector throughout the so-called developed world. Things are out of whack and getting worse. Money is being made on misery. Power's being gathered out of our demonstrated discontent. But – we error if that's all we see out there. These are also magnificent times, look here, over yonder, and behind that city edge, on top of that building, there are grand small-life adventures, warm cool hues and musical fertilities all waiting to applaud and encourage our view towards a better humanity. We see "glowing lights" germinating into top-side existence growing all across the North America country side. And most of these lights have in common a bond direct and indirect back to the rebirth of good farming. And not just in North America, but all around the planet. Folks are taking charge of their own self-sufficiency. With small farms and gardens springing up from Pakistan to Indonesia to Louisiana from the south of Africa to Scandinavia. Delightful to imagine that we may be heading for a small farm earth. But we aren't there yet. And there is much left to be done.

That's part of what had built up behind the dam with all that time off.

R&R: Glad you're letting it out.

LM: Well this hope comes from positions long held, before there was a journal, I was passionately concerned about small ranches. Many were my neighbors, like Ed and Bertha Dalhman. Ed was a Finnish cowboy, who had 30 head of Charolais Hereford-cross cattle and was the most classic old time buckaroo from Europe. He did his stint and saved some money and bought a small ranch in Oregon. And what was happening at the Federal level was hurting him on a daily level so I thought, well, I've got an inside track here, I might be able to figure out why these things are. At first, I thought it was really the result of indifference and that our elected officials just didn't understand. And to tell on myself, I was in my 20s!

R&R: Well there it is. We can change things!

LM: Yes! I've gone from a 20 year-old optimist to a 64 year old man who says we can still call things names...I can't change them but I can call them names.

R&R: But I get a great sense that you are still quite the optimist.

LM: I am. I am very optimistic because I've been blessed really, and for whatever reasons I think it's partly because I have not pulled my punches in what I've shared with folks. These people, almost to a man or a woman, feel like they can come up and talk to me. They don't always agree with things I've written or said but they want to talk to me.

R&R: Do you consider yourself a fire-brand of some sort?

Magnificent Liar by Lynn Miller

LM: Maybe...maybe a little bit. I really don't want to be what a lot of people would like me to be. I have been accused of being a reluctant messiah in a very general sense.

R&R: I can see that.

LM: That doesn't serve the game for me. What serves for me is I want to be a mirror of the best moments I've had in my interactions with my readership and even with people who are readers who are farmers and ranchers. My best moments have been when something I've done or said or didn't do or didn't say had a person feel like they had been reaffirmed.

R&R: Ok. But you see that goes back to being this permission giver. As people look more inward there is an awareness that they can take control locally and see that interaction of growing something, going to a farmer's market, selling to your neighbors and if people want to call that going "back to the land" ...ok. It is becoming more of a community.

LM: I wrote about this recently, I'm keenly interested in continuing to draw an important distinction between community and neighborhood. Something that might be a curiosity for you. I've talked about how various our readership has been. Many, many film celebrities have been and are subscribers. That doesn't mean anything to me. What means a lot to me, and this will be telling in our conversation, is Ray Hunt was a subscriber. And he loved the magazine...

R&R: I can see that.

LM: He loved the magazine and sent the message to me, that it was so good for him to be able to sit down and see repeated examples of how people had figured it out. He and Tom Dorrance are two of my heroes. And that really points in the direction of what I am trying to do

with the magazine. You know you could say that Ray Hunt was a permission giver. But there is something else to that dynamic too. When I am doing workshops and demonstrations on training horses we are talking to people about this, the thing that is so difficult to describe, to enumerate, or even to demonstrate is that sense of trusting that the moment is right. And understanding that there is a price to be paid when you go too far.

R&R: Tell us about *Farm Drum*.

LM: The name is interesting, isn't it? Originally when I talked about using that title Paul Hunter questioned it, now he has come to love it. But he was looking at it as a word-smith in the connotation that words together can take on all sorts of meanings. He likes the image of the drummer. And by drummer I mean the old fashioned notion in the West, of the guy who went with the whole bunch of different stuff in his wagon who went to farm to farm, ranch to ranch selling.

R&R: The video and audio parts of *Farm Drum* take real advantage of the media variables that exist today. Something that can spread your message more visually which is palpable to a much larger group of people. That and the fact that you have interspersed this with Paul's writing and a little Wendell Berry, it says it's OK to slow down. And when I say that, that does not mean to be non-productive, it means slow down long enough to look around.

LM: Right. And it means to that one must slow down to see all the pieces of small farming. That's hard for many people to understand why we want

to keep this endeavor so individual-based. Recently I had a discussion with somebody, who I respected a great deal, who said "I can't peg you Lynn, I don't know whether you belong to a church or belong to a political party." He said, "I just can't figure you out." I said, "Does that mean you don't like me, and don't trust me?" And he said, "No quite to the contrary, I like you and trust you. But I can't figure you out." And I said, "Well, let me help you. Number one I do not belong to a church. Number two I do not belong to the Republican or Democratic Party. I am a registered Independent. And as far as I am concerned, I am not a conservative or a liberal and I am not in-between either, those persuasions don't even appear on my horizon. I am in a parallel universe somewhere, where those things are not on my Geiger counter."

R&R: I would take it a step farther and simply say – and it probably wouldn't be something you would say about yourself – but you are thinking and evolving person.

LM: Thank you. I agree with that.

R&R: Someone who is responding to his environment as it changes.

LM: Exactly. And it goes back to imagining myself or Tom or Ray and being around them. What are you going to do next with this horse? I can honestly say I won't know until he does it.

R&R: May I segue from the art of horses to the art of Lynn Miller

LM: You may.

R&R: Your art is very important to you, yes?

LM: It is. And here's a little story. This morning I had

Abe by Lynn Miller

to doctor my stallion. He's a 5 year old, I raised him from a baby, and everything he knows I taught him – but on the flip side a lot of things I know...he taught me. He's got a wire cut along the top of his hoof on the back which was really nasty I am having to change his bandage every day and give him antibiotics and every time that I go out there and spend time with him, I love the time as we do all this together, just ourselves. He's broke to ground tie, and I can just put a halter on him and drop the rope, and go back and work on his hoof while he's watching me. And while I'm thinking about that I am saying to myself "Wow there's a perspective in

all of this – that I wish I can get into a painting."

"There's something about having an 1800 pound work horse trust you so impeccably that you can pick up a foot that you know hurts a great deal, and work with that foot and be under that animal to where we know it would take very little for him to hurt me. And that doesn't enter the equation, I don't even think about, I mean I think about it in terms of environment, I want to make sure there's nothing that might surprise either one of us, but while I'm out there in his dry lot and doing his doctoring, everything is the way it should be. I am thinking, when I paint it's so important for me, in this stage of my life, to honor and be inside of what I see. You reproduced a painting of mine in your magazine once of a barn that was a commission by some very nice folks. I did 6 paintings, and they bought three of them, and that one didn't get bought. Frankly, it's the best one...because for me it does what I would like to do as it depicted that blue roan stallion, which puts me in the painting, in essence. It is, as my daughter use to say when she was younger, that my paintings are always moving. I think I know when I've been away from painting for awhile – and I haven't painted for over two and a half weeks – as I count the days. I can feel it constrict me, it definitely has an affect. I feel my hackles go up when somebody says "O you are a painter, that must really help you with your stress, it must be a good hobby."

Santa Barbara Spade Bit by Lynn Miller

R&R: Great...painting as Advil.

LM: (Laughs) Well I think for me the painting is the light that's between the spaces. That trying to imagine what it means to cradle a back leg off a horse, we can think about it proportionally in terms of the size of the man we can also – those of us who ever had to do it – can look at it and realize that horse is leaning on us, or that horse is not leaning on us. We can realize levels of comfort or discomfort or whatever else. But then there's the architecture that is the back line of the man, the legs bent, the hocks on the horse, the air passing beneath the belly, you know, what kind of shadow may or may not come from the tail. And there's just that back behind, but underneath...just all that. You know it's not the thing that you imagine when we start talking about the great beauty of a horse and its elegance, you don't imagine that... you know you think about other things about the horse's posture or someone on his back.

I think about painting – alot as I've been painting for 55 years. And, frankly, I've been very lucky. When I left San Francisco and came up to Oregon – this is where I've lived ever since. I had an opportunity because I was precocious and could talk about what I was doing

and what I intended. I could have gone anywhere. I remember I was in a seminar at the Art Institute and a bunch of us were sitting around critiquing my work along with a couple of the painting professors. And they asked me, "Where do you imagine yourself in ten years?" I said "I imagine myself on a small ranch somewhere up in the Northwest, maybe with no telephone. I imagine myself with a dog and a horse, I may have some sheep I may definitely have some cattle but that's where I see myself." And one woman said "My God, what about your art?" And I said, "Well that will inform it, won't it?" And she said, "But you can't do that...you will never amount to anything." And I said, "Well, at this age, I probably don't understand what I am doing, but feels to me, like that's exactly what I want to amount to." And I've done it. I've moved my life the way that I set out to do it. I just didn't know at the time that there would be this journalism tangent.

And the beauty of all this is, I hope to finish the circle and say that I imagine the magazine goes forward, far, and a lot further than I can imagine. Well beyond me. Its not because of me, but I think it does harken back to notions of stewardship and what compels a rancher to make breeding choices late in life that he will never see the result of. It's a contribution to the future. The old ranchers, and artists that fed my interest, people like Ed Dalhman, the old Finnish rancher, and even Ken Keasey who was my English teacher.

R&R: So it's a hand-off to the next, isn't it?

LM: Yes. It's a relay race. And our opportunity for grace is in the hand-off.

Respect is Earned

Bozeman, Montana's Copper Spring Ranch

By Jayme Feary

Montanans are not known for their subtlety, so let's get straight to the question most people ask about Bozeman's Copper Spring Ranch: Is it a billionaire's toy or a respectable outfit?

This question is rooted in the history of the American West. Since settlement began, many wealthy persons have earned fortunes elsewhere and have bought their way into ranching. A fancy spread and a tall crown with a five-inch brim declared importance. Of course, this kind of braggadocio hatched resentment as thick as horn flies. Today the phenomenon continues: pour in nearly unlimited capital, add a healthy dose of ego, stir in a pinch of I'm-better-than-you-are, and top it off with the commitment level of a hobby, and you have a recipe for bitterness and umbrage.

Consider a couple of recent examples in the northern Rockies. Nevada businessman Larry Lipson has been embroiled for years in multiple controversies relating to his ranch, The Resort at Paws Up, in Greenough, Montana. According to a January 4, 2012, article in *The Missoulian*, the Montana Supreme Court "found that Lipson had used an 'asset-free shell entity' to ... protect his property from construction liens." A decade-long dispute between the ranch and its building contractor was recently settled for an undisclosed figure *The Missoulian* estimated could be as high as $2.1 million. And, Lipson's attempt to gain exclusive rights to the Montana state slogan "Last Best Place" led to more legal wranglings while riling up the good citizens of Big Sky Country.

In 2003, in Jackson, Wyoming, resort and casino developer Richard Fields bought an heirloom horse

The Copper Spring breeding program is focused on raising performance horses for competition in barrel racing, roping, reining and cutting.

property that he built into Jackson Land & Cattle. He enhanced the existing Jonathan Foote-designed facilities and purchased neighboring ranches. Fields said, "We made a decision to build this legacy ranch, and in doing so protect the valley. Our plan is to put the ranch into a continuing trust so that when we're not here the ranch will always be here." He partnered with famed trainer Al Dunning, after which he purchased one of the most legendary stallions in U.S. cutting-horse history, Peptoboonsmal, son of the great Peppy San Badger. Dunning said, "We hope to have [Jackson Land & Cattle Co.'s] name down in the history of great ranches in the U.S."

The ranch's veterinary operation includes a mobile equine vet clinic, which offers on-site treatment at equestrian events throughout the country.

Now Jackson Land & Cattle – including the famous Peptoboonsmal – is for sale. The asking price, $175 million, is the highest of any residential property currently for sale in the United States. Dunning is no longer associated with the ranch.

It is understandable, given these and other examples, that people are skeptical when a new megaranch emerges. Most ranchers, even the hardscrabble ones descended from homesteaders, are less influenced by lip-flapping than actions. They generally wait and judge a tree, like the Good Book says, by its fruit. After all, many well-heeled newbies have built ranches that became a credit to their communities and industry.

So we're back to the question about CSR. Who are its owners, and what is their agenda? Are their high-end facilities only for amusement or self-aggrandizement? Are the ranch's horses any good? Are CSR's owners in the game for the long term? So that you can decide, let's meet the owners and tour the ranch.

The story of Copper Spring Ranch began 15 years ago, the day eight-year-old Aspen Gilhousen, in love with horses like many girls her age, needed a better barrel horse than the one she had. Her parents, long-term Bozeman residents Klein Gilhousen – co-founder of Qualcomm – and his wife, Karen, approached Aspen's need like any parents who support their child's interests. Where could they find a decent barrel horse? Not finding one, the non-ranchers asked themselves, Why don't we breed our own? Persons with lesser financial means would never be able to entertain that question, the one that sprouted into Aspen's interest in breeding and, 10 years ago, rose from the hills south of Bozeman into Copper Spring Ranch.

Aspen Gilhousen-Cok, now 22, understands that CSR is often seen as a hobby ranch, but believes people are beginning to understand the ranch is a serious

operation. She views community service as a way to show CSR intentions. Therefore, the ranch works with the equine science programs at Montana State University and the University of Montana-Western, and supports youth programs such as 4-H and high school rodeo.

After taking a hands-off approach for a few years, Gilhousen-Cok is now taking an active role in the breeding operation. She lives bloodlines. Ask her about any horse on the ranch; she will likely know its registered name, barn name and pedigree. When she talks about her ideas for the breeding program, her eyes widen and her speech escalates. She plans to expand the broodmare number from 29 to 45, she says, and her husband, Robert, from a local Bozeman farming family, wants to help turn the ag enterprises into a legitimate and well-run operation encompassing CSR's 1,600 acres of rangeland, 400 acres of irrigated cropland, and 100 head of stocker cattle, which the ranch is now using to give its colts practical experience.

The CSR Equine Sports Medicine Center serves both the ranch and the general public, offering sportsmedicine, surgery and arthroscopy to horse owners throughout the northern Rockies and northern Plains.

Gilhousen-Cok wants to maintain the same breeding priorities: barrel horses first, and then roping, reining and cutting. "We're working for big-boned horses with speed, agility and a good mind," she says.

If Gilhousen-Cok's interests were the impetus for CSR, her parents' resources were the fuel. Their vision and philosophy, like any ranch owners', determine how the outfit is perceived. Karen Gilhousen, the matriarch of CSR, is a slender woman with silver hair and sincere blue eyes. She exudes a strength and confidence, but carries herself in a quiet manner. Gilhousen is up front about her inexperience. "I didn't grow up as a rancher," she says, "so I have a lot to learn."

Gilhousen looks to model herself after other respected and established breeders, like Bill Myers of Myers Training Stables in South Dakota. It wouldn't hurt if she could be like him, she says.

Ask Karen Gilhousen her philosophy and she does not hesitate. She leans forward and makes direct eye contact. "We want to be friends with people and learn from them," she says. "It's not all about us. It's about the industry as a whole." Gilhousen seems to understand that running a successful business requires more than a cooperative spirit. Her voice levels out and takes a more matter-of-fact tone. "Of course," she adds, "we have to run it like a business. We want it to pull its own weight."

Does she have any goals in mind? She smiles. "It'd be nice to have the No. 1 barrel racing sire."

A tour of the ranch starts at the top of the hill with

The ranch's expansive indoor facility includes an arena that does double duty as a training ground and an event venue. An attached bar and seating area accommodates spectators at shows, clinics and Montana State University's annual horse sale.

the castle of a home in the hills south of the Gallatin Valley, the noble Bridger Range rising to the north. Communication antennae of every sort rise from the roof. A paved runway runs like an oversized driveway in front of the house and heads south along the ridgeline.

At the east end of the ranch, the "bunkhouse" accommodates guests and a few employees. Guest rooms are furnished with fine furniture, accessories, art and amenities such as bath towels and M&Ms imprinted with the ranch logo. In the bunkhouse kitchen, a cook prepares lunch each day and employees eat in an adjoining dining and living area decorated in the vein of a Jackson Hole custom home. Family members are welcome, and conversations tend to be more sanitized than you might hear at some ranch tables.

Tucked in the middle of the spread is a unique operation, one of the finest private equine veterinary clinics in the northern Rockies. Why would a ranch need its own equine vet clinic? Again, the idea came from the Gilhousens, who noticed that area horses were dying because owners did not have access to advanced vet services. Now horse owners from across the Rocky Mountain region have access to special services at the CSR Equine Sports Medicine Center.

Serving both the ranch and the public, the clinic

offers a full range of specialized services normally found only in large metropolitan areas, including sports-medicine, surgery, and arthroscopy. Plus, as one might expect, the clinic offers a full range of breeding services. Board certified surgeon Dr. Ellis Farstvedt, one of the region's finest equine surgeons, leads a team of equine veterinarians.

CSR Equine Sports Medicine Center also offers one of the nation's few full-service mobile equine vet clinics, a tractor-trailer rig that they set up at various performance-horse events around the country. The mobile clinic allows on-site treatment of ailments and injuries.

Just downhill from the airstrip and the Gilhousen home stands the centerpiece of the training operation, an indoor equine facility trimmed in rock and landscaped with trees. Inside, a bar and seating area allow visitors a chance to view the goings-on. CSR often hosts events including clinics and shows, and they broadcast several of these events live on the Internet. Each year the ranch hosts the annual Top of the West Ranch Performance Horse Sale for Montana State University's Equine Science Department.

