

The Journal of the American West

# Ranch & Reata

Volume 2.5 \$14.95



The Making of *Lonesome Dove*

The Art of Wyoming's *Chessney Sevier*

Texas Horseman *Buster McLaury*

Dean of the Vaqueros, *Ray Ordway*

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## FRONT GATE

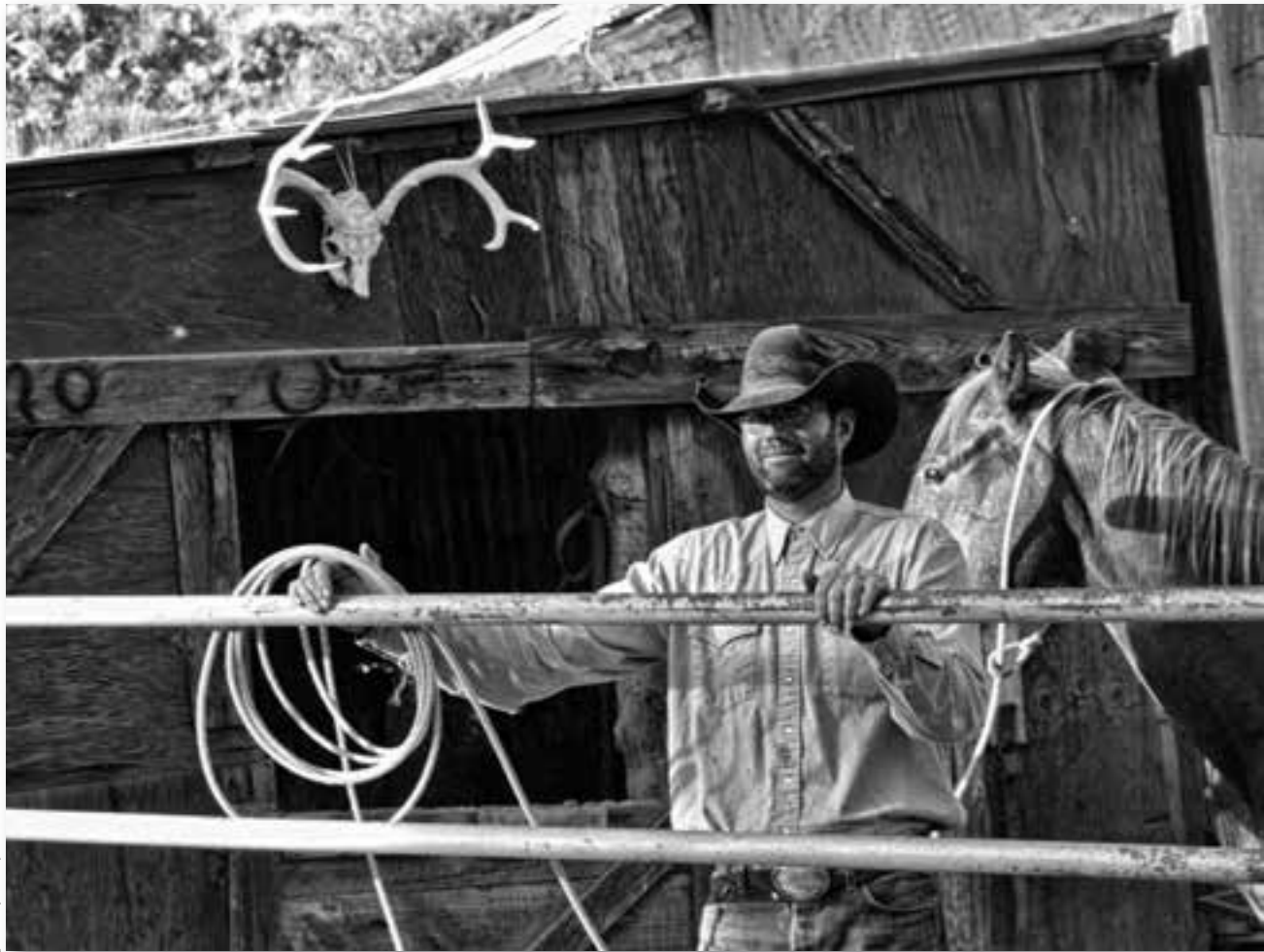


photo by Kathy McCraine

Wes Foote puts his horse away at Francis Creek Camp, O RO Ranch, 2006. Wes was cow boss at the time.

Photo by Kathy McCraine

A young cowboy lopes his colt across a pasture, giving him experience traveling outside the round pen. O RO Ranch, Prescott, Arizona, 2008.

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# Ranch & Reata



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

# Opened Doors

By A.J. Mangum

**B**raidie Butters was driving through Kansas, at the midpoint of a thousand-mile move from Michigan to the Texas Panhandle, when her cell phone rang. One of the young silversmith's mentors, Scott Hardy, was calling from his shop south of Calgary. Braidie listened as Scott discussed educational opportunities in their shared craft.



“At first, I thought Scott was talking about a possible course I could take,” Braidie says. At the time, Scott was president of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association, an organization whose members include some of the world's

---

Braidie has studied bright-cut engraving in TCAA workshops, and plans to learn advanced engraving techniques during her fellowship year.



leading cowboy craftsmen – saddlemakers, rawhide braiders, bit and spur makers, and western silversmiths. It had been Scott who'd encouraged Braidie to participate in the group's engraving workshops, classes where she'd met Idaho silversmith and TCAA member Dave Alderson, now a key influence on her work. As Scott continued to speak, though, he revealed the true purpose of his call: to inform Braidie she'd been selected as the first recipient of a \$12,000 TCAA fellowship.

The group had already awarded more than \$70,000 in scholarships, helping both aspiring and veteran



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photos courtesy Braidie Butters

Silversmith and engraver Braidie Butters is the first recipient of the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association's annual fellowship.

craftsmen cover travel costs and tuition for workshops and one-on-one sessions with TCAA members. To that point, scholarships had been capped at \$500 each, but in the spring of 2012, TCAA unveiled a revised strategy: the creation of an annual fellowship to be given to a craftsman who's progressed past the "workshop phase," and who has the potential to produce work on par with that from the best makers in the business. The fellowship would fund a set of intensive mentoring sessions with TCAA members, with the goal of rapidly advancing both the recipient's work and his or her career.

Braidie learned the fundamentals of her craft from her father, Michigan spur maker Randy Butters, who eventually put his daughter to work making spur-strap buckles, then jewelry. Now in her twenties, Braidie partners with her mother, Brenda, in B&B Sterling, a western jewelry business. New Mexico silversmith Bill Lusk introduced Braidie to bright-cut engraving, a technique she went on to study in TCAA workshops, classes in which her work impressed Alderson, Hardy and Washington silversmith Mark Drain, a TCAA emeritus member. Braidie's artistic talent, interest in continual improvement, and passion for her craft kept her on TCAA's radar. Once plans for the fellowship were in place and talk turned to potential nominees, Braidie's name was among the first mentioned.



Western jewelry is Braidie's primary business. She partners with her mother, Brenda, in B&B Sterling.





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“I’m more than happy to be the ‘guinea pig’ for this program,” Braidie says. “A whole new world of silversmithing knowledge is now within reach. Working with TCAA members one on one, in their shops, will be like being handed a book filled with knowledge and experience, a book I not only get to read, but will be *taught*.”

Braidie hopes to spend her fellowship year further improving her fabrication and engraving skills, and learning more about inlay work and new ways to combine materials.

“I might otherwise spend years trying to figure these things out on my own,” she says. “This has opened doors I otherwise wouldn’t be able to afford to open. I don’t think \$12,000 begins to represent what this fellowship can truly mean for someone.”



A folding knife takes shape in Braidie’s shop.

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*Richard Stearns' Ocher Woman - oil on canvas - 36 x 48 inches*

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## CLASSICS

# The Trophy Buckle



By Paul A. Cañada

As much a symbol of the West as the cowboy hat, the trophy buckle we know today has surprisingly contemporary roots, its connection to the American cowboy only about a century old.

Most 19th century cowboys didn't wear belts, fearing the leather might catch on a saddle horn. The classic western leather belt didn't see widespread use until the mid-1920s to 1930s. According to Richard Rattenbury's *Arena Legacy: The Heritage of American Rodeo* (University of Oklahoma

Press), rodeo champions didn't begin receiving engraved trophy belt buckles as prizes until the early 1900s. Before that, champions were awarded entire belts, modeled after 19th century trophy belts, bearing engraved plaques on the front.

"[The belts] were wide, resembling kidney belts, and were similar to the championship belts given to professional wrestlers and boxers today," says Don Reeves, McCasland Chair of Cowboy Culture at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. "The



Hamley & Co. sponsored this gold and silver belt plate, made by John McCabe Silversmiths and awarded to Fritz Truan, the 1941 Pendleton Round-Up's champion all-around cowboy.

photo courtesy National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum





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This floral-carved, silver-mounted belt, made by Miles City Saddlery, was awarded to Ralph Whitlock, “Best All Around Cowboy” at the Glendive, Montana, Frontier Celebration on the Fourth of July, 1916.



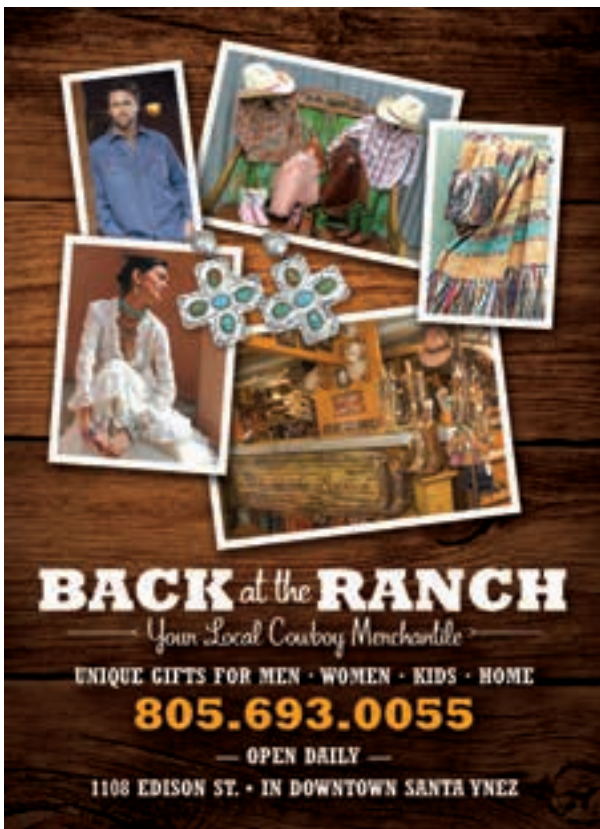
belts, called bronc-riding belts, had large, engraved silver plates on the front. It then evolved from the full belt to just the buckle.”

One of the oldest trophy belts in the National Cowboy Museum marks the transition from trophy belts to simpler inscribed trophy buckles. The belt was won in

1902 by bronc rider Harry Brennan, “Champion Rough Rider of the World.” The solid sterling-silver belt consists of nine linked plates. Eight of the plates are decorated with western scenes and, as with today’s trophy buckles, the ninth and center plate includes the award inscription.

The trophy buckles that followed were formed from either sterling or gold. They were smaller than today’s buckles, square or rectangular in shape, and featured simple engraving. Oval-pattern trophy buckles we’d recognize today began to appear in the 1920s, but the design didn’t become prominent until the mid-1950s. By the 1960s, the trophy buckle’s scale had increased, with the R. Schaezlein Levi Strauss RCA plates reaching the size of a professional boxer’s belt plate. Today’s trophy buckles are of a more practical size, but haven’t lost their style, with sterling ovals, intricate engraving, and rope or bead borders.

“Outside the West, ‘taking home the buckle’ might not mean anything,” Reeves says, “but out here, its significance is unspoken. It defines who a cowboy is.”





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## New and Interesting Things from Out West.

### RAY ORDWAY

*There are many “bridle” horsemen involved in today’s resurgence of California-style training. Eighty-seven-year-old Ray Ordway, however, provides one of the few living ties to the original vaqueros. He walked, talked and lived with the original masters and descendants from a 125-year vaquero family culture. This is his story and about the Morgan horses he rides and loves.*

#### Dean of the Living Vaqueros

By Brenda L. Tippin

The legacy of the California vaquero goes hand-in-hand with the early development of the Morgan breed in the settlement of the West. With origins dating back to the eighth century when the Moors conquered Spain, this legacy became far more than just a style of horsemanship. The vaqueros had tremendous pride in their work and in the equipment they used to finish and train their horses, and this knowledge was carefully guarded and passed on from

father to son, or from one horseman who mentored another as a matter of honor.

The focus of the California vaquero was a natural style of horsemanship built on respect and trust. The vaquero felt he had all the time in the world, and patiently spent years finishing a bridle horse. Development of huge “ranchos” from land grants began in 1784 and continued into the 1840s. Many of these were thousands of acres in size, some even 30,000 to 40,000 acres or more. Work for the vaquero was abundant; his ways were born of necessity, and were a way of life that endured for more than a century.



Ray and Henry

Following World War II, many of these big ranchos were sold; demand for the vaquero skills decreased, and the art would have been lost but for the dedication of a handful of men who learned firsthand from the original vaquero masters, and who sought to place this valuable knowledge in the hands of those who would carry on the traditions of horsemanship and use of the reata to future generations. Vaquero horsemanship has thus experienced a rebirth in the last several years.

Among the last of the true vaqueros, Ray Ordway stands alone as a modern day legend whose lifelong passion has been to preserve these traditions and pass on the great store of knowledge he has gathered, which was passed down through his family for more than 125 years.





The Ordway family came to California in 1870; Ray's father was Ira Ordway. Ira was born in Santa Cruz County, California in 1879. When he was 14, Ira joined his older brothers Ed and Adolph in the cattle business, working on the historic Rancho Jesus Maria cattle ranch in Santa Barbara County, for which they paid him \$5 per month. At that time, the 42,149 acre Rancho Jesus Maria, founded by the Olivera family, was already more than half a century old. One of Ira's first experiences was assisting an old vaquero in a day of calf-branding – to make things easier on his young helper, the old vaquero figure-eighted all 88 calves, never once letting his hondo touch the ground.

Deeply impressed by the expert use of the reata and spade bit, young Ira learned to speak, read, and write Castilian Spanish in order to be able to learn directly from the vaquero masters. This was the legacy Ira passed on to his sons, all four of whom became outstanding California reined horsemen. What follows is a recent conversation with Ray Ordway.

*Your father and uncles started out on the Rancho Jesus Maria, which was where Vandenberg Air Force Base now is. How did they come to move to the northern part of the state?*

**Ray:** Because of the drought in Santa Barbara County, Ed and Adolph moved their cattle to Mendocino County in 1898, driving them all the way. They drove them through San Francisco, ferrying them across the San Francisco bay, ending up in Willits, California. This was a distance of over 400 miles. In 1900, when Dad was 21, he went to work at San Luis for \$40 a month. Lem Castle was the vaquero boss there, and he was the one Dad credited as teaching him the most. They all spent a lifetime at vaquero work, and learned directly from the old vaquero masters who had spent a lifetime at it.

*When and how did you get started as a vaquero?*

**Ray:** My earliest memories of riding were with my father. He would put me on the horse in front of him when they were moving cattle. From then on, my greatest teachers were my father and older brothers, Kent and Oliver. I was riding on my own by the time I was six or seven.

*When did you first hear about Morgans?*

**Ray:** As early as I can remember, Father would talk about Morgans being the best horses. A lot of the ranches had Morgans or part Morgans in their cavvy. Many were probably not registered but could have been...they were at least 3/4 or 7/8 Morgan blood, beautiful horses. The horses Father and my brothers rode were mostly Morgan.

*Did your family have a ranch?*

**Ray:** What my father, my uncles, and my brother Kent did in those days was just lease the land by the acre. It was cheap to do that then, maybe two bits an acre. Then you would start off with a few head of cattle and you were in the cattle business.



Ed Ordway, Ray's uncle, 1st from left.  
Ira Ordway, Ray's father, 4th from left,  
mounted on a Morgan, Willits, CA 1911



Ira Ordway, 24 years old, Buffalo Bill Show



Ira's steer tying horse of Morgan descent,  
Mendocino County, center-fire Stern saddle  
and Spade bit 1910-11



Ollie, Ray, Jack, Ira, Kent and Chinese Cook,  
Vasco Ranch, 1948

photos courtesy Brenda & Trinity Tippin and the Ordway family

*What kind of cattle did the vaqueros have?*

**Ray:** The cattle of the early California vaquero were a Longhorn strain descending from the old Spanish cattle. They were tough wiry animals weighing 700-800 pounds, and they could run fast and hide in the brush. They were all colors of the rainbow. We called them “Streamliners” or “Sport Models.” Before the war, a foreman would get \$75 a month, and a vaquero would get \$60 a month. \$75 was the price of a new Visalia saddle.

*How did the war affect your business?*

**Ray:** Three of us Ordway brothers served in the military during World War II. I was 18 and spent three years in the armed forces, mostly in a training command at Westover airfield in Massachusetts. My younger brother, Jack, wanted to go in the navy; he was stationed on a battleship off Japan, and Oliver was shot down off Guadalcanal and spent several months in the VA hospital. Prior to this, my younger brother Jack and I had accumulated a small herd of cattle which we sold when we joined the military.

*What did you do when you came back from the war?*

**Ray:** After returning home from the war, I went to work for the Jack Ranch in Cholame starting colts. They used Morgan studs and these were some of their colts. I also worked for H.Moffat & Co. and some other cattle companies in the San Joaquin Valley. I was starting colts for nine different outfits and the standard wage for a vaquero after the war was \$150 a month.

*Didn't your brother have a ranch that you managed for a while?*

**Ray:** Yes, Kent and his wife owned the Vasco Ranch in Livermore, California. After he passed away in 1954, I managed the ranch for a couple of years, and eventually started up my own cattle business, leasing the land for \$3.25 an acre. The price kept going up; went up to \$11 an acre and then \$18 so it was no longer profitable. After that I worked from daylight to dark, first for \$8, then \$10 a day for various ranches and starting colts.

*What age were the colts you started?*

**Ray:** I started a lot of four- and five-year olds. The vaqueros did not like to start them too young because a colt does not get all his teeth until he is seven-years-old, and a mare by six. This is good for Morgans too, because they are a slow maturing horse.

*What other Morgans do you remember?*

**Ray:** I started three nice registered Morgan colts, a brown, a black, and black chestnut/flaxen for the Potter Estate at El Nido. The brown colt was exceptional, he acted like he already knew what was expected of him. After about the third time I rode him, some men in big hats drove by



Charlie, a Longhorn steer, Harris Ranch, 1971 head and horns now mounted in bar of Harris Ranch restaurant, Coalinga, CA



Ray, Kent and Jack Ordway, Merced CA 1950



Kent Ordway and best bridle horse Keno, sired by one of Hill's Morgans, Oak Flat Ranch





and proceeded to stare at this colt. They bought him from the estate. This turned out to be Bruce Harrington of New Hall Cattle Company, and he wanted this colt for his own personal horse.

*What other ranches did you know of that had Morgans?*

Ray: Most of the ranches I worked on had Morgans or part Morgans. There was the Jack Ranch, which started in the 1880s. H. Moffat & Company, where I worked after the war, bought 30 head of good Morgan yearlings from the Bixby Ranch. There was also the Ingomar Ranch, Division of H. Moffat & Company in Gustine – these colts had Morgan sires and the dams were part Morgan. A lot of good Morgans were never registered and became absorbed into the Quarter Horse breed because that became popular and everybody wanted in on the dollar.

*Why did the vaqueros like Morgans?*

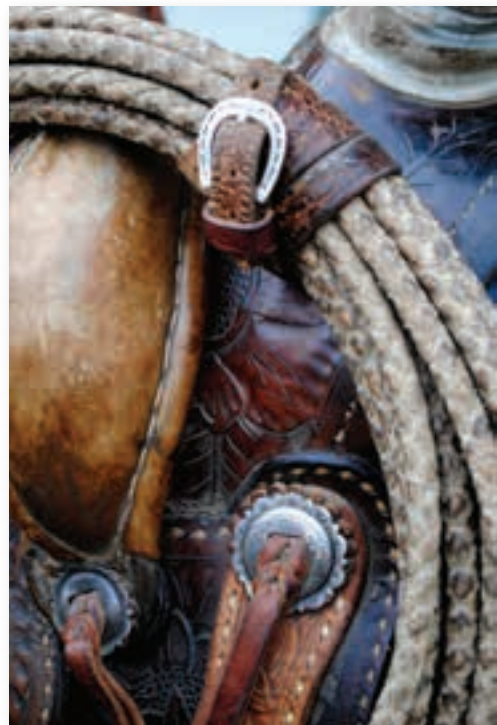
Ray: Morgans had a good back for the type of saddle they rode. As Russell Hill would say, ‘They’ve got a place for a saddle.’ The Morgan horse was very smart, quick-learning, gentle and enduring, and most were not bad buckers. A Morgan will stand for no roughness, so the vaquero style of training worked extremely well for them. The vaqueros also liked the Morgans because of their strong resemblance in both appearance and character to the old Spanish horses; I think they both went back to Barb ancestors. A sport horse type Morgan is an ideal stock horse for the Vaquero. Many of the Morgans in the early days were used for long distance and stagecoach work; these were all very useable horses, level headed with common sense and good dispositions. They had good lines, good action and were straight gaited, up headed, uphill horses, crackerjacks. The best horses all had some Morgan blood in them.

*Who else did you know that liked the Morgans and had an impact on the vaquero traditions?*

Ray: Arnold Rojas. I met Rojas through Buster Clark and Russell Hill. This was in the early ‘70s, Rojas was selling his books. He wrote many of the old vaquero stories and their history in his books, and he wrote about the Hills and some of the early Morgans in California even before Roland Hill started bringing them out in the 1920s. I credit Rojas with saving the spade bit; right after the war the Humane Society was about to outlaw it because a lot of people misunderstood it, misused it. What you look for is if the horse likes the bit, he will have a relaxed mouth. When a person is uptight, their mouth tightens. A horse is the same way. Actually, the bigger the spade, the less severe it is. The spade was not intended to be a leverage bit, but to signal the horse, and the difference is in good seat and hands. The spade gives the horse something to hold onto and keeps them relaxed – I’ve seen them take the spade and hold onto it even without a headstall.



Jesse Wilkinson – Morgan horse –  
Chimeneas Ranch 1934



Silver reata horseshoe buckle and engraved silver concho on Ray’s saddle

*Who were best makers of old vaquero equipment?*

**Ray:** Visalia Stock Saddle Company – they were called Walker Saddles and Olsen Nolte Saddle Company. For bits, my father used Stern’s in San Jose – Roland Hill used these too. When Roland would hire a new vaquero he would say, “If you are going to ride my horse, you use my bit.” He had about a hundred of these bits locked in his trunk. Russell only had a couple different bits – he said the difference is in the hands holding the reins.



Some of Ray’s hackamore bosals

*Tell us about the Morgan you have now and how you came to buy him.*

**Ray:** His registered name is HMSTD Shuda Bin A Cowboy, bred by Janine Welsh of British Columbia. I call him ‘Henry.’ A lady brought this colt from Canada, then decided to sell the horse as she didn’t really have time for him. Her vet was a friend of mine and knew he was just what I was looking for.



Ray and Henry

*Where is Henry in his training?*

**Ray:** Henry just needs work. The very early vaqueros would start a colt out directly in the hackamore. Since the 1930s, they introduce the snaffle bit first. I use a smooth, straight iron snaffle. Iron makes the saliva flow and keeps the mouth soft. You work a young horse about three times with just the snaffle, and then the snaffle over the hackamore. Next, you work him in just the hackamore until he is collected and gathered. Henry is in the hackamore now. I only put shoes on his back feet because keeping him barefoot in front will help him to gather. He will be ridden in the hackamore until he is ready for the double rein. Then he will go from the double rein into the bridle.

*How do you know when the horse is ready for the next phase of training?*

**Ray:** He tells you. Each horse has their differences – even full brothers can be very different in disposition. He will get bored if you keep him back when he is ready to move along, but you have to be sensitive to understand what he is telling you. The horse is figuring you out just as fast as you are figuring him out, so just use plain common sense.