Trainer Brett Badgett, an affable man who likes to stay out of the spotlight, uses the indoor arena, round pen, and outdoor arena to start CSR colts. Badgett learned his horsemanship mostly under Jeff Griffith, a Dillon-based clinician. When Badgett starts each colt, it seems to take on his persona, quiet and competent. When the colts graduate from "Badgett Elementary School," they go to Burkland High School to train with Tyrell Burkland. Upon graduation from high school, they go to well-known trainers for specialty training in barrels, roping, reining or cutting.

Of course, the breeding program and the quality of the facilities are inconsequential if they do not help produce fine horses. So what about CSR horses? Because the ranch is relatively new and CSR progeny are just now starting to show up in arenas, on tracks and at brandings, this question is not entirely answerable. People in the equine industry are just beginning to recognize the CSR brand. Some horse buyers have purchased CSR horses through association with a trainer instead of through the ranch. Karen Reece and Shelly Arrington purchased their CSR barrel horses through trainer Lisa Anderson in Texas. A collegiate competitor and Texas A&M student, Reece loves her gelding, Spiderman, who won the barrel competition at the recent All-Aggie Rodeo. Arrington is thrilled with her four-year-old mare, Zelda, who is already running times only a half second off the pros. Recently Zelda won an amateur championship in Texas and a prize of $3,600. CSR sent flowers and congratulations.

Copper Spring Ranch owners Karen and Klein Gilhousen

Slowly, CSR horses are beginning to compete, but the industry will take years to render a verdict about the

ranch and its horses, about whether the ranch is a Gilhousen family playground or a legitimate, long-term force in the industry. After 10 years, ample evidence exists, but time will have its say. Right now, as CSR works to breed and train fine western performance horses, you might want to mark Karen Gilhousen's declaration: "We don't want it to be about us, us, us. We have to work together to build the industry."

Remember her words, and then watch CSR perform.

Jayme Feary is a writer and photographer. He divides his time between Wyoming and Montana.

Upcoming Clinics

Buck Brannaman
www.brannaman.com
February 17-20, Pasadena, California; (818) 790-8341
March 2-5, Farmersville, Texas; (972) 784-7037
March 16-19, Marana, Arizona; (520) 686-3776
March 23-26, Cave Creek, Arizona; (623) 742-7285

Peter Campbell
www.petercampbellhorsemanship.com
February 13-17, Wheatland, Wyoming; trc@wildblue.net
March 12-16, Wheatland, Wyoming; trc@wildblue.net

Tom Curtin
www.tomcurtin.net
February 6-17, Madison, Florida; (850) 929-2178

Jon Ensign
www.jonensign.com
March 19-23, Belgrade, Montana; (406) 570-9779
March 26-30, Belgrade, Montana; (406) 570-9779

Buster McLaury
www.bustermclaury.com
March 18-20, Mt. Pleasant, Texas; (800) 527-8616
March 24-27, Cottonwood, California; (530) 347-0212

Bryan Neubert
www.bryanneubert.com
March 18-21, Lady Lake, Florida; (352) 748-4420
March 28-29, Dillon, Montana; www.lacensemontana.com
March 31-April 3, Arlee, Montana; (406) 726-3203

Dave & Gwynn Weaver
www.thecalifornios.com
February 3-6, Stavely, New Zealand; teresatrull@gmail.com
February 11-12, Helensville, New Zealand; teresatrull@gmail.com
March 1-3, Maricopa, Arizona; (406) 425-0744
March 23-25, Grass Valley, Arizona; (530) 896-9566
March 30-April 1, Orland, California; (530) 896-9566

Joe Wolter
www.joewolter.com
February 1-5, Aspermont, Texas; joewolter@hotmail.com
February 11-12, Benton, Louisiana; (318) 402-8745
March 2-4, Portland, Oregon; (503) 554-1624
March 23-24, Erda, Utah; (801) 541-9228

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Images Fueled by Light and Passion

Bev Pettit turns a passion for horses and photography into artistic expression.

By Kathy McCraine
Photographs by Bev Pettit

Rain was coming down in torrents the first time Bev Pettit photographed the Arizona Cowpuncher's Reunion Rodeo at Williams, Arizona. Raining like some big dam in the sky had just burst wide open. Cowboys and horses were churning through what looked more like a lake than an arena, but they weren't letting a monsoon cloudburst stop the show.

Bev screwed her Aussie hat down and stepped up to the fence, pulling her yellow slicker tight and shielding her big Canon camera with a Ziplock bag. Thundering toward her was pickup man Carter Williams hazing a bronc through a swirling explosion of mud.

"When I saw Carter running through that mud dragging those broncs around, I thought, *this is it!*" Bev says. "I was drenched like I'd just come out of the shower, but I loved it."

Some of the photos she got that day and in subsequent years at the rodeo would win her several coveted photography awards, but at the time she was just combining her two passions, horses and photography.

Bev Pettit and Skeeter

Bev's love for horses began while growing up in the small farming community of Winona, Minnesota. Her fondest memories are of riding her horse, Mr. Schatz, bareback through the hills and bluffs surrounding her family's dairy farm. Later she got a degree in fine art and art education from Winona State University, sold her horses, and embarked on a career that would take her around the world.

While working in the publishing department of a big American investment bank in China and later London, she spent her spare time traveling with her camera and freelancing in exotic places like Vietnam, Cambodia and China.

Skyscrapers and big-city life grew old though, and homesick for the United States, she moved back to California in 2000, soon thereafter relocating yet

again, with husband Clark and daughter Kayla, now nine, to Rancho Diamante near Prescott, Arizona. There she lives and works out of her home, surrounded by wide open ranch country that she often prowls with her five horses.

Sometime in the early 2000s she bought her first digital camera. "I swore I'd never do that," she says, "but the rumors were that film was going to be obsolete, so I figured I better start learning. I was pretty much forced into it, but now I'm glad I made the change."

Today she uses a Canon 1D Mark IV for action and horses, a Canon 5D for landscapes, and Canon G12 to carry around for everyday use. On the computer she works with the program Lightroom for organizing and saving her photos, and Photoshop and NIK Software to add her individual artistic touch to the finished photos.

"Learning Photoshop was a nightmare," she says. "Back when I first started using it, you had to learn all this technical stuff, and it was very frustrating." With unwavering determination, books, internet research and online courses, she finally mastered the program and went on to develop a distinctive style that turns each photo into a work of art resembling a fine charcoal or pencil drawing. She may spend an hour on a picture, or like a painter, she


6
5
BABB
Ranche

may go back and rework it several times.

"I always know in my mind how I want my pictures to look," Bev says. "I think it comes from my art background and studying the masters going back to Rembrandt. If you look at those masters' paintings, it's all about light, and that's the difference between a good photograph and a bad one. I can look at an image and intuitively know what to bring out, what to emphasize to make it more than just a photograph, to make it an artistic expression. Every photographer benefits from developing his own artistic style, and I think I have a style now that people recognize.

Bev started her horse photography by asking neighbors to set up photo sessions for her with their horses. After she joined an online group of women photographers, she began traveling to various horse shows and competitions. That's how she wound up at the Cowpuncher's Reunion Rodeo. It's a family gathering and rodeo strictly for working ranch cowboys, and with non-professional events like the wild horse race


BLACKMORE
RANCH
Hillside Az
Terry &
Shelly
AZ.

and wild cow milking, the action gets pretty rowdy. The fact that it pours buckets of rain almost every year is a gift to Bev's art. It lends her photos an almost surreal look. It's no wonder she has won numerous photography awards in such prestigious competitions as the International Black and White Spider Awards and the International Aperture Awards.

Bev sells prints online and is represented by several galleries. Now she also teaches photography online and does some mentoring both online and in the field.

"I don't think I'll ever get rich or famous at this," Bev says. "I just want to keep learning and growing as a photographer, and sharing what I know."

Kathy McCraine is a rancher and writer from Prescott, Arizona; visit her web site at www.kathymccraine.com. Learn more about Bev Pettit's photography at www.bevpettit.com.

A VISIT WITH BUCK BRANNAMAN

What's the Rush?

By Buck Brannaman

This column will give you some insight as to how I approach raising, educating and caring for my horses.

I've been traveling the globe for the last 29 years teaching horsemanship that I learned from great horseman such as Ray Hunt, Tom Dorrance, and Bill Dorrance, and in this nearly three decades of work I've never progressed to the point where anyone appointed me to judge others in what they do!

The most successful teachers, to me, are not those who tell you of others and what they do that they don't like, great mentors have something to offer about themselves.

For me I don't have a tight schedule to follow according to a show career for my horses, although I occasionally do show. My goal is to make a fine "Bridle Horse" in the vaquero tradition.

If you're afraid of "commitment" you might as move on to the next article friend!

I live in Wyoming and we can have pretty harsh weather even in late April or early May so since we foal outside our colts are generally born in May and June..." which is very late for a futurity horse." All the mares we breed are proven to be good riding horses, with good feet, "number 1 shoes or bigger," and good bone.

In the first month, we catch the colts in a confined area such as a large foaling stall, with the mare outside in sight so they don't fret much. I use a catch rope made into a knot rope so it won't close all the way and cut off their air. I do basic groundwork as I teach in a colt-starting class, getting simple control of their feet, and just getting my hands on them and rubbing. I don't use a halter this early as there's too much power over them. I want them to operate on a "feel." I mess with them a few days then they go to the hills as there's grass coming! They stay out until weaning time and just become a "horse." During this time they are in school with their mother, time well spent.

We wean them at seven or eight months as opposed to six – it seems to give you better growth. Then I truly

photo by A.J. Mangam

begin the haltering process. I will work with them about 10 days doing basic groundwork.

I then turn them out again for a couple months. During the first 2 years I might catch them 30 times and play with them. That's enough for me, even if they come in a little worried they will come around fast.

When they are 2 years old I start them and put about 10 rides on them, just enough to get them gentle, where I could swing a rope on them, maybe move some cattle on short rides, maybe catch a couple calves on them at a branding...simple stuff.

As a three year old they will get around 30 rides, and still be in the snaffle bit.

When they are four I start to ride them quite a bit more as they are almost physically mature.

During this year they will progress from the snaffle to the hackamore. He'll see quite a bit of cow-work and roping and be getting pretty handy.

When he's five I am then on a steady schedule of work, slowing advancing toward the two-rein and then then straight up in the bridle in the next couple of years. If a person wanted to take twice as long it wouldn't matter all that much.

Horses are a big business and sometimes rushed to get to a show ring, racetrack, or arena and sometimes it works out nicely, sometime not so much! The horse will tell what he can handle and quite a bit about yourself... if you'll listen.

Barring anything unusual my horses are enjoying a very productive working way into their teens and early twenties.

We're all doing the best we can with what we know, I believe this about people, so this is what I do. When I know more...I'll get back to you.

The Strawberry Roan

By Tom Russell

An' I spots the corral and a standin' alone
There I sees this caballo, a strawberry roan.
Curley Fletcher,
The Original Strawberry Roan

The first horse to run off with me was a roan. His coat was the color of strawberry milk with flies in it. *So I recall*. I was ten years old, and the scene of the action was an old rent stable called Fox Hills Academy, out on the edge of Inglewood, California. Fox Hills was near the Los Angeles International Airport where, in the 1920s, fields of wheat, barley and lima beans had been converted into landing strips. Then men started dreaming up freeways, and the freeways tore out the heart of the irrigated desert. Fox Hills is buried underneath the San Diego freeway. Rush hour traffic snaking across the horizon.

The Original Strawberry Roan by Tom Russell.
(Note the 44 Brand)

We've come full circle, when a horse in L.A. would be a faster mode of transport than a car. Ole Winston Churchill mused: *the substitution of the internal combustion engine for the horse marked a very gloomy milestone in the progress of mankind.* Agreed. But I wanted to tell you about that roan.

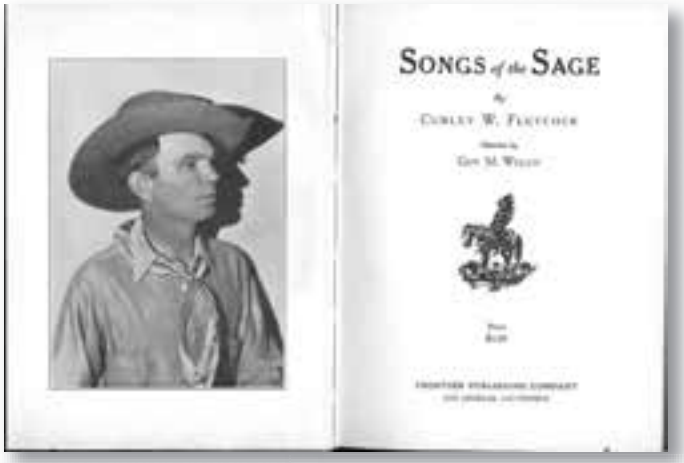
The stable was run by an old gal named Mrs. Kirby, who had a withered left arm and a helper named *Smitty*. Smitty was cowboy to the bone, and responsible for turning my brother Pat into a tobacco chewing, bull riding, bareback-bronc riding, bulldogging, horseshoeing, horse trader, and all around western *character,* with a mouth on him like Slim Pickens. Smitty was the classic sidekick, with a yen for cheap red wine and a verbal battery of terse, off color western remarks. He delivered all his punch lines between spits of tobacco juice.

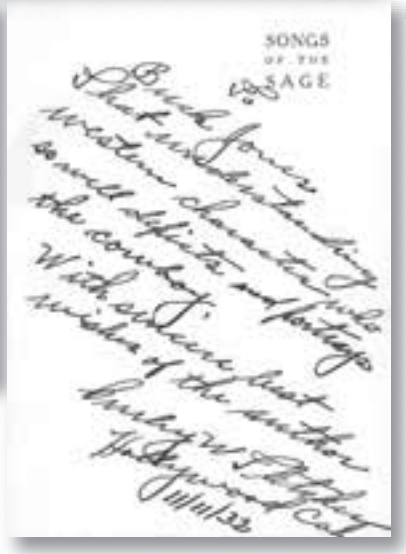
Back to the runaway roan horse.

I don't recall the horse's name, but he was one of those *special deals* my father picked up over at the L.A. horse and mule auction. Or he might have been a lead

pony, gone bad, from the race track. My father had a line on sour horses from both venues. My old man was an Iowa horse trader who spent odd mornings playing poker with Hopalong Cassidy on the backside of Hollywood Park Racetrack.

Let's call this *special deal* horse *Roanie*. For the sake of poetry. Old *Roanie* had a few temperament problems. *Ticks*. This was the 1950s, before the age of horse whisperers and the gentler means of dealing with equine psychosis.





If he didn't pan out as a saddle horse, a misfit like this might be sold off to a second level bucking string in the San Fernando Valley. There were weekend rodeos at places such as Crash Corrigan's movie ranch. Usually a horse like *Roanie* wouldn't pan out as a bucker and end up running through fences with terrified amateur bronc riders trying to weather the storm.

I recall my brother Pat, whenever he was around somebody like myself who was being *run off with*, might yell: *Good luck, kid. Pick up the mail in Tucson*!

Humor gleaned from old Smitty.

Roanie's trick was to walk gently for a one hundred yards, then suddenly snort and make a savage U-turn, taking off, hell bent for the barn. If you were a neophyte rider dumb enough to hold on, Roanie would aim at the low beam hanging over the back barn door. *The great barn door equalizer*. He was a *head hunter* with worn-out brakes.

I was mounted on old *Roanie*, on this particular afternoon, when he made his U-turn and bolted. I was holding onto the saddle horn and *talking to the Lord* as the barn door beam came into sudden, looming focus. I had a vision of a scene in Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,* where Ichabod *Crane* is chased through the hollow by the *Headless Horseman*.

And now to the point. I was suddenly a character in one of my favorite songs: *The Strawberry Roan*. I was riding the horse *that could never be rode* – that *frog walkin'*, *sunfishin' beast* that *jumped up the east and came down to the west. The worse bucker even seen on the range. That pin-eared* monster who *screamed like a shoat. Oh that Strawberry Roan...*

I ducked my head down at the last minute and rode him through the barn and into history. My *personal* history. My memory of what happened to that horse has faded. But that old song is still stuck in my gut. The most famous bucking horse song ever written. *The Strawberry Roan*.

I. Let us Now Praise The Bard of the Bucking Horse

My earliest memory is of cowmen and cattle. I spent my best years as a cowboy of the old school. I knew every water hole, I think, from the Sierra Nevada to Utah. And I still look back to long days and nights in the saddle, at $30 a month, as the happiest of my existence.

Curley Fletcher
Letter to John I. White

If you're talking cowboy songs and the foundation of Western Music then, at some point, you have to deal with several pioneer poets, among them Charles Badger Clark, Gail Gardner and Curley Fletcher. We'd also give a backwards nod to the lasting influence of Robert W. Service, *The Bard of the Yukon*, and the epic rhymes of Rudyard Kipling. I'm sure you could carry it back to Chaucer, the Old Testament, and Homer, and end up with whatever the old cave painters were trying to say, when they painted running lines of horses on cave walls seventeen thousand years ago.

The old ballad mongers and versifiers, like Service and Kipling, could spin a rhymed yarn and build the action. You were there with them in the trenches. Add Scots-Irish melodies and rank horses to the evolution of the rhyming ballad, and you arrive at Carmen William Fletcher, the bucking-stock bard from the Great American Desert. *Curley* for short.