Henry’s saddle, modified five-eighths rigging

*If you wanted to breed and raise a Morgan to train for a bridle horse, what would you look for in the sire and dam, in those bloodlines?*

**Ray:** I would look for action, ability to gather himself. I would want a horse that stands square and balanced, head up, good withers. A horse with a nice croup or rump, will be able to get his hind feet under him. I would look for a big honest eye, and willing disposition.

*What is the difference between the “center-fire” and the “double-rig” or “rim-fire” type of saddle?*

**Ray:** The Morgan horse has the ideal back for the center-fire, which the old vaqueros liked. The center-fire has a single cinch at the midpoint between the fork and cantle. This saddle sits up on the horse’s withers





and the rider's weight is more balanced, and allows the horse freedom of movement at the shoulders. It needs to be adjusted often, but this helps the horse's back not to get sore. The double-rig sits back off the withers and has a double cinch; it was used by the cowboys east of the Rockies who preferred the hard and fast style of roping. The rim-fire would stay in place better.

*What are the main differences between the vaquero and the regular cowboy style of training?*

**Ray:** The vaquero uses scientific finesse and will patiently work with the horse for as long as it takes to finish him. Gather is the same as collection in dressage. You must learn to gather your reins. Prepare and execute, so the horse knows what is coming. Good hands are very important.

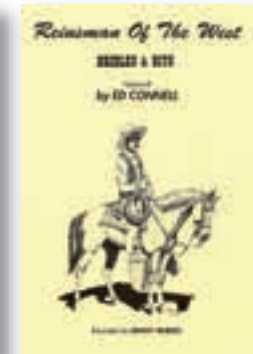
When you ride, the horse balances you. The horse will always try to stay under you if you lean. When he wants to buck, his goal is to unbalance you. The cowboy influence came more from Texas, or east of the Rockies, while the vaquero influence came into California through the Spaniards and was centered west of the Rockies. These were two completely different cultures, different equipment, and different methods. For example, in cutting, it boils down to Texas style being done on a loose rein, and California style being done bridled up. The Texas style of turn is done with heavy emphasis on the horse's front end. California style trained horses stop straighter, are more level, and at the turn they lift their bodies up. Texas style has the horse's front end very low and it remains there.



Ed Connell, author of *Hackamore Reinsman* and *Reinsman of the West*



*Hackamore Reinsman* by Ed Connell, illustrated by Randy Steffen



*Reinsman of the West* by Ed Connell, illustrated by Ernie Morris

*Can you think of any recent Morgans that really impressed you?*

**Ray:** One of the nicest stock horse types I've ever seen was the Morgan stallion Jo Johnson recently lost, Can Don Joshua Danny. This was just a beautiful horse and he worked straight up in the bridle. I would consider him an ideal old style vaquero horse and excellent example of the Morgan stock horse.

Quiet, unassuming, and with infinite patience when it comes to a horse, Ray Ordway characterizes all that the term "vaquero" stands for in a way few living men can. He is, or has been, mentor and/or close confidante of some of the greatest names in western horsemanship. Ed Connell, the first man who painstakingly wrote down the details of vaquero training methods and published several books on it, used to work for Ray's brother Kent. Ray was a friend of Arnold Rojas, one of the old school vaqueros who managed also to become a widely acclaimed Latino author in spite of having less than a third grade education, and whose books include many forgotten details on the Hill family and early California Morgans.

At eighty-seven years young, Ray still rides, ropes with the reata, and is patiently developing his own young Morgan to become a bridle horse. He has become widely respected as one of the very best of the true vaqueros of the last century.



Ray Ordway

## THE GREAT SALT LICK ADVENTURE

By Lynn Miller

photos by Kristi Gilman-Miller

“No man is worth his salt who is not ready at all times to risk his wellbeing, to risk his body, to risk his life, in a great cause.” – Theodore Roosevelt

### What follows by way of preface is fiction:

*Imagine with me: The mottled and arguing old Datsun pickup slinks along side the back boundary fence its driver peering intently for telltale browned forest-floor cul-de-sacs the center of which might contain great treasure. Might. Usually in the vicinity of a water source, often near gating, he searches for odd rumped shapes he appreciates solely for their monetary value. He cannot see the higher value some would place on these ranching artifacts, a higher value born of a marriage of humor, practicality, aesthetics, and exclusivity. Let's call this fictitious salt lick rustler Grover, just 'cuz the name sort of fits. He's not a bad man. He's a natural born comedian, one that instinctively appreciates moments of obscure cultural opportunity – moments when you can just about hear the folks saying “come on, join us, take this curious little community adventure in new directions, make it yours, all bets are off.” And prize money to boot! Fiction, remember, just something imagined from a thread of evidence.*

*Imagine with me again: On the feedstore bulletin board a handmade poster with a picture of a much-licked salt block. The poster asks “Lost salt lick. Has anybody seen my trace mineral salt block (last photographed August 29)? Disappeared between 4 and 5 pm on August 30 from near my water tank at the southeast corner of the summer pasture. Been turning it over every day so I know when it ‘disappeared.’ Any information leading to its discovery will be rewarded. I’ll give three new blocks for it if I can get it back – no questions asked. If it turns up at the Great Salt Lick you’ll be in big trouble! You know who you are. I want my block back, you bum.”*

*Imagine again with me that inside an old abandoned garage out on the edge of Baker City a woman who might be called Sheila operates a pressure washer, working to create new curvilinear indentural shapes into a new livestock salt block, to make of the perfect cube a bubbly lump of surprises. She giggles thinking to herself “those yahoos will never be able to figure out that this one is a fraud, looks like three Charolais bulls stared each other down for a month as they licked on it.” Sheila's actually drawn to do this for the cause. Helping in a small way to fund Parkinson's disease research is something she gladly risks her artistic reputation on as she gleefully forges another counterfeit salt lick.*

### What's this about? What follows is fact.

I've been ranching now for over forty years, that's a good long while and it has solidified for me that the more things change the more they stay the same. Unless some rancher decides... When I first studied bovine genetics with ABS in the early seventies, the shape of cattle ranching seemed to be well set in its modernist form, what with artificial insemination, embryo transplants, terminal crosses, advanced rangeland management practices, yield and cutability targets, calving ease, and mineral requirements. On the horizon would come those appropriate technology additions that would alter hand-tools, fencing systems and take us from stock trucks and slide-in pickup racks to the now ubiquitous gooseneck stock trailers. The cowboy stuff, though







reinforced by regular revisits, was off in the romantic periphery of the business of cattle raising. If you were looking to get a ranch hand job you had a better chance if you knew how to run haying equipment, nitrogen tanks, and breeding charts than if you were a passable heeler. Big and middling' money was getting back into ranching and the bottom line was everything. We then had salt blocks which were beginning to incorporate trace



minerals. These brought with them on-going discussions about whether or not free-choice mineral access was better for cattle. Convenience in many cases won out and the salt block quickly became pervasive. We've all come to take them for granted, these hard heavy near-cubes with their locator holes indented in the bottom. Be honest now, have you ever given a nearly-done salt block a second glance? Around Baker City, Oregon they do, and with several good reasons. In that ranching and mining town, every fall for six years now, ranchers go out to pastures to gather what they think are their most 'attractive' nearly done salt blocks for the Great Salt Lick Contest and Auction. This is not a joke. This is for real and for good; people actually auctioning off the sad remains of old cattle salt licks. Results? Consequences? Baker City has found a humorous and righteous way to bring community together and honor its heritage while contributing to a most worthy cause.

In most parts of ranching country folks don't worry about someone stealing the remains of old salt licks. They can't imagine why anyone would want to. And the idea of forging a phony weak end to a salt lick is positively preposterous. In one darn sure western part of Oregon this is something which has changed in a big way and all because of one man. Whit did it. Whit Deschner of Sparta Butte Ranch. It was his epiphany, his vision, his sardonic sense of justice and elegance, his desire to turn a common oddity into an event that provided a feel-good way for his community to come together and contribute to a worthy cause.

Baker City, Oregon, is cattle country. If you were to triangulate from Pendleton to John Day to Baker City, apologies to the great southeast of Oregon, you would find yourself in the heart of the inland empire of this rich and varied state. Mining, forestry, wildlife and ranching abound. The Snake River Canyon, the forges and easels of the great Wallowa communities of Joseph and Enterprise, the gold mines at Sumpter and Granite, the fisheries – elk – deer and yes the dangerous wolves, the deeply etched native American traditions and history vibrating each year at the Roundup's Happy Canyon, the Chinese tragedy of the Lilly White Mine, the long loop traditions of Jordan Valley and the Owyhee tribal cowboys, Powder River, sagebrush, mountains and pine – it goes all in a swirl to make up this region, old and young all at once.

Out east of Baker City a bit is the remote community of Sparta. Whit Deschner lives there on his spread, Sparta Butte Ranch. Ask around Baker City about that "salt lick guy" and you'll discover that this town is mighty fond of Mr.

Deschner – they speak of him as brilliant, funny, caring, quirky all with tones that say this guy belongs to us, he is “us.” Quite a testament but well-earned. Whit has Parkinsons. When we met last September he answered my question “What is this Great Salt Lick Auction business? How’d it start? What is it about?”

“I’ve always seen salt licks, hiking the rangelands, and I’ve wondered why this one, what makes this rare or special? I was sitting out at a cabin by the Lilly White Mine with a friend admiring the shape of a salt lick the deer had worked on and I began thinking that it sure beat some of the sculptures in parks and in front of buildings. You know the ones – the boulders with a chip knocked out of them masquerading as art that some artist has been paid a six-figure sum for.



Not only were the animals creating these blocks not getting paid, but they were being eaten. In any case the idea of a contest formed and one thing led to another...”

Way back 6 years ago and Whit took this idea to a friend who owned the local coffee shop. Deschner said “What if we gathered up a bunch of donated tired salt licks and auctioned them off as art objects – to the highest bidder. Then we took that money and gave it to Oregon Health and Science University/Movement Disorder Clinic for their Parkinson’s research?” His friend thought he was nuts. (Over time that same friend has become a prime sponsor and volunteer.) Whit made the rounds to local businesses until he got folks hooked on his idea. Money was donated for prizes and ranchers were contacted and invited to submit their “best” salt licks. That was 6 years ago. Whit roped in his neighbor, Nib Daley, a self-made auctioneer and local cowboy comedian, to call the sales events. At that premiere event 29 salt blocks were entered and the first one sold, under the auctioneer’s gavel, for \$129!

Over the years, with increased volunteer help and clever added aspects, the event has evolved into Baker City’s own iconic signature event, one with a growing worldwide notoriety. The posters say it all, *The Great Salt Lick, Baker City, Oregon*. Blocks have come from as far away as Las Vegas, and even included a salt block from Germany (submitted in photographic form).

This is the way it works now; Ranchers bring in salt blocks, with suitable entry forms filled out indicating what animals licked the block (i.e. cattle, horses, sheep, deer, elk, guinea pigs etc.) and a hand-writ poem commemorating the block. These are taken to the local feed store where the ranchers get a new one in trade (thanks to sponsorship support). Beautiful pine boxes, each just the right size for one salt block, are made by the prison and delivered mid-September to the auction volunteers. The local FFA is given advance notice to have one highly particular bovine heifer prepped for special duty sale night. The entered blocks are then “high-graded” to select the best ones for the oral auction (others get relegated to the silent auction). Whit designs interesting posters that get put up all over town. Sale night the winners are announced, poems read or sung, and the auction begins. Whit reserves the right to have the winning licks taken to the local Blue Mountain Fine Arts foundry, there bronzes are made for private sale the subsequent year. The winners get cash awards *plus* the bragging rights. All the auction proceeds go to the Parkinson’s Research Fund at OHSU in Portland, Oregon.

Last year, 2011, the high selling block went for \$525. Not including this year’s event, the total generated for OSHU has come to more than \$30,000.





I asked Whit “What goes into the process of deciding what is a high-grade salt lick.”

His answer, “Its like pornography, you know it when you see it.” Local ranchers in committee are the judges, one year the county agents did the duty. “It draws the whole community together. The ranchers come to town for this when they wouldn’t ordinarily come in for art functions, even if it was for paintings of cows and horses.”

I asked him, “Do the same ranchers come back each year with blocks, any new faces?”

Whit answered “Maybe ten to twenty percent turnover. Its become a competitive thing, they are competing against each other. We’re beginning to see them steal each other’s blocks. And there is a forgery division.”

“You mean to tell me people are actually going to the trouble to create a phony salt lick?”

“Yes, but we can usually tell which ones they are. We put those in their own division. We have a best song division too. We also have an award for the one which most looks like Michael J. Fox. I did Janet Reno one year. She was really nice and asked for a picture. I think, (when she saw the picture of the salt block) I might have insulted her.”

“Is it a point of pride for the ranchers to have the best block?”

“I think so.”

“Are there those that swear that a Charolais does a better lick?”

“Last night we learned from an Angus breeder that the Angus do a better block. This year we are doing a song contest, there is an Italian family here whose son sings opera. He’s going to sing the competitor’s poems to old standard tunes like ‘Sweet Betsy from Pike’ and ‘Yankee Doodle Dandy’”.

“How do you deal with the case of a tie?”

“The FFA kids bring in their heifer to break any ties. We put a block on each side of the heifer and the one she turns to lick is the winner.”

I had to ask, “Would you be able to tell if I had coated mine in molasses?” The look on Whit’s face told me I had inadvertently given him a new idea.

“So, Whit, where would you like to see this going next?”

“I would like to see giant bronze salt blocks up and down Baker City’s main street. I think it would be a wonderful draw – if it was right shape and large enough it might even double as a skate park. The library has always wanted a sculpture there, we’re trying to raise the funds for that. I went before the city council and they are all for it but when it came to the high cost of the bronze casting... they took it with a grain of salt.”

I love stories like this, they come at you like molasses-coated hope.

For more information and a look at all the past winners visit [www.whitdeschner.com](http://www.whitdeschner.com)

Writer and artist Lynn Miller does all sorts of things, many worthwhile, like publishing the venerable *Small Farmers Journal*.

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## HANNAH BALLANTYNE LEATHER

Hannah Ballantyne is a young college student who builds custom designed armitas and chinks from her home in Bozeman, MT. Having grown up and worked on ranches around the country she is pleased to provide folks with well made “leggings” that last and look good also!

Of her new venture, Hannah reports, “I was privileged to spend a summer working with saddle maker Matt Moran who taught me a great deal about leather work and inspired me to start my own business. Hannah can be reached through her Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/HBallantyneLeather](http://www.facebook.com/HBallantyneLeather)



## ROBERT DAWSON

Our spectacular cover image was created by Robert Dawson. The photographer’s romance with the west started as a young boy growing up in Texas and has taken him to photograph some of the most beautiful and wildest places in America. His talent in working with natural light and composition are sought out by major clients wishing to capture a unique angle of the West that will compliment their advertising campaigns. Along with having six coffee table books published showcasing his work, Dawson is one of the top selling artists for The Ashton Co. with over eighty images produced as high quality lithographic prints. See more of Robert’s work at [www.dawsonphotography.com](http://www.dawsonphotography.com)





## BURNS SADDLERY EXPANDS



Burns Saddlery headquartered in Salina Utah is the oldest same family owned western retail business in the world and has opened its newest location in Lehi, Utah. Miles Lamonie Burns founded Burns in 1876. “Moan” was a cowboy, fine leather craftsman, blacksmith, musician, husband, father, and visionary. His dream of settling a territory in Utah started in Nephi and ended up at the gateway of Capital Reef near Torrey where he opened the first Burns retail shop in the spring of 1876.

In its 136 years, Burns has had six different shop names, six generations of ownership, one family, one legacy, and above all, one culture: COWBOY. Burns has locations in Salina Utah, Park City Utah, Carmel by-the-Sea California, and now their newest location, Lehi Utah. Generations five and six along with

many talented team members continue the Burns cowboy legacy, with multiple operations including four retail stores, three mobile units, and two manufacturing facilities that build custom saddles and quality hats from the ground up.



Generation five owners, Scott and Danna Burns- Shaw, expanded the business 20 years ago when they hauled product on the road, setting up and selling at equestrian events. The business soon grew to three rigs hauling from California to Texas, representing Burns Saddlery at world-class horse events.

Sixth-generation owner, Braydan Shaw, expanded the business in many new directions; adding multiple websites, improving and developing better overall systems, setting up, designing, remodeling store fronts, and establishing and improving the Burns manufacturing plants. Braydan and his family recently re-located to Park City Utah to work on expanding the business with Braydan’s parents Scott and Danna Shaw.

Danna is unabashedly proud of the family’s legacy in serving the needs of westerners. “The cowboy,” she relates, “is an American icon: fearless, overworked, underpaid, and revered worldwide for his vision, determination, honesty, and cool ruggedness. The cowboy seeks fertile soil, flowing streams, a good horse, quality equipment, and a place to hang a hat after a long day of outside adventure.”

The new Burns Saddlery in Lehi will feature Burns-Made custom-made saddles, handmade custom cowboy boots, custom cowboy hats, with a large selection of high quality tack, customized hat fitting, and quality clothing and accessories. The staff includes master hatters, experts in saddle fitting, and boot professionals. [www.burnssaddlery.com](http://www.burnssaddlery.com) or [www.burnscowboyshop.com](http://www.burnscowboyshop.com). Call 1-800-453-1281.



## BOOKARC STAND FOR IPAD



Many of our readers subscribe just to the online version of *Ranch & Reata*. Here's a very cool reading solution for the iPad – for many the web weapon of choice. The BookArc Stand is a beautiful slice of heavy gauge steel that provides a perfect perch for the latest stroke of genius from Apple. BookArc for iPad uses a soft silicone, reversible insert to hold iPad in four different positions – four positions that let you use your iPad just the way you want to. [www.twelvesouth.com](http://www.twelvesouth.com)

## LINDA MUTTI ART

Award-winning California artist Linda Mutti grew up with a love for horses and the West. For most of her adult life she showed quarter horses and they are still a passion which is revealed in Linda's detailed graphite drawings. "My drawings and paintings are inspired by the team spirit of the cowboy and his horse. That relationship is a joy to experience and interpret in my art." In addition to graphite, Linda works in pastels and oils. Contact her at [mutti4art@aol.com](mailto:mutti4art@aol.com)



## SWEETBIRD STUDIOS

Nancy Anderson creates mind-blowing jewelry and buckles at her Colorado Sweetbird Studio.

This one features the simple truth that "every girl needs a pony" on sterling silver, of course.



[www.sweetbirdstudio.com](http://www.sweetbirdstudio.com)



## RANCH ROMANCES

*Ranch Romances*, by far the most successful of the western romance pulps, enjoyed a 47-year run with over 860 issues published from September 1924 through November 1971. Here's a little graphic that appeared in an issue about "why gals want cowboys." Hello – of course they do. Who wants a guy in a top hat?







## EMPTY SADDLE

David Rubin  
1959 - 2012



This past November, the *Ranch & Reata/Range Radio/Roadhouse* family lost one of its own. David Rubin was more than a colleague, he was a dear friend. A true force of nature, his energy lifted all us to do our best. He was a fine man, husband and father. His passing has left a hole in our hearts. *Vaya con Dias*.

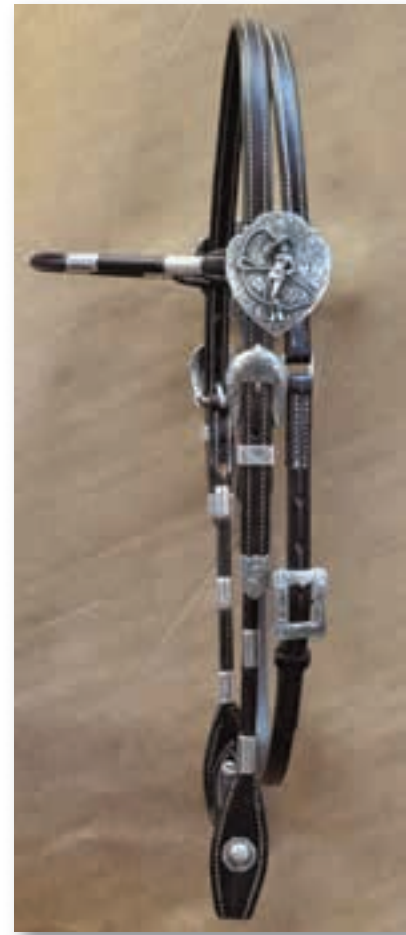
## PENDLETON 1910

In our Cowboy Wish List last issue, we put the wrong bottle of Pendleton Whisky in. One might ask, "How can there BE a wrong bottle of Pendleton?" A question for the ages. Anyway, here's the correct one along with a mouth watering description of its contents. Pendleton 1910 is a rare 100% rye whisky distilled in Canada and is oak barrel-aged a minimum of 12 years. With rich notes of tobacco, charred oak, butterscotch and a peppery kick, Pendleton 1910 is rounded out by the smoothness of maple and sweet cherry to provide a balanced yet flavorful blend. Yeah, baby. Proudly served at Ranch & Reata Roadhouse. [www.pendletonwhisky.com](http://www.pendletonwhisky.com)



## HEAVENLY HEADSTALL

Saddler Doug Cox has made some exquisite headstalls during his long career. He is now doing some in conjunction with Old Cowdogs silver. Here's a nice one that will stand the gaff. [www.dougcoxcustomsaddles.com](http://www.dougcoxcustomsaddles.com)



## THE REST OF THE STORY: LAST ISSUE'S COVER COVER

Last issue's cover featured an incredible saddle made by TCAA member, Rick Bean. But all we gave you was the cantle. So many people wanted to see the rest of the saddle – here t'is. [www.tcowboyarts.org](http://www.tcowboyarts.org)



## HAMLEY'S

*“Quality articles are made for men who are tired of the extravagance of buying cheap things.”*



photos by Heather Pearce



cash, bound for Ashton, South Dakota, where they established Hamley and Co. After three successful years, regional crop failures and depression forced



them to relocate and they move west to Idaho. Henry Hamley passed away in 1894 and in 1905 J.J. Hamley relocated to Pendleton, Oregon and set up shop on the Oregon Trail – in the same building that exists to this day. Hamley was first known as a harness and saddle maker, but the business soon developed around its saddles and became known throughout the west as the maker of “the finest saddles man could ride.”

The family kept at it until through series of sales, during the 1980s, the business struggled. Enter Parley Pearce

In the world of cowboy saddles, a “Hamley” has always been held in regard as a true, quality “using” saddle. The word “using” in this case is true to its most basic definition as Hamley saddles were used by men who rode – all day, all week, all year. And the Hamley history is equally based on hard, dedicated work.

The Hamley family history goes back many generations to Cornwall England, where the trade of saddle and leather craftsmanship had been passed down through many generations of Hamleys. The American history of the Hamleys began in 1850 when William Hamley moved his family from England to Rupon, Wisconsin, where he opened a small leather goods store. William’s two sons, John James (J.J.) and Henry Hamley set out from Wisconsin in 1883 with two railroad tickets and \$10.00 in







and Blair Woodfield, two men who loved the Hamley history and became interested in the failing business. Both men had grown up on cattle ranches and were intimately familiar with Hamley cowboy gear. Visiting the Hamley store was considered a special event. They were both aware of the quality and tradition represented by the Hamley name. They acquired the building, business, trademark rights and the Hamley name, all in separate deals, which finally allowed Hamley and Co. to once again operate as in days gone by. With pride, they began the resurrection of this great western icon.