The original poem *The Outlaw Broncho*, which later became *The Strawberry Roan*, can be attributed to Curley Fletcher (1892-1954). He wrote it. He'd lived it. He saw his poem swirl into western history. The swirling became a cyclone that knocked Curley backwards and taught him hard lessons about the *ins and outs* of the music business, song publishing, and the fleeting nature of fame and fortune.

The poem contains archetypal western ingredients: a great bronc fighter comes to town, brags a little, and takes on the horse *that could never be rode.* The cowboy ends up bucked off and transfigured by the ride of his life. The reader is with him in every twist and spin. In the belly of that original poem lay classic and colorful horse and bucking-stock descriptions that have never been bested.

Respected folklore authority Hal Cannon, after an informative phone chat with Curley's daughter, discovered that Curley wrote the poem one night in pencil on the back of an envelope. The envelope had

"A FINE HAT FITS LIKE A GOOD FRIEND."

– Charles M. Russell

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held Curley's winnings in the bareback bronc riding at Cheyenne in 1914. Curley lost all the money in a poker game and was writing the poem to charm his wife, Minnie, into letting him back into their hotel room.

Curley didn't know, as Hal Cannon states, *that he was the first person to take the excitement and sheer kinetic power of a bronc ride and encapsulate it in verse.* He'd concocted a classic.

Curley Fletcher was born in San Francisco and raised in the high desert near Bishop, on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada. Curley called it: *The Great American Desert*. He caught the last wild end of the deal. Fletcher learned about broncs, early on, rounding up wild horses with a band of Paiute Indians out in the desolate Owens Valley of California. The scenario reminds me of John Huston's *The Misfits*. *Mustanging*. Horse herds running hell bent across desert flats and dry salt lakes. Indian cowboys in their wake.

Fletcher's early bronc stomping days pulled him towards the rodeo arena. He rode bulls, broncs, and steer-wrestled, until a steer jerked its head back and took out one of Fletcher's eyes. Curley kept following the circuit, but turned more to poetry and poker. He was better at verse than cards. He took what he'd learned from his mustanging experience and folded it all into long colorful ballads. Curley conjured them up on envelopes and scraps of paper and gave them away to friends.

Curley published *The Outlaw Broncho* as a poem for the newspaper *The Arizona Globe* in 1915. He changed the title to *The Strawberry Roan* in 1917, in his first song and poetry collection, *Rhymes of the Roundup*. He sold these little songbooks when he travelled to rodeos across the west. Perfect size for the back pocket library of the working buckaroo.

Cowboys began *singing* Curley's ballad as a slow, deliberate waltz. The tune came from *an unknown balladeer*. Or maybe a dude ranch wrangler. Or was it twisted around and borrowed from an Irish fiddle tune. Who knows? Thus begins *the folk process,* and the long rag tag journey of Curley's bucking horse poem, through the glory days of western music.

If we take a strong gander at Curley's original poem, it bears raw resemblance to what evolved into the popular song, *The Strawberry Roan*, recorded throughout the 1930s, 40s and 50s, by folks like Gene Autry, Marty Robbins, and Wilf Carter. The song became legend in a matter of three decades: millions of 78s sold; two motion pictures produced under the *Strawberry Roan* title; dozens of parodies and follow-ups.

The core of the tale remained the same in all versions. The bronc ride and the athletic prowess of the roan horse. Curley's original draft of the poem was rough around the edges. He wanted the lingo to sound authentic. He called it *the vernacular of the early pioneer of the traditional west.* His poem was filled with words spelled like: *gits*, and *sez* and *wuz* and *hoss*, capturing the tone and the slang of the working cowboy.

Spelling and grammar *be damned*:

I wuz hangin' 'round town just uh spendin' muh time,
I wuz out of a job an' not makin' uh dime,
When uh feller steps up an' he sez,
"I suppose you're a bronc ridin' guy from the looks uh yure clothes."

With that ragged, bumpy lingo, Curley was not implying cowboys were stupid. Far from it. In his songbook, *Songs of the Sage*, he declares that it is a mistake to consider the early cowboys as illiterate:

It would indeed surprise the misinformed individual, were he to hear discussed at the campfire, chuck wagon, or water hole, the myths of the Greeks and the Norsemen, The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, or the works of Shakespeare. He would be dumbfounded to find, upon the table in the bunkhouse, **The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam**, *the works of Keats, Voltaire, Dumas, Shaw, Wilde and many others.*

Indeed. Curley's anecdote impressed me enough to make a list of a few authors I might have missed in school. Maybe these literary references reveal how in the hell a wild horse wrangler from the high desert could have writ' such a masterpiece on an empty rodeo winnings envelope.

I found this little gem from a translation of the *Rubaiyat*:

A book of verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of bread – and Thou,
Beside me singing in the Wilderness,
And oh, Wilderness is Paradise now.

If chance supplied a loaf of white bread,
Two casks of wine and a leg of mutton,
In the corner of a garden with a tulip-cheeked girl,
There'd be enjoyment no Sultan could outdo.

I'm with Omar. Give me a cask of wine, a leg of lamb, and that tulip-cheeked gal. I'd be singing in the wilderness too. Khayyam, a Persian, wrote this in the eleventh century. He was a poet, philosopher, mathematician, and astronomer. He seemed to have pioneered the *quatrain* form. I imagine if there were a buckaroo in the bunkhouse with *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* on his bedside table, it must have been Curley Fletcher.

In fact Hall Cannon, in his fine introduction to the reissue of Curley's *Songs of the Sage,* states that Curley was an avid reader and carried *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* with him religiously. Though Curley only finished sixth grade, he could speak French and Spanish fluently. The plot thickens.

Let's cut loose of the biographical stuff, for a moment, and look at the heart of the poem. Eyeball those great *bronc lyrics*.

II. The Art of the Bucking Stock Lyric

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
The Last Go Round, Rosalie Sorrels
When dust rising off the backs
Of large animals
Makes a racket you can't think in....
All this Way for the Short Ride, Paul Zarzyski

Curley kept that dog eared copy of *The Rubaiyat* in his back pocket, the cover beat to hell from saddle leather and the rock and roll of rank horses. From reading Khayyam, Curley surely knew and appreciated the *quatrain form*. He also had a great ear for the elements of rhyme. The art of rhyming words goes back

to 10th century B.C. in China. Rhyming is also found in ancient Greek literature, and in the Bible. Irish literature introduced rhyme to medieval Europe. The Irish were masters of the ballad form, and the news of the day was composed into rhyming ballads and broadsheets by the wandering bards and minstrels, hundreds of years ago. Forerunners of the songwriter.

When I think of Curley Fletcher, and the great balladeers or history, I recall hearing about a colorful ballad-monger of note: the Irish bard *M.P. Moran* of Faddle Alley, Dublin. Moran was born in 1793. He was blind. From an early age Moran could memorize entire books of the bible after one or two hearings. He was later transfigured as the ballad singer *Zozimus*; renaming himself after an early Christian mystic from Palestine, who lived in the desert and spoke in tongues.

This character *Zozimus* prowled the streets of Dublin, in long black cape and a beaver-skinned top hat, hammering the cobblestones with a gnarly blackthorn walking stick, shouting his lyrics to the heavens, as they *reverberated out of the gutters of Dublin*. He would spend the early hours of the morning in a pub called *The Brazen Head*. (The pub is still there, Ireland's oldest, established in the year 1198. James Joyce mentions it in *Ulysses*.)

Zozimus prepared his daily ballads at the pub, after having the newspaper read to him. He'd versify the news, in his mind, and then stomp off to his regular spot near Carlisle Bridge, where he'd bellow and sing his ballads and topical songs. His voice had a *piercing raspy quality* on the top end, and a *cannon boom roar* at the bottom. He could roar all day and night.

The Irish folk singer Dominic Behan noted: *Dublin folks woke up in their sleep and could hear Zozimus, tap-tap-tapping down the cobblestones, his blind face thrust up at the stars, and his blackthorn stick tapping menacingly. If anyone dared interrupt him, he would heap tremendous abuse on them and shout them down. He brooked no interference. The greatest of ballad singers had been born.*

Zozimus wrote a few lines, now and again, about old milk horses making their way in the morning. Though blind, he retained a wondrous knack for the description of working steeds. Horses conjured up in quatrain and rhyme. A forbearer to our ballad maker, Curley Fletcher.

The core beauty of Curley Fletcher's original *Strawberry Roan* poem lies in the description of the horse, and the poetry of the wild ride. Curley had a stout hold on bronc vernacular.

Here's the key verse, in a cleaned up rendition by Marty Robbins:

Down in the horse corral standin' alone
Is an old Caballo, a Strawberry Roan
His legs are all spavined, he's got pigeon toes
Little pig eyes and a big Roman nose
Little pin ears that touch at the tip
A big 44 brand was on his left hip,
U-necked and old, with a long, lower jaw
I could see with one eye, he's a regular outlaw.

I guess Curley *did see* with only one eye. *A poet's eye*. If there's a better sketch of a rank, plumb-ugly bronc, I haven't heard or read it. I'm surprised there wasn't

sawdust coming out of the nag. Some writers wonder what the hell Curley meant by *u-necked*. Actually the original was *yew-necked*. Did he mean *ewe-necked*, like a sheep? He never changed the spelling and we'll never know. His roan had spavined hocks and the ugliest head in hoss history. Later versions would throw the word *cayuse* into the mix, which might mean a northern mustang associated with the *Cayuse* tribe of Oregon, or any scrubby looking little horse.

Pin ears? Harry Webb, an old cowboy who used to work for Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, described a *pin eared horse* in a chat with Walt Thayer in 1979. Harry was talking about the great bucking horses of the 1920s and 30s.

> *The greatest of them all, in my opinion, was a beautiful blood bay called* **Pin Ears.** *The tips of this horse's ears were frozen at the time he was born. He made 53 riders bite the dust before anyone rode to the finish. That was long before the sissy Hollywooders thought up the flank strap.*

Then we proceed to the wild ride itself. We can see why Curley, later in life, was hired as a dialogue and color-adviser for western films. From the original poem:

> *And he goes toward the east an' he goes toward the west,*
> *An' tuh stay in the middle I'm doin' my best;*
> *Now he's sure walkin' frog an' he heaves uh big sigh*
> *And he only lacks wings fer tuh be on the fly.*
> *Then he turns his old belly right up tuh the sun*
> *An' he sure is a sun fishin' son uv uh gun...*

Frog Walking might be described as crow hopping, or a horse that bucks and hops with an arched back and stiff knees. *Sun Fishin'* is described in Ramon Adams' book *Western Words* as:

A horse when he twists his body into a crescent, alternately to the right and to the left, in other words he seems to touch the ground with one shoulder and then the other, letting the sunlight hit his belly.

Back to old *Pin Ears*. Harry Webb gives us a real example of the term *sun fishin',* and an added lesson on the great old broncs, before the age of the flank strap:

***Pin Ears** was a 'sun fisher' and sometimes it looked like he'd come down flat on one side or the other, but he always hit the ground on his feet. With a tight buckled flank strap a horse can't get his head down to buck like the old timers. That's why every bucker of later years comes out just kicking his heels up and all but standing on his head. Hard to sit, sure, but I wouldn't walk across the street to watch a bucker nowadays.*

Amen Harry. There wasn't a flank strap on the Strawberry Roan. And what about that brand on the bronc's left hip? In the original, published in 1915, Curley wrote: *X. Y. Z. iron*. Later he changed it to *double square brand*. In the Marty Robbins' version it's changed to: *big 44 brand. Glen* Ohrlin, in his fine song book, *The Hellbound Train*, says that some cowboys even sang: *a map of Chihuahua branded on his left hip*. I like that one. It's proof that the folk process is damned interesting. Ohrlin goes on to illuminate facts about the brand:

Curley's double square brand refers to the old Double Square Ranch in Nevada which was actually known among cowboys as having a cantankerous bunch of horses. I've seen several broncs in West Coast rodeo strings bearing this brand.

Once Curley hit his stride with the success of *The Strawberry Roan* he cranked out more bucking-stock ballads, like *The Ridge Running Roan*, and *That Bucking Bronc, Coyote*. *The Ridge Running Roan* ran to twenty-one verses, as Curley tried to outdo himself with the rankness of this new roan horse. It doesn't have the poetic balance, however, and the *impact* of the original roan poem.

Curley explored the physics of bucking in another ballad, *Bad Brahma Bull*, recorded by Tex Ritter. The bull is a *sun fisher* and a *fence rower (*scraping cowboys off on fences, I presume*)*, and has dust is *fogging 'right out of his skin.*

Back to the poem's journey.

III. Where Good Men Die Like Dogs

If you steal my purse, you do me no wrong,
But God forbid you should steal my songs
For it's down in hell such likes belong
And not with decent people.
Zozimus (M.J. Moran)

In 1931 *The Strawberry Roan* was sung by Everett Cheatham in the Broadway play *Green Grow the Lilacs.* Tex Ritter sang four songs in this show, as the character *Cord Elam*. The play utilized traditional cowboy songs and told the story of a cowboy falling in love with a farm girl.

Cowboy themes were "in." In the early 1940s Rodgers and Hammerstein were much intrigued by the success of *Lilacs*. They collaborated on their first classic musical, *Oklahoma*, based on the plot of the *Green Grow the Lilacs*. In 1934 Cole Porter concocted the western hit, *Don't Fence Me In*, from a poem he'd purchased for $250 from a Montana poet named Bob Fletcher, no relation to Curley. Bob Fletcher had to sue Porter's

publishers to get his name on the song, which was later recorded by Roy Rogers, Bing Crosby (*a million seller*), Ella Fitzgerald, and Willie Nelson.

In 1938, the renowned American classical composer, Aaron Copland, utilized traditional cowboy songs in his popular ballet *Billy the Kid*. Copland also used western and folk music in the ballet *Rodeo*, and portions of that score were used in commercials for the American Beef Industry.

By the mid-1930s, western music was popular and *The Strawberry Roan* was growing famous, while Curley Fletcher was mostly ignored. *Old Strawberry* entered that netherworld where lyrics were duded-up by Tin Pan Alley pros, and copyrights were applied for. The checks were *in the mail*, but not for Curley Fletcher. Around this time there was a singing duo who called themselves: *The Happy Chappies*, made up of Fred Howard and Nat Vincent. They published and sang several versions of the songs; some with a refrain added:

Oh that Strawberry Roan, Oh that Strawberry Roan
They say he's a cayuse that's never been rode
And the guy that gets on him is sure to get throw'd...

I remember hearing my Grandfather sing this chorus. *The Happy Chappies* version was a minor hit, later recorded by *The Sons of the Pioneers*, with Leonard Slye (*Roy Rogers*) on vocals.

Curley met *The Happy Chappies*, and he was eventually given credit on the back of their song folio for composing the original poem. Most of the money still went to the duo. Curley kept trying to set the record straight. If you didn't *lawyer-up*, back then, you were lost. I am reminded of a quote on the music business attributed to the late Dr. Hunter S. Thompson:

The music business is a cruel and shallow money trench, a long plastic hallway where thieves and pimps run free, and good men die like dogs. There's also a negative side.

Cowboys didn't have the inclination to pick up a phone and hire a lawyer. *Naw*. Instead Curley published his original version of the song, once again, in his *Ballads of the Badlands*, a song folio sitting here on my desk. It states inside that the song was written to be sung in *cowboy style*. I can only imagine that *cowboy style* means a slow waltz on a plunky guitar, sung with a dust-blown slur or a mouth full of chaw. The illustrations in *Ballads of the Badlands* were drawn by Curley's father in law, Guy Welch, a painter and muralist I've written about in the essay: *The Michelangelo of the Western Saloon*. Welch painted cowboy murals up and down the west coast, trading drawings, paintings, and murals, for drinks and food.

The songbook *Ballad of the Badlands* includes a brief note from Curley:

The author has spent his life in that part of the West known as the Great American Desert...he has been a cowboy, muleskinner, prospector and what not, but refuses to admit ever having herded sheep.

Then Curley discovered that the roan song had appeared in John Lomax's early cowboy and folksong collections, but Curley Fletcher's poem wasn't mentioned. The Lomax family were early pioneers of song collecting, but their sources and attributions towards authorship were sometimes questionable, or at the very least *imaginative*. They also understood copyright law. Back in those days it was open season on the so-called *traditional ballads*. Even musical

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arrangements can be copyrighted, so the publication of major song collections could be a lucrative endeavor.

John Lomax first attributed *The Strawberry Roan* to a dude ranch cowboy named *Whistle* in 1929. Go figure. Curley was fed up with the Lomax tribe, publishers, song stealers, and the bogus huckster-life outside the high desert and the real west. He fired off a letter to John Lomax indicating the authentic date when the song was first published under his name. He added:

> *Anyone laying claim to having heard or read the* ***The Strawberry Roan*** *prior to those dates, above mentioned, is a damned liar, branded so in the eyes of God, myself, himself and the devil.*

Lomax eventually set the record straight, but culled the song from future editions. Lomax probably didn't want to be involved in monetary or legal hassles. But the saga goes on, and song-mongers and ballad thieves clustered around the *Roan* like flies.

To quote folklorist Austin Fife:

> *How could Curley Fletcher anticipate, as he sent his Strawberry Roan to the* Arizona Record*, where it was first printed in 1915, that it would sell a few million 78 rpm records, appear in scores of song folios and other books, and provide the making for a movie script? He even ended up paying royalties for a right to publish a tune and refrain for his own song!*

Curley thought the authorship matter was finally settled. *Hold on, partners.* Enter, *stage left*, vaudeville cowboy singer, arch-Hawaiian crooner, and world class *windy story teller: Powder River Jack Lee*, who performed with his wife Kitty. Powder River Jack made bogus claims to having written the *Roan* song, and also asserted he'd written Gail Gardner's classic *Sierry Petes* (*Tying Knots in the Devil's Tail.*) Author John I. White says that Powder River Jack suffered from *an overactive imagination*.

Curley Fletcher and Gail Gardener, who'd become pals, went searching for Jack's head, and tracked him down in Phoenix. But Powder River was a slippery character.

Gail Gardner reminisces thirty years later:

> *That dude come swingin' into Phoenix thirty years ago packin' a steel guitar and a hula skirt fer his wife, Kitty. They found a rather sorry reception for that sorta music on the radio, so he bought hisself a fancy cowboy outfit, loaded him and Kitty down with belt buckles 'n boots and began singin' every cow song he could wrap his tonsils around. Curley and me got pretty damn sore about his liftin' our songs without so much as a by-your-leave, but when we got together*

to see what we could do about it, we found our only recourse was to sue him. Hell, he didn't own the clothes he stood in, and of course neither of us wanted Kitty.

Next, Hollywood took interest in *The Roan*. In 1933 Ken Maynard appeared in a movie titled: *The Strawberry Roan*. In that scenario the roan is a renegade stallion, and ranch wranglers are trying to round him up. In 1948 Gene Autry starred in another version, this time a young kid is injured by being bucked off a wild roan, and his father wants to shoot the horse. Gene Autry steps in, *singing all the way*, and tames the horse, hoping to give it back to the kid and cheer him up. It was Gene's first color film.

Then came the parodies and take offs. In the early 1940s a *blue* version surfaced, titled: *The Castration of the Strawberry Roan*. One source claims Curley wrote it himself in New York City. Maybe Curley wanted to douse his frustrations, and kill off, or *neuter,* his beloved old roan. Lord knows they'd never put *this version* in a Broadway Musical. *Parental guidance suggested*.

A bootleg version of this bawdy song exists, and the vocals are alleged to be *The Sons of the Pioneers*, though they didn't put their name on it for obvious reasons. In my first meeting with Ian Tyson, back in 1986 in New York City, we began work on the song *Navajo Rug* and drank *mucho* red wine. Later in the evening Ian sang *The Castration of the Strawberry Roan* into my reel to reel tape recorder. Unfortunately, the tape has disappeared into history. Maybe it surfaced in The Bronx, and ended up as a rap song. *The folk process prevails*.

The version begins thusly:

I was layin' round town in a house of ill fame,
Laid up with a rough, tough hustlin' dame,
When a hop-headed pimp with his nose full of coke
Beat me outta that woman and left me stone broke.

That's the *tame* part. You'll have to hunt up the rest for your own edification. Omar Khayyam is turning pink.

IV. Endings

But I bets all muh money thar's no man alive
That kin stay with that bronc when he makes that high dive.
Curley Fletcher

So it goes. We could look even deeper into the song, but the sum power and mystery of the balladeer's art is greater that the dissection of lines. The song has endured. The parodies and imitations abound. Curley went on to work as a magazine columnist, essayist, and prospector. His last years were spent seeking out mining properties in California. At one point he owned a mine with Tex Ritter. The money never lasted. Curley gambled or gave it away to cowboys down on their luck. The fame and fortune hustle always paled against those early days and nights in the saddle, at *$30 a month*.

Curley died in San Jose, California, in 1954. I'd like to think his grave marker says something raw, like: *I Never Herded Sheep*. I hope they buried him with his copy of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam,* and the empty rodeo-winnings envelope, upon which he'd scrawled, in pencil, the classic bronc poem of all time. *The Strawberry Roan*. Writ' by a great poet, *branded so in the eyes of God*.

Tom Russell's newest record: *Mesabi*, and his art book *Blue Horse/Red Desert*, are now available from www.tomrussell.com
Special thanks to Gary Brown for the historical posters, photos, and illustrations.

Selling Tommy

By Cynthia Carbonne Ward

There were ponies in picture books and mounted policemen in the park. That was the extent of my contact with horses as a child growing up in Brooklyn, New York. Oh, I suppose I experienced a flicker of horsey romanticism at one point, as all young girls do, imagining myself astride a beautiful Palomino, my hair flying in the wind. But none of the practical details concerned me, and the vision was short-lived. It somehow didn't go well with sidewalks and snow.

Life, however, is nothing if not unpredictable. Fast forward forty years and I am living on a ranch in a place called Gaviota, driving over dirt roads and a cattle crossing to get to and from my house each day. So the horse fantasies that my daughter Miranda developed, emerging in such a suitable context, didn't seem incongruous. Which isn't to say I encouraged them. I simply couldn't hold them back.

photo courtesy SYVTRP

Tommy at the Santa Ynez Therapeutic Riding Program

Miranda developed horse lust at age seven. Then began the Pony Club servitude, during which my husband and I dutifully transported her to a shabby stable where she spent the day grooming, riding, and cleaning stalls. It was difficult to understand why this was so

compelling. She took a ceramics class and crafted a collection of eccentric-looking clay horses. She made pencil sketches of horses, filled spiral notebooks with horse stories, and replaced her dolls with plastic equine figurines. I knew we were in trouble when she got a C in P.E. because she refused to run, and would only gallop.

The way I feel about horses is this: they are very high off the ground, and I have no desire to sit on one. I like bicycles. They're more compliant. Horses come fully equipped with a daunting battery of ongoing duties and expenses, and they have voracious appetites – we're talking, after all, about half-ton vegetarians. In summary, I did not wish to become the owner of a horse. But the relentless lobbying of a young equestrienne is not easily dismissed, particularly when more experienced friends assure you that the horse obsession can delay the boy obsession for up to ten years.

Tommy and Miranda

And so we found Tommy – a young Appaloosa who had been raised like a pet. He could hold his own in working cow horse events, and was gentle and predictable enough for the children at the therapeutic riding center where Miranda sometimes volunteered. He had goofy expressions, a horse with eyebrows, one of which arched quizzically when something confounded him. Miranda's devotion was constant. In the mornings, she would scramble down the hill, open the creaky gate, and walk the trail along the creek to our neighbor's place, where Tommy boarded. I would glimpse her sometimes, riding in the canyon, my own little girl living a life I could have barely imagined.

Gradually, despite my resistance, it was often me who would walk up the canyon in the mornings and evenings to feed Tommy. It was a simple and satisfying duty. Tommy was clearly happy to see me, and I felt purposeful and appreciated. I liked the sounds of his chewing and chomping. I thumped his dusty flank with tentative affection, and felt the warmth and life in him. We were friends, and I lingered, smelling the sweetness of alfalfa and enjoying the freshness of the air.

Feeding a horse forced me outside. I walked head-on into dusk and morning light, becoming intimate with white sky and the rustle of the brush, with the buckets in the barn, the whims of the well, the latching of the gates, with a thousand sounds and silences I have never noticed, and a thousand

photos courtesy the author

Tommy working at the therapeutic riding center

kinds of light. Tommy was a good excuse to check out the day before it slid away.

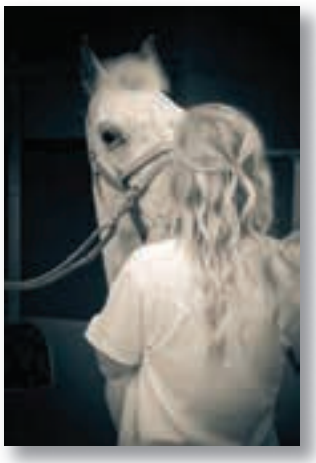
Meanwhile, Miranda was growing up. I watched her help round up the cattle once; she looked serious and competent. Sometimes we'd all go out together – my husband and I on our bicycles, and Miranda on Tommy. Other times, she would take off on her own, just a girl and her horse. I would see her galloping along the rises and contours of the ever-present hills, not awkward and timid like me, but beautiful and capable. Not my little girl anymore, but her own person, a young woman.

And so, as high school and homework and travel and sports increasingly cut into Miranda's time with Tommy, I knew that she was struggling with the idea of selling him. It was a hard decision, and one she had to make for herself. Ultimately, she simply wanted to do what was best for him. Our friend Julie, an expert horsewoman, had grown fond of Tommy, and made an offer. He would have a wonderful home, and he'd be ridden regularly. When Miranda said yes, Julie cried with happiness. Miranda just went quietly into her room. Tommy's picture is still tacked to her bulletin board, along with some ribbons they won together in the Pony Club days. She hopes to visit him before Julie takes him with her to Wyoming for the summer. Miranda has strength and good sense; I think she'll be fine.

It's me I'm worried about. I miss Tommy. I miss his quizzical eyebrows. I miss visiting him in the canyon. More than that, I miss that skinny brown haired girl in her tall riding boots. Come to think of it, I miss my cat, and my Volkswagen bus. I miss my father, too, and the pear tree in our backyard. I miss being ten years old, and the easy way I used to believe that anything was possible. I miss friends who left us. I miss last year. I miss every summer that has vanished.

I guess you have to get used to losing things if you're going to live a life. But tonight, the crazy winds are howling, the trees in the orchard are dancing, and I can see Miranda's light on in her room downstairs. She is reading; she looks up and smiles at me sleepily. I stroke her hair, profoundly grateful for this moment. The sky is ablaze with the milky light of a million obsolete stars.

The story of Tommy is from Cynthia Carbone Ward's book, *The Savage Faith of the Sacred Heart and Other Essays*, published by Sacata Canyon Press. See more of her writings at www.cynthiacarbone.com.



Regarding Tommy

On December 15, 2011, Cynthia wrote us.

"After our family, Tommy had two loving homes and was then donated to the Santa Ynez Valley Therapeutic Riding Program. We found out recently that Tommy had died this past September and that the children at the riding center held a little memorial ceremony in his honor.

I always felt that the story I wrote about Tommy was about change and growing up and the way losses accrue in the course of a life. But I see now it is equally about continuity and love. Tommy was a gentleman and a sweetheart to the end. He definitely touched lives, as I suppose a good horse does."

For the Love of the West

Cowboy poet Doris Daley on language, landscape and laughter.

By Melissa Mylchreest

photos by A.J. Mangum

Alberta poet Doris Daley

She's not sure where it came from, this fascination with words.

"Somewhere in my DNA there must be story-telling," says cowboy poet Doris Daley. "There's poetry and imagination, and it was all there waiting for me when I was born."

And after reading Daley's work, it begins to make sense, this idea that a poetic sensibility is something

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carried in the blood, especially if that blood is deeply rooted in Canada's wild and windy prairie.

A lauded and acclaimed poet out of southern Alberta, Daley's writing pulls inspiration from an array of sources, while maintaining deep ties to landscape, people, and a distinct culture. All three of these influences, Daley says, have shaped her life from the very beginning, providing the backdrop upon which her literary imagination unfolded.

Growing up on her family's ranch in the Alberta foothills, outside a town of 300, she had a typical country-kid upbringing. Yet, while other children devoted time to sports or music, Daley found herself playing with words.

As a young girl, Daley's love of poetry was fostered, in part, by her parents' gift of a rhyming dictionary, one she still employs in her writing efforts.

"I fell in love with rhyming as a very little girl," she says. "My parents gave me a rhyming dictionary that I still have, all tattered and coffee-stained, with pages falling out."

When she read the poetry of Robert Service in seventh grade, it was as though the world snapped into focus and her inspiration had found a guide.

"I didn't aspire to be a cowboy poet back then," she says. "Who knew that was even a career option?"

And yet, at that young age, she knew she had found something special, and she began down the path that would lead her around North America, to venues large and small, to fame, recognition and fun.

Like many cowboy poets, Daley deals in icons and imagery, myth and metaphor, but also the everyday stories that she watches unfold around her, on the ranch or in town. When she sits at her kitchen table to write, she lists the five senses at the top of her page, to remind herself to immerse her readers fully: "I want to bring them to the campfire, put them on the back of the horse, take them to the rodeo dance."

Her decision to write about horses, ranch hands, cattle, camp cooks, and the wide western sky, she says, "is mostly instinct. When you grow up on a ranch, the line between your inner landscape and your outer landscape is so blurred that it almost doesn't exist." Daley says she sees connections between the world of cowboy poetry and the working world of the West, in terms of what traits garner respect: Often when she's performing at a gathering or festival, she finds that she's the token female. And yet, she says, she's never felt that it mattered, to anyone.

"Just as when you're working on the ranch, or you're at a branding party, or you're bringing cattle out of the hills, it doesn't matter who you are," Daley says. "If you

Daley writes at her kitchen table, organizing her thoughts on a legal pad.

saddle up and do the job, you're respected for it."

She appreciates, too, finding on the cowboy poetry circuit what she refers to as a "Western kind of gentlemanly decorum," which harkens back to an earlier age, one often evoked in cowboy poetry.

With her words, Daley pays homage to a landscape and lifestyle that still retain their legendary status in both Canadian and U.S. cultures. "There's a notion," she says, "that here in the north and in the West are the last great frontiers." While many cowboy poets rely heavily on the symbolic weight of romantic and sometimes old-fashioned notions, Daley speaks to these ideas while remaining grounded in workaday life. She acknowledges the tenuousness of those myths, and her poetry is often a celebration of those brief moments when "the romantic idealism and reality sometimes still meet up. When they do, it's a happy day."

And even when the going gets tough, the bills are due and the winter is bad, even then, the land itself never disappoints: "Gosh, here I am surrounded," she says. "There are the Rocky Mountains and there's the big blue sky, there are the prairies rolling out in front of me, as

far as the eye can see." The West, Daley contends, is the world's gift to writers, a living, blooming poem in which we're lucky enough to live.

Romanticism aside, though, Daley's not afraid to admit that the business of being a cowboy poet is hard work. In addition to continually writing new material, she spends much time on the road, traveling the cowboy poetry circuit.

"On a good week, I have two or three gigs, sometime more." And, while she has been a featured performer at every cowboy festival in Canada and countless events in the United States, she's just as fond of small venues.

"This week, I'm doing a featured stage performance, then a convention in Calgary, and then a rural village for their annual pig roast," she says. "Some gigs require lots of travel, others are a few kilometers down the road at the church potluck or the senior center." And while she loves the recognition and the feel of the big events, the size of the paycheck and the size of the venue aren't Daley's main concerns. "No matter what, I always say my two favorite gigs are the one I was just at, and the one I'm going to next."

Ultimately, she says, one of the best parts of the job is simply being onstage, performing for people who appreciate her art. Often, what first draws in listeners is her showmanship – her big grin, her animated delivery – and also the wittiness of her poems.

"I know darn well that people like to laugh, and we need more of it in the world," she says. And yet, while Daley enjoys amusing herself and others with her words, she also admits that "it's a heck of a load to be funny." While she often begins and ends readings with humorous poems, she always strives to bring audiences more than just wit.

"I want to be a good writer," she says, "whether it's humorous or sad or a tribute or a reflection." This is why, from the church supper to Elko, the rural pig roast to big-time Texas cowboy gatherings, she says, "I always love going where audiences themselves are really keen about cowboy poetry. They appreciate all the elements of it. They really get how a poem is written and set up."

Over the years that she's been honing her work and performing to ever-larger crowds, Daley has also been thrilled to watch the world's growing acceptance of cowboy poetry, not just as a regional novelty but as a legitimate art form. She cites two examples from her own career: performing her work with both the Saskatchewan Opera Company and the Reno Philharmonic. When she speaks of these events, her voice grows both proud and slightly incredulous: "There I was, the little ranch kid, and then I turned a page and I was a cowboy poet, and then I turned another page and there I was, on stage with 65 professional musicians backing me up with this beautiful, sweeping music."

When she thinks about what drives her, after all of these years of writing, she offers a simple, poetic answer: "The page and the stage." She thrives on the two very different worlds they offer. On the page, it's just her and the ideas, the kitchen table, a cup of coffee, the wild Canadian landscape and the influence of five generations of Alberta ranchers hovering around her like ghosts. On stage it's a bright, vibrant place, full of friends and fans. Here, she says, she steps into her favorite role.

"I love the West," she says, "and I love being a face of a certain part of the West, getting up on stage and presenting it to the world."

Melissa Mylchreest lives in Montana. Learn more about Doris Daley at www.dorisdaley.com.

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Restoring the Legends

Pioneering gunsmith Doug Turnbull keeps alive the firearm traditions of the Old West.

By Jameson Parker

They were the guns that won the West. LeFaucheux. Hulbert. Webley. Joslyn. Adams. Starr. Ballard. And, of course, Merrill-Latrobe-Thomas.

Confused?

Actually, some of those were very fine weapons. And some were considered less than useless by their unhappy owners. But they were all present as the settlers followed manifest destiny and took advantage of the Homestead Act, spreading west from the Great Plains to the Pacific.

photos courtesy Doug Turnbull

New York gunsmith Doug Turnbull

While the guns most of us have heard of include such standards as Smith & Wesson, Remington, Sharps, Schofield, Springfield, Henry and Enfield, the phrase, "the guns that won the West," brings Colt and Winchester to mind. Some of this is due to great contemporary promotion, some to popular fiction, and some to classic Hollywood cowboy movies, but credit also has to go the guns themselves. On various levels – accuracy, reliability, durability, ease of handling, ergonomics – they simply outshot the competition.

But not all Colts and Winchesters. There were models of each that were not well received in their day, either by the military top brass (which, then as now, tended to be conservative, hidebound and frequently incompetent) or by the public, but most Colts and most Winchesters were eagerly sought at the time, and are eagerly sought by collectors today. Some have become classics.

The very name of Winchester invokes images of some of the greatest firearms ever produced in this country: the Model 21 side-by-side shotgun; the Model 12 pump; the Model 70 bolt-action, "the rifleman's rifle"; a string of classic lever-actions that culminated with the Model 94, arguably the greatest lever-action of all time, and the first sporting repeating rifle to be adapted for the then-new smokeless cartridge. It's an extraordinary

Turnbull's version of the Winchester 1886 comes chambered in either .45-70 or .45-90.

achievement made more extraordinary by the fact that Oliver Winchester knew next to nothing about guns.