Pearce and Woodfield oversaw the dramatic renovation of the building that brought to life aspects of Hamley and Co. from 1905, mixed with the new look of Hamley and Co. in the 1950s. After six months of construction, the company reopened in September 2005, one week before Round Up and just in time to celebrate the “first century” of Hamley and Co. in Pendleton, Oregon. Today, Hamley and Co. continues its tradition of creating fine using gear – along with the addition of the Hamley Steakhouse which opened in 2007 which includes the Slickfork Saloon. The next time you’re in Pendleton, Oregon, stop by. [www.hamleyco.com](http://www.hamleyco.com); [www.hamleysteakhouse.com](http://www.hamleysteakhouse.com)



## MONTANA DREAM

Chimney Rock Ranch is like no other, 10,605± contiguous deeded acres and 1,465± leased acres spread below the Absaroka and Crazy Mountain Ranges with approximately 30± miles of riding trails winding throughout the Ranch. A beautiful main home with views framing the expansive Ranch overlooks the equestrian center, stables, pastures and other improvements. There is excellent, live-water trout fishing along 5± private miles of Lower Deer Creek and 7± miles of National Forest boundary provides access to thousands of additional recreational acreage. Chimney Rock Ranch is found 30± minutes south of Big Timber, Montana and within a 90-minute drive of Bozeman, Montana providing amenities and a commercial airport. \$22,500,000 For information contact Fay Ranches, [www.rayranches.com](http://www.rayranches.com)



## A MESSAGE FROM MONTANA

Our resident fillet artist, Teal Blake is “wintering” in Montana and sent this new painting along just for the mule lovers out there. [www.tealblake.com](http://www.tealblake.com)



## WHIPPING POST

Ryan Barr describes himself as a “failed musician who worked some crap jobs” before he learned to work leather and build a case for his Gibson “Hummingbird.” He now makes a variety of extremely cool leather things. Limited production means he touches it all, a good thing. Cases, guitar straps and a fine messenger bag, among other things await you at [www.whippingpost.com](http://www.whippingpost.com). True to his musical passion, his dog is named Banjo.



30

## 120 SONGS

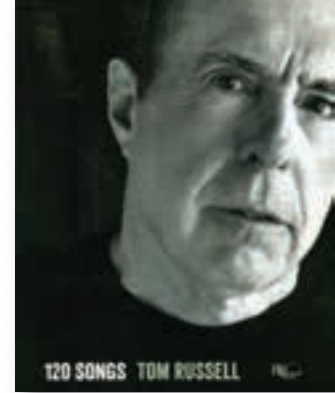
By Tom Russell

Readers of this publication and lovers of great western music know the work of Tom Russell. Over the years Tom has created a diverse volume of work – music, writings, art and films. We figured we would let him tell you about it.

“I’ve been working on this songbook for a few years (with compiling help from Peter O’Brien and Steve Toner.) There are 120 songs included, with guitar chords and stories about each song. I included some of my original woodcuts. I also wrote an opening essay about my years in the song business, and my early run-ins with Bob Dylan and the Beatles

– and co-writing with folks like Ian Tyson, Dave Alvin, Bob Neuwirth, and Katy Moffatt and others. There are also some rare lyrics included. I think you folks will like it...it’s not just a songbook, it’s a chunk of my life the last forty years...in rhyme, essay, and art. A rhyming biography of sorts... something for the bedside table, perhaps.” This is a must read, it’s classic Russell – that’s all that needs to be said.

[www.tomrussell.com](http://www.tomrussell.com)



## THE BRIDGE AT VALENTINE

By Renee Thompson

The vast wilderness of the empty page can hold back even the most assertive. This is Renee’s first novel and she doesn’t kid around. In this “retelling” of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, “The Bridge at Valentine” presents a realistic and poignant portrayal of life in 1890s Idaho. July Caldwell, the daughter of a sheepman, and Rory Morrow, the son of a cattleman, find themselves embroiled in their fathers’ bitter feud to control the rangeland. Cattle and sheep, Romeo and Juliet – Thompson takes us back to the realities of the era with interesting basis and puts us center stage as folks try to make sense of their lot. A great read. [www.trespicospress.com](http://www.trespicospress.com)



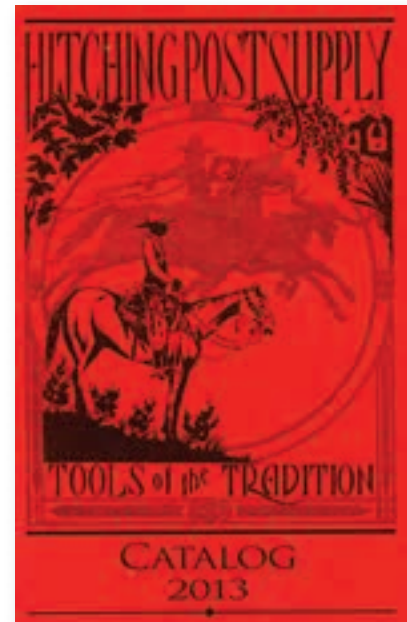




## EARLY CALIFORNIA SKILLS



## HITCHING POST SUPPLY



Hard to believe that Vicki Mullen's Hitching Post Supply has been around since 1988, but it proves that good things last. HPS has always been a source of great buckaroo gear, books, music and horsehair for braiders. Her catalog is a traditional treat.  
[www.hitchingpostsupply.com](http://www.hitchingpostsupply.com)

## RIVER RANCH

Located just 14 miles north of Steamboat Springs and premier skiing, this could be your new home on the range – *the River Ranch at Round Mountain*. This premier property encompasses 1,278 acres of pasture and wilderness, bordered by National Forest and host to 2.5 miles of riverbank access on the main stem of the Elk River. From the River House, a spectacular, luxury home with 7,575 livable square feet, to the indoor equestrian arena, the property is a masterwork in which each enhancement serves both purpose and aesthetics. Meticulously maintained ranch management facilities support cattle and haying operations. Gracious guest homes and cozy cabins provide comfortable, private accommodations. \$23,900,000. For information contact Jeff Buerger at 303 861 8282 or [jeff@hallandhall.com](mailto:jeff@hallandhall.com)



## FINDING THE TRAIL OF BLENdings: Cowboys Eating at The Mouth of the Mississippi by Lynn Miller

So, if you are a rancher and you find yourself somehow in New Orleans, where would you likely tie up your horse for some grub? If you are completely new to this far corner it might help to have someone paint you a picture of the place. New Orleans is west of the Mississippi, only by a shoreline but it's no less true. One possible way to think about this area is to see it as completely separate from the rest of the country. Almost like it's tucked under a geographic rug.

Does the west start here, or end here? Food could be the best clue. There is an epic old black and white movie starring Leo Carrillo as a Creole cattle rustler moving back and forth from the river west into the Texas territory. First time I saw it I was reminded that, oddly, the trappings of those river delta cowboys seemed to strongly parallel the Vaquero influences of California and Mexico. Might have been

a Hollywood oversight, and then I remembered that, along with the French and African American infusions into Louisiana, the Spanish had early and lasting impact.

The Old Spanish Trail crisscrossed the wonderings of the Pirate Lafitte and we have bayou mysteries as the result. Spanish moss, steaming fogs, terrifying reptiles, catfish the size of Toyota pickups, big snakes the color of turpentine, weather to break your heart and

drown your spirit, music to revive and recalibrate you plus the long-lasting shrugs of old black men – that's this French, African, Spanish, Cajun, Creole, oil-rigged Plantation water world.

The architecture of the oldest parts of New Orleans, especially the infamous French Quarter, would fit side by side with that of my mother's homeland, old Puerto Rico. Wrought iron arabesque, Caribbean colors, narrow streets, beans and rice, slow cooked meats, curvilinear sauces, humidity infused rhythms, and an eye for jaunty hand-created fashion always referring back to traditions. Came down to knowing the ingredients of the culture and trusting where your instincts took you if you felt like pushing

the edge. Let's try out a nickname to circle the whole of it – how about Cajuroo? Might take a couple of rum drinks but I know a truckload of cowboys who could

quickly find the dance steps to true Zydeco music. Accordion always tastes better if the one playing it is wearing a Stetson.

And speaking of taste: you are to be forgiven if you get lost in the incredible food

offerings of this city. Here you will find deservedly expensive restaurants that have been around since long before the civil war – places like Gallatoires – and others which are legends riding on their past laurels. But those







aren't the places to go to. You want to find the places where my bellman buddy from the Cotton Exchange Hotel, Derek, says the old women cook. Paul Hunter the agrarian poet, and I recently spent a couple days trying to find those places. We had a few less than good experiences but they were quickly forgotten when we struck culinary gold at least five times.

Oceana on Conti Street in the French quarter was a pure delight. Atmosphere was a cross between sports bar and voodoo carnival. Prices were moderate. And the food would make your mother jealous. We had baked Oysters reminiscent of Rockefeller style but with Cajun fussiness. Paul had fork-a-part barbecue ribs featuring a sauce that didn't let your smile slip long enough for you to figure out the secret ingredient. I had whole butterflied Blackened Bayou Duck with a Crawfish Cream Sauce. Best duck, no, best bird of any kind I have ever eaten and I've been chasing good poultry for 6 plus decades. Only way I can imagine that the subtleties got into this bird was to allow that swimming in the bayou, worrying about submerged gator eyeballs, laced the meat with a perpetual mossy adrenalin. This waterfowl escaped long enough to end up on my plate. And the sauce! Wow.

On my scale of 1 to 5, this place rates *5 conchos*.



The Cafe Pontalba on Jackson Square served us a mighty fine breakfast. And we had excellent oysters and beer at the Crescent City Brewhouse near the river. Derek from our hotel sent us in search of one of those "locals" restaurants that you can't find unless you know where to look. Hobnobbers



on Charondelle, a half block off from the Quarter, is open at odd hours but worth the synchronization. You have to go all the way back through a bar to find it. Nothing fancy here but the grub is outstanding. We had

red beans and rice with sausage plus steamed chicken – and you could hear the old women humming in every bite.

Pierre Maspero's is housed in a 18th century building which originally head-quartered a slave market. Grim and nasty past but fine French Quarter restaurant now. It's on Royal across from the Napoleon House. We went

there for breakfast. Got there after chores (or the time of day when we would have normally been done with chores) and they weren't open yet. Had to wait an hour but boy was it worth it. Paul and I, in the interest of culinary journalism and the science of curiosity, ordered three breakfasts "just to try a little of each". Ha! Though it was far too much food we ate it all. Paul's choice was Baked eggs on a bed of Andouille sausage and cream sauce – superb.

Fact he said "put this sauce on a shoe and I'd eat it."



I had old-style cured ham steak with red eye gravy, eggs and cajun-style hash browns – very fine. Then, just to shame the ghost of Orson Wells, that fat Hollywood cowboy, we ordered Bananas Foster French Toast. It featured a caramel-like liquor-infused syrup sauce with fried bananas – sublime.

Another *five conchos*.



If you make it to the French Quarter and Pierre Maspero's make sure to ask for Mary B and tell her the old cowboy sent you

## AMERICAN MADE CLOTHIER BULLISH ON FUTURE

Despite current economic uncertainty, political gridlock, unemployment and the daily lure of importing offshore, Schaefer Ranchwear is holding steady to its made in America roots committing all of its resources to grow the company forward. Rick Grant, President of Schaefer Ranchwear is optimistic for the company's growth over the next five years. "We're here for the long haul and I refuse to downsize despite many negative economic indicators. I am convinced expanding our American made collection of ranch wear and outdoor clothing will continue to be a bright beacon shining on the hill and I encourage my fellow "Made In America" manufacturers to take the same outlook."

While Schaefer has stayed true to it's made in America roots for the last 30 years many brands have jumped on the band wagon in

the last few years, but with higher price points targeting the ultra-affluent consumer. Schaefer's price points range \$60-\$70 for jeans, \$70-\$120 for shirts and \$90-\$280 for vests and outerwear. New brands on the market feature jeans for \$150 and up, shirts exceeding \$200 and vintage outerwear starting at \$300. "We are working hard to keep overhead low and streamline production in order to keep pricing as affordable as possible, according to Grant. This management style has translated into a healthy growth model going forward into the next five years."

There was a time when cowboys worked and roped in neckties. During the last years of the 19th century, encroaching civilization, along with a growing Victorian influence from the east, began influencing the ways of Westerners.

Pride in one's appearance and one's work was not alien to the working cowboy – then or now. For the serious, it has always been prideful work. And, as the 20th century wore on, along with the evolution of the necktie and its design, came the advent of unique accoutrements and accessories to help hold the tie down and keep it from flapping – an advantage for one working horseback. Genre tie bars and tie chains were all the rage in the '30s, '40s and '50s with many becoming unique collectables of the era.

Today, seemingly a billion years later, there is a renaissance of sorts occurring in many aspects of the Western horsemanship world – a return of respect, if you will, for some of the old ways in working and training fine bridle and using horses. Along with that has come an increased interest in ranch ropings and in classic vaquero-style roping techniques. It is only natural, then, that an interest in certain aspects of classic Western dress would follow. Re-enter the necktie. Today, at many ranch ropings and competitions, Western gentlemen can be seen roping in neckties – a style that is "tied" to the West. [schaeferferranchwear.com/RR](http://schaeferferranchwear.com/RR)





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## BY HAND AND HEART

# A Winter's Tale

Winter evenings give birth to some of the West's most beautiful furniture.



By Rod Miller

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**W**inter evenings get pretty long in Wyoming. When you're running a ranch and the cows are fed and checked, the chores done, and the books in order, it can mean you've got time on your hands. Steve Moulton uses that time – and his hands – to create handcrafted furniture the like of which you'll not see in any franchise furniture warehouse, or even upscale interior design emporium. And while Moulton's furniture is so Western that it looks right at home in cowboy country, creating it is an unusual, perhaps unique, pastime for a Wyoming cowboy.

Then again, Moulton is not your usual Wyoming cowboy. Born in Jackson Hole, he started life on a family ranch (now part of Grand Teton National Park) that's home to what must be the most-photographed barn in the West. His great-grandfather, Guy Holt, was one of the few cowboys to weather the storm aboard legendary



photo: courtesy Candy Moulton

Wyoming cowboy, musician, and furniture designer and craftsman Steve Moulton.

bucking horse Steamboat – and he did it twice, with one ride resulting in his being declared 1903s world



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champion saddle bronc rider at Cheyenne Frontier Days. A photo of Holt aboard Steamboat is said to be the basis of the bronc rider that graces the Wyoming license plate.

Moulton's family moved to Cody when he was six years old and that's where he stayed until marrying and taking up residence on a gravel road outside of Encampment, his home for some three-and-a-half decades. There, he and his wife, Candy, raised two children. For 21 of those years, he has managed the Fish Hook Ranch.

Before settling into the comfort of Moulton's furniture, it also bears mentioning that he's an accomplished cowboy singer. He composes a few songs of his own, but his love is interpreting the classics, both contemporary and from days gone by, of the cowboy genre. Many a weekend evening he strums and sings for visitors at the nearby A Bar A Guest Ranch. His 2009 album, *Cowboys & Campfires*, earned him the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum's Wrangler Award for best new artist.

Moulton's love for the cowboy life is understand-



Upholstered sofa with cowboy- and Indian-style embellishments.

able. And there's nothing out of the ordinary in his taking up a guitar and crooning a cowboy tune. But furniture making? Where did that come from?

"My Grandfather Woodward was a carpenter and cabinetmaker," he says. "As a kid, we had several pieces of furniture in our house that he made, and we still have some that we use all the time. I'm sure those pieces had great effect on me. I spent about six years working for a furniture manufacturer in Saratoga, Wyoming, making high-end wood office furniture. I learned a lot about furniture construction and finishes. I've been making furniture of my own design for about 20 years now."

The know-how he acquired is just a part of it. Artistic inspiration also plays a role. "I think it's much like writing music," Moulton explains. "Most tend to write about what they know and who they are. Western furniture design seems to be the same for me. It's just who I am." And while he claims to find his furniture "more utilitarian than artistic," seeing Moulton's work removes any doubt that its form and function are infused with imagination, originality and



Bed built with native juniper from Red Canyon Ranch



# Larry Mahane

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artistry. “Growing up in Cody, I was aware of the many pieces of Thomas Molesworth furniture around the community. I also found Molesworth furniture at the A Bar A Ranch where I sing. His style was very influential on me.”

The influence of the legendary furniture designer, enriched by Moulton’s own ideas and techniques, express themselves in a style that is both identifiable and evolving. “For the most part I build as I go,” Moulton says of his approach. “I have an idea in my head. Sometimes I will do a drawing to show a client how I am going to make it, and to show dimensions.” Sometimes, the clients who commission furniture are contributors. “While I think my style is fairly settled at this point,” Moulton says, “it sometimes changes with new ideas a client brings to me.”

That close collaboration between customer and craftsman is evident in one of Moulton’s major projects – furnishing the ranch house at Wyoming’s Red Canyon Ranch, near Thermopolis. The ranch, owned and operated by best-selling authors Michael and Kathleen Gear, occupies ruggedly beautiful sagebrush, juniper, limber pine, and bunch grass country in the foothills of the Owl Creek Mountains, and hosts an award-winning herd of prime buffalo.

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Cheval mirror, Western style, framed with native wood.



Note the buffalo embellishments across the bottom of Red Canyon Ranch living room furniture.

“Steve, being the modest sort that he is, had never said much about his work,” says Kathleen, who had known the Moultons for years. “On a visit to a neighboring ranch, we saw furniture he’d made. We were blown away. We immediately commissioned chairs, couches, a dining room table, and the bed. From there, other projects followed, including a library and dining room cabinets. Art literally





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Upholstered native wood sofa and chair.

organic to the ranch. For another, we had some sort of vague input on the design that you don't get in a furniture store. We said, 'Can you make it like this?' Steve nodded, then he made it even better than we'd imagined."

Each room in the Red Canyon Ranch house, and each piece of furniture, presented unique challenges. "We provided a buffalo hide from one of our animals for

flows out of the man's fingers when he touches a piece of wood."

Wood, being the furniture maker's medium, is of utmost importance. "I buy local wood and collect wood that I find interesting," Moulton says. "I use mostly lodgepole pine and juniper. I have, many times, collected wood from the ranch I made the furniture for – as an example, the juniper I used in furniture for Red Canyon Ranch. We made trips up there to harvest the wood and then I spent winters making the furniture."

Native wood presents unusual challenges. "Steve was trained as a classical master, a true cabinetmaker, where everything is perfectly symmetrical, immaculately fitted and mortised," Michael says. "As much as he'd like to exploit his expertise in finely fitted traditional woodwork, we dragged him out on the ranch, cut dead juniper, and said, 'Create great furniture out of these pieces.' Candy told us that he cussed, fiddled with chunks of wood, cussed some more, and created magic."

Kathleen adds, "The man is like the Mozart of modern Western furniture. For one thing, it's

the dining room chairs," Michael says. "The 'guest of honor' gets to sit in the one with the tail dangling down the back."

Dining room cabinets had to be compatible with a *viga* and *latilla* ceiling and serve as a foundation for displaying the ranch's numerous buffalo trophies. "Here, Steve was free to mix his traditional craftsmanship with the rugged look of split poles," Kathleen says. "Again, he created a masterpiece."



Cabinet designed and built by Steve Moulton.



A man wearing a white cowboy hat, a light blue and white vertically striped short-sleeved Wrangler shirt, and blue jeans with a brown patterned belt is sitting on a horse. He is looking off to the side with a serious expression. The background is a blurred indoor setting, possibly a stable or arena.

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Then came bookshelves. “Steve measured, mumbled to himself, looked around, cocked his head, and all the while his pensive eyes simmered,” Michael remembers. “He just seemed to visualize the final product in his head. When it was delivered, the two of us were stunned. ‘Awe’ is an overused word these days, and often for the silliest of things. Steve, in the real meaning of the word, left us in awe.”

As an artist and craftsman, Moulton enjoys the challenges, as well as the variety the work offers. “I can’t say there’s any particular type of work that I like more. I have made couches, chairs, beds, dressers, mirrors, tables and cedar chests. My children have bedroom sets I made for them when they graduated from college. My wife uses a roll top desk I built for her nearly 30 years ago, but you can barely see it for all her piles of writing work. I also

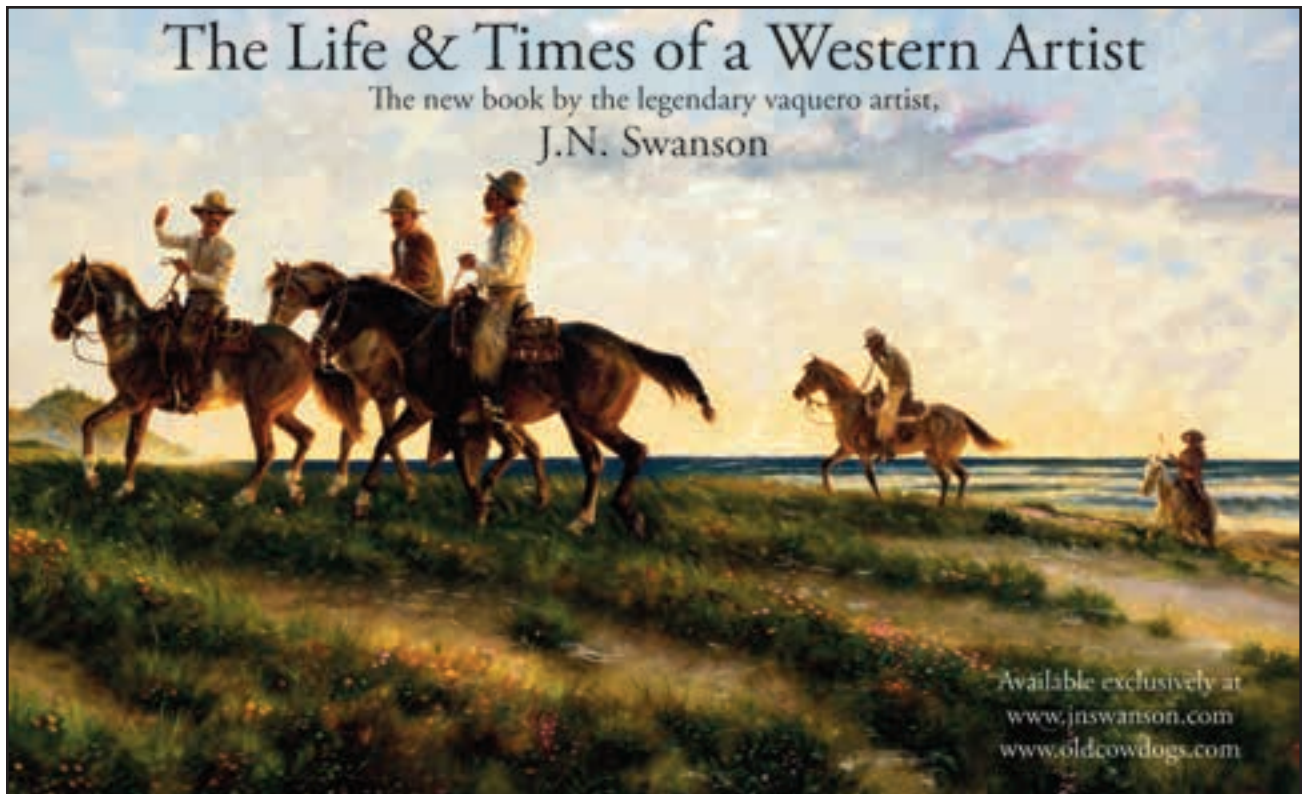
make the Spur Awards for Western Writers of America. I’ve been making those for about 20 years now.”

While most would agree that Moulton’s furniture is worthy of display in galleries and museums, most is in day-to-day use in private homes. But, at least one museum has come calling: “I made a gun-display cabinet for the Grand Encampment Museum,” Steve says.

As long as Wyoming winter evenings remain long, Moulton intends to spend them practicing and perfecting his craft. And while it’s a pastime that satisfies the designer and craftsman, it’s likely the most satisfaction is felt by the folks who use his furniture. “Furniture is usually added to *furnish* a house,” Kathleen Gear says. “Steve’s was built to be *integral* with the house. We can’t think of this place without it.”



Rod Miller lives in Utah. He is the author of several books, including *Go West: The Risk and the Reward* and the forthcoming novel *Cold as the Clay*.







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# Waking the Dead

South Dakota braider Whit Olson gives life back to rawhide.



By Mark Bedor

For the young cowboy walking past exhibits and vendors at the Black Hills Stock Show and Rodeo, it was love at first sight. The object of his desire that day in Rapid City was not a beautiful woman, but rather a set of romal reins hand-crafted by Texas rawhide braider Leland Hensley.

“That pair of reins really took my eye,” remembers the cowboy, Whit Olson. “I was intrigued by them and I decided I’d braid on my own.”

Whit was 18 at the time, in town to ride bucking horses for the South Dakota State University rodeo team. It would be three years before he finally built a set of reins he deemed worth keeping.