Born into poverty, he was a carpenter, a successful haberdasher, and above all, a remarkably astute businessman with an eye for opportunity and a genius for manufacturing and marketing. He recognized the potential of the industrial revolution, spent his money on research, and was smart enough or lucky enough to surround himself with gunmaking geniuses, notably Benjamin Tyler Henry of the Henry rifle.

Samuel Colt, by contrast, was a born inventor and gun nut. After a boyhood spent taking apart his father's guns, blowing things up, and generally being the local Dennis the Menace, he either ran away to sea at 16 or was sent away by his exasperated father to learn a trade. He did, but not the intended one. The story, true or apocryphal, is that he was inspired either by the ship's capstan, or its wheel, or both, and while still supposedly working as a seaman spent his time carving a wooden prototype of what would eventually become his famous revolver.

Like Oliver Winchester, Colt was an astute child of the industrial revolution, and he recognized the benefits of mass production and the assembly line. He was also a bit of a flim-flam artist (he earned his first money "lecturing" on the dubious science of laughing gas under the name Dr. Coult), and not above boosting sales to foreign countries by encouraging arms races between rivals.

The list of guns created by Samuel Colt, or by his company after his too-early death, includes scores of revolvers, derringers, semi-auto pistols, shotguns, a double-barreled rifle, as well as civilian and military rifles. Some of these were commercial successes, some failures, but the Single Action Army revolver, or Peacemaker, and John Browning's 1911 semi-auto, are still considered to be two of the greatest handguns of all time.

If you are lucky enough to own a Peacemaker, or one of the classic Winchester lever-actions, or any other antique firearm for that matter, the question is how do you strike a balance between preservation and restoration?

Anyone who has ever seen an episode of the PBS series *Antiques Roadshow* has seen some expert tell an unfortunate owner, "It's a shame you restored this, because now it's only worth...." This is usually followed by a shot of the owner weeping hysterically.

But this is not true of all antiques. Antique cars, for example, that have been properly restored can be worth a prince's ransom. The Packard gathering rust in a farmer's field, by contrast, is worth very little.

Firearms used to fall into the fine-furniture category: if you want to preserve their value, don't touch them. Now, thanks primarily to one man, that has all changed and, barring historical significance, restoration is the order of the day.

Doug Turnbull was born in upstate New York, where his father owned the largest gun store in that part of the country. Doug grew up working in the store.

"I never knew anything different, so it seemed

normal to me," he says. "The shop was 200 feet in front of the house. The range was 150 feet from the front door. I was never interested in sports, so I'd come home from school, grab my pellet rifle and go out and shoot."

Not surprisingly for someone who spent his childhood surrounded by collectible firearms, Turnbull developed a love of antique guns. More specifically, he developed a fascination with color-casehardening.

Before and after shots of a Peacemaker revolver illustrate Turnbull's work as a gun restorer.

Casehardening is the process of adding carbon to the surface of low-carbon steel, thereby creating a thin, hard outer layer around a softer inner core. In its broadest sense, from the point of view of creating varying layers of hardness, this is not a new technology, nor is it exclusive to firearms. The Japanese Katana has been around for about 1,000 years, while Charles Allen's revolutionary DiamondBlade Knives, which use a sophisticated modern variation of the same technology, have been around less than 10. But casehardening (creating a single unit of metal with varying degrees of hardness from outside to in) is one thing, while *color*-casehardening (achieving extraordinarily brilliant and mottled shades of blue, green, red, purple, grey and brown) is quite another.

The classic American firearm companies of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were famous for their color-casehardening. Unfortunately, like the making of true Damascus steel (another example of varying layers of hardness in metal), the process became a lost art. The men who perfected the techniques were notoriously secretive, partly for reasons of job preservation, partly because it was as much an art as a science, and the methods they used were only passed on from family member to family member. Fortunately, unlike true Damascus steel (which has never been precisely re-discovered or precisely reproduced), Doug Turnbull was able to reinvent the wheel.

"My father started experimenting with color-casehardening [around the time Turnbull was born] and he worked on it off and on for about 15 years," Turnbull says, "so when I got serious about it, it took around three years."

Why so long?

Color-casehardening is like a code where the variables are practically infinite. The carbon materials and the combinations of those materials (charcoal from bone, wood, leather or fruit-pit, either singly or in combination; salt, cyanide or potassium cyanide, either singly or in combination; or any number of commercial formulas available on the market) are numerous, and

Turnbull with a vintage Parker side-by-side shotgun.

that's just the beginning. The heating and cooling process is critical: too high a temperature washes out the colors; too low a temperature doesn't harden the steel; too much air exposure mutes the colors; incorrectly timed steps affect the temper of the metal; and, perhaps most important of all, the quality of the finished product is dependent on the polishing and cleaning of the metal before the hardening process even begins.

But it doesn't end there. Each company, Colt, Winchester, Parker, Fox, et al., had colors that were specific and different, so Turnbull had to teach himself to create the appropriate colors for each company, and then to reproduce them at will.

Beyond all that, restoring an antique firearm may also involve charcoal bluing, rust bluing, salt bluing, stock work (up to building an entirely new stock, if necessary), metal work as varied as dent repair all the way up to recreating a missing metal piece, up-grading, caliber conversions, whatever it takes to return the firearm to its original, shootable condition.

"If a gun has already been messed with, and its historical value has been compromised, and you just want a working gun, then it's a candidate for restoration," Turnbull says. "But be careful. If you're

restoring a gun for economic reasons, be aware that the restoration costs can rise quickly, sometimes beyond the value of the piece."

For many people, lever-action means Winchester, but in fact Winchester was neither the first nor the only maker of such guns. The model 1886 was the culmination of a line of progression from Volcanic Repeating Arms (started by Horace Smith and Daniel Wesson), to the Henry (as in Benjamin Tyler Henry), to the 1866 (dubbed "Yellow Boy" for its brass receiver), to the 1873 to the 1876 to the 1886 (designed by John Moses Browning), with its much stronger action capable of handling the more powerful cartridges of its day.

"That's why I decided to reproduce that particular model. It's the largest and strongest of the large caliber actions," Turnbull says, "and it's is the most sought after. The '73 and the '92 were both built for pistol cartridges, but the '86 was built for a cartridge longer than 2.4 inches and [in its day] much more powerful than anything else."

For Western firearm enthusiasts who want a working cowboy gun and don't have an original to restore, Turnbull offers reproductions. His Winchester 1886 is chambered for either .45-70 or .45-90 and is such an accurate reproduction that all the parts are interchangeable. I will also vouch that it is extraordinarily accurate in the other meaning of that word. I shot his .45-70 with iron sights at 50 yards and got a five shot group that was one large ragged hole.

The Colt Single Action Army 1873, also called the Peacemaker, perhaps the most iconic firearm of the West, was actually created by a Colt factory machinist and inventor named William Mason (who later switched companies and worked on the Winchester 1886) approximately 10 years after Samuel Colt's death. Colt himself had resisted the idea of an enclosed frame or "strap" pistol, preferring his traditional and successful open frame, but Army Ordnance had other ideas and, in 1872, Mason gave them what they wanted. His revolver was tested against a Smith & Wesson No. 3, proving itself more reliable and accurate. In a humorous twist of fate, Army Ordnance tested a third revolver at the same time. It was a .44 caliber Colt Model 72 with an open frame, and it outperformed both of the other candidates, but the Army made its choice and the open frame went out of fashion while the Peacemaker went on to become a classic. It remained in continuous production from 1873 to 1941, and was manufactured again starting in 1955.

Turnbull calls his reproduction of the Peacemaker the "Open Range" model and offers it in .45 Colt only. It comes in a Sheriff's model with a 3-1/2 inch barrel and a Bisley spur hammer; a more traditional version with a 4-3/4 or 5-1/2 barrel that can be made as fancy as your wallet will bear; and a "Hand of God" version that is a duplicate of the one his company made for Russell Crowe in the movie *3:10 to Yuma*. And if you really want to get wild and crazy, Turnbull is about to make a limited number of Buntline Single Actions in both .45 Colt and .44 Special.

Thanks in part to the Single Action Shooting Society and the Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association, America's fascination with the traditional weapons of the West has never been greater. And thanks to Doug Turnbull, the opportunity for owning a superb reproduction, or having an old family heirloom restored has never been better.

Jameson Parker is the author of the memoir *An Accidental Cowboy*. He lives in California.
Learn more about Doug Turnbull's work at www.turnbullmfg.com.


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King's Saddlery: A Pictorial

A mecca for horsemen since its founding by Don King in 1963, Sheridan, Wyoming's King's Saddlery still outfits working cowboys throughout the West.

By Guy de Galard

Added to King's Saddlery in 1989, King's Saddlery Museum is a treasure chest of western history. It holds over 6,000 pieces that include an outstanding collection of Indian artifacts and cowboy memorabilia from all over the world; pieces include chaps, bits, spurs, saddles, rawhide and horsehair work, boots and guns. The layout and design of the museum was done by Don King himself. The air is filled with the comforting scent of leather. Rustic pine walls serve as a backdrop while giant display cases protect some of the exhibits. "What makes the museum unique," explains Jean King, the museum's curator, "is the fact that, unlike most museums, it's a hands-on museum." Although some of the pieces on display are loaned or donated, the majority are from Don King's personal collection.

Bruce (left) and Bill King are Don's sons. Bruce, who's been working at King's Saddlery since 1972, learned leather work from his father and became a talented saddlemaker and leather carver. Today, he oversees the King operation. He no longer builds saddles, but still enjoys creating and tooling small items such as cantines, saddlebags and headstalls. Bill King earned a degree in history and, today, owns and operates Sheridan's Bozeman Trails Gallery. When his father opened the museum, Bill and his wife, Jean, started going to auctions. "I was interested in Indian beadwork and started trading, but I didn't consider myself a collector," he says. "In the process, I started picking up some western art."

Jean King is King's Museum's curator, as well as the spouse of Don King's oldest son, Bill. Jean has been working in the museum since its opening in 1989. "When Don offered me the job, I thought it would be boring, but it never was," says Jean, whose responsibilities include managing and maintaining the museum's 6,000-piece collection. "I learned everything from Don. Now, I can usually determine the era of a saddle by a few years by just looking at it. But being friendly to the visitors is more important to me than knowing about the pieces."

The heart of King's Saddlery Museum is its collection of over 500 western saddles that Don King collected over a 50 year period. A history of the western saddle could be written based entirely on the museum collection. All the big names of saddlemaking throughout the West – Visalia and Bohlin of California, Garcia of Nevada, Miles City of Montana, Hamley of Oregon, Myres of Texas, Ernst of Wyoming – can be found at the museum. One piece that was of great sentimental value to Don King is the saddle in which Don's grandfather, Gordon Fitzhugh, rode on a total of eight trail drives from Texas to Colorado and Wyoming, starting in 1876.

If you buy a King rope, there is a good chance it was made by Dan Morales, who has been twisting ropes at King's for 31 years. Each year, 1.5 million feet of ropes of 400 varieties are twisted and stretched in King's basement, where Morales works. Ropes are stretched using weights recycled from oil-drilling rigs. "The more weight, the more stiffness," explains Morales. The rope is then dipped in a vat of lubricant before being stretched for about two weeks outdoors to take the curl out of the coil. Then, the ends of the rope are seared shut with a butane flame, the hondo is tied on, and the burner is sewed around the hondo to protect the eye of the lariat from wear.

Jim Jackson has carved leather at King's since 1971. Growing up in Sheridan, he working with leather at 15 years old, covering stirrups at Ernst Saddlery, where his father was a saddlemaker. While there, he met local saddlemaker Bill Gardner, who took Jim under his wing. Jim went on to earn an MFA from the University of Wyoming. During his time at UW, Jackson did piecework for King's. "I'd tool some belts and things," he says. "It was nice to get the extra money. Don was always around and would give me pointers." While at UW, Jim worked as curator of exhibits at the school's art museum, and received a scholarship to travel to Europe for nine months of study. Today, Jim continues to carve leather at King's, where he gives lectures and demonstrations on leather carving and design. He has taught workshops at the Autry Museum in Los Angeles, as well as in Australia and Japan. Besides a lifetime of experience at tooling leather, Jim's paintings have been shown in galleries in Wyoming, Colorado and California, and he's completed works for the likes of Presidents Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton, and actors Anthony Hopkins, Tom Selleck, Robert Redford and Tommy Lee Jones.

The leather work Jim Jackson creates is recognized by its free-flowing, complex design, delicate flowers and intricate swirls. Elaborately carved flowers in full bloom become the focal point for balanced, repetitious patterns. Flowers such as wild roses or copper roses are often used because they are indigenous to the Sheridan area. This pattern is referred to as the "Sheridan Style." "When I was growing up, we didn't call it anything," Jim says. "That's just the way it was done here." According to Jim, the style was sparked in the mid-1950s, when Don King began work on the Rocky Mountain Quarter Horse Association trophy saddles. "Don pioneered a carving pattern by reducing the size of the flower and nesting it in a delicate circular geometric pattern of leaves and tendrils. This, during a time when most saddlemakers were tooling very large, loose floral patterns, was quite innovative."

Deb Iacolucci was born and raised in Cody, Wyoming, and has been working at King's since 2007. She lives on the Padlock Ranch, where her husband, Jim, has worked for 28 years. Accustomed to the ranching lifestyle, it comes natural to her to talk about bits or advise customers on which type of cinch to use. "I know a lot of the people who come in," she says. "When you stay on the ranch, you don't get to see many people. Here, I enjoy seeing everybody I know." When she is not assisting customers, Deb designs and arranges the store's window display.

Guy de Galard is a Wyoming-based photographer and writer.
Learn more about King's Saddlery at www.kingssaddlery.com.

Horses and life, it's all the same to me.

- Buck Brannaman

Houlihan Ranch, Wyoming *A.J. Mangum*

www.brannaman.com

Coloring the Past

Western artist Roy Andersen reconnects with childhood dreams via paint and canvas.

By Paul A. Cañada

photo by Paul A. Cañada

Anderson works on a historic battle scene. Many of the horses he depicts are based upon Paint Horses he and his wife keep on their Texas property.

photo by Paul A. Cañada

Western artist Roy Andersen and his wife, Lui.

Living in the 1930s was demanding and most families struggled to put food on the table and shelter overhead. Anders and Serena Andersen labored hard to provide for their children. There was little time for leisure and few luxuries.

Yet, every evening following dinner, the children gathered around their father. Anders might recite a Danish folk tale for his children, or as his son Roy always hoped for, he might retell a family anecdote about Uncle Neils.

The popular Neils emigrated from Denmark to Nebraska, where he found work as a cowboy. Stories of how the children's uncle broke broncs, roped cattle and met Indians captured Roy's imagination. The young boy spent countless hours sketching and giving life to Uncle Neils' deeds and adventures.

Serena recognized her son's talent and interest early on. When an opportunity for young artists to attend a workshop at the Chicago Field Museum of Natural History presented itself, despite the sacrifice, she made

Singing the Good Hunt, by Roy Andersen

sure money was available to allow Roy to attend. At the end of each session, Roy would make his way to the museum's Indian collection, where he spent countless hours sketching the clothing, weapons and tools of the Plains Indians.

"Nearly as long as I can remember, I wanted to be an Indian warrior," he recalls. "When I realized being an Indian wasn't an occupation you could choose, I drew and painted them. Today, I am still living out those adventures on canvas. I am older now, but the kid in me still remains."

After graduating from high school, Roy Andersen completed a two-year program at the Chicago Academy of Fine Art, a three-year apprenticeship at Felcamp-Malloy, a leading Chicago art studio, and two years of study at the Art Center of Los Angeles. He established a workshop at Jack O'Grady Studio and quickly ascended the ranks to be one of Chicago's more accomplished illustrators.

It was in Chicago where Andersen met his future bride, Louanne "Lui" Ihde, an artist working for an architectural rendering firm in New York City. In due course, Andersen joined Lui in New York. He had always wanted to try the prestigious and lucrative commercial market in the Big Apple.

Lui eventually left her job in order to help promote Andersen's art and the two married. He had been a great success in Chicago, but Andersen was virtually unheard of in New York. With Lui's help, he made a name for himself as a freelance artist, illustrating paperback books, movie posters and magazines such as *Time*, *Sports Illustrated* and *National Geographic*.

"I really enjoyed my 10 years with *National Geographic*," Andersen says. "I enjoyed the assignments because they required a lot of research and authenticity. Anything requiring historic research was great fun to do. They sent you out to

Quanah Parker, by Roy Andersen

He Holds the Pipe, by Roy Andersen

interview archeologists, zoologists and historians. I illustrated everything from dinosaurs to space labs."

While at the peak of Andersen's career in New York City, the age of illustration began to wane, thanks mainly to advances in computer graphics. The art staffs of magazines were going back to school to learn computer graphics, and demand for illustrators began to diminish. Worked slowed enough to allow Andersen to pause and rethink his objectives in life.

"When I turned 50," he says, "I realized I might be running out of time. While I had accomplished many things as an illustrator, I still had an unfulfilled lifelong goal. I wanted to move west to pursue the life of a Western artist."

The couple moved from New York to Arizona, before settling in Kerrville, Texas, where Andersen has a spacious studio and residence overlooking pastures filled with some of their two dozen Paint Horses.

"One of the reasons I started collecting Paints was because I like studying them," Andersen explains. "It's easier to have a live subject to work from when painting. There's usually one or two of my horses in each painting."

Horses and Indians are a common theme in many of Andersen's works. He realized early on the great number of Indian peoples, each with a unique culture, would make it impossible to gain thorough knowledge

Quest for Gold and Souls, by Roy Andersen

of each tribe. And so, he focused his studies and art on the Plains Indians of his youthful dreams.

Today, Andersen is known for his accurate portrayal of the Native American. He takes great pride in the correctness of his subjects. He not only works to get their appearance right, but also strives to assure tools, weapons, settings and events are rendered accurately. He takes special care to assure the correct conformation of his horses and the authenticity of their riders.

The enormous diversity in language and cultures between the many Indian nations requires artists to pay close attention to the smallest of details if they hope to be accurate. Over the years, many artists, writers and historians have erred in their depiction of America's various native peoples. Because of this, Andersen limits the number of tribes he depicts in his work to the Crow, Cheyenne, Comanche and Kiowa, in order to minimize errors.

This special care isn't limited to Indians alone; he applies the same care when working with other historic subjects. Recently, Andersen finished a painting of the conquistador Francisco Vasquez de Coronado entering Arizona. The painting portrays a proud Coronado, flanked by a soldier with two Spanish greyhounds. Trailing behind are soldiers on foot and horseback, as well as Indians, Catholic priests and servants. The image captures the enormity of Coronado's expedition.

"In this painting, I tried to play up Coronado more than the Indians that were with him," Andersen says. "I was careful with the details, including the flag he flew. In those days, they carried the flag of the ruling family, not a national flag. At that time, Spain was ruled by a Burgundian and the family flag was the red and white Burgundy cross."

Andersen's latest project depicts a historic scene from the Battle of Rosebud Creek, between the U.S. Army and a contingent of Cheyenne and Lakota. The painting marks a first for Andersen. Until now, he has never recreated a cavalry battle.

White Wolf-Pawnee, by Roy Andersen

"It's on a big 40-by-60 canvas, so there's lots of detail," he says. "As I did depicting Coronado's expedition, I am being very careful to accurately portray the timeline."

Legacy Galleries' Brad Richardson has said of Andersen that his use of subjects is his real trademark. Unlike most Western art, where the landscape or action is often the story, Andersen's work focuses on the figure. Because of this, Andersen is considered more of a figure painter than a landscape painter.

Outside of being known for the accuracy and detail in his figures, Andersen is equally known in Western art circles for his use of vibrant colors. He often uses abstract backgrounds with lots of color to communicate

When Robes Were Wealth, by Roy Andersen

messages. He interprets what he sees with color.

Andersen sees a world other artists might not see as vibrant, sees color in things where most would not. Collectors have gravitated toward this abstract use of color. The brilliant world captured on Andersen's canvas is as he sees it, through the wondrous mind of a young boy, daydreaming about adventures out West.

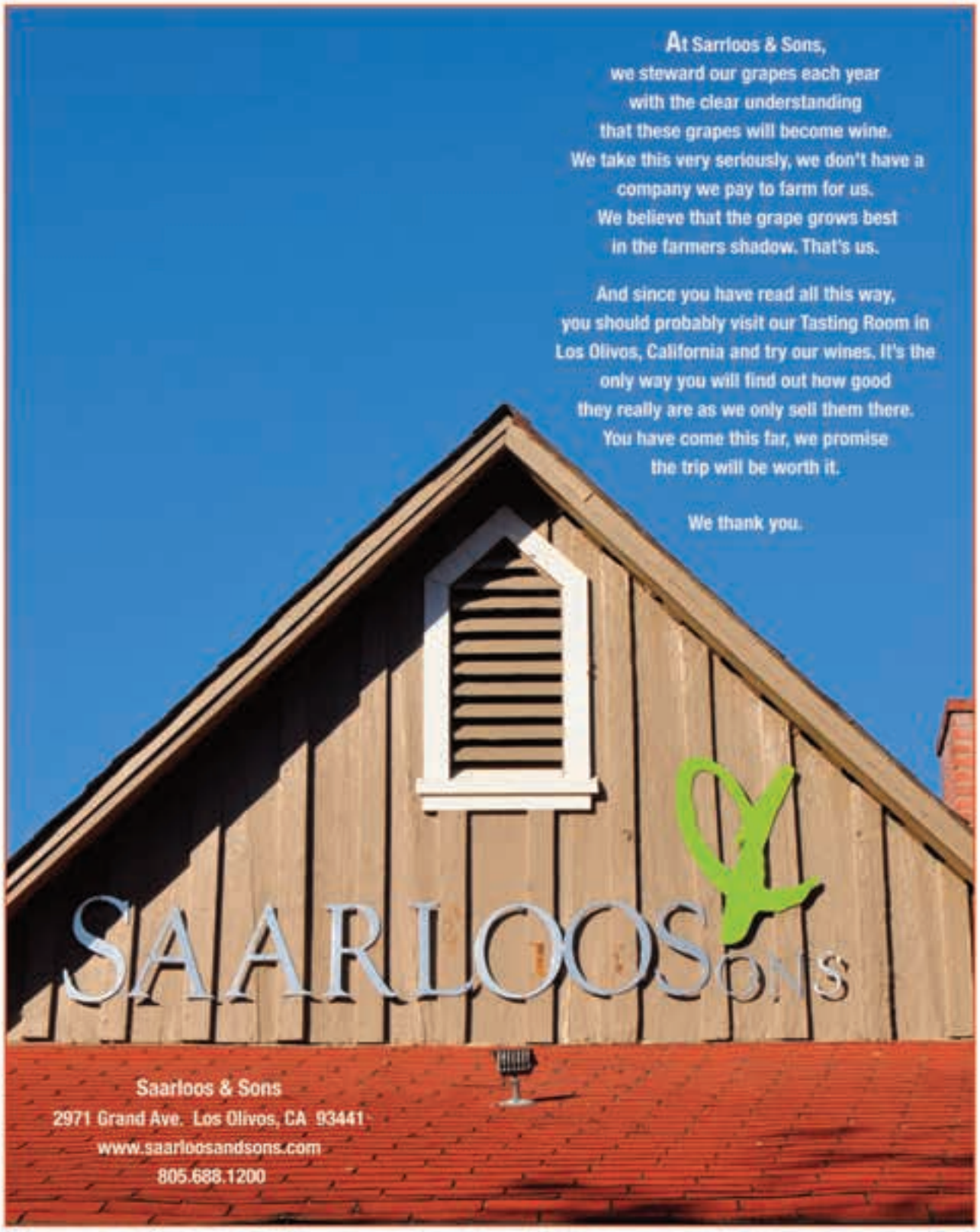
"What I paint are symbols for something else," he says. "I paint free men moving through a natural environment – real and spiritual, honest people. In my painting, I'm trying to show man looking for the connection between God and his own nature, and the beautiful landscape around him."

Andersen sees himself as an Old World craftsman, left behind by the technical world long ago, but still compelled to sketch and paint. One of the things he has always loved about art, and appreciates more as he grows older, is that he alone is responsible for the work. Starting with a blank sketch pad or canvas, he creates something out of seemingly nothing. The act of creating something tangible from an idea or concept makes Andersen a craftsman. In fact, he prefers being called an illustrator, rather than an artist.

"I always thought that was such a great title," he says. "Charlie Russell always said he was an illustrator and that's good enough for me."

Paul A. Cañada is a writer living in Texas.

The grape grows best in the farmer's shadow.



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Saarloos & Sons. 2013

The Road Trip List

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

#4 Patsy Cline's Greatest Hits

How many of you have "Virginia Patterson Hensley" lovingly placed in your play list? One – two? None? Maybe you know her better as Patsy Cline? Aha!

Born March 5, 1932, for those who love her, there is probably no more important female country singer in the very early 1960s than Patsy Cline. It is hard to believe today, that prior to the early 60s, so-called "girl singers" were seen by the male-dominated realm in country music as mere eye candy, and only necessary to attract male listeners to their shows. Cline's rise to popularity changed that, and has been an inspiration to female singer/songwriters ever since.

It is hard to consider classic country without Cline's work prominent. Some of the more notable hits she had during her lifetime began in 1957 with Donn Hecht's "Walkin' After Midnight." Harlan Howard's "I Fall to Pieces," Hank Cochran's "She's Got You," Willie Nelson's "Crazy," and ended in 1963 with Don Gibson's "Sweet Dreams."

In 1960, Cline was asked to join the cast of the Grand Ole Opry becoming the only person granted membership after "asking to join," and became one of the Opry's biggest stars in the process.

Always confident, believing that there was "room enough for everybody," Cline befriended and encouraged a number of women just starting out in the country music field at that time, including Loretta Lynn, Dottie West, Jan Howard, sixteen-year-old Brenda Lee and a thirteen year old steel-guitar player named Barbara Mandrell with whom Cline once toured. All cited her as a major influence, even today, and millions of albums have been sold in the years since her death in 1963 – which was due to a plane crash in a storm just ninety miles from Nashville.

Considered a groundbreaking moment in her career, her rendition of Willie Nelson's "Crazy" is a story in itself. From the fact of her difficulty hitting its high notes due to broken ribs from a car accident to the fact that she didn't like the idea of "over-dubbing" her own voice. The long road to "Crazy" would take Cline to have hits of the song on three different charts in late 1961 and early 1962, reaching #9 on the US Hot 100 and #2 on both the Hot Country Songs and the Adult Contemporary lists.

"Crazy" like so many of Patsy Cline's songs have become a deep part of the fabric of American music. We celebrate her *Greatest Hits* album as part of our road list and give you the lyrics to "Crazy" so you might sing along – over-dubbed or not. Oh, and these lyrics are not to be confused with the other "Crazy." (That would be Aerosmith's "Crazy.")

Crazy
By Willie Nelson
Sony/ATV Music Publishing

Crazy,
I'm crazy for feeling so lonely
I'm crazy, crazy for feeling so blue
I knew you'd love me as long as you wanted
And then someday you'd leave me for somebody new
Worry, why do I let myself worry?
Wond'ring what in the world did I do?
Crazy for thinking that my love could hold you
I'm crazy for trying and crazy for crying
And I'm crazy for loving you
Crazy for thinking that my love could hold you
I'm crazy for trying and crazy for crying
And I'm crazy for loving you.

Ten of the Best Rodeo Songs

From Our Range Radio Facebook Fans

By Bruce Pollock

Even though Range Radio is an Internet-based service, we want to know what you like. So we asked our many fans on Facebook to tell us what they think are the absolutely Ten Best Rodeo Songs. Well you answered and here they are, in no particular order but each one of these received an overwhelming amount of requests. For those reading this article in our digital edition, just click on the link to see and hear the selection. Thanks to all who responded and thank you all for listening to Range Radio. We have lots more on the horizon so, "stay tuned."

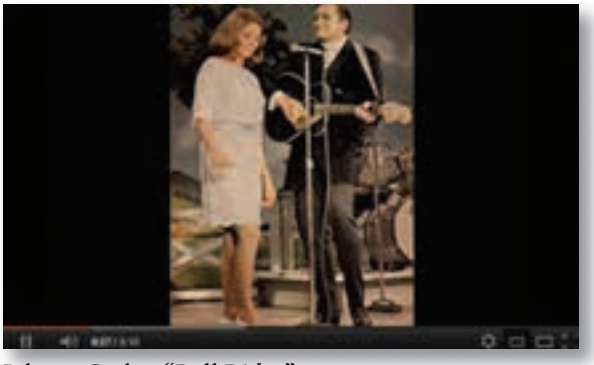
Dan Seals – "Everything That Glitters is not Gold"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUXCaXSTmns&feature=related

Moe Bandy – "Bandy The Rodeo Clown"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5pHKI5y8jU&feature=related

Chris Ledoux – "8 Sec Ride"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIOVSr8UOxQ

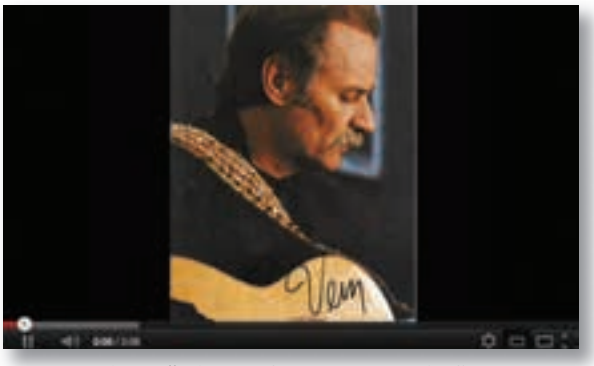
Roy Rogers – "Rodeo Road" (with Willie Nelson)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9Nm6auaL3M

Marty Robbins – "Strawberry Roan"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3BkHtlSYR4



Johnny Cash – "Bull Rider"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TViGS1ePGp8

George Strait – "Amarillo by Morning"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_KrrsLZaY9s



Vern Gosdin – "This Ain't My First Rodeo"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=—MUIkQelWg

Ian Tyson – "Casey Tibbs"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfflEb7-9SE

Suzy Bogguss – "Someday Soon" (by Ian Tyson)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYK5CjSXaE4&feature=related

Academy of Western Artists

2011 Awards

We are very please to announce the winners of the 2011 Academy Of Western Artists' AWA Awards given this past January in Ft. Worth in the great state of Texas. It is an especially important event this year as our own Bruce Pollock was recognized as Disc Jockey of the Year for his work with Range Radio. We are very proud of Bruce and his work. The AWA is the only true awards event that recognizes the work of contemporary western artists, musicians, writers and cowboy crafts. Everyone who loves the art, music and culture of the West should support this fine, non-profit organization. They have a swell little magazine to boot! Here are all of this year's deserving winners. www.awaawards.org

2011 AWA Winners

1 Disc Jockey – Bruce Pollock, Range Radio
2 Radio Station – LKCM Radio Group, Ft. Worth, TX
3 Cowboy Poet – Henry Real Bird
4 Cowgirl Poet – Bette Wolf Duncan
5 Cowboy Poetry Album/CD – Paul Kern *Rimrock, Where Memories Rhyme*
6 Buck Ramsey Book Award-Francine – Roark Robison *The Quilt and Other Pieces*
7 Artist – Mikel Donahue
8 Engraver – Dave Alderson
9 Spurmaker – Larry Fuegen
10 Garnet Brooks Chuckwagon – B.K. Nuzum
11 Bootmaker – Carl Chappell
12 Don King Memorial Saddlemaker – Bill Gardner
13 Western Music Male – Syd Masters
14 Western Music Female – Mary Kaye
15 Western Music Duo/Group – Old West Trio
16 Western Music Album/CD – Stardust Cowboys *Riding Back To You*
17 Western Music Song – Tom Hiatt "Bronc to Breakfast"
18 Young Artist – The Nugents
19 Western Swing Male – Jimmy Burson
20 Western Swing Female – Joni Harms
21 Western Swing Duo/Group – Shoot Low Sheriff
22 Western Swing Song – Leon Rausch/ Asleep at the Wheel "It's A Good Day"
23 Western Swing Album – Tony Harrison/ Hot Texas Band *Swinging Big*
24 Instrumentalist – Jody Nix
25 Pure Country Male – Landon Dodd
26 Pure Country Female – Jade Jack
27 Pure Country Duo/Group – The Survivors
28 Pure Country Album/CD – Curtis Potter *The Potter's Touch*
29 Pure Country Song – Amber Digby "Sing a Sad Song"
30 Will Rogers Special Event – Ride With Bob

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Hidden Water

By Dane Coolidge

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

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

CHAPTER VII

HELL'S HIP POCKET

In the days of Ahaz, kind of Judah, Isaiah the son of Amoz is reported to have seen in a vision a wolf which dwelt with a lamb, while a lion ate straw like an ox, and a weaned child put his hand in the cockatrice's den. Equally beautiful, as a dream, was the peace at Hidden Water, where sheepmen and cattleman sat down together in amity; only, when it was all over, the wolf wiped his chops and turned away with a wise smile–the millennium not having come, as yet, in Arizona.

Hardy's wrist was a little lame, figuratively speaking, from throwing flapjacks for hungry sheep herders, and the pile of grain and baled hay in the storehouse had dwindled materially; but as the sheep came through, band after band, and each turned off to the west, stringing in long bleating

columns out across The Rolls, he did not begrudge the hard labor. After Jasper Swope came Jim, and Donald McDonald, as jolly a Scottish shepherd as ever lived, and Bazan, the Mexican, who traced his blood back to that victorious general whom Maximilian sent into Sonora. There were Frenchmen, smelling rank of garlic and mutton tallow; Basques with eyes as blue and vacant on shares, whose whole fortune was wrapped up in the one huddle of sheep which they corralled and counted so carefully; and then the common herders, fighting Chihuahuanos, with big round heads and staring eyes, low-browed Sonorans, slow and brutal in their ways, men of all bloods and no blood, lumped together in that careless, all-embracing Western term "Mexicans."

But though they were low and primitive in mental processes, nearer to their plodding burros than to the bright-eyed sensitive dogs, they were the best who would consent to wander with the sheep through the wilderness, seeing nothing, doing nothing, knowing nothing, having before them nothing but the vision of a distant pay day, a drunk, the *calabozo*, and the kind boss who would surely bail them out. Ah, that was it–the one love and loyalty of those simple-minded creatures who, unfit for the hurry and competition of the great world, sold their lives by spans of months for twenty dollars and found; it was always to the boss that they looked for help, and in return they did his will.