After transferring to Montana State University, in Bozeman, Whit spent a summer working for a Big Sky

outfitter. One day, a rawhide braider named Hial Steele dropped off some headstalls he’d made. The work caught Whit’s attention and the two struck up a friendship, with Hial becoming Whit’s first braiding mentor.

“It started out with him getting some free labor out of a kid that wanted to learn,” Whit says. “The local butcher slaughtered on Wednesdays, and I’d help Hial put up all of his hides in exchange for one of them. I’d take the hide back home and go to work.”

Braiding rawhide is complicated, detail-oriented work. It involves creating functional art out of one of nature’s most fundamental materials:

the hide of a dead animal.

“What I start with looks like a big, wet, bloody carpet on the floor of a meat locker,” Whit says. “I refine it, cut it down, braid it, and come up with something unique



photos courtesy Whit Olson

Megan, Wyatt and Whit Olson.





that can't be reproduced by any machine."

Whit sold work to cowboys, including those competing in West Yellowstone's twice-weekly summer rodeos. Demand for his work, and his reputation, grew. Now 30 and based in South Dakota, Whit is recognized as one of his craft's top young practitioners, a testament to both his talent and his tenacity in a demanding trade that frustrates the impatient. His temperament, he contends, is a perfect match for his profession.

"I love to see it come together," he says. "It's so extreme to start with something as basic as rawhide, then refine it into an art form."

Working with a hide, Whit explains, is fundamentally different from working with tanned leather.

"You can't just put down a hide whenever you want to take a break," he says. "Rawhide is dynamic. It's almost alive."

Of course, Whit's hides arrive dead as a doornail, scraped of flesh and hair, and dried. In that condition, each hide is as stiff as hard plastic. In a process called 'casing,' hides are moistened to make them pliable.

"That's where every braider struggles at first, learning to case," he says. The challenge: a hide's thickness isn't uniform. Consequently, some parts of a hide need to soak longer than others. The entire hide is then tossed into a plastic bag; the trapped moisture softens the piece to an even consistency so it can be cut in strips and strings, then braided. "The first time I cased a hide, I was excited and in a rush. I didn't wait for the hide to properly case. It looked pretty good when I braided it, but when it dried, it looked like hell because it shrunk down. The braids were gappy. It just didn't work."

As with most craftsmen, Whit is his own worst



Whit's creations range from traditional working tack to more unusual items, such as these rawhide knife handles for Damascus steel blades.

critic. In his early days of braiding, if he deemed a finished piece subpar, he'd cut it in half to ensure it was never used. Standards in the craft of braiding are high, and the hours required to produce quality work can lead to prices that, to the uninitiated, can seem shocking: hundreds, even thousands of dollars for top-quality rawhide tack. Cowboys working for cowboy wages, though, are still the craft's customer base.

"There are multiple levels of gear," Whit says. "Working gear, then art. One is more expensive than the other because of the amount of time involved and the intricacy of it. Working gear can be a little bigger – thicker string, less plaits – so you can make them a little faster. And, there's usually not much for color; they're pretty natural. A braider can make those more inexpensively for working cowboys."

A more artistic effort, he adds, might require weeks for a single piece's construction. The results are more colorful, with dyed rawhide and intricate braids. Time and detail, of course, account for higher prices for such pieces. Regardless of the type of customer for whom he's braiding, though, Whit says he feels a constant sense of



responsibility to his work's end user.

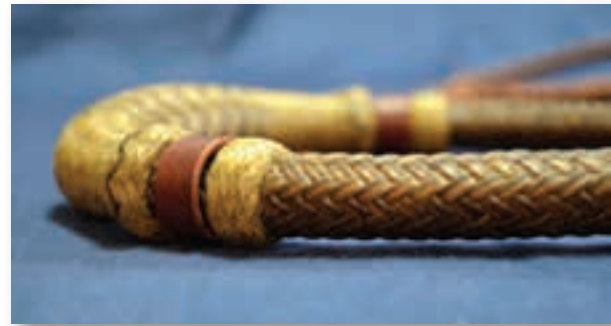
"Nowadays, people look at items in a very disposable way," he says. "When a guy making \$800 a month spends \$500 on a pair of reins, that's a big deal. They're going to care for those reins like a prized possession. To a rawhide braider, that's beyond words."



A bosal by South Dakota rawhide braider Whit Olson.

Whit works in his shop at his home outside Salem, South Dakota, west of Sioux Falls. He and his wife, Megan, run cattle and keep a few horses, and just celebrated the second birthday of their son, Wyatt. There's now a year-long waiting list for Whit's creations. Commissions range from traditional working gear to more elaborate efforts, such as a rawhide breast collar a customer ordered last winter.

"I don't know that I'd ever seen one," Whit admits.



Braiding rawhide is intricate work, testing a craftsman's patience.

"I got to looking around and Luis Ortega made one that's hanging in the National Cowboy Museum in Oklahoma City. I looked at it and figured out how he did it, then sat down to make this guy a rawhide breast collar."

Since happening upon those reins at the Black Hills Stock Show more than a decade ago, Whit's enthusiasm for his trade has only grown. He still marvels at the simple nature of his raw materials, and the fact that such material can be turned into something both functional and beautiful.

"It's been said that only God and a rawhide braider can bring a dead cow back to life," he jokes. "My only goal is to be the best rawhide braider I can be, have a style that's unique to me, and do my counterpart justice."



Intricate weaves and color patterns raise the degree of difficulty for a braider.





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## BOOKS TO FIND

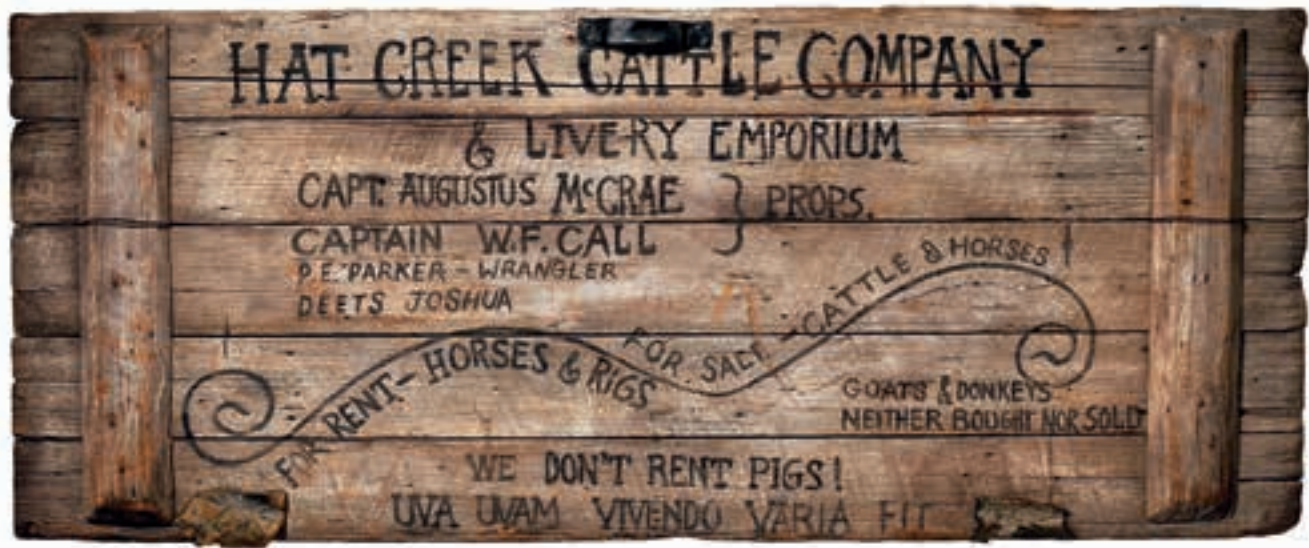
# A Book on the Making of Lonesome Dove

By John Spong, Jeff Wilson, Bill Wittliff

**W**ith interviews by John Spong and images by Jeff Wilson and Bill Wittliff, this is a must have book for anyone who loves *Lonesome Dove* and needs to watch it – like most of us – a least once a week. Wait, do I see a hand up in the back asking what's *Lonesome Dove*? Yikes. No worries.

In a nutshell, *Lonesome Dove* is Larry McMurtry's epic tale of two aging Texas Rangers who drive a herd of stolen

54







Images courtesy the Publisher, University of Texas Press

cattle 2,500 miles from the Rio Grande to Montana to found the first ranch there. It is a book that captured the public's imagination and has never let it go. The novel, published in 1985, was a *New York Times* best seller and won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. More than two decades after publication, it still sells tens of thousands of copies every year. Enough?

Then came the miniseries. *Lonesome Dove* premiered on CBS in February 1989. (I know this for a fact as I missed the second night because my daughter Laura was born!) Twenty-six million households watched the premier episode, and countless millions more have watched Gus and Call each time the movie has rerun on TV, video, and DVD. It was nominated for eighteen Emmy Awards and won seven. It also won Golden Globe Awards for Best Television Miniseries and Best Actor; a Peabody Award; the D. W. Griffith Award for Best Television Series; the National Association of Television Critics Award for Program of the Year and Outstanding Achievement in Drama; and the Writers' Guild of America Award for Best Teleplay (Bill Wittliff). So, that's *Lonesome Dove*.

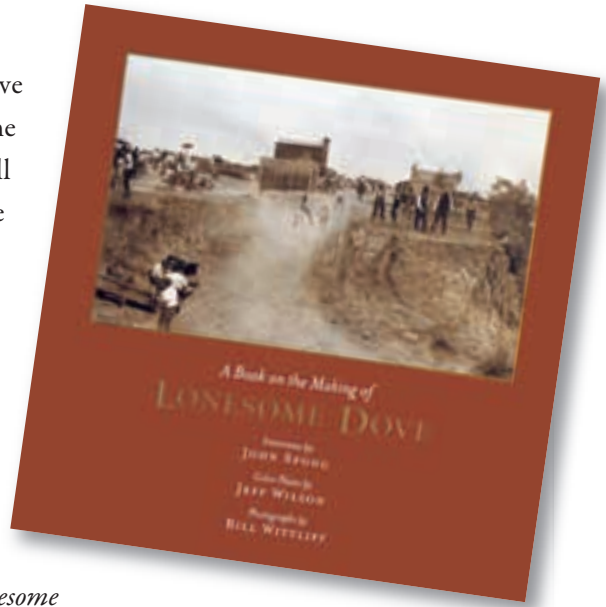
This book, *A Book on the Making of Lonesome Dove* is the second volume about the filming of the miniseries and takes the reader on a fascinating behind-the-scenes journey into the creation of the book, the miniseries, and the world of *Lonesome Dove*. Writer John Spong talks to forty of the key people involved, including author Larry McMurtry; actors Robert Duvall, Tommy Lee Jones, Anjelica Huston, Diane Lane, Danny Glover, Ricky Schroder,







D. B. Sweeney, Frederic Forrest, and Chris Cooper; executive producer and screenwriter Bill Wittliff; executive producer Suzanne de Passe; and director Simon Wincer. They and a host of others tell the inside scoop about McMurtry's writing of the epic novel and the process of turning it into the miniseries. Accompanying their comments are photographs of iconic props – including “the sign,” costumes, set designs, and shooting scripts. There are even continuity Polaroids used during filming and photographs taken on the set by Bill Wittliff, which place you in the middle of the action. It's very cool.



Published by the University of Texas Press and designed as a companion for *A Book of Photographs from Lonesome Dove*, Wittliff's magnificent fine art volume, *A Book on the Making of Lonesome Dove* has something for every fan of this American epic.

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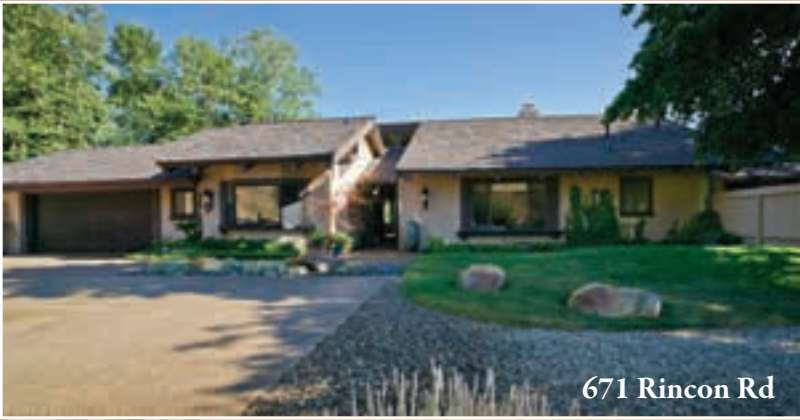


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## THE COOK HOUSE

# Darryl Guillory's Crawfish Étouffée



By Kathy McCraine

It's right before Mardi Gras, and we're headed to Darryl Guillory's house at Church Point, Louisiana, where he is cooking his famous crawfish étouffée for a few friends. Darryl had warned us, "You better wear gloves. This is so good you'll chew your fingers off."

Creole and Cajun men are proud of their cooking, especially in this part of Acadiana, just west of the Mississippi River, where crawfish, rice and cattle are major industries. Darryl is a Creole, a French-speaking person of mixed black and French origin, descended from the earliest Louisiana settlers. Cooking for friends is his diversion. Cowboying and catching wild cattle are his trade.

Like his daddy before him, Darryl, 58, has had a lifetime of experience handling bad cattle. In the woods and marshes of south Louisiana, cattle can get wild, so when ranchers have trouble gathering them, Darryl is the man they call. His tools for getting the job done are a stout horse, rope, bullwhip and pack of about 10 well-disciplined Black Mouth Cur and Catahoula cow dogs. Along with a crew of young, aspiring cowboys, they make a formidable team that even the wildest old cow can't elude, but as more of the woodland is turned into cleared pastures, Darryl's work is becoming a dying art.

The art of Creole and Cajun cooking, however, is very much



photos by Kathy McCraine

Darryl, with one of his horses, Sheba, and his two favorite dogs, Emma and Blue.





alive, having evolved over nearly 300 years from the Spanish and French, who originally settled Louisiana, and the Acadians (Cajuns) from Nova Scotia, who followed them. Their unique cooking style has been passed down over many generations.

Darryl learned how to cook watching his mom cook for her family of 11 kids in the same little, white frame house where he now lives.

“When I was small, my sisters didn’t want to get up and go to early mass on Sundays, so me and my brothers would go, then come back and watch my mom cook,” he says. “She was a good cook. Everybody in the neighborhood, if they knew ‘Nanny’ was cooking, they were coming. And her gumbo, Lord have mercy! They were definitely coming for that.”

Today Darryl is throwing handfuls of unmeasured ingredients into a big aluminum pot, “a little bit of this and a little bit of that,” he says, “the same way my mom cooked when I was small.” His homemade seasoning mix is his secret weapon.

*Étouffée* means stew in Creole French, and in a short time the rich brown concoction is bubbling on the stove with a spicy and savory aroma. An étouffée can be made with almost any kind of meat, but crawfish, widely farmed in the area, double-cropped with rice in marshy fields, is a favorite in south Louisiana.

Darryl’s version is without a doubt some of the best I’ve ever tasted. After we eat our fill, we all pile into pickups and cars and head to Whiskey River Landing, a lively honkytonk built on the levee of the Henderson Swamp, a few miles down the road. There, our friend Geno Delafosse and his Zydeco band, French Rockin’ Boogie, have the crowd dancing and rocking out until the old wood-frame building is swaying on its piers. It’s the perfect ending to a perfect Sunday afternoon.



### Darryl’s Crawfish Étouffée

- 1 stick butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 bunch green onions, including half of green part, chopped
- 1 jalapeño, minced (optional)
- ½ can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1 8-ounce bottle mushrooms
- ½ bunch parsley, chopped
- Seasoning mix to taste (recipe below)
- 1 pound shelled crawfish tails

### Seasoning Mix

- 1 tablespoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon Accent
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste



Mix all ingredients for seasoning mix in a small bowl. Melt butter in a medium large Dutch oven. Add onion, bell pepper, garlic, green onions and jalapeño, and cook, stirring occasionally, until cooked down, about 15 minutes. Stir in enough paprika, about 1 tablespoon, to give the mixture a nice golden brown color. Add soup,

then slowly stir in 1 to 2 cups water until it reaches a gravy consistency. Add about 1 tablespoon of the seasoning mix, then add more to taste for a more seasoned dish. Add mushrooms and parsley, and cook, uncovered, for 20 minutes. Stir in crawfish and cook no more than 10 more minutes.



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




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## YOUR HORSE'S FEET, A SERIES

# The Prepurchase

By Pete Healey, APF

Recently I worked on two horses that had a prepurchase exam. One horse sold for a lot of money but became lame in both front feet two weeks later. The other horse didn't pass the exam because of a mild lameness in one foot. The buyer is waiting with check in hand until the lameness is resolved; months have passed.

The lameness on the first horse could have been prevented with the information presented at the prepurchase and the lameness on the second horse may have been resolved by now with the information. The problem is this information wasn't evaluated, why? The answer is, because biomechanics and soft tissue evaluation of the foot is not a common practice at these exams.

A tremendous amount of information can be gleaned from a physical examination of the foot. Measuring the hoof-pastern axis with a goniometer can determine degree of flexion and position of the pastern at weight bearing. The center of rotation of the coffin joint can be palpated and marked on the bottom of the foot to use as a landmark to determine heel to toe balance. Conformation of the foot through physical reference can determine side to side balance, the ground angle of the coffin bone and depth of the sole and digital cushion. Balance abnormalities can be seen as flares, bulges, dishes and uneven growth rings.

Radiograph analysis of the soft tissue, bone angles and the bone itself can tell a lot about the history of the foot as well as where it might be headed. Areas of interest are the hoof-lamella zone, sole depth, angle of the coffin bone and posture of the pastern. Load remodeling and lesions of the bone are directly related to these areas. Biomechanics of the current shoeing application should be addressed as well, but should be discussed in mechanical detail like millimeters and degrees.

A horse is a big investment. Lameness can create large out of pocket expenses as well as time lost to recovery. Of course any horse has the possibility of going lame, but if everyone is paying attention to the signs, a lot of these problems can be avoided before the horse is broke down. Knowing this information could be the difference between getting a horse bought or sold and can be an advantage in price negotiations.

If you're a farrier and have a newly purchased horse come into your practice, be sure to record what the feet looked like. A horse could be on the cusp of lameness and all it takes is an increase in the riding program to send him over the edge as the equilibrium between what the feet and legs can handle are maxed out by the work load and the horse goes lame. The blame can quickly go to the farrier as he was the last one to work on the feet. Farriers can save a lot of grief for themselves as well as help a lot of these horses by getting educated in biomechanics.

When getting a prepurchase exam, it might be a good idea to go to a vet or clinic that specializes in podiatry. Get specific analysis of the feet and legs. There are several podiatry vets that can offer consultation through email at a very reasonable price. Don't fall into the category of knowing last what you needed to know first. Remember "no foot, no horse."







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## THE WESTERN WEB

A look at all things cowboy on the information superhighway.

# Buffalo Bill in Scotland

An online short film discusses an upcoming documentary that explores a nearly forgotten chapter in the career of the West's quintessential showman.



By Alan Knight

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I first heard about Tom Cunningham's book, *Your Fathers the Ghosts: Buffalo Bill's Wild West in Scotland*, in 2010, when I directed a documentary about a famous street market in my home city of Glasgow, Scotland. One of the interviewees told me about the book, which chronicled the 1891-92 visit to Scotland by Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Once my curiosity was raised, there was no turning back.

After I got in touch with Cunningham, we worked out an agreement in which he gave me permission to use the material in his book. I've since been editing and adapting it, turning it into a documentary script.

Given the unbelievable detail of Cunningham's research, I realized there was a film waiting



*Buffalo Bill in Scotland*, an upcoming documentary, explores the showman's 1891 visit to the country.





to grow some legs. Particularly inspiring was the idea that I could re-create many of the anecdotes, incidents and dramas of Buffalo Bill's tour using animation, which has become such a flexible, creative medium in the world of film and television.

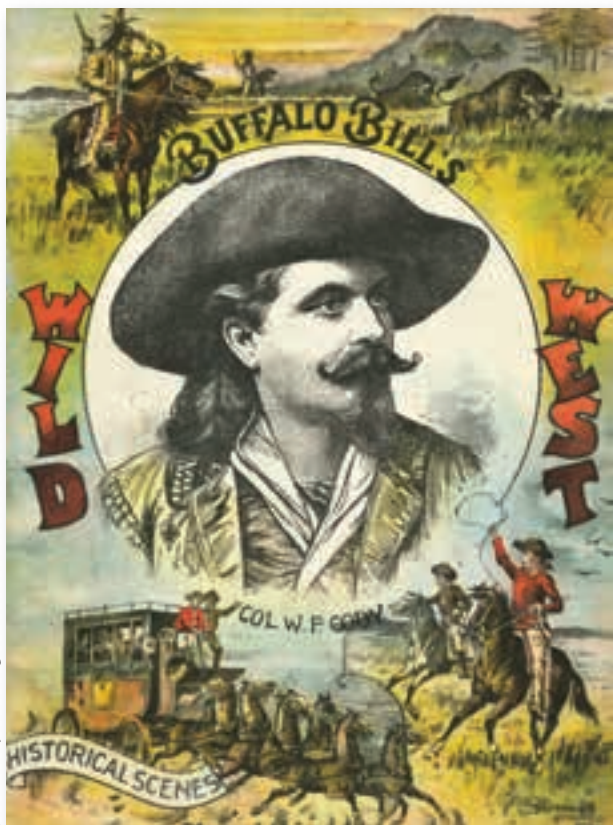


photo courtesy Alan Knight

With extensive newspaper coverage and a non-stop publicity campaign promoting the troupe's visit, Scotland was abuzz with excitement over the arrival of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

anecdotes regarding cultural exchanges between the troupe and the Scottish public. These vignettes are priceless gems, humorous and touching, that will engage audiences. Obviously, the film will also depict elements of the show – which had its share of funny moments – so there's a good deal of material with which to play.

Scottish newspaper correspondents of the time created many descriptions and reports. In my film, I plan to depict journalists through voice-overs by top Scottish actors, such as Brian Cox. With such a diverse set of roles – ranging from Buffalo Bill himself to Annie Oakley to Kicking Bear – the film will be rich with accents.

Incredibly, this chapter of the Buffalo Bill story has been largely forgotten, furthering my curiosity. Why was one of the most successful European tours of the Wild West Show consigned to oblivion? It's become my mission to revive for a modern audience this period in history, one in which William F. Cody was the most famous American on the planet.

Learn more about Buffalo Bill in Scotland, and view the film's fundraising campaign trailer, at [www.buffalobillfilm.com](http://www.buffalobillfilm.com).

Barring a substantial budget for live-action re-creations, another solution would've been impossible. Once this idea took hold, I knew a unique film could be realized, a film that had a unique blend of archival footage and images, interviews, scenes from present-day Scotland – depicting locations where Buffalo Bill brought his entourage – and, of course, animation, the movie's crucial element.

The Wild West Show's first visit was limited to a three-month residency in Glasgow's East End. In anticipation of the show, Scotland's newspapers – all 127 of them – were in a frenzy. Couple that with an intense publicity campaign; no Glaswegian could fail to notice the streets of the city covered in posters and leaflets, advertising the greatest show of their time.

The troupe's Lakota Indians made their presence felt immediately, as the locals had never experienced such exotic individuals. The *Glasgow Evening News* reported the tribe's members as “already casting an air of romance and gaudy horse blankets over the East End.”

In 1904, Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World visited 29 towns and cities across Scotland, utilizing the country's expanded railway network. The Scottish public were so intrigued, they gathered at train stations to watch the troupe de-train at a given destination.

The best material in Cunningham's book consists of

anecdotes regarding cultural exchanges between the troupe and the Scottish public. These vignettes are priceless gems, humorous and touching, that will engage audiences. Obviously, the film will also depict elements of the show – which had its share of funny moments – so there's a good deal of material with which to play.

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# Sierra Bonita

An Arizona rancher carries on the legacy of the state's first cattle baron.

By Guy de Galard

A warm breeze sweeps over the southern Arizona grassland, sending dust across a stone corral where Jesse Hooker Davis activates a squeeze chute holding a bull in place. With just his neck and head sticking out of the chute, the angry animal violently shakes his head. Snot flies into the dust. The bull has lost an ear tag, most likely on mesquite. Working to avoid being hit by the bull's massive head, Jesse secures a replacement to the animal's left ear as Jose Adame urges another bull, also missing a tag, through the adjacent alleyway.

For both men, the process is second nature, not surprising given their experience. Adame has ridden for the ranch – the Sierra Bonita – for 35 years. And ranching is in Jesse's blood. His great-great-great-grandfather, Col. Henry Hooker, founded the Sierra Bonita in 1872. Located 27 miles north of Willcox, the historic spread is

Arizona's oldest permanently established ranch. In 1964, the Department of the Interior designated the outfit a historic landmark.

Jesse learned to ride on the Sierra Bonita and, after moving to San Diego, where he was more likely to be found riding waves, he continued to spend summers and spring breaks working on the ranch. Nine years ago, Jesse, then 30, took over management of the outfit.

"It was a steep learning curve," he says. "I had to learn a lot quickly. I'm still learning every day. I live here and make all the decisions, but I don't consider it my ranch. This is my family's ranch. It was passed

down through six generations and now it's my turn to take care of it."

Born in New Hampshire in 1823, Henry Hooker headed for California after the Gold Rush, establishing a mercantile business in Placerville. When his store



photos by Guy de Galard

Jesse Hooker Davis is the sixth generation to live and work on the historic Sierra Bonita Ranch, established by his great-great-great grandfather in 1872.



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burned down, he began supplying meat to mining camps and U.S. Cavalry outposts. One of his herds stampeded on a drive to Fort Grant, near Arizona's Pinaleno Mountains, coming to a stop in the shade of cottonwoods, a promising sign of water.

Hooker established a ranch on the spot, calling the operation Sierra Bonita – “pretty mountain.” Tucked away in the Sulphur Springs Valley and framed by the Winchester, Galiuro and Pinaleno ranges, the ranch had a mild climate and abundant water and feed. Even at 4,500 feet, Hooker's cattle wintered on the range.

In the 1870s and '80s, southern Arizona was a wild, untamed territory. Rustling and range disputes raged. Bands of Apaches led by Cochise and Geronimo roamed the sparsely settled region. And, outlaws often found refuge in the region. It's rumored Billy the Kid honed some of his cowboy skills at the Sierra Bonita. Hooker, known for his generosity, was unlikely to have asked many questions of strangers

seeking work, and more likely to judge a man by the way he saddled his horse.

“Thief or dignitary, you were invited to his dinner table provided you'd wear a jacket,” Jesse says. “And if you didn't have one, he'd provide one for you.”

With its 16-foot adobe walls, the fortress-like ranch house was built to hold off attackers – effective architecture given that Apaches killed several of Hooker's cowboys, but never attacked the ranch house. Despite such conflicts, Hooker and Cochise were friendly, trading blankets (Cochise was buried in a blanket gifted him by Hooker), and the rancher made a habit of cutting out beef for the Apaches when they were in need of fresh meat.

During his infamous 1882 vendetta ride, Wyatt Earp and his posse stopped at the Sierra Bonita to rest and restock supplies, an incident recounted in the film *Tombstone*, in which Hooker is portrayed by Charlton Heston.



The ranch's remuda includes Hancock, Dash for Cash, Poco Bueno and Doc Bar bloodlines.





Jose Adame turns the remuda back out to pasture.

In its heyday, the Sierra Bonita boasted 30,000 head of cattle grazing over 250,000 acres. From its headquarters, the ranch stretched as far as the eye could see in every direction. Hooker first stocked the ranch with Longhorns and Corrientes, later replacing them with Herefords, a breed he introduced to the region. The ranch's herd is still predominantly Hereford, though Jesse's recently introduced Red and Black Angus bulls.

Working methods haven't changed much since Hooker's day. Calves are branded in the spring and work is done on horseback. The ranch keeps 90 horses,



The Spanish style ranch house's interior courtyard. In the violent era of the 19th century, the bell was used to warn of an attack. In later years, it served as a dinner bell.



During a glorious Arizona sunset, a storm brews over the Pinaleño Mountains.

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including 35 broodmares and four stallions. Bloodlines include Hancock, Dash For Cash, Doc Bar, Poco Bueno and Blue Valentine. At the end of a horse's career under saddle, Jesse turns the animal out into the mountains.

"When they get older, I let them be horses for the remainder of their lives," he says. "They served us well."

Today, the ranch covers 45,000 acres, a change in size that's reduced its access to water, that precious

commodity that first inspired Hooker. Wells provide water to center-pivot irrigation systems, and the ranch has two springs, but Sierra Bonita now relies heavily on rainfall, a risky proposition in the high desert.

Given the realities of modern ranching, Jesse's also pursuing diversification strategies, leasing land for corn farming and, potentially, opening the ranch to guests.



Guy de Galard is a photographer and writer living in Wyoming.





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## THE WESTERN HORSE

# Everyday Miracles

Therapeutic horsemanship changes the lives of riders living with physical and mental disabilities.



By Melissa Mylchreest

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It's an October afternoon in Montana's Bitterroot Valley. The grass has long since gone yellow, the air is cool, and smoke from the summer's wildfires still lingers. In a small arena in the foothills of the Sapphire Mountains, a young woman sits astride a horse, listening carefully to her instructor.

"What you're going to do, Brandy, is run continuously through the pattern at a nice, easy pace. When you're

10 feet out, approaching that first barrel, you want to be out here," says the instructor, Ernie Purcelli, as he walks

the path he wants his student to follow.

Broad-shouldered and wearing a ball cap, Ernie looks like he could just as easily be coaching baseball, but his words reveal a horseman through and through. In one-on-one conversation, his voice is quiet and soothing, but at this moment it booms, filling the arena. His



photos courtesy BTR

BTR riding student Brandy Davenport, with Tonah.





Therapeutic riding can offer patients a path to healthier and more confident lives.

enthusiasm is contagious, and when he turns to make sure the young woman understands, she yells back, “Gotcha!” She urges the small Norwegian Fjord into a walk, and the two of them head into the pattern.

Horse and rider are not alone. They’re flanked by two volunteers, with a third leading the mare forward, all three offering support in the form of positive words and steady hands. They make their way through the barrels and, as Purcelli continues to offer guidance, the

rider’s face alternates between expressions of intense concentration and pure joy.

Brandy Davenport is a participant in the equine-therapy program at the nonprofit Bitterroot Therapeutic Riding, one of hundreds of therapeutic riding centers around the country. Therapeutic horsemanship – also called hippotherapy – is used to help treat certain physical and mental limitations, including autism, Down’s syndrome, brain injury,

multiple sclerosis, PTSD, paralysis and others. BTR's instructors are certified through Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International, formerly known as the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association. PATH International is a global advocate for equine-assisted therapies, which include not only riding, but also therapeutic carriage driving, interactive vaulting, and horse-assisted cognitive and behavioral therapy.

The physical benefits of therapeutic riding are many. Because the stride of a horse and that of a human are so similar, it's often the first chance a wheelchair-bound person has to experience the sensation of walking. For those with other physical limitations, the rigors of riding a horse provide excellent physical therapy.

"It's very simple in theory, as any doctor will tell you," Purcelli says. "If you stimulate the nerve endings, it brings blood to the muscles. For people with MS, for example, the most important thing is to keep the muscles working. This helps them do that."

In Davenport's case, riding helps her combat the effects of cerebral palsy. Being able to leave her wheelchair and spend an hour each week on horseback has been life changing, says Troy Ann Magruder, who brought Davenport to her first session a year ago.

"If she gets out of her wheelchair, she automatically goes into the fetal position," Magruder says. "When she rides, the warmth of the horse loosens her legs, and it helps with circulation and stimulation."

Over the course of the lesson, we watch Davenport's legs relax, lengthening down the sides of the horse, until she's able to use them effectively.

"One of the things she's learned is to use her legs to

move the horse," Magruder says. "When Brandy started, she had no strength in her legs. Her legs are strong now,



Riders cope with a wide range of disorders, including brain injuries, autism, PTSD and multiple sclerosis.

and she can transfer from her wheelchair to the car on her own."

While the physical benefits are important, instructors, volunteers and clients are quick to point out that the value of therapeutic horsemanship goes far beyond building bodily strength. Vanji Burnett, an instructor-in-training at BTR, has worked in hippotherapy elsewhere in the world, and seen programs that simply placed a client on a horse, had them complete 15 minutes of exercises, then called it a day. Here, though, she sees a holistic approach.

"In this program, they actually teach people how to ride," she says. "They build self-esteem. They see progress. Riders aren't just using their bodies. They're using their minds." Magruder concurs, saying the change she's seen in Davenport in the past year has been tremendous.

"Riding horses gave her confidence, and the capacity to do anything she wanted, anything anybody else does," she says. "When I met her, she wanted to stay at home,





and wanted people to do everything for her. Now she wants to be independent. She cooks, she does laundry. And it all started after she began horseback therapy.”

Fostering this feeling of confidence and self-esteem is a primary goal of the program. Not only do students ride, they also learn about the care of horses, which helps build a sense of competency, compassion and responsibility. They bring animals in and out of their pastures, learn about saddling and grooming, and in the process, often develop deep relationships – with the horses, other students, instructors and volunteers.

Purcelli knows better than anyone the transformative value of therapeutic riding. After being an instructor for more than a decade, he says, “I could write a book about the things I’ve experienced as an

instructor. I’ve seen kids speak their first words in a lesson, kids who have never made a sound in their lives, and then all of a sudden...” He spreads his hands and shrugs, gesturing to the arena and his students riding. “It’s hard to describe, but horses have a sixth sense. They know.”

He tells story after story of the progress he’s seen. An older woman with multiple sclerosis had relied entirely on a cane for mobility yet, after six months of riding, could walk unassisted and mount a horse on her own. A deaf and developmentally delayed girl taught her able-bodied sister to ride, then challenged her to a barrel race.

“Years ago, we had twin girls who had cerebral palsy,” he says. “They were born premature, and the doctors told the parents they’d never walk or talk. They started with us when they were 11 or 12. By the time they were 14, they could ride independently, walk, trot and canter. We took them to a barrel race, and they competed in it.

“The parents said, ‘We know our kids will never win a blue ribbon, but just the fact that they can compete and be normal – you have no idea how much that means to them.’”

As Purcelli speaks, his words are infused with an acknowledgment of the tiny miracles that occur every day. It’s an ethos that permeates this place and the people who work within it, from volunteers to the program director and property owner, Linda Olson.

“That’s what it’s all about,” she

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says. “Seeing the joy in someone. That makes it all worthwhile.” She admits, though, that the business side of BTR can get disheartening. “There are so many people who could use this kind of help. The medical profession is realizing what a difference therapeutic riding makes. Insurance companies, though, don’t acknowledge it’s a viable form of therapy. More people need to know about it.”

BTR sponsors many of its riders through a scholarship program, funded by community donations. The program also receives community support in other ways.

“All of our horses are donated,” Olson says. “That’s such a great aspect, too. We get to be a retirement facility for horses.” She says that of every 20 horses offered to BTR, perhaps one qualifies for the program. Once accepted, horses go through a 30- to 45-day training period to prepare them for one of the most

important jobs a horse can have: helping people find happier, healthier, more confident lives.

Back in the arena, Davenport approaches the end of her weekly lesson. After nearly an hour of walking her horse around the arena, weaving patterns through the barrels, she’s ready for one final challenge: trotting, something she’s never done before.

The volunteers at her sides stand ready to offer support as the group moves forward. The Norwegian Fjord picks up his pace at Davenport’s cue. The pair trots the length of the arena, coming to a stop before its double doors.

Everyone in the building cheers. The rider grins and ducks her head happily. After Purcelli has helped Davenport out of the saddle and she’s settled back in her wheelchair, the horse leans in, gently nuzzling Davenport’s cheek. The young woman’s smile, huge to begin with, grows even bigger.



Melissa Mylchreest is a writer living in Montana.

Learn more about Bitterroot Therapeutic Riding at [www.bitterrootriding.org](http://www.bitterrootriding.org).

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# Sunday Creek

A frontier community comes to life through the voices of multiple characters in Jeff Streeby's collection of poems and stories.

Poet Jeff Streeby's book *Sunday Creek* (InCahoots Literary, 2012) is one of the most original and ambitious storytelling projects imaginable: the resurrection of a frontier town through the long-lost voices of multiple characters, whose stories unfold in verse and first-person prose.

Streeby writes in character, telling Sunday Creek's story through what Margo Metegrano, of the Center for Western & Cowboy Poetry, calls "epitaphs spoken in verse," a collection of yarns, testimonies and confessions from beyond the grave. Extending his cast of characters past a predictable lineup of cowboys and Indians, Streeby gives equal time to soldiers, artists, blacksmiths, schoolteachers, preachers and even the frontier prostitutes who populate Sunday Creek. Characters are based upon historical figures, nearly forgotten anecdotes, and obscure clues to frontier life harvested from sources ranging from sketchy footnotes to weathered headstones.

"It's as if a person were entering history from a different doorway, encountering these figures and events, being and happening, slightly differently than history dictates," poet and musician Charlie Camden says of Streeby's collection. "Words common to the time, expressions, the way his characters speak, rationale of the time period, knowledge of horses and a way of life – all these come together to allow the reader to readily enter a time gone by."

Here, we present three excerpts from *Sunday Creek*:

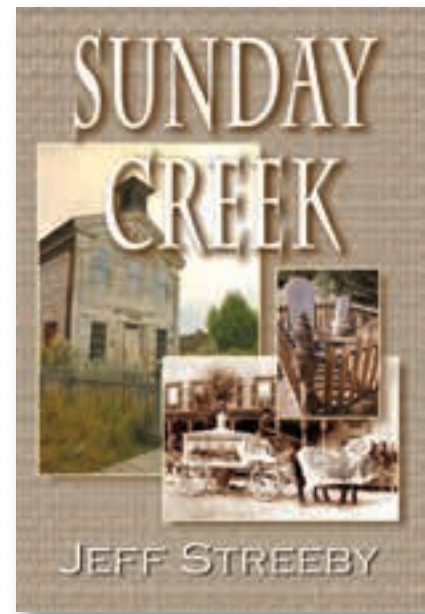
## George Ides

1831-1865

Palmer and me, we was cut from the same leather and stamped with the same dies. And, by God, you better know that Palmer he wasn't no smarter than me. It was just that jackass was the Great Seizer of Sunday Creek and he had him that shiny badge, his

other nickel-plated fofaraw, words eight-to-the-pound, and a room back of the Mason's Hall, so he figured to run things.

Palmer and me, we was each of us an end of the same cinch and strung to the gold D's of the same skeleton rig. But, by God, you better know it wasn't him that made wolf meat of that old grissel heel Seamus MacCleod on the road back from Elk City. It was ME







stripped him of his corn freight and his treasure. It was ME, MY ax it was creased his skull a foot deep like it wasn't nothing but a pumpkin, and ME, I left him there in the swag. It was ME worked them jerklines and Mormon brakes with Frank Vicar and chivied them freight wagons out of the mountains and up to Pendergast's ranch. It was ME sold off everything, wagons and all, and nobody the wiser.

Palmer and me, we was twin forks of the same tree, took as we was with the gold colic. But, by God, you better know it wasn't him but ME that dabbled in all them miners' gore, and ME as put a ball in that two-buckle boy for his wagon load of potatoes, and ME as curled up that little Illinois Jezebel for him that time at the courthouse, and ME over at Nevada City, not that yellow-bellied Haze Kroeger or pretty Charlie Ford, as let a window in the skull of that ass Dillington whilst Henry kept the doors swinging at Tanner's whiskey mill "on the scout" he'd say "for easy pickings."

That last day, when me and Frank seen our private mark on the coach and that Billy Bunyon had left off the whipping and we seen that the wheelers and the swing team was so poor and jaded, we figured we could go on our own and to Hell with Henry and the rest. We would stand them up for what they was worth then light us a shuck for the Medicine Line.

We should have maybe waited to count out what was in McFarlen's portemonnaie 'til we was well on the way North. Or we should have maybe shot the leaders, or cut the traces, or run off the teams. Or we should have killed that long-legged Irish son-of-bitch McFarlen and all the rest, like Henry always said and like we always done before. We could have got off sure, fixed like we was in town.

But when that mudwagon fogged into Sunday Creek an hour late with one of the wheelers dead and

dragging in the traces and Rumley the jehu, all fuss and uproar, reported the robbery at Pendergast's stage office, well, Wilkinson and McFarlen went straight to the Masons' Hall and told Madison and Saddler who we was and leaked their mouths about the whole damn business.

The Vigilance Committee surprised me and Frank out at Pendergast's ranch after. And then they run Pendergast and Co. out of town.

Birds of a feather, as they say, roost in the same tree. Palmer really wasn't no smarter than me, neither. The 3-7-77s took him up right out of Tanner's that afternoon and Jack, Buck, and Ned, too. And so was we all cut off by Dix Saddler's rope.

Palmer and me, we took the cure for the gold fever on the same limb, dancing the strangulation jig 'til our faces turnt black. My eyes went glassy how many years ago looking through the leaves on this same cottonwood tree.

By God, I hate the racket of them leaves!

*Author's Notes: "George Ides" is based on the historical figure of George Ives, who, reputedly was one among a gang of thieves and highwaymen known as the Innocents and who was among the first to be hanged by the Montana Vigilantes. The incident of the robbery of the Peabody coach in October of 1863, which resulted in the capture and execution of Ives and his confederate Frank Parrish, was reported in an essay by British immigrant Professor Thomas J. Dimmesdale, editor of the first Montana newspaper, The Montana Post. In 1996, Dimmesdale's essay was reprinted in Big Sky Stories, Number 8, Choteau, Montana. "Jehu" (yahoo?) is a common name for the stagecoach driver, after the reckless charioteers of King Jehu.*

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**Jim Smith**  
1828-1865

For a long time after I got to California, I was fizzled, so finally, with a different name, a little nerve and a '58 Remington, I put together a fair slipe of rag money and hard tack then went north on the slope up to Idaho City.

Opportunity had dried up there already. Nothing left but sniping for China wages. Even the heathen Celestials had me beat.

So with a pack mule and a bed horse trailing behind, I followed the rumors of gold into the new Territory, rode up over the Lolo Pass and laid up for a week or so there at Hellgate in Tanner's rum hole. I don't rightly recall, but it was long enough, I reckon, to get good and drunk on snakehead whiskey and lose one horse and half my outfit playing at euchre in that morgue.

When I sobered up, I lit out East along the emigrant trail toward the old Hudson's Bay fort on the Missouri. I was plainly far up the flume again, so I sold the saddle horse there to McCleod and bought a shovel and a pan, a little Hercules powder, a bottle of aqua regia, just in case, and victuals enough for a month and headed up Old Fort River.

After three days the river bent to the east and got squeezed through a narrow rocky cut. The going was steep and hard for a day and a half, then the canyon leveled out and opened into a pretty little basin maybe thirty miles across, grassy, open mostly, with bunches of cedar, spruce and quakies growing up rims that rose to goodly mountains on three sides. Looked to be virgin country right enough though I allow as how it couldn't be, for there was nary a beaver. Not even an old lodge. Elk sign aplenty and moose. Plenty wolves. And cats. Alder thickets and buffalo berry, willows. Real brushy there along the river. More deer than rats in a granary. And tame, too. A muley doe scrambled out of the shallow water fifty feet off then stood looking at me and the mule.

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Plenty good bear country, too, though I saw no sign. A damn fine country all told, but for the punkies and noseums and skeeters.

That high up, the river ain't much, just a little crik, not deep enough to reach the panniers. The mule could wade across it in a minute or so. I followed the stream north by northeast and I camped that night at a gentle bend underneath a lip of rock that bellied out of the northern rim.

In the morning, I walked the crik with shovel and pan. Found black sand and quartz. Bedrock pitchings. Good signs, but no color in the first prospect nor none in the second a hundred yards further west. Another hundred yards – there, a few chispas winked up at me out of the pan. Another fifty yards – there was plenty color but still too fine to bother with. Another fifty yards – I

washed out maybe a dollar's worth of dust. In a second pan there was a two-dollar pellet. I worked the spot for another two hours and got me about twelve dollars more. Another fifty yards west – I picked up a nugget the size of my thumbnail off a narrow gravel shelf on the creek bank.

The next morning I worked the gravel shelf and made about twenty dollars in an hour and a half. A hundred yards further west I worked for two hours for ten dollars then I went back downstream to the gravel shelf. I worked the rest of the afternoon within twenty yards either side. In two hours west of the shelf, I collected an ounce of nuggets. And in two hours on the upstream side, only a half ounce of dust. Then I knew what to do.

The next morning, a Monday I reckon, I worked above the little gravel shelf north of the creek bank. The

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land there rose gently for half a mile or so between two rocky outcrops in front of a three-hundred-foot cliff face. The wedge-shaped slope was dotted with sage and greasewood, buffalo berry and bear grass. A boggy strip ran down the middle from a little stand of cedars about halfway up. Here and there a little stand of aspen. Horsehead. Death Camas. Skunk cabbage. A little deadfall. Not such hard work. Twenty yards uphill from the crik, ten or so yards upstream from my little gravel shelf, I dug a prospect hole and dry panned, looking for color. Then, over the next two days, I dug a line of them ten paces apart clear across the hillside. Thirty of them. The only color I found was in the boggy strip and sixty feet or so to either side. For the next four days I tracked the streak up the slope, digging, dry-panning, and all along, there was more and more color and she got narrower and narrower the farther up the hill I went and she give up more pay dirt all the time. Late on that last Saturday afternoon I figured as best I could where the veila madre was like to be found.

Come the next morning then, and a fine Sunday morning it was, too, I pushed an adit into the side of the slope and after a little ways in then I turned it straight down and worked it into a coyote hole and got about eight feet further where I hit a shelf of rotten rock with a white quartz seam running through it. It was just about five o'clock, I reckon, just before I was a-losing the light, when I knew for sure that this here was sure the glory hole. If'n I'd a-had to wait until the next day to be sure, I reckon as how this whole damn drainage here would have been called Monday Creek instead. When I rode back into McCleod's stockade a week later to the day, I was a-packin' a fortune – 102 pounds and six and a quarter ounces of dust and nuggets.

I went into business with McCleod and staked him. He rode back over to Idaho City, hired teamsters, and bought three tandem freight wagons and 18 big drafty mules. He loaded up all the picks and shovels and pans and boots that he could get his hands onto, and hard tack and flour and salt and sugar and jerked meat, some kegs of sixty-rod whiskey and some gunpowder and lead bars and some axes and hammers and other tools, all that the mules could haul. And he surely spread the word all over the country about what I had found up on Sunday Creek, he called it. And after that it wasn't Old Fort River anymore, it was Sunday Creek from Sunday Flats clear down to the Missouri, and off west was Sunday Butte, and it wasn't Frenchman's Cabin or Varina anymore, it was





the city of Sunday Creek, and it was Sunday This and Sunday That and Sunday The Other. I leased my claim on shares to a company of free miners and I stayed around and spent a lot of money. Made a lot, as well. Made more money over the next few years from being partners with McCleod than I could have packed out of there on a hundred mules. The day they brought in McCleod's body, I was damn drunk. I spent \$40,000 that day just on a pair of New Orleans sporting women, oysters and lobsters and French Champaign.

I stood the drinks for 800 people the day they decorated that cottonwood tree with Ides and Palmer and the rest. Then, that very Sunday afternoon, right after the hangings, as I rode out the Elk City Road on a lark, drunk and celebrating-like, for I and every man in town knew that it was Ides as had taken off my partner McCleod, a couple of Bannock bucks who had took a considerable liking to the fine big bay gelding I was on rode down on me out of the timber and and before I could say lickety-split one of them put an ounce ball through my guts. That knocked me off the horse. When I woke up, they was gone and the horse and my hair, too. I crawled a couple of miles back toward town.

You know, I just might have made it all the way in too, if it hadn't snowed on me in the night.

*Author's Note: A fictional character, Jim Smith is based on the historical figure of John White, the discoverer of the gold deposits at Alder Gulch (Virginia City, Montana), the largest placer deposit ever found. The miner's slang which peppers his speech is based on "Cariboo," a goldfield dialect which appears to flower around 1863 in the northern goldfield, though it owes much to the slang of the California Gold Rush period.*

### **Phillip St. George**

**1862-1937**

In 1878, on October 25, St. Crispian's Day you know, and a dark day it was too, a dreary day, cold and inauspicious, bringing rain, wind, and cold in that year, I rode out on a salty fuzztail, a crowbait that bucked and fell with me like a ton of bricks. When we lit, an iron stirrup smashed my ankle to mush. Thus in a little twist of fate rendered forever lame and

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otherwise of no meaningful use to anyone, did I then become a saddler and maker of harness.

Dad taught me everything he thought I maybe ought to know but I figured anyway I better have a look-see at what fancy tricks the master makers had to show me. I worked a time for the Collins brothers, John and Gilbert, at their new shop in Cheyenne and for S. C. Gallup too, down in Pueblo. And I learned much, became practiced, skillful, sure of hand – so men sought my work – for I knew horses well – the way they moved—and knew the small vanities of horsemen – I had a good eye for ornament – I could read and write, and cipher, too, and so could keep accounts. I was honest, temperate, thrifty, single-minded, and prudent to boot.

So in May of 1883, I moved to Main Street in Sunday Creek by Orr’s Blacksmith Shop. My first day open, Duncan Granville walked in and put up five double Eagles on the nail for a new rimfire California hardseat. Set with silver. Nelson A-fork tree. Full flower tooling. Long eagle-bill tapaderos. By God, the whole shebang. Yes, a fine piece of work that was, if I say so myself.

He picked it up the very day they finished his big fancy house. Was it, what, maybe three years later, about? He was dead and his pretty wife and the baby too. I bought it back at the sheriff’s auction that closed out his bankrupt outfit.

The taps was ruined for they had got water-logged somehow so I hung a pair of cast brass ox-bow stirrups on it and sold it to Bob Steele. After he got all crippled up, he sold it and for a little spell then – a year or so? – Big Mose Richardson had it. After he got himself killed, Em, Miss Prissy’s boy, had it from him, and he sold it off when he run away with Mr. P. T. Barnum’s Circus.

In 1894, I bought it back from J. T. Fisk, the hotel keeper, who took it in on an unpaid bill for room and board. I replaced the latigo and half-breed and the flank cinches. I re-stitched the horn and the cantle. I sewed up a torn fender. I relined and restrung it. I put wear strips on the swells. I put on new brass conchos. The original silver ones was all a long time gone. Then I sold it off. On the cheap this time. To China Jack.

It was quite a fair long spell before I saw it again. In 1923 there was a little poker game in Dyers back room. China Johnny lost it and his horse.





The next day the lucky winner come in the shop with it and I bought it back for cash. I cleaned it up and oiled it and sold it back to Johnny after he got flush again.

In 1928 Johnny swapped out that old-time hull and traded up for a brand-new rig. I fixed it all up again, new stirrup leathers, a new seat jock and sold it to Hank Iron Bull, that Indian rodeo cowboy.

Some years later, I guess I don't recollect how many, on the way back home from Crow Fair a drunk driver killed him and both his rope horses. The State Troopers sent his saddle and his other things home. In tears, his mother brought his gear, everything in his warbag, in here to get shed of it. Thus Duncan Granville's old saddle came back to me again.

It was banged up bad this time. I saved whatever I could. The cantle was broke so I pegged it. I reset the

horn. I had to grind the skid marks out of them old brass stirrups. It took more work and leather than I thought it could pay back, but I sold it to an outfitter and I broke even.

A year later one of his hunters let his horse run off carrying the old saddle. I found it myself last fall wrapped around a bunch of horse bones under the China Wall. After all that time, there wasn't all that much left of it. I could tell it was mine though by the pegs in the cantle, the one scarred-up brass stirrup that was left, the last concho.

I could not give up on it, Duncan Granville's old saddle. I kept that bent brass concho as a fob on my watch chain for years. When it was time, I sewed it inside a pocket of my black vest. Two weeks later they buried me in it.



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## NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

### To the future of agriculture and FFA...

The 85th National FFA Convention & Expo wrapped in October with a record-breaking 56,000+ FFA members, advisors, supporters and guests on hand to celebrate another tremendous year for FFA nationwide. The event proved to be a heart-felt *sayonara* for Indianapolis after seven successful years as the national blue and corn gold convention and expo's host city.

The theme for this year's convention and expo was GROW. Over the four days, attendees not only grew their



knowledge and support for agricultural education, agriculture and FFA, but they also cultivated their passion for the last line of the FFA motto, Living to Serve, with the first-ever FFA Rally to Fight Hunger. More than 10,000 members packed one million+ meals that fed food insecure families in Indianapolis and Haiti.

In addition to fighting hunger, FFA honored the rich legacy of Hispanics/Latinos with the "Somos FFA, We Are FFA" celebration.

Hundreds of FFA members volunteered to help with community projects throughout the Indianapolis area during the National FFA Days of Service. FFA members from every state as well as Puerto Rico competed in FFA Career Development Events while others learned in student workshops, celebrated milestones, received honors and more at the nation's largest annual student gathering.

As we move forward to 2013 and Louisville's turn to host the convention and expo for the next three years, we prepare for a new era in agricultural education and FFA that will continue to inspire attendees at this life-changing event.



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Thousands of FFA members, advisors, supporters and guests gathered at Bankers Life Fieldhouse in downtown Indianapolis for one of eight general convention and expo sessions that featured award presentations, special recognitions, keynote speakers, the installation of the new 2012-2013 National FFA Officer







Opening day of the convention and expo kicked off with Olympic gold medalist and hall of famer Scott Hamilton inspiring young and old alike during the opening general session and a sea of blue jackets parading down FFA Way during the Grand March. That night, attendees enjoyed a private concert featuring The Band Perry, with special guest Brantley Gilbert.



FFA envisions a world in which hunger is a thing of the past. That's why our members are fighting hunger at home and abroad with service projects such as the FFA Rally to Fight Hunger. An impressive 10,000 FFA members packed 1 million+ meals for families in Indianapolis and Haiti.



Another convention and expo milestone was the “Somos FFA, We Are FFA” celebration that paid tribute to the rich ancestry and traditions of the more than 80,000 FFA members who self-identify as Hispanic/Latino. Here, members strike a pose with Flyte, the organization’s new mascot, who officially debuted during the convention and expo.





The National FFA Expo featured 450 exhibitors representing colleges, agriculture-related and fundraising companies, U.S. Armed Services and auto and truck manufacturers. New this year was the Collegiate and Alumni Career Fair, which brought FFA Alumni and Collegiate FFA members face to face with more than 30 employers looking to fill internships and full-time positions.





Since 1928, the National FFA Organization has worked to create career development events that demonstrate the meaningful connections between classroom instruction and real-life scenarios. CDEs test the abilities of individuals and teams in 25 major areas of agricultural instruction. More than 3,000 youth travel from across the country to participate at the national level.



The World's Toughest Rodeo brought the best bull and bronc riders to the convention and expo for two big shows and the crowning of the series champions.



FFA members and advisors were “living to serve” during the National Days of Service. Service sites included Joy’s House, an adult day service that provides care for adults living with physical and mental challenges.



# The Frontier Project

Snowy Ride: An excerpt from *Mustang Spring*, a new collection of poetry and short fiction by Deanna Dickinson McCall.



*Editor's Note: Published this fall by The Frontier Project Inc., Mustang Spring is the first collection of poems and short stories from New Mexico writer and rancher Deanna Dickinson McCall. Margo Metegrano, of the Center for Western & Cowboy Poetry, characterizes McCall's work this way: "Five generations of ranching run through Deanna McCall's veins, through her life, through her writing. She carries the wisdom forward through her absorbing poems and beckoning stories. Her wisdom is hard earned. Her stories are not about the 'romance of Western life.' Characters know heat and hurt, cold and loss, danger, heartbreak and toil. But, like the writer, they don't know 'can't.'" The following excerpt is testimony to that last point. In this story, a rancher braves a ride in a horrific blizzard to save his stranded family.*

I am cold, colder than a man should be and still be alive. I felt my body begin to draw up into itself hours ago, leaving a physical space between the first of many layers I wear and my tightened skin. It no longer hurts to breathe the frozen air and my legs and arms don't ache any longer. They are now like wooden stumps that slowly, mechanically, respond to my wishes. I am tired, beyond tired, but must continue lifting my heavy head to make sure the horse under me is still going the right direction. I trust him, but only somewhat. He became a little confused earlier.

But, let me start my story from the beginning. It has snowed relentlessly for days, with temperatures hovering around zero, give or take ten degrees. Our fuel tanks are near empty, and our haystacks are shrinking

too rapidly because of this massive storm that continues to swirl above us. The fuel must come first; we need it to get feed to the cattle. The additional hay must also come, but can wait a little while.

The ranch is isolated, with no electricity, fifteen miles from the nearest phone, and ten miles from the nearest neighbor or paved road, which is a U.S. highway. It is to this neighbor I am riding, hoping to get a ride, a ride in a vehicle, to the phone at the roadside store five miles further. We keep a freezer there and my wife has asked me to fill my saddlebags with meat since we ran out several days ago. While the ranch sits nestled on a county road, we're the last on a long list to get plowed. It will be weeks before we hear the sound of a county plow. "County-maintained" means grading once a year and snow removal



*Mustang Spring*, by Deanna Dickinson McCall, is the New Mexico writer's first collection of poems and short fiction. Artist Teal Blake illustrated the cover.



# Great Cowboys Drink Great Wine



*Tony Thompson, Head Wrangler*

*Alisal Ranch, Solvang, CA 2012*



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once or twice a year, after all the other roads are in good shape.

I left my worried wife and children to feed the cattle and horses when we decided this ride must be made and that I must ride back in the same day. My wife was emphatic about the timing of the return ride, because no one except she and the kids knew I was going, and no one would know if I didn't make it. She has a vivid imagination and I knew she had mental images of me lying frozen on the snow, dead eyes iced over. If I haven't returned by an hour after dark, my wife will saddle up and begin searching for me, leaving our teenager in charge of her younger brother. No one could survive a night in this high desert country during this cold storm. This winter has broken the grip of the devastating drought, but is a nightmare for ranchers tending stock already weakened from short, sparse grass.

I rode out the ranch gate this morning and up the slight rise to the small flat that gradually ascends into the foothills before the pass. The snow lay in drifts like sugared mounds, ranging from three to six feet with ground swept bare in places by the eternal wind. The howling wind filled the air around me and I pulled my scarf up to cover my face. As I neared the pass and the protection of the trees, the snow lay deeper with less rise in the drifts. At times, Yellar used his big chest to break a trail through the deepening snow.

Suddenly my horse fell directly out from under me. I managed to stay over him, a couple feet above the saddle. He shook his big head and wallered out of the gully that the snow had filled and hidden. I loosened my big snow pacs from the stirrups, knowing I'd never get them out if he fell. Cold sweat broke on my body, trapped in the layers padding me. Grimly, I gathered my reins in my bulky mittens and rode on.

After several more startling, heart-racing drops into hidden gullies, we topped the pass into the next valley.

I should have been able to spot the distant neighbor's ranch and the highway, but ground blizzards swirled below me like an evil magician's trick. Yellar began sliding. I tried to help by leaning back to get my weight off his front end, and turned toward the direction of the ranch. The horse was now soaked with salty sweat, his head bent down in fatigue. I reached to rub his neck with a stiff arm, transmitting my thanks and encouragement. A big, startlingly fast horse, he was bought for the kids to rope off and barrel race in high school rodeos, but he had shown various signs of possessing low intelligence. I was grateful for the heart he'd shown today.

Suddenly, Yellar threw his head up and neighed, staring straight ahead. I peered through the swirling snow and could see nothing. A few moments later, I saw the outline of the large trees at the neighbor's ranch. Feeling a surge of energy, I straightened in the saddle and began working my toes and fingers to try and regain some feeling. Yellar gathered himself up under me and picked up his pace, throwing snow out from under us like a machine.

We crossed what we knew had to be the highway, yet it was so covered by snow, only the occasional snow marker standing above a drift made it recognizable. The fence bordering it was nowhere to be seen, completely buried in the snow. We rode up the lane to the ranch yard, Yellar neighing at a place he'd never been or seen before. Wood smoke drifted on the air, making me shiver as I thought of the warmth of a fire. I stiffly dismounted, stomping feeling back into my legs as I put the horse in the barn, giving him hay and grain and a chance to rest.

No one had appeared, so I walked to the neighbor's pickup and felt the hood, which was still warm. All four wheels were chained up. My neighbor must be out feeding with his team of horses, I reasoned. The keys





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were in the truck and I drove out, headed for the highway and the store five miles down the road. The heater felt like heaven and I delighted in its warmth. The highway was a mess of drifts, with only my neighbor's tracks sliced through. I was beginning to wonder if I was in a nightmare and if we were part of a handful of people still alive in a world gone white and frozen.

I made it to the store, where another neighbor and the store owners were gathered around the stove, excited to see me. No one was venturing out in this weather, none of the usual tourists clad in shorts wanting to know why the desert was this cold and why it was snowing. My neighbors had been making plans to reach us. I drank hot coffee shoved into my hands, the steam melting my frozen mustache, while assuring them the family was all right, although we were out of fuel.

I called my worried father-in-law, who had already hired a bulldozer to make a trail into the ranch and

check on our well being. I arranged for him to coordinate the dozer and fuel truck. I grabbed candy bars and jerky to eat on the way, explaining I couldn't accept the worried offers of dinner and a bed, but had to hurry to begin the ride home. I filled my saddlebags with Polish sausages, remembering my family's plea for meat and thinking my wife would stretch them into various meals.

I returned to the neighbor's ranch, parking his truck as I found it, scrawling a note of thanks to place on the seat. Yellar had eaten his meal, and nickered at me. I re-saddled him and led him out of the protection of the barn. We both heaved a big sigh as we looked at the vast area we had to re-cross.

The temperature was beginning to fall in anticipation of the coming night. Dark came early in January and the clouds now sat on the ground, adding to the density of the blowing snow. I had hoped the wind would begin to die, but it appeared to be gaining force.

As we crossed the highway and began the gradual climb back up the pass, I prayed Yellar didn't sink through the snow to become tangled in the buried fence. Our tracks I had planned to follow were gone, drifted over. I was trying to remember where a particularly deep gully was when we fell straight down several feet, causing me to do the splits above the saddle before landing hard back in it. My groin muscles screamed in protest and the horse stood dazed for a moment before he shook his big head and began trying to climb out.

I kicked my feet free of the stirrups and leaned forward to help him. The walls were too close to allow me to get off and I feared he might pin me while struggling out. He plowed ahead, once again using his wide chest to break a trail. We continued on, Yellar with his head now close to the ground, sniffing. Maybe he wasn't as dumb as we all thought. Like a bloodhound,





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*Tom Dorrance & Ray Hunt*

*Photo Courtesy Heather Hayleigh*

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the old bugger was trying to sniff our earlier path.

I knew we were going to be in trouble. The sun was lowering behind the heavy veil of gray and I wasn't cold any longer, just tired, and kept nodding off to be rudely jolted awake when we fell through a drift. I tried to focus on my wife and kids' faces.

I am past the point where I began this story. I am vaguely worried that my wife is preparing to ride out to find me, and afraid she won't make it far before becoming lost or falling into a gully. Darkness is slowly surrounding us, comforting somehow, and adding to my exhausted state. I am fighting all my senses to stay awake, to stay alert as the big horse plods on and on, first traveling evenly, then jarring me to my teeth as we fall through drift after drift. The ride and the night are eternal.

Suddenly Yellar stops abruptly, almost knocking me from the saddle, throws his head high, and takes huge, deep sniffs of air. He begins whinnying and becomes excited, lifting his huge, snow-caked feet high to strike out quickly at a much faster pace. It has shaken me awake, and I become aware of a slight smell on the now still air. Is it piñon smoke?

I am almost afraid to think of it, afraid I might be dreaming, and try to push away thoughts of my warm home and my family. But the horse lifts those feet up and slams them down, breaking half-round balls of ice free from his feet. He wants to travel faster, but is afraid of falling or slipping. Then I hear it, the answer to Yellar's whinny. Then the howling, barking chorus of our dogs. I close my eyes as tears form, silently thanking God we have made it. We are almost home! My next thought is that darkness has fallen. Has my wife ridden out and missed us, or is the answering whinny I thought I heard coming from her horse?

I have reached the rise above the house and see the weak yellow glow of kerosene in our windows. A flashlight appears by the corrals and barn, and we half slip, half slide on the lane down to the light. My daughter is standing by my wife, holding in her hands a halter. She throws it to the ground as she grabs my horse's bridle.

My wife quickly moves to stand beside me, telling me to get down, that our daughter will take care of the horse. I brace against her shoulder as I try to get my right foot to move, to kick free of the stirrup. She moves to that side to break away the ice, then slowly forces my boot out of the stirrup. She repeats the same on the left side, then says quietly to try to get off. She is deadly calm, a warning sign to me. I know I must be bad and she reaches up to place her arms around me and begins to gently pull me toward her while my daughter holds the horse's head, staring at her parents with eyes like my grandmother's blue china saucers.

I don't remember losing the reins, but my daughter has them, I discover. My wife silently shakes her head at me, and resumes gradually pulling me down to her. Yellar is tall and she stretches upward, trying to slowly take my weight against her strong shoulders. I half fall against her, feel her brace herself and take the jolt as I try to stand. She wraps her arms more securely around me and tells me to be still, to let the blood circulate for a moment.

I am home and I am safe. The road will be opened tomorrow, and the cattle will get feed. My daughter has found the sausages and shows them to her mother. I couldn't know that the road would blow closed again the next night, and that it would take a few years before any of us could even look at a Polish sausage, but that's another story.



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# Quietly Listen

## Buster McLaury puts a West Texas twist on the Dorrance-Hunt traditions.

By Paul A. Cañada

**B**uster McLaury first met Ray Hunt in 1984, when Hunt was starting colts for the Four Sixes Ranch. Buster was a fourth-generation West Texas cowboy, born on the Sixes and raised on the nearby Triangle. He had heard of Hunt, but admits he was ignorant about Hunt's methods, what many would come to call "natural horsemanship."

Like many of the Sixes cowboys, Buster was certain of one thing: Hunt, whose methods were then more prevalent in the Great Basin, didn't do things the way they were done in Texas cattle country. Buster reasoned his own way of doing things was the right way. Despite his confidence, the younger cowboy made an effort to stay open-minded.

Each Sixes hand brought from his remuda a colt for Hunt to start. The Idaho horseman ran each colt in a pen, roped him and worked him from horseback. He then worked on foot to prepare the colt for the saddle. When he was ready, Hunt saddled the animal.

Buster and the rest of the Sixes hands were amazed at Hunt's ability to get a colt to do what they would've previously thought impossible to achieve in a timespan of mere hours. By the end of Hunt's first day, Buster made a habit of watching the horseman's every move.

The colt Buster took to Hunt was easily excitable, trying to climb over the backside of the corral each time a Sixes cowboy pulled a horse from the pen. After Hunt

worked the colt, Buster carried the saddle into the corral.

"Do you mind if I saddle this one and you just coach me a little bit?" Buster asked Hunt. "I believe I'd like to learn a bit more about this."

Hunt was skeptical.

"I usually like to do it myself, especially with a sensitive colt like this," he told Buster. "But, it's your horse. If you want to saddle him, just be about it."

Hunt coached the cowboy along, directing Buster to "ease up to him, pet him a little bit and introduce yourself."

Buster reached to touch the animal's nose, but the colt turned his head away. Persistent, Buster eased behind his horse's shoulder, petting him on the neck. When the colt again reacted adversely, the Texas cowboy took a step back.

"Oh, hell, boy," Hunt said. "You don't even know how to pet a horse."

Hunt's rebuttal caught Buster by surprise. Surely he'd misheard. Buster, as it happened, was in charge of the Sixes bronc pen, and knew his way around a horse. He looked back over his shoulder at Hunt, as if to say, "Huh?"

Hunt then used two words Buster's father often used: "Now think. What was the first thing that horse ever felt in his life?"

The young cowboy didn't say anything. He just rolled his shoulders a bit. Hunt rode over to the colt and ran his hand over the colt's mane.





photos by Paul Caniada

Working with a horse isn't about unlocking his physical abilities, McLaury contends. It's about getting the animal to think about helping his handler, and about the job at hand.

"He felt his momma's tongue licking him off," said Hunt. "She didn't take her tongue and go banging on him like you just did. It isn't that you had a bad idea, but the way you presented the idea to that horse wasn't worth a damn because it didn't fit the horse mentally. He wasn't ready to be patted like that."

To that point in his life, Buster says, he hadn't given the horse's point of view much consideration. Whether petting a horse, saddling or shoeing, he did what he needed to do, no matter how much rope it took to get the job done. That attitude was the norm among cowboys of the day.

"We pressed horses into doing what we wanted

them to do," Buster now says, "though force, fear and intimidation. We didn't think we were being mean. There was a job to do and the horse was there to help us get the job done."

Growing up in West Texas, Buster learned to "break" a horse the way his daddy learned from his father. The horse was seen as a tool, not as a partner.

"I can't tell you how many times I heard, 'Make him do it,'" Buster says. "There wasn't much instruction given in how to make a horse do it. Thanks to Ray Hunt, many of today's young cowboys are much better horsemen than we were at their age."

Hunt had a tremendous influence on cowboys

working the Texas outfits he visited. Those interested and willing were given opportunities to learn. Not all were agreeable, though, and Hunt believed he couldn't force his idea of horsemanship on the unwilling.

In Texas' rugged brush country, a cowboy's horse was his to do with as he pleased. If he worked for a large outfit, he was given a string of horses and they were his to ride and care for. No one dared tell him how to manage them.

"A cowboy's horses were a reflection of him," Buster says. "That was the mentality I grew up with. You learned to make a hand on whatever kind of horse they led out to you – no excuses – or you went on down the road."

Today, it's hard to find a ranch cowboy unfamiliar with the horsemanship of Ray Hunt and his mentor, Tom Dorrance. Even if a cowboy doesn't understand the concepts, he's heard of them, and knows where to look to learn more. Early resistance to Hunt's ideas among Texas cowboys, Buster contends, had to do with the demands of the state's unforgiving brush country, where quarters were tight and cowboying could require quick, decisive action.

Buster, though, had learned early in life that the cowboy with the most reliable string of horses stayed on the job. He took Hunt's horsemanship to heart, working to see from the horse's perspective, and learning to make the "right" decisions easy for a horse to make.

Not long after that first encounter with Hunt, Buster left the Sixes. He cowboied in the brush country and eventually went on to manage a couple of cow operations. Even when he had a crew working for him, he still hesitated to tell a man how to ride his horse.

"I rode my horses the best way I knew how, and tried to set a good example," he says. "If anyone asked for help, I tried to help. I never considered *teaching* horsemanship."

In 1994, Buster found himself out of a job when



Buster McLaury travels across the country to educate horsemen. Much of his philosophy is based upon the teachings of Ray Hunt.

ownership changed at the ranch where he worked. He began working as a day hand and riding horses for others. Customers began asking about his horsemanship techniques, and Buster shared what he had learned from Hunt. Soon, he began getting calls from outfits like the Pitchfork Ranch and Moorhouse Ranch, asking if he'd lend a hand starting colts. Other horse owners called, as well, asking for help with their horses. Before long, Buster was on the road, teaching horsemanship at clinics. The money was good and the work was plentiful, but Buster missed working cattle.

On a spring day at the Pitchfork, Buster had just finished working with two dozen two-year-old colts when Bob Moorhouse, then the ranch's manager, approached him. "You better hang around," he told Buster, "because come Monday, we're going to pull out the wagon and go to branding."

Buster wanted nothing more than to be back out with the wagon and branding crew, but he was due to





conduct a clinic in Illinois. On the drive north, he felt remorseful over his decision. As he drove past corn fields, on his way to spend time with people who might never turn a cow, he reflected on the fact that his father, two grandfathers, and great-grandfather had never missed a spring of working cattle in Texas.

“In the middle of my pity party, something dawned on me,” Buster says. “For over a hundred years, the horse helped my family make a living. I realized the Lord had given me an opportunity to give something back to the horse. That changed everything and I never looked back.”

Today, of course, Ray Hunt’s philosophies are as commonly practiced in Texas as they are in other parts of the horse world, and Buster keeps a busy schedule, sharing the perspective he’s developed since his introduction to Hunt’s methods.

“They call this ‘natural horsemanship,’ but if you think about it, there’s nothing natural about it,” he says. “Here’s the human, a predator, climbing on a horse’s back and taking control of his feet in order to get a job done. The clinics are not about what I can get a horse to do. Instead, I’m sharing a philosophy, the idea of working with the horse mentally and getting him to let down his defenses and try something that’s very unnatural to him.”

That process begins with communication, a term that implies give-and-take, with each entity listening to the other. A horse expresses himself through body language – the way he holds his ears, the look in his eye, his head carriage, his tail position. In working with a horse, Buster observes the animal’s body; he presents an idea, then watches for a response. There’s a line, he says, between that point where a horse can operate without needing to protect himself, and a point at which he reacts in fear – kicking, striking, bucking.

“Ray always talked about wanting to operate just inside that line, and then back off a bit,” Buster says. “That’s a great idea, but that line moves all the time. It changes from one horse to the next, and from one minute to the next. It requires constant listening in order to find out where the horse is and where the trainer needs to go next.”

When he works with a horse, Buster attempts to quickly assess horse’s mental state. How does he feel about Buster’s presence in the corral? Some horses are indifferent, others afraid. Buster then presents himself in a manner that prompts the animal to think about him.

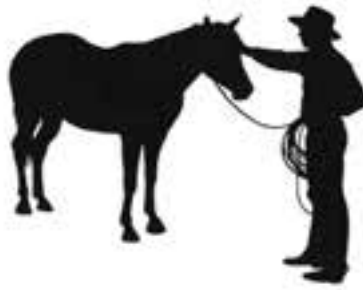
“If I’m in the corral with a horse for the first time and he runs from me, that’s all right,” Buster says. “I try to pressure him in a way that encourages him to step his hindquarters away from me, turn toward me, and look at me. It becomes a matter of getting the horse to yield his feet. I remember Ray saying, ‘All we’re trying to do is operate the life in the horse’s body down through the legs and to his feet, through his mind.’ It took me a long time before I understood those three words – ‘through his mind.’”

Horses have always had the physical abilities to do anything a human could ever ask – stand still, move forward, stop, turn, back. Working with a horse, Buster contends, is simply a matter of getting the animal to think about helping, and about the job required of them. If a horse decides to work with a rider, the human has to know enough to get out of the way.

“There’s something special in the horse, making him really want to please a human,” Buster says. “He’ll do everything in his power to please, if he understands what’s required, and understands he can get it done without getting in trouble. A horse will give you his life while trying to please.”



Paul Cañada is a writer and photographer based in Texas.  
Learn more about Buster McLaury at [www.bustermclaury.com](http://www.bustermclaury.com).



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## A VISIT WITH BUCK BRANNAMAN

# Working with Fear

## Part 1

**F**ear is something that I deal with a lot in my work with horses. It can be something so overwhelming that it permeates your entire life. It can make you say and do things you wouldn't dream of doing any other time. Sometimes when a person is afraid or intimidated, they'll be a little defensive toward others, or they may be rude or aggressive. So many times they're just putting up a wall trying to protect themselves from some unknown fear.

Early on, when I first starting working with people, I would see the symptoms of a person who lived a life in constant fear. The symptoms were different for different people. Some were very, very timid and withdrawn, others could be quite aggressive. With fear comes lots of other things – low self-esteem and doubting yourself, among others. I've found that frightened horse owners often can overcome their fear of doing the wrong thing by doing something else that's safe. Just be proactive and do something. Don't be locked up by fear. So many times, people fear situations where they believe they have no control. Of course, you can't play God with everything around you, but many times you can shape what's happening around you in a way that eliminates whatever it is that's frightening you.

Horses can be scary animals to work with due to their size and apparent skittishness – but often fear of an animal is just covering up other personal issues that the person is trying to deal with. I've never seen a situation where a person was just simply afraid of their horse, and didn't have that same characteristic fear permeating their entire life fabric. It always does. I guess because horses are larger and more powerful than we are, working with them can be a very revealing time for the owner – any fear that was there to start with is greatly magnified. And I don't know anyone who wants the things below the surface of their psyches to be revealed publicly. Surprise! Around horses, it all comes to the surface.

Over the years, I've found that some folks are intimidated by me. Although I often have to use a microphone at my clinics so everyone can hear, my natural speaking voice is fairly loud, too. Add to this the fact that I've been doing this for about a hundred years and I know that this job comes with a big responsibility to do my best to put my students at ease, while making sure I teach them and work with them to understand and accomplish the various things they're at my clinics to learn. But I am also there to help them take a look at themselves to see what they need to do to help themselves, not just their horses. I think it's very important to realize that many of those who are stuck in place by their fear may very well be doing the best they can with what they have, and it's up to us to understand where they're coming from. You have to put yourself in someone else's shoes before you can really appreciate why and how they will react to outside influences or situations. This counts for people as well as horses. *Part 2 in issue 2.6*





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

- Buck Brannaman



*Houlihan Ranch, Wyoming*

*A.J. Mangum*

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# Marsh Rats, Eels, and Butter Beans

## Tales of Spanish/Cowboy Cuisine

By Tom Russell

*God bless the inventor of sleep, the cloak that  
covers all men's thoughts, the food that cures all hunger...  
the balancing weight that levels the shepherd  
with the king and the simple with the wise....*

Cervantes

*Don Quixote*

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I'm gazing at a photo of eight Spanish herdsmen on the Peralta ranch in Seville. The men have dismounted to eat the midday meal, feasting on an enormous pan of *paella* in an open pasture. Their saddled horses stand attention. Bony, spavined *caballos* in a poor condition. They look like the nags Don Quixote rode through here with his pal Sancho Panza, when the boys rode out, tilting at windmills.

The photo is from a book by Barnaby Conrad and Loomis Dean titled: *Hemingway's Spain*. The horses may be lean and rattle-boned, but the men are eating well. They're following the tradition of ancient cowhands – a lunch served as a mixed casserole in an open pasture. Flies and fighting bulls be damned. The *paellera* pan, which holds the communal meal, is two feet across and filled with chicken, tomatoes, peas, garrafon beans, and artichoke hearts. There may be odd bits of wild bird and chorizo in there, as well as marsh rats and river oysters,

but I can't see that closely into the pan.

The herdsmen are shoveling the paella onto large chunks of Spanish bread and fishing through the rice for chicken bones. The boys examine every wing and leg bone before it is gnawed-on, flayed, and discarded. There might be a herd of fighting bulls somewhere in



photo courtesy Allen Josephs

Paella in Spain





photography courtesy Allen Josephs

“Ayo” cooking a giant paella in Malaga, Spain

the distance, outside the frame of this scenario, studying the herders and waiting for somebody to invade their terrain, or *querencia*. I am imagining this.

I’ve been in a pasture of large Spanish fighting bulls, travelling at a safe distance in a Land Rover. The driver’s side door of the car had a large hole in it, four inches in diameter. From the attack of a bull. I don’t see any bulls in this photo. Just herdsman and horses with heads bowed toward the grass, and the paella that is the center of this particular universe. As it should be. I harbor a deep *aficion* for paella.

There’s a caption included to the right of the photo which is attributed to my friend Allen Josephs – the

Hemingway scholar. His quote tells us something of the link between the American West and Spain:





Tom's ingredients for paella - our intrepid reporter on the front lines of international cuisine.

*In Spain Hemingway found being practiced some things he believed in and he liked the bullfights and the people. And he rediscovered parts of America, especially the West, in Spain, which made him love Spain all the more and gave him common ground with the Spaniards who had discovered America.*

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I've toured Hemingway's house in Cuba and felt the overpowering presence of his love for Spain in every room. Books, paintings, posters, keepsakes – on down to the empty bottles of *aguardiente*. I thought of this enchanted house, *finca vigia*, when I poured through the photos in *Hemingway in Spain*. But it's the paella which concerns us here. I've tasted paella in Valencia and Madrid and New York City, and now I cook it myself. It's a concoction which takes its own course and color and form. Blood and bone and sand. It's early cowboy cuisine. A connection back to the Spanish earth.

*Paella* is a Catalan word, echoing back to the Latin

"*patella*" for pan. Later the Spanish word for cooking pan became "*paellera*," and we eventually arrive at "*paella*," the rice dish which is associated with Valencia. The Moors are credited with introducing these casseroles of rice, meat, and spices – cooked on the ground at family fiestas. The dark and bloody Moors. They introduced rice to Spain as well as horses, bulls, and essentials at the root of our cowboy culture.

Who in hell were they? *The Moors*. They were pony riding Berbers who cut a wide and bloody swathe across ancient Spain, until driven out by the Catholics in the 15th century. They were the black cowboys of *Al-Andalus* and they cast a long historic shadow on our Spanish West.

In the 18th century the *Valencians* cooked paella out in the rice orchards, with ingredients such as marsh rats, eels, and butter beans. *Bon appetite!* Civilization began to intrude, and the wilder ingredients gave way to rabbit, duck, chicken, seafood, chorizo and snails. The subtleties and savors were added with saffron, rosemary, salt, paprika, garlic, olive oil and white wine. These ingredients, along with the short grain white rice, form the base of *Valencian Paella*. Two other common forms of *paella* exist: *Seafood Paella*, which became popular along the coast, and *Paella Mixta*, which may be a combination of Valencian and seafood – it's more freestyle.

The color and taste of paella owes much to the expensive spice *saffron* which comes from the dried stigma of the flower of the saffron crocus. Saffron, when toasted, gives off a hay-like fragrance and carries with it a dye called *crocin*, which imparts a yellow hue to the rice, meat, and other ingredients of *paella*. So much for the science.

The bottom line: *Valencian* rice, saffron, and your choice of meats, seafood or vegetables – and that carbon-steel cooking pan with two handles. The *paellera*. Heat up the fire. Add a degree of patience and a steadying glass of Rioja wine. When I'm cooking this





dish I need that glass of wine and a blast of *cante hondo* on the record player. *Cante Hondo* being “Deep Song” perhaps rendered by that old blacksmith they called *Aguetas*, or maybe a passion-laced flamenco sung by that hot-blooded junkie madman, *Camaron de la Isla*. When in doubt I’ll settle for Paco Pena or Segovia or *Manitas de Plata* or *Sabicas*. I want to hear gypsy cries and fingernails clicking across gut strings.

I don’t tolerate gawkers standing around my *paella* on the cook stove. I’m like an old “cookie” out on a cow camp wagon in Nevada, I am ornery about onlookers. If there are people hovering around my fire, bothering me, I buy them off with a pitcher of Sangria, an old Spanish tourist trick. Or I curse them and turn up the volume on the *cante hondo*. That raspy wailing of mad gypsies will drive most folks out of the vicinity. I cook alone.

Sangria is the blood of our equation. No Spaniard worth his Mediterranean sea salt would ever order Sangria in a bar. It’s a tourist punch usually made with cheap “*vino tinto*” and whatever fruit is going moldy in the pantry. Brew up your own. Don’t buy the bottled brands.

Chop up any combination of apples, oranges, lemons, peaches, pears, bananas or strawberries, and let them sit overnight in a pitcher in the ice box. Sprinkle a dash of *Triple Sec* or *Contreau* over the top. At sundown

on the following day, add a bottle of red wine, preferably a *Rioja*. Top it off with a little honey, sugar, orange juice or agave nectar and, if you’re still brave, add a cup of brandy, or more *Triple Sec* or *Contreau*. Be careful. Your hat might not fit in the morning. Throw in ice and stir. It all looks wonderful. Wine punch is the balancing weight that levels the shepherd with the king. Ask Cervantes.

Now that you have a glass in your hand I will tell you how I make *paella*. One man’s version. If you’re a pure *meat and potatoes* sort of human, then best cut out now and go directly to the third section of this essay. The Rib Eye waltz lies just up ahead.

Okay – gather ye round *paella* folk. I am assuming by now you have a recording of flamenco music or perhaps a disc of Portuguese *Fado*, or maybe even a collection of *Pasodobles*, the ancient brassy instrumental marches played during bullfights. If not, put on a Tex Ritter record. What the hell. You’ve also purchased a





*paellera* in Spain or at one of the stores in America which specialize in Spanish cooking products. (*La Tienda* or *The Spanish Table*.) If you buy one of their *paella* kits you're ahead of the game. Make sure you've tempered your *paellera* if it's carbon steel. They'll tell you how.

*Andale!* Say an opening prayer. Uncork the wine. Chop up a whole chicken or buy a mix of legs, wings, and breasts and cut them in halves which would fit in your hand. Don't use skinless chicken breasts. You'll need grease for flavor. Douse the *paellera* with a pool of Spanish olive oil and brown and fry the chicken. Now the juggling begins. Turn up the music.

Create one and a half cups of warm chicken broth (fish broth will work) by pouring two cups of boiling water over a broth cube, if you don't have the ready stock. Set aside in a bowl. Pick out seven or eight threads of saffron and toast them slowly in a flat pan until the aroma lifts off, then add a half cup of white wine to the toasted saffron until the mix is boiling. Pull it off the heat. Don't burn the saffron. Some poor old grandmother in Spain had to delicately pick, dry, and package it. It costs twenty dollars for a few threads.

Relish it. Raise your glass to the old lady.

Check your chicken. *Patience*. Think of those herdsmen in Seville examining the small choice pieces of wing and leg. Sip the wine. Cut up your Spanish chorizo into quarter size discs. If not chorizo, than whatever form of beef, chicken, pig, or turkey sausage you can find. But real chorizo has the edge you need. It's Spanish pork bits and smoked paprika and comes sweet or spicy. Those free range hogs have been glutting themselves on wild acorns, and their meat is prime. If you don't have the real thing – I've invented a method of "tricking" a normal bratwurst or sausage into a chorizo taste by powdering it with red Spanish pepper called *pimenton*.

When the chicken is well-browned, throw in the chorizo or sausage. *Sauté*. Add chopped onion and garlic. Anoint the whole thing with garlic salt, sea salt, pepper, and rosemary – or a bag of magic stuff they call "*Pebrella*" herbs. It's probably rosemary, basil, and oregano, and the dry wings of Andalusia mosquitoes. They ain't saying. Now turn up the flamenco music, again, and measure out two cups of Valencian rice. Pour into the *paellera* and stir and sauté until the rice is coated with oil. If you have a medium or large *paellera* pan I would double the rice and liquid portions. Chop up two tomatoes into cubes and cut a green pepper into strips. Dump into the pan. Pour in the broth and the wine-soaked, toasted saffron. Take a breath.

Add a can of green peas if you wish. Sprinkle on the "*Pimenton*" and perhaps the red-yellow powder named "*palmero*," included in *paella* kits. What you have now is a simmering concoction, and if you look up "concoction" in *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* it connotes something "thrown together like a rice, bean, and meat dish." Like *paella*. You are beginning to hear the hoof beats of the Moors, galloping up the street of the knife makers. I'll explain that in a moment.

Finally clean a half pound of shrimp or *pulpo*





(octopus) or scallops, and dump them across the top of the paella. Same with a jar of artichokes hearts. You might add mussels or clams at this juncture, but this is essentially a chicken-based *paella*. I only eat shellfish when I can *see* the ocean. We have all danced the Aztec two-step. But those shellfish look great on top.

Let the whole thing simmer and sit for thirty minutes, until the rice is done and the ingredients have melded. A tasty brown crust develops on the bottom of the pan. This crust is the caviar to the herdsmen. The icing below cake. You are half drunk now. Not so much on wine as the reeling nature of the whole endeavor – the aroma of the paella, the Rioja, the sangria and the music. Your guests are knocking on the cookhouse door like forlorn cow dogs. They are hungry.

Leftover paella is even better the next day, when you have time to concentrate and the ingredients have blended overnight, and your guests have staggered home, sated and speaking in Spanish tongues.

And now imagine Moorish wranglers riding up the street of the knife makers in Madrid. They're hungry for blood and pig meat. Let's leave the *paella* and indulge in the roast suckling pig. I'll open up a souvenir menu and invite you into the oldest restaurant in the world.

## II The Street of the Knife Makers

*All men are hungry. They always have been. They must eat, and when they deny themselves the pleasures of carrying out that need, they are cutting off part of their possible fullness, their natural realization of life whether they are rich or poor.*

M.F.K. Fisher, *How to Cook a Wolf*

A few years back I dined at Restaurant Botin, off the Plaza Mayor in Madrid, Spain. This is the “oldest restaurant in the world,” according to the Guinness Book of Records. It was founded above a cellar, on the street of the knife makers, *calle de cuchilleros*, off the Plaza Mayor in old Madrid. A *cuchillero* would be a *cutler* or a *knife maker*, but also, *in slang*, a wrangler or a trouble maker. A cowboy. In the 1700s Casa Botin was a traveler's inn where muleteers and traders stopped for a *copa de vino* and roast meat, and thus Botin is a precursor to our Western cafes and saloons.

The original oven is still there, in Botin, as described in the menu:

*An oven for roasting, it's firmly built, tastefully decorated with exceptional tiles, where the wood of the evergreen oak gives the heat and the very special taste, which, together with*



photo courtesy the Restaurant Botin

The front of Restaurant Botin – “the oldest restaurant in the world.”  
Founded in 1725



photo courtesy the Restaurant Botin

Interior of the Restaurant Botin

*the ingredients used according to a very old tradition, permits us to create Castilian roast meat, highly esteemed all over the world.*

Ernest Hemingway mentioned Casa Botin in *The Sun Also Rises*, and it was on the passionate recommendation of the above mentioned Hemingway scholar, Dr. Allen Josephs, which brought me to Botin few years ago. Dr. Josephs has written a very fine book on Spain, and another on bullfighting and he knows his Spanish cuisine.

“Go to Botin,” Allen said. “You must go to Botin.”

Damn glad I took his advice. There I rested, in front of a bottle of Spanish white Rioja. Next to me sat a Brazilian ambassador with his wife and daughters. Three of the most beautiful women I’d ever had the pleasure to meet. (I hadn’t met my wife yet.) What a night. I should mention that the specialty of Botin is roast suckling pig. I ordered the *menu of the day*: Andalusian cold soup (*gazpacho*), bread, roast suckling pig, a bottle of house Rioja, and on and on – spiraling down to the ice cream and Spanish coffee and brandy.

Caste your eyes over the Botin menu: Baby eels, *clams Botin*, garlic shrimps, baby squids in their own ink, roast lamb and chicken, stewed partridge, filet mignon, black sausage from Burgos, anchovies with red peppers,

smoked salmon, white asparagus, artichoke hearts with Iberian ham, Segovia style big mushrooms, eggplants *Cordobesa style* – and of course the wines and the cheeses and the melons. And the ice creams and flan and cognacs and brandies. I’m surprised I made it back to the hotel that night. I have no recollection of the journey.

And now you’re besotted with talk of Spanish wine and brandy, and you’ve had your fill of the paella and pig. Let’s leave Spain for a moment. Let’s talk Rib Eyes.

### III *One Day Above Bein’ Rotten*

(How to Cook a Rib Eye)

*There’s a guy in Paso Robles aging ’em (steaks) sixty days... he trims the mold off. It just melts in your mouth. It’s one day above been’ rotten.*

**Pat Russell, Livestock Contractor**

Okay red meat warriors. If you ain’t into the *paella*, then let me introduce you to a like-minded soul. My cowboy brother, Pat Russell, informing me how to cook meat – especially a rib eye steak. I’m sure there may be several readers out there who’ve purchased broncs from my brother. I know I did. He’s cured me of buying bargain-rate horse flesh. The Russell’s come from a long line of Irish



My brother, Pat Russell, with mouth filled with superglued, wild pigs’ teeth





horse traders, pirate queens, and gypsy troubadours.

This little rib eye detour follows nicely from our roast suckling pig tale because my brother, when a few of his teeth fell out, has admitted to replacing them with wild pigs' teeth, jammed up into his jaw with super glue. The dentist lives too far from the ranch, you see. My brother could be portrayed in film by Slim Pickens, Ben Johnson, or John Wayne.

I recorded Pat – calling from a feed lot somewhere out on the rodeo circuit. I asked him how he cooked Rib Eyes. Here's his un-edited commentary:

*"If you're startin' with a rib eye, leave it sit out till it's room temperature. Put garlic salt and pepper on it. Pretty heavy. Brown it on the meat side down. Then brown it on the fat side down and cook it with the fat side up. Then trim that bark of fat off the back of it. When you tap it with your fork and it kinda' quits bouncing' then you know you're ready.*

*On a tri-tip it might take forty minutes. You want it at about 350 or 400 degrees, and if you're barbecuing' put your hand over the fire and count: 'One hundred, two hundred, three hundred, four hundred...' If that's about as long as you can hold it over the fire, then it's right. You judge your heat by how long you can hold your hand over the fire.*

*In the oven, the secret is to cook it with the fat side up. Drip the juice back over it three or four times. Your good rib eye will be an inch and a half, or an inch and three quarters thick. Good hot skillet. Trim some fat and grease the skillet. About seven minutes a side, dependin' on how they like it. If it's an inch and three quarters, then about seven minutes a side for medium rare. Rib eye's about the best cut. Got the most marblin' (fat).*

*On a tri-tip the secret to it is cutting' it across the grain, not with the grain. If you got time, go buy a jacquard and punch the meat with the jacquard about twenty times on each side. That's a hand held needle tool you buy in the cookin' store.*

*Best place I ever ate a steak? There's lot's of 'em. There's a little place in Redding, California called 'Jacks.' One of those deals where you go in and it's all Salvation Army plates and they ask you if you want a 'little one' or a 'big one.' And the salad comes with one dressing and the soup comes in one big bowl. He knows how to fry a steak. And they're fried. But the deal is, he dry-ages 'em twenty one to twenty eight days. That's the trouble with the meat now days, they all got those diapers under 'em, cause they're injected with water and they got so much moisture in 'em and they're not aged.*

*There's a guy in Paso Robles aging 'em sixty days. But you need a good blue light in there and then he trims the mold off. It just melts in your mouth. It's one day above been' rotten. And that's the trouble with it. Because if you cook a tri-tip that's been aged that long you can't make sandwiches out of it the next day. Cause it's gone. Adios.*

Pat Russell, November 17, 2008

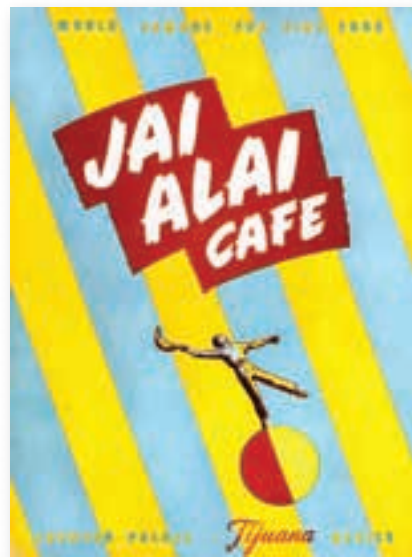
#### IV *The Jai Alai Café*

*The primary requisite for writing well about food is a good appetite... Each day brings about only two opportunities for field work, and they are not to be wasted minimizing the intake of cholesterol. They are indispensable, like a prizefighter's hours on the road.*

**A.J. Leibling**

I recently unearthed an old menu in my Uncle George's steam trunk. Uncle George was a concert pianist who travelled the world. I guess he stopped one night at the *Jai Alai Café* in Tijuana. Let's glance at this incredible menu and finish off with one more gastronomic daydream. When I grew up this Basque ball game, *Jai Alai*, was still being played in Mexican border towns. There are a few courts left in Florida, but the game is dying out.

It's Saturday, May 10, 1952, and you're sitting in the Jai Alai Café at the Fronton Palace in Tijuana, Mexico, *world famous for fine*



Jai Alai Menu, Tijuana, Mexico, 1952



*food.* The café sits next to the Jai Alai court, *the world's fastest game.* Happy hour is over. Its dinner hour. May we suggest wine with your dinner? Ask your waiter for the wine list. Then start with *Hors d'oeuvres.* *Hors d'oeuvres* translates roughly from the French, as *outside of the main work*, or perhaps *outside* the main meal. We usually call them *starters* today, but we live in a less elegant time. And today the starters are usually ho-hum fare.

Let's remain back in '52. The choices of *hors d'oeuvres* at the Jai Alai Café: *Hors d'oeuvres Maison, Canapes Varies, Caviar Canapes,* mixed celery and stuffed olives, stuffed celery Roquefort, and imported sardines. There *must* be a French chef in the kitchen, heh? There are Basque parts of France, aren't there? And *Jai Alai* is a Basque







game. Onward. Into the menu.

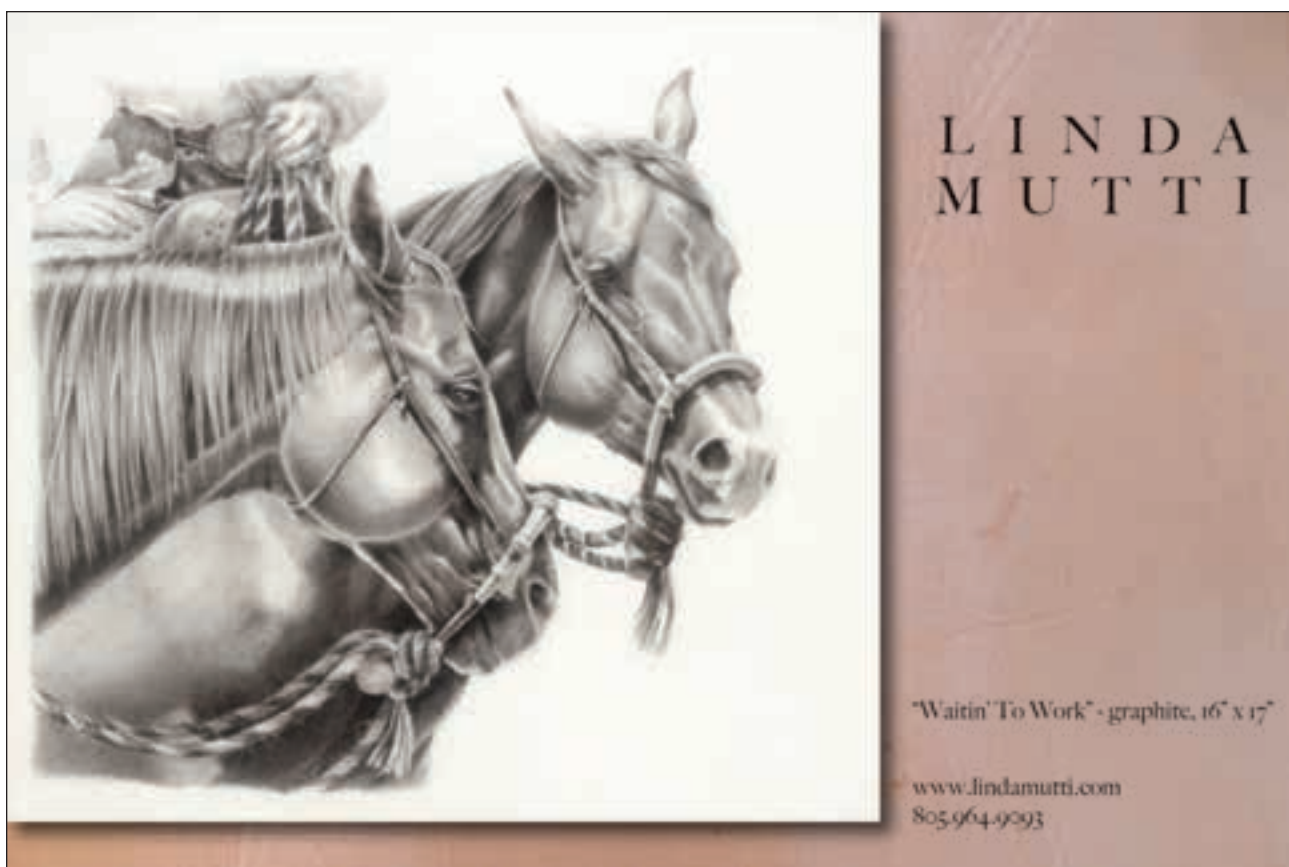
Let's study the "cocktails." Not of the alcohol sort, no, we're referring to the course between *hors d'oeuvres* and the main course. *Palette* cleansers and such. These are fruit and fish cocktails, which are usually served in French ice cream glasses: *cocktails* of lobster, abalone, oyster, and avocado. Maybe you'd prefer a glass of abalone juice? Echoing in from the gaming courts we hear the resonant whack of the Jai Alai *pelota* hitting the concrete wall. Care to make a bet while you're perusing the menu? Ushers in red berets, with identification numbers on their lapels, will be glad to take your bets while you're dining. It's written right on the bottom of your menu.

Now on to the soups and seafoods and "buffet froid" (*cold buffet*) and then the Mexican specialties. We're in

Mexico, after all. *Or are we?* We're in that netherworld between two countries. The land where anything goes. The frontier. The borderland. 1952 was the high and holy days of Mexican-American border towns. We may be inside the gaming fronton of the fastest ball game on earth, "Jai Alai," and our chef might be French, and the group of folk around us are perhaps semi-drunk *Americanos*, but we are *geographically* in Mexico, *amigo*, and it's a beautiful Sunday, May 1952.

Let's leave the normal *carte* and take a glance at the "*Jai Alai Deluxe Dinner*." It's the feature of the evening, attached to the menu with a paperclip. The menu is a beautiful, deco-designed cream-colored sheet of French paper, with a dark blue border. The food list is framed by the artistic rendering of a lobster and a cow head.

Lobster is the specialty tonight, and it comes "*fresh*



from the Blue Pacific.” Are there any lobster left in the blue Pacific? Is the Pacific *blue*? I doubt it. This cream colored paper even gives off the aroma of drawn butter and lobster and memories of another time. Something from an old steamer trunk that has been to Shanghai and back, in Uncle George’s travel gear.

Over to the right hand side of the sheet, above the depiction of cow head, is a sign for the “*magic chef broiler*,” which produces “*savory broiled steak and chops...a gourmet’s delight*.” Hungry yet? Now our eyes are running down the menu past the lobster cocktail supreme, the cream of fresh mushroom soup, the homemade chicken mole (*puebla style*), the roast prime rib and Yorkshire biscuit, the “*unjointed capon*” with corn fritters and honey, the fried abalone steak, the “*young venison steak*

*au garniture*,” and the two quails *sautéed* on toast.

Personally I’m pleased that the capon is *unjointed*. It makes fine dining all that much easier. All that twisting and tearing of capon legs can be a bother, and might interfere with the wine toasts, the placing of bets, the ogling of pretty girls, and the overall reverie. Let the man in the kitchen deal with the grease.

You’re asking me what a capon is? A capon is a rooster that’s been castrated to improve the quality of its flesh for food. Well, you *asked*, amigo. They say the ancient Roman’s invented the capon. There was a grain shortage back then, and the law of the land forbade over-feeding hens. So a Roman *gourmand* invented the castrated rooster routine to get by the law. The result was a bird that was double the size, and its meat was more tender, tasty, and less gamy.

Okay you’ve stuffed your gullet with caviar, lobster, and capon, and washed it all down with abalone juice and French wine. Turn the menu over. We arrive at the *coup de grace*. The deserts. Crème de menthe parfait and a choice of *camembert* or *Leiderkranz* cheese. Ah, the hell with it, how about pineapple pie, or Italian *Zabaione*, an Italian custard desert made from egg yolks and sweet wine (*Marsala* or *Proseco*) whipped to perfection and served with figs. There’s no turning back. Have an espresso with a shot of grappa. The grappa will help your digestion. Steady your hand for the betting up ahead.

Ah, we might be a trifle *sated* now, full and happy, but try to rise up and we’ll stagger out to the







gaming court for an after dinner *aperitif*, another coffee, and perhaps a Cuban cigar. The evening is young and we're unburdened by the premonition of fifty years of culture ahead of us in which such pleasures as five course meals, drinking, smoking, gambling, whoring, blood sports and such have been condemned, politically corrected, closeted and finally banished into history and cheap crime novels.

The Jai Alai Café would have suited the late *A.J. Leibling*, perhaps our finest scribe on boxing and gourmet food. You've not read about cuisine unless you've enjoyed some of Leibling's work. Leibling would consume five course Parisian meals for lunch and wash it all down with copious amounts of fine wine. He wrote about meals where three bottles of wine were consumed and toasts offered with each bottle: "one to our loves, one to our countries, and one for symmetry." The last bottle was always on the house.

As you might have guessed, Leibling was a rather large man who lived to be 59, but died with a contented, besotted smile on his face. He had the digestive system of an ostrich. He tight roped danced over the sauce-drenched abyss which separates the gourmand from the glutton. He fell off the wire.

Mr. Leibling would have loved the 1952 Jai Alai Café, since his passions ran to eating and sports. Why not, then, imagine Ernest Hemingway has joined us. *Papa* Hemingway was writing his Paris memoir: "*A Moveable Feast*," around the same time Leibling was fine dining on the same Parisian boulevards where Hemingway came of age as a writer. Hemingway could lay it down like this:

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*I closed up the story in the notebook and put it in my inside pocket and I asked the waiter for a dozen portugaises and a half carafe of the dry white wine they had there... I ate the oysters with their strong taste of the sea and their feint metallic taste that the cold white wine washed away, leaving only the sea taste and the succulent texture, and as I drank their cold liquid from each shell and washed it down with the crisp taste*



*of the wine, I lost the empty feeling and began to be happy and to make plans.*

No one writes, eats, or even *feels* like that anymore, unless their parodying Hemingway in an airline magazine. And airline journalism (and airline food) is pretty much the state of current affairs. But I must return the Jai Alai Café menu to my uncle's box of memories, where it will sit on top of a neat little pile of hotel stationary from around the world. Back when people used hotel stationary and fountain pens, or they kept the fine, thin sheets, and used them to write letters,

as my Uncle George did. Back when people *wrote letters* and ate and drank well.

Good night ladies and gents. Tomorrow brings us another opportunity to do field work into the roots of Cowboy cuisine. Paella, roast suckling pig, marsh rats, eels, rib eyes, tri-tip, lobster, and a bottle or three of your finest Rioja. *The food which cures all hunger.* I can almost hear the clatter of Arabian ponies on the cobblestone street of the knife makers. The wranglers and trouble makers are coming...and there's my brother Pat, riding in the lead, with a mouth filled with wild pig teeth.

Tonight we ride, boys.



The book: *120 Songs of Tom Russell* is available from [www.tomrussell.com](http://www.tomrussell.com) as well as Tom's art book and most of his 27 CDs and DVDs. Tom will appear with Ramblin Jack Elliott at the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko in February and at the Ranch and Reata Roadhouse May 5, 2013.

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# Moments of Importance

The work of Wyoming artist Chessney Sevier.



*Plains of Plenty*, Etching

This is one of my favorites because of uniqueness of the image and the expression of light. The subjects, their horses and the grass seem illuminated. The bare trees and the heavy coats of the figures suggest the time of year is fall. The grass, however, is high and thick. Coronado came to North America looking for the seven cities of gold and, in search of them, moved through seas of grass. To the stewards of the prairies, grass is a precious commodity. As these cowboys ride out for a day's work, they wade through riches and bounty, in both resources and friendship.

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I've always been influenced by places, both landscapes and interiors. Part of a place's appeal is the aesthetic, surely, but sometimes a location evokes a profound mood or triggers a memory. When that happens, I feel transparent, as if there is no boundary between me and that which surrounds me.

This must be a common experience for artists, this sensitivity to space and environment. Artists have an

inborn sensitivity to the elements of art that surround them, beginning with light and its effect. A simple desert bush can appear to glow in the right light. Rocks and trees – basically shapes with textures – form compositions when varied and assembled. Color and value show recession of space and create atmosphere. These elements amplify in the western landscape.

Why etching? Etching happened to me, beginning



*Last Rose of Summer, Pastel*

There's an abandoned ranch on the Powder River in Northeast Wyoming. Once an empire on the plains, the buildings still stand today only because of their strong, hewn-stone construction. On a day in late September, my friend and I found our way there and I photographed her sitting in the sun on the front porch of the main house. There's a feminine quality to this piece, not just because the subject is a woman, but because of the warmth of the light and the strength of the structure.

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with a college printmaking class. My early works were largely about my grandmother and her influence on me. She was my link to my history, traditions and native culture. I will never forget her stories or the way she told them. She lived in a time that will never be again. There is value in what she gave us. It shaped me and will shape my daughter.

I've continued to create etchings because I love the mysterious quality of the prints. They're like black-and-white memories of moments of importance. My goal is to achieve a spontaneous style that reads representational. Only an artist's inherent knowledge of a subject, and the techniques to produce an image, can allow for such spontaneity.





*First Pick, Oil*

Working cowboys get up when it's still dark and cold, knowing they'll be moving all day. They might look for something comforting, like a hot cup of coffee or a good horse. The white horse in the painting depicts that easy and steady horse, the one a cowboy would use every day, if he could. This type of horse allows a man to let his mind drift a bit, or take on a bigger task than usual.



*Blue Shadows on the Trail, Oil*

This is my first “historical” piece. In 2011, I was invited to exhibit work at the first “We Pointed Them North” show. Work had to represent Teddy Blue Abbott and the Texas cattle drives of the 1880s. This was the excuse I needed to allow myself to create an “old time cowboy painting.” No matter how many times a nocturnal painting with a cowboy has been created, I never tire of the representation. There’s always a mysterious stillness and a subtlety of color in a viridian monochromatic hue.

*Chessney Sevier grew up in the Nebraska Sandhills, earned an MFA in fine art, and worked as a graphic designer before becoming a professional painter and printmaker in 2001. Her work has appeared at the Buffalo Bill Art Show, Cattle Raisers Museum, Heard Museum, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, Trappings of the American West, and Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, among other venues. She is represented by the Big Horn Gallery, Cody, Wyoming and Tubac, Arizona; Nathalie’s of Santa Fe; and Northwest by Northwest, Cannon Beach, Oregon. Chessney lives with her daughter outside Glendo, Wyoming.*

*Scrub Cedar and Sage, Oil Study*

The majority of the landscapes I paint either begin as life studies or are actually painted from life. There’s something about actually being there that translates the feel of a time and place onto the canvas. As artists, we try to capture a vision of what we see or interpret. A photograph only carries so much information. A painting created in a time in which the artist is fully aware of the light, temperature, sound, shapes and colors can embody those elements effectively.

The painting becomes an experience, a time and place happened upon.







*Stargazer, Etching*

I share the fascination many have with bucking horses. It could be that I was raised to believe God made horses that buck so cowboys could ride them. My dad was a professional bronc rider, so I know riding bucking horses can be a lifestyle. Stargazer depicts a ranch bronc rider. After hours of sanding the plate and redoing the aquatint, shapes appeared that resembled cosmic explosions. This accident added to the image and inspired the title.



*Turned Out to Grass, Etching*

The minimalism of the cows and the cowboy sitting in space give this tiny image a feeling of vastness. It's attractive to me because I find a sense of belonging in the enormity of open spaces. Depicted here is a cowboy moving pairs out to grass. It's simple, in action and in imagery. Since there's one rider, the piece also has a solitary feel. I guess I might find a longing in this image. It's just a place I would like to be.



*Life and Lemonade,*  
Etching  
I've always believed there are two kinds of meals, those eaten at the table and those eaten outside on the grass after working cows all morning. I prefer the latter. This etching is a simple concept about two cowboys enjoying their lunch. The clear lemonade is a stark comparison to the heat and dust these cowboys have endured all day.



*(Receloso) The Wary One, Oil*  
This painting is about the horse's expression. I tried to emphasize the fragility of the horse by elongating his features and body. I wanted him to appear as if he had really been used, but still had that innate caution in him that would never change. I would consider this work a tonalist painting, closer to the way I painted when I first started. The effect is subdued and soft, the paint thin and transparent.





# Arizona Cowboys

By Kathy McCraine

I've been photographing Arizona cowboys for more than 25 years now. My husband and I are ranchers, so I've been lucky enough to call many of my subjects friends and neighbors.

Over the years I've written about and photographed cowboys on some of the state's greatest outfits – Babbitt Ranches, Diamond A Cattle Company, the O RO Ranch, Chevelon Butte Cattle Company, and the 7 Up. Some of the cowboys enjoy being photographed and some couldn't care less, but because most of them know me, they don't seem to mind. I just stay out of the way, never stage anything and, only rarely, ask them to pose.

They are a diverse and colorful bunch. Some are nomads who never stay anywhere very long, drifting from camp to camp and wagon to wagon like they're playing a game of musical chairs. Others, like Cisco Scott, who's been in a remote camp on the O RO for most of the past 30 years, just take root. Some, like Clay Rodgers, whose family has worked on Babbitt Ranches for generations, were born to the life. Others are young cowboys who come to Arizona's big outfits to hone their skills and build their resumes. Here and there, you run across somebody like KJ Kasun, who gave up a lucrative career in cutting to come home to ranch on the 7 Up and do what he truly loves.

Over time, I've come to realize that I'm documenting a time and way of life that is unique, a culture that could vanish someday in this accelerating world of changing values. I like knowing there are still places like the ROs and Babbitts, where families raise their kids in remote cow camps and cowboys bunk in tepees when the wagons pull out, far from bustling cities and highways. Cowboys are a unique breed, who take the kind of pride in their work you don't often find in town. Their story needs to be told.



Brother Daniel relaxes with a cup of coffee at the O RO Ranch wagon, which was nooned out at Jones Tank, Prescott, 2009.



Kadence Kasun watches the Campwood Cattle Company crew load trucks at the K8 Division, Prescott, Arizona, 2012.

Kadence may be only seven, but she's already enough of a hand to whip the older kids in local gymkhanas.







Ralf LeSueur watches for the vet to arrive at the O RO headquarters, 2008.



Clay Rodgers drags calves at the Cataract Division of Babbitt Ranches, Flagstaff, 2010. Clay is the second generation in his family to work for Babbitts.



Jeff O'Haco works a young horse, spring 2012. Jeff's Basque family settled in Arizona more than a hundred years ago and now owns the Chevelon Butte Cattle Company at Winslow.





Gary Wilson, manager of the Diamond A Cattle Company, at the wagon at Pica Camp, Seligman, 2010.



Linc Buddy after a hard day at the fall wagon, Francis Creek Camp, O RO Ranch, 2006. Linc was the Francis Creek camp man and jigger boss for the ROs for several years.





Texas cowboy Dakota Falcon brands out of a holdup at the O RO Ranch, 2009.







Cisco Scott waits for the wagon boss to rope his mount for the next morning's circle at Francis Creek, 2006. Cisco has worked for the ROs for more than 30 years.





Ralf LeSueur drags calves at Redlands Camp on Babbitt Ranches, 2007.  
At 10 years old, Ralf was already riding with the Babbitt wagon.





Cisco Scott relaxes while he waits for the wrangler to bring the remuda for the next morning's circle. O RO headquarters, 2008.



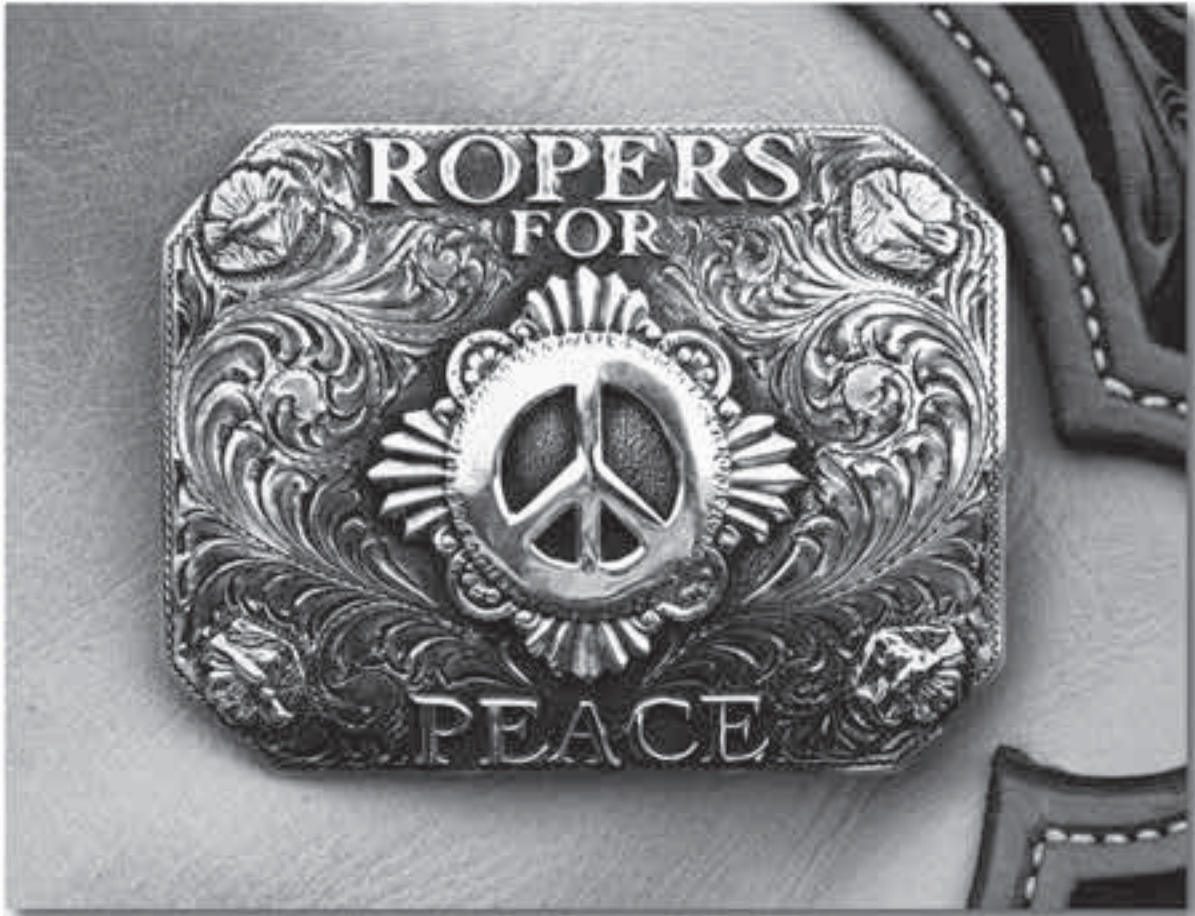
A young cowboy relaxes at the horse barn after a long day. O RO Ranch, 2008.



See more of Kathy McCraine's work at [www.kathymccraine.com](http://www.kathymccraine.com).



*It's not just what you say,*



*it's how you say it.*



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## RANGE RADIO

# New Music



By Bruce Pollock



Glenn Fry, "Route 66"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsnQKSishNQ>



Willie Nelson, Sheryl Crow & Lukas Nelson  
"Come on up to the House"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkGh4bpgRWc>



Ange Boxall, written with J. D. Souther "Lucky Day"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwvvSicDUgk>



Brigitte DeMeyer "One Wish"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wMAwcVB9JXc>





Shovels and Rope "Birmingham"  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nzj-w11vuMo>



Mumford and Sons "I Will Wait"  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGKfrgqWcv0>



Jim Messina "Blacktop Cowgirl"  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8G-bC23pmsI>

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# The Road Trip List

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

#17 Kate and Anna McGarrigle, #18 Mike Beck  
and #19 Gary McMahan

**Kate and Anna McGarrigle**

*Kate & Anna McGarrigle*

[www.rhino.com](http://www.rhino.com)

*Kate & Anna McGarrigle* is the self-titled 1975 debut album by Kate and Anna McGarrigle. It contains “Heart like a Wheel,” the McGarrigles’ most famous



song, which was first released by Linda Ronstadt in 1974. That song has subsequently been covered by several other artists

including Billy Bragg and The Corrs. Ronstadt also covered “Talk to Me of Mendocino” on her 1982 album *Get Closer*. The British pop singer Kirsty MacColl also covered “Complainte pour Ste-Catherine