When the great procession had drifted past, with its braying clamor, its dogs, its men on muleback and afoot, the herders with their carbines, the camp rustlers with their burros, belled and laden with water casks and kyacks of grub, the sheep owners hustling about with an energy that was almost a mania, Hardy sat beneath the *ramada* of the ranch house with dog-fighting Tommy in his lap and pondered deeply upon the spectacle. A hundred thousand sheep, drifting like the shadows of clouds across the illimitable desert, crossing swift rivers, climbing high mountains, grazing beneath the northern pines; and then turning south again and pouring down through the passes like the resistless front of a cloudburst which leaves the earth bare and wasted in its wake. For this one time he had turned the stream aside and the tall grass still waved upon the upper range; but the next time, or the next–what then?

Long and seriously he contemplated the matter, dwelling now upon the rough good nature of the sheepmen and this almost miraculous demonstration of their good will; then remembered with vague misgivings their protestations against the unlawful violence which presumed to deny them what was their legal right–free grazing on all government lands. And in the end he wrote a brief note to Judge Ware, telling him that while the sheepmen had accepted his hospitality in a most friendly spirit and had respected the upper range, it was in his opinion only a question of time until they would take the whole country, unless they were restrained by law. He therefore recommended that the judge look up the status of the bill to set aside the watershed of the Salagua as a National Forest Reserve, and in case the opposition to it indicated any long delay it would be well either to sell out or reduce his stock. This note he sent out by Rafael, the Mexican roustabout, who was still hauling in supplies from Bender, and then with a glad heart he saddled up his horse, left a bait of meat on the floor for Tommy, and struck out over the mesa for Carrizo Creek.

After his long confinement in the pasture the

sorrel galloped along the rocky trail with the grace and swiftness of an antelope, the warm dry wind puffed little whirls of dust before them, and once more Hardy felt like a man. If for the best interests of his employer it was desirable that he cook beef and bread for the sheepmen, he could do so with good grace, but his spirit was not that of a man who serves. Since he had left home he had taken a great deal from the world, patiently accepting her arrogance while he learned her ways, but his soul had never been humbled and he rode forth now like a king.

Upon that great mesa where the bronco mustangs from the Peaks still defied the impetuosity of men, the giant *sahuaros* towered in a mighty forest as far as the eye could see, yet between each stalk there lay a wide space, studded here and there with niggerheads of bristling spines, and fuzzy *chollas*, white as the backs of sheep and

thorny beyond reason. Nor was this all: in the immensity of distance there was room for *sahuaros* and niggerheads and *chollas*, and much besides. In every gulch and sandy draw the *palo verdes*, their yellow flowers gleaming in the sun, stood out like lines of fire; the bottoms of the steep ravines which gashed the mesa were illuminated with the gaudy tassels of mesquite blossoms; gray coffee-berry bushes clumped up against the sides of ridges, and in every sheltered place the long grass waved its last-year's banners, while the fresh green of tender growth matted the open ground like a lawn. Baby rabbits, feeding along their runways in the grass, sat up at his approach or hopped innocently into the shadow of the sheltering cat-claws, jack-rabbits with black-tipped ears galloped madly along before him, imagining themselves pursued, and in every warm sandy place where the lizards took the sun there was scattering like the flight of arrows as the long-legged swift-jacks rose up on their toes and flew. All nature was in a gala mood and Rufus Hardy no less. Yet as he rode along, gazing at the dreaming beauty of this new world, the old far-away look crept back into his eyes, a sad, brooding look such as one often sees in the faces of little children who had been crossed, and the stern lines at the corners of his mouth were deeper when he drew rein above Carrizo Creek.

Below him lay the panorama of a mountain valley–the steep and rocky walls; the silvery stream writhing down the middle; the green and yellow of flowers along the lowlands; and in the middle, to give it life, a great herd of cattle on the *parada* ground, weaving and milling before the rushes of yelling horsemen, intent on cutting out every steer in the herd. Beyond lay the corrals of peeled cottonwood, and a square house standing out stark and naked in the supreme ugliness of corrugated

iron, yet still oddly homelike in a land where shelter was scarce. As he gazed, a mighty voice rose up to him from the midst of the turmoil, the blatting of calves, the mooing of cows and hoarse thunder of mountain bulls:

"Hel-lo, Rufe!"

From his place on the edge of the herd Hardy saw Jefferson Creede, almost herculean on his tall horse, waving a large black hat. Instantly he put spurs to his sorrel and leaped down the narrow trail, and at the edge of the herd they shook hands warmly, for friends are scarce, wherever you go.

"Jest in time!" said Creede, grinning his welcome, "we're goin' over into Hell's Hip Pocket tomorrow–the original hole in the ground–to bring out Bill Johnson's beef critters, and I sure wanted you to make the trip. How'd you git along with Jasp?"

"All right," responded Hardy, "he didn't make me any trouble. But I'm glad to get away from that sheep smell, all the same."

The big cowboy fixed his eyes upon him eagerly.

"Did they go around?" he asked incredulously. "Jasp and all?"

"Sure," said Hardy. "Why?"

For a long minute Creede was silent, wrinkling his brows as he pondered upon the miracle.

"Well, that's what *I* want to know," he answered ambiguously. "But say, you've got a fresh horse; jest take my place here while me and Uncle Bill over there show them ignorant punchers how to cut cattle."

He circled rapidly about the herd and, riding out into the runway where the cattle were sifted, the beef steers being jumped across the open in the

hold-up herd and the cows and calves turned back, he held up his hand for the work to stop. Then by signals he sent the galloping horsemen back to the edge of the herd and beckoned for old Bill Johnson.

For a few minutes he sat quietly on his horse, waiting for the harassed cattle to stop their milling. Then breaking into a song such as cowboys sing at night he rode slowly in among them, threading about at random, while old Bill Johnson on his ancient mare did likewise, his tangled beard swaying idly in the breeze. On the border of the herd they edged in as if by accident upon a fat steer and walked him amiably forth into the open. Another followed out of natural perversity, and when both were nicely started toward the beef cut the two men drifted back once more into the herd. There was no running, no shouting, no gallant show of horsemanship, but somehow the right steers wandered over into the beef cut and stayed there. As if by magic spell the outlaws and "snakes" became good, and with no breaks for the hills the labor of an afternoon was accomplished in the space of two dull and uneventful hours.

"That's the way to cut cattle!" announced Creede, as they turned the discard toward the hills. "Ain't it, Bill?"

"He turned to Johnson who, sitting astride a flea-bitten gray mare that seemed to be in a perpetual doze, looked more like an Apache squaw than a boss cowboy. The old man's clothes were even more ragged than when Hardy had seen him at Bender, his copper-riveted hat was further reinforced by a buckskinned thong around the rim, and his knees were short-stirruped almost up to his elbow by the puny little boy's saddle that he rode, but his fiery eyes were as quick and piercing as ever.

"Shore thing," he said, straightening up jauntily in his saddle, "that's my way! Be'n doin' it fer years, while you boys was killin' horses, but it takes Jeff hyar to see the p'int. Be gentle, boys, be gentle with um–you don't gain nawthin' fer all yer hard ridin'."

He cut off a chew of tobacco and tucked it carefully away in his cheek.

"Jeff hyar," he continued, as the bunch of cowboys began to josh and laugh among themselves, "he comes by his savvy right–his paw was a

smart man before him, and mighty clever to his friend, to boot. Many's the time I hev took little Jeffie down the river and learned him tracks and beavers signs when he was n't knee-high to a grasshopper–hain't I, Jeff? And when I tell him to be gentle with them cows he knows I'm right. I jest want you boys to take notice when you go down into the Pocket to-morrer what kin be done by kindness; and the first man that hollers or puts a rope on my gentle stock, I'll sure make him hard to ketch.

"You hear me, naow," he cried, turning sharply upon Bill Lightfoot, who was getting off something about "Little Jeffie," and then for the first time he saw the face of the new cowboy who had ridden in that afternoon. Not since the day he was drunk at Bender had Bill Johnson set eyes upon the little man to whom he had sworn off, but he recognized him instantly.

"Hello, thar, pardner!" he exclaimed, reining his mare in abruptly. "Whar'd you drop down from?"

"Why howdy do, Mr. Johnson!" answered Hardy, shaking hands, "I'm glad to see you again. Jeff told me he was going down to your ranch to-morrow and I looked to see you then."

Bill Johnson allowed this polite speech to pass over his shoulder without response. Then, drawing Hardy aside, he began to talk confidentially; expounding to the full his system of gentling cattle; launching forth his invective, which was of the pioneer variety, upon the head of all sheepmen; and finally coming around with a jerk to the subject that was uppermost in his mind.

"Say," he said, "I want to ask you a question–are you any relation to the Captain Hardy that I served with over at Fort Apache? Seems's if you look like 'im, only smaller."

His stature was a sore point with Hardy, and especially in connection with his father, but making allowance for Mr. Johnson's way he modestly admitted his ancestry.

"His son, eh!" echoed the old man. "Waal–now! I tell you, boy, I *knowed* you–I knowed you the minute you called down that dog-robber of a barkeeper–and I was half drunk, too. And so you're the new superintendent down at the Dos S, eh? Waal, all I can say is: God help them pore sheepmen if you ever git on their trail. I used to chase Apaches with yore paw, boy!"

It was Bill Johnson's turn to talk that evening and like most solitaries who have not "gone into the silence," he availed himself of a listener with enthusiasm.

Stories of lion hunts and "b'ar fights" fell as trippingly from his lips as the words of a professional monologist, and when he finished his account of the exploits of Captain Samuel Barrows Hardy, even the envious Lightfoot regarded Rufus with a new respect, for there is no higher honor in Arizona than to be the son of an Indian fighter. And when the last man had crawled wearily into his blankets the old hermit still sat by the dying fire poking the charred ends into the flames and holding forth to the young superintendent upon the courage of his sire.

Hardly had the son of his father crept under the edge of Creede's blankets and dropped to sleep before that huge mountain of energy rose up and gave the long yell. The morning was at its blackest, that murky four A.M. darkness which precedes the first glimmer of light; but the day's work had to be done. The shivering horse-wrangler stamped on his boots and struck out down the cañon after the *remuda*, two or three cooks got busy about the fire which roared higher and higher as they piled on the

iron-wood to make coals, and before the sun had more than mounted the southern shoulder of the Four Peaks the long line of horsemen was well on the trail to Hell's Hip Pocket.

The frontier imagination had in no wise overleaped itself in naming this abyss. Even the tribute which Facilis Descensus Vergil paid to the local Roman hell could hardly be said of the Pocket–it is not even easy to get into it. From the top of the divide it looks like a valley submerged in a smoky haze through which the peaks and pinnacles of the lower parks rise up like cathedral spires, pointing solemnly to heaven. As the trail descends through washed-out gulches and "stone-patches," now skating along the backbone of a ridge and now dropping as abruptly into some hollow waterway, the cliffs and pinnacles begin to loom up against the sky; then they seem to close in and block the way, and just as the cañon boxes in to nothing the trail slips into a gash in the face of the cliff where the soft sandstone has crumbled away between two harder strata, and climbs precariously along the somber gloom of the gorge to the bright light of the fair valley beyond.

It is a kind of fairy land, that hidden pocket in the hills, always covered by a mystic haze, for which the Mexicans give it the name *Humada*. Its steep canon comes down from the breast of the most easterly of the Four Peaks, impassable except by the one trail; it passes through the box and there widens out into a beautiful valley, where the grass lies along the hillsides like the tawny mane of a lion, and tender flowers stand untrampled in the rich bottoms. For three miles or more it spreads out between striated cliffs where hawks and eagles make their nests; then once more it closes in, the creek plunges down a narrow gorge and disappears, writhing tortuously on its way to the Salagua whose fire-blasted walls rise in huge bulwarks against the south, dwarfing the near-by cliffs into nothingness by their majestic height.

In the presence of this unearthly beauty and grandeur old Bill Johnson–ex-trapper, ex-soldier, ex-prospector, ex-everything–had dwelt for twenty years, dating from the days when his house was his fortress, and his one desire was to stand off the Apaches until he could find the Lost Dutchman.

Where the valley narrowed down for its final plunge into the gorge the old trapper had built his cabin, its walls laid "square with the world" by sighting on the North Star. When the sun entered the threshold of the western door it was noon, and his watch never ran down. The cabin was built of shaly rocks, squared and laid in mud, like bricks; a tremendous stone chimney stood against the north end and a corral for his burros at the south. Three hounds with bleared eyes and flapping ears, their foreheads wrinkled with age and the anxieties of the hunt, bayed forth a welcome as the cavalcade strung in across the valley; and mild-eyed cattle, standing on the ridges to catch the wind, stared down at them in surprise. Never, even at San Carlos, where the Chiricahua cattle fatten on the best feed in Arizona, had Hardy seen such mountains of beef. Old steers with six and seven rings on their horns hung about the salting places, as if there were no such things as beef drives and slaughter houses in this cruel world, and even when the cowboys spread out like a fan and brought them all in to the cutting grounds there was hardly a calf that bawled.

As the three or four hundred head that made

up his entirely earthly possession drifted obediently in, the old man rode up to Creede and Hardy and waved his hand expansively.

"Thar, boys," he said, "thar's the results of peace and kindness. Nary a critter thar that I heven't scratched between the horns since the day his maw brought him down to the salt lick. I even git Jeff and the boys to brand and earmark 'em fer me, so they won't hev no hard feelin' fer the Old Man. D' ye see that big white-faced steer?" he asked, pointing with pride to the monarch of the herd. "Waal how much ye think he'll weigh?" he demanded, turning to Creede. "Fifteen hundred?"

"Um, more 'n that," responded Creede, squinting his eyes down judicially. "Them Herefords are awful solid when they git big. I reckon he'll run nigh onto seventeen hundred, Bill." He paused and winked furtively at Hardy. "I kin git fifty dollars fer that old boy, jest the way he stands," he said, "and bein' as he can't carry no more weight nohow, I'll jest cut him into the town herd right now and–"

"Hyar!" shouted Johnson, grabbing the cowboy's bridle, "who's doin' this, anyhow?"

"W'y, you, Bill," answered Creede innocently, "but–"

"That's all right, then," said the old man shortly, "you leave that steer along. I'll jest cut this herd to suit myself."

Over at the branding pen the irons were on the fire and the marking was progressing rapidly, but out in the open Mr. Bill Johnson was making slow work of his cut.

"He gets stuck on them cows, like an Irishman with his pig," observed Creede, as the old man turned back a prime four-year-old. "He's rather be barbecued by the Apaches than part with that big white-faced boy. If I owned 'em I'd send down a lot of them big fat brutes and buy doggies; but Bill spends all the money he gits fer booze anyhow, so I reckon it's all right. He generally sends out about twenty runts and roughs, and lets it go at that. Say! You'll have to git a move on, Bill," he shouted, "we want to send that beef cut on ahead!"

The old man reined in his mare and surveyed the big herd critically.

"Waal," he drawled, "I reckon that'll do fer this trip, then. Take 'em along. And the fust one of you punchers that hits one of them critters over the tail with his hondu," he shouted, as the eager horsemen trotted over to start them, "will hev me to lick!"

He placed an order for provisions with Creede, asked him to keep the supplies at Hidden Water until he came over for them with the burros, and turned away contentedly as the cowboys went upon their way.

Down by the branding pen the mother cows licked the blood from their offsprings' mangled ears and mooed resentfully, but the big white-faced steer stood in brutish content on the salting grounds and gazed after the town herd thoughtfully.

A bunch of burros gathered about the doorway of the cabin, snooping for bacon rinds; the hounds leaned their heavy jowls upon his knees and gazed up worshipfully into their master's face; and as the sun dipped down toward the rim of the mighty cliffs that shut him in, the lord of Hell's Hip Pocket broke into the chorus of an ancient song:

"Oh, *o*-ver the prairies, and *o*-ver the mountains
And *o*-ver the prairies, and *o*-ver the mountains
And *o*-ver the prairies, and *o*-ver the mountains
I'll go till I find me a home."

Intimate Knowledge

Wyman Meinzer's photography tells of his close relationship between Texas' landscape and people.

By Paul A. Cañada

As dusk approaches and the day's heat loosens its grip, life returns to the Panhandle tank. A covey of quail cautiously makes its way down to the water's edge. A cardinal lands precariously close to the covey, as if trying to nudge its way into the family conversation. Across the tank, a lone feral hog makes its way down to the water's edge.

Appearing seemingly out of thin air, a single nighthawk swoops down over the water. Gliding just inches above the glass-like surface, the insectivore's mouth gapes open and the bird takes in much needed water from the pond. In its wake, an elongated V disrupts the slick surface.

Tucked away in the heavy brush, unseen and unheard, a hunter utilizes skills that decades of trapping have taught him. Instead of a firearm, the hunter wields the latest Canon, loaded with a 400mm f5.6L lens. The skilled photographer, Wyman Meinzer, has been dutifully appearing at the water hole every evening, documenting the effects the long Texas drought has had on West Texas cattle and wildlife.

photo by Paul Cañada

Texas photographer Wyman Meinzer

Whereas most photographers would spend a day – three at best – to complete such a study, Wyman requires a summer's worth of evenings to complete the task. He shoots for perfection. This dedication to his art and the Texas landscape has earned him national acclaim and statewide recognition. His images have documented life in rural Texas for more than three decades and portray an intimate knowledge of the subject, only obtainable by living the life.

Wyman grew up on a 27,000-acre ranch, 11 miles outside of the Panhandle town of Benjamin, Texas. Established in the 1800s, the League Ranch provided a younger Wyman plenty of opportunities to study wildlife and cowboys, two subjects he holds close to his heart today.

His father, Pate Meinzer, served as the ranch's foreman for 30 years. His mother, Earlene, stayed busy raising Wyman, his brother, Rick, and sister, Patty. The

photo by Wyman Meinzer

Moving the remuda

two boys were best of friends and spent days getting in trouble together. According to Wyman, the two "roped chickens and branded pigs," while getting in and out of the daily binds.

"I grew up totally cowboy," Wyman says. "That was my early background. If I wasn't riding horses, I was hunting."

While breaking broncs and cowboying provided the teen with a financial means, he knew early on that ranching wasn't going be his life's occupation. Wyman had a greater passion for wildlife and West Texas' habitat. While in high school, Wyman made it a goal to attend Texas Tech and study wildlife management. He enrolled in 1969 and graduated five years later.

As an upper-classman, Wyman received a rare undergraduate grant to conduct a food-habit study of coyotes. During the two-year study, his advisor loaned him a 35mm camera for documenting field data. He enjoyed the photography work so much that after returning the camera, Wyman purchased one and embarked on the long and rewarding journey of self-taught photography.

Wyman's time spent in the field alone, quietly and patiently observing, taking notes and photographing, impressed on him the importance of intimate knowledge of a subject.

"A lot of people make the mistake of thinking, because they have the latest digital camera body and a large lens, they're a wildlife photographer," Wyman says. "True, they can now shoot the proverbial poster shot. However, producing the intimate images that give insight into the subject matter requires learning the natural history of the animal and that takes time. You need to really study that animal and its nuances in behavior. Then when you go out to photograph it, you're not just capturing a portrait; you're capturing

photo by Wyman Meinzer

A modern campfire scene

every little activity that defines that species."

After graduating from college, Wyman made the decision to spend his next winter exploring the art of hunting. His plan was to totally immerse himself in hunting and trapping, seven days a week. The experience proved so rewarding, he spent the next five years making a living hunting bobcats and coyotes.

As a 22-year-old, Wyman lived on the Pitchfork Ranch, in a half-dugout shack with no electricity or running water. He took a bath in a No. 2 washtub once a week, before making the trip into town for gasoline, groceries and necessities. The extreme conditions of the Panhandle's winters and summers weren't lessened much in the meager shelter. Yet, Wyman didn't give much thought to his stark living conditions. They sufficed in his endeavor.

"I look back on those years as being some of the more formative years of my life," he says. "Living like that taught me to be independent. I was out there all week long with nobody to talk to. If I made a mistake, there was no one to blame but myself."

While patiently studying and waiting on quarry, Wyman had plenty of time to take in his surroundings. It was on the Pitchfork where he began recognizing and understanding the importance of great natural lighting for photography. Wyman realized he was witnessing Texas as few people ever do and began recording what he saw with his camera.

photo by Wyman Meinzer

Wyman has a passion for photographing West Texas wildlife.
He spent his formative post-college years living in isolation, working as a trapper.

"Coming out of those canyons and seeing that first ray of light on a cold, bitter morning left a lasting impression on me," Wyman says. "I began trying to convey what I saw, the great light and color of the Texas landscape, into my images."

Not only did he continue capturing images of the landscape while trapping, he began investing any expendable income in upgrades to his camera gear. He eventually purchased a Canon F1 and a big lens, and started shooting the interactions between wildlife and habitat. After five years, Wyman gave up trapping for a living, but continued shooting images.

One day, while looking through hunting magazines, he got an idea of how he could apply what he had learned in the field. He knew wildlife behavior and reckoned if he mastered the technical aspects of photography, he might be able to sell wildlife images to magazines. While he hadn't planned on a career as a professional photographer, he set his sights on improving his art.

Wyman developed an early reputation of excellence in the field of wildlife photography. By the 1980s, he was shooting for renowned outdoor magazines such as *Sports & Field*, *Field & Stream* and *Outdoor Life*. Eventually, the young naturalists tired of strictly shooting wildlife and looked for new challenges. He correctly reckoned if he could do well

photo by Wyman Meinzer

Photographing working cowboys is especially meaningful to Wyman, as he spent his childhood on a Texas Panhandle ranch.

at shooting wildlife, he could shoot landscapes, skyscapes and people.

Wyman's natural inquisitiveness and constant self-examination drove him to seek new challenges. The curiosity was probably a product of his youth, a result of adventures with his brother on the League Ranch. However, Wyman credits his years spent in isolation, trapping and hunting on the Pitchfork, for his introspective ways.

"I spent a lot of time thinking and did a lot of self-evaluation," Wyman says. "I learned to appreciate the state of solitude. It taught me to be independent."

When pressed, Wyman will admit he was a little worried when he first started trapping. After spending five years in college, he made the decision to go out and live like a vagabond, trapping coyotes and bobcats for a living. With every passing day, the answer to his initial self-doubt was a resounding, "Yes, you did the right thing."

"When you're younger, you think you need to be more like other people," he says. "As I grow older and look back, I am thankful I chose the route I took. I take great pride in being my own person, with my own opinion. I am proud I work with my hands."

Wyman believes there's much value to be gained from spending time in solitude. He instilled in his own two sons the importance of spending time alone and outdoors when they were young. He placed a great value on finding work they enjoyed doing, working with their

West Texas lightning.

photo by Wyman Meinzer

The morning's work begins with horses being roped from the remuda.

photo by Paul Cañada

Wyman, his wife, Sylinda, and a feline friend, photographed at their home in the Texas Panhandle.

hands, and thinking and living big.

Today, more than ever, people need to be entertained whenever they have a free moment. Wyman believes in some ways this might be what's ailing America.

"Americans are becoming less and less inclined to spend time alone and outdoors," he says. "People are pulling away from rural areas and the work ethic and independence associated with them. It's detrimental to our country. We want our kids to be electronically savvy, but it's equally important for them to have a basic understanding about the land and the life therein."

Today, Wyman and his wife, Sylinda, live on the outskirts of the quiet town of Benjamin, in the rolling hills of West Texas. Most folks passing through town don't blink twice as they speed along Highway 114 and continue on to Lubbock. That suits Wyman fine. As long as he has the Panhandle landscape – rich in history, beauty and wildlife – and a camera, he's content to perfection, like his work.

Amy Hale Auker's Stew

By Kathy McCraine

"I like to make stew," western author Amy Hale Auker writes. "Chop up vegetables, rummage for canned goods with my head stuck in the pantry, brown whatever meat is thawed (or almost), decide for or against rice, pasta, beans. But whatever happens, call it stew, and somebody should make some cornbread."

Like her stew, Amy has plucked ingredients from two decades as a ranch wife, mother and cook in the Texas Panhandle for her new book of essays, *Rightful Place.* At 19, Amy married Nick Auker, a young cowboy who had been promised a camp job on the Pitchfork Ranch. For the next 20 years they would move from ranch to ranch – the big outfits of Texas – and she would cook for the crew. She knew the basics of cooking, but learned mainly by doing, prowling the cookbooks she got as wedding presents. Since beef was usually furnished by the outfit, beef was almost always on the menu.

photos by Kathy Mccraine

Amy Hale Auker

"If your freezer is full of beef, you do everything as cheaply as possible," she says. "I did a lot of enchilada casseroles, lots of roasts and chicken fried steak, rarely steaks, because there aren't that many steaks in a beef. It was a crash course those first

few years: how to get your beef cut, how to fill out your order at the packing house. The best teachers I had were the older women who lived in the camps."

Unable to ride with the crew, and confined to the four walls of a cow camp, Amy found an outlet in writing humorous "ranch wife" stories, which were widely published, but she soon grew dissatisfied with humor. When she met Andy Wilkinson, who was looking for talented writers for the Texas Tech Press, he encouraged her to write more seriously, and she began writing essays.

"One time I wrote this essay while I was feeding the cowboys," she says. "I was up to my eyeballs in beans and potatoes and cooking. I would run to the computer, which was in the laundry room right off the kitchen, and write, write, write, then go back and stir something and chop something, and bake a pie, then go back and write, write, write. By the time I was ready to serve the meal, I had this essay, and I e-mailed it to Andy. I fed all the cowboys, I did all the dishes, and the phone rang. It was Andy."

He said, "That's your voice. Don't touch it. And it's going in your book."

Amy left Nick and Texas in 2007. She met Gail Steiger, who manages the Spider Ranch at Prescott, Arizona, and now she works with him, making day wages and concentrating on her writing when she's not working cows. Her book was published in the spring of 2011, and she has others in the works.

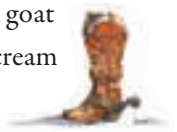
Amy still has fun cooking and grows a vegetable garden right outside the kitchen door – lettuce, tomatoes, corn, squash, eggplant, onions and green beans. When the weather turns cool in the fall, she'll rummage in the freezer for some stew meat, pluck whatever's still growing in the garden, and throw together this stew. Now somebody just needs to make some cornbread.

Amy's Stew

2 pounds stew meat, cut in cubes or slices
Flour for dredging
Salt and pepper to taste
½ cup oil
1 large onion, chopped
4 large carrots, peeled and sliced
4-5 large red potatoes, peeled and cut in cubes
3/4 pound fresh green beans, cut in 2-inch pieces
1 14½-ounce can stewed Italian style tomatoes
1 cup leftover coffee
2 tablespoons brown gravy mix
½ cup water
1 cup red wine
1 bunch fresh spinach

Optional: shredded cheddar, crumbled goat cheese, or sour cream and pickled jalapeños

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Season the meat with salt and pepper and dredge in flour. Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven, and brown the meat in it. Add the onion and continue to brown until onion is wilted. Cut the tomatoes up in the can with a knife and add, along with the carrots, potatoes, and green beans. Add the coffee and enough water to cover the meat and vegetables. Simmer in the oven until tender, about 2 hours, stirring frequently and adding water if necessary. Move the pot to the top of the stove. Dissolve the gravy mix in ½ cup water and add to the stew, along with the red wine and spinach. Bring to a simmer and cook 10-15 minutes more. Top each serving with crumbled goat cheese, shredded cheddar cheese, or sour cream and sliced pickled jalapeños.



Amy Hale Auker's book, *Rightful Place*, is available at www.amyhaleauker.com. Kathy McCraine is a rancher and writer from Prescott, Arizona. Her book, *Cow Country Cooking: Recipes and Tales from Northern Arizona's Historic Ranches*, winner of the Will Rogers Medallion Award, is available at www.kathymccraine.com.

At Top 50 Ranches website, find great ranches where you can experience the wonders of the American West

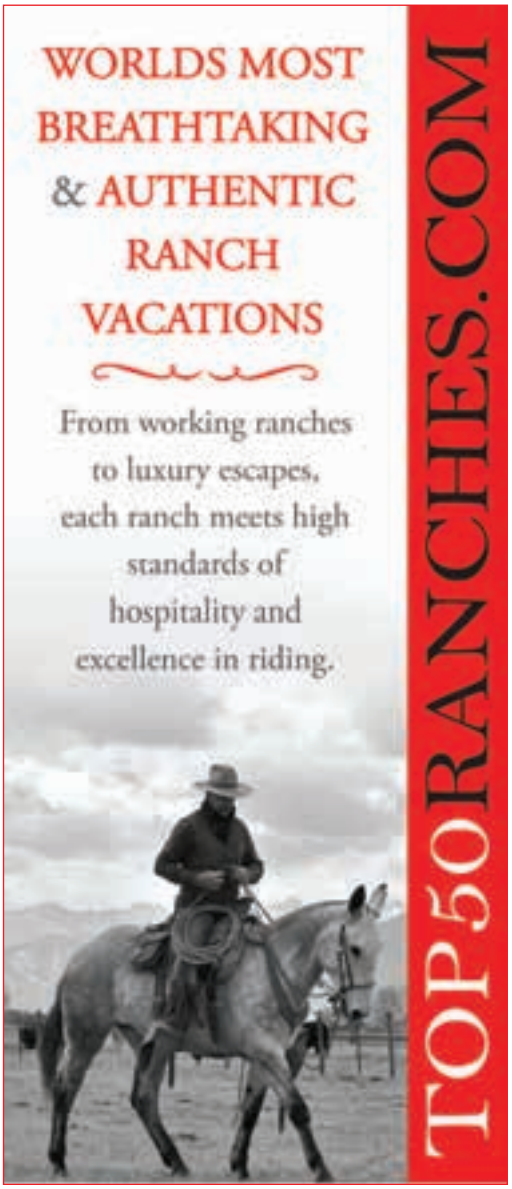
McGinnis Meadows Cattle & Guest Ranch

If you saw 'Buck – The Movie' and were inspired by the renowned horseman's natural methods, a ranch vacation at McGinnis Meadows Cattle & Guest Ranch in Montana will be right up your street. This authentic working cattle ranch's riding program has Buck Brannaman style horsemanship at its core, so whether you've just taken up the reins or you're an experienced rider, you can be sure of leaving the ranch a better rider, with more knowledge about horses, Buck Brannaman style horsemanship, and cattle. Whether you choose to take your own horse or ride one of McGinnis Meadows' responsive, highly-trained ranch horses, guests are invited to take part in daily clinic style Buck Brannaman horsemanship taught by the ranch's skilled wranglers throughout the year. Because McGinnis Meadows is all about detail, you can be sure to be matched with your perfect mount – and your perfect saddle! Comfort is guaranteed thanks to custom-made saddle and tack, using only Slick Fork saddles and snaffle bits with Mecate reins.

Being an authentic working ranch, McGinnis Meadows puts the horsemanship to use offering endless opportunities to work cattle. Either learn to move, sort and cut yearling cattle on the ranch at any time, or experience cattle drives all summer long across 75,000 acres of spectacular country. Beginning the 1st of June through mid October you can choose to experience full days out on summer range helping to move cows and calves to new pastures, re-riding for strays, pushing cattle up to the high country and learning about proper land management.

McGinnis Meadows likes to spend time with each of its guests, meaning you'll receive individual attention. Whether you want clinic style Buck Brannaman horsemanship or cattle working lessons in the arena or out in the meadows, a leisurely ride out to explore the beautiful surrounding country, or a full day of riding on authentic cattle drives, McGinnis Meadows tailors each day to you. Such care is extended throughout everything this ranch does – from the 1st class lodging and family style ranch cooking, to the excellent facilities and sincerity of all its staff. With such care and attention to its guests and true riding standards of excellence, it's no wonder McGinnis Meadows has been selected as one of the Top50 Ranches in the world.

www.top50ranches.com



Reaching for New Stars

By Bill Reynolds

One the West's most attractive qualities is its nurturing of talent and entrepreneurial thinking. It is a place of ideas and people who are passionate about them. And with the advent of the access that social media brings – these creative westerners are only a mouse-click away.

We have seen tremendous growth of both Range Radio and *Ranch & Reata*'s reach through our presence on Facebook. Our Facebook commander, Bruce Pollock, actively posts and responds to the over 60,000 fans who constantly check back to see what's up with Range Radio and this Journal. One need only check back and see the story of the 10 Best Rodeo Songs, earlier in this issue, as it was totally comprised by our Facebook queries. Our mission with all of this is not just to bring to you, dear reader, stories and ideas we have found but to listen and learn from you about great new things coming up, throughout the West. And that means everywhere we can be heard or read – in over 120 countries and all over the U.S.

Gussie

One such story that came through involves the creative writing of one Augusta Keetch, better known as Gus or Gussie. This fifteen-year-old cowgirl hales from Salem, Utah, is a freshman at Spanish Fork High School, is a loyal member of her local FFA chapter and competes in local 4-H Working Ranch Horse classes. Her parents figured she would be good with horses as she has always "crawled all of over them" for most of her life. And this passion for horses and the cowgirl life is something she has always openly and creatively displayed through her writing – expressing her cowgirl thoughts and dreams through poetry. She received her first literary award way back in first grade and has been receiving awards ever since.

Gussie started writing to us through Facebook and was sending her poetry along to see what we thought. What we found was a very talented young lady who can certainly tell a story. Here are a couple examples of her poetry.

These Old Boots

Sixteen inches of crumpled leather, scuffed bottoms,
they look as though they've been through hell and sure got themselves a story to tell.
Each scar has a story, whether it be from trippin' in the rocks, to the brush takin' some knocks.
The big gash over the toe is from the ride up Santaquin,
and the one there on the side, well that was the West Mountain ride.
And that tore up pull loop, apparently runnin' in spurs'll bring ya to a scoot.
And that black there, it's the marks left from a spur's wear.
Those scuffs on these boots didn't come on their own,
they're from a cowgirl wearin 'em as she's growin'.

Cowhorse

There's not too much to be said with words,
but when I look into the eyes of an intelligent cowhorse,
I see quiet force,
with a wisdom hidden inside.
It's just a waitin there for the time to be shown,
when a cow dodges out that's when it'll be known.
You can't sneak by,
without bein caught by his eye.
And there ain't no cow that can slip away,
for he'll charge with speed into the fray.
But the greatest of these is the assurance of knowing when you lose hold,
you've got somethin greater than gold.
You have a trust unbeknown to most.
The trust of a cowboy's cowhorse.

In the world before "digital doings" it would have been difficult for the writings of a young girl out West to make the journey Gussie did through her Facebook posts. It is gratifying that we can help celebrate this young girl's passion for *her* West. There are a great many Gussies out there and we want to help give them a voice. Range Radio has touched so many – all over the world –as they remind us daily that the West and its culture are very much alive and more importantly that its values and traditions are worth protecting.

As always we thank each and every one of you for your continued support – *Ranch & Reata* is a reader supported, subscription based publication. We hope you will tell your friends to subscribe.

—BR

Can You Feel the Rumble?

Hold on to something because it's that time of year again. Tax time!

Not only that but there's a herd of new taxes bearing down on you and you're directly in the path.

That is ...unless you've talked with me. I've got 6 ideas to help defer or lower the taxes on your investment income as well as manage your investment risk.

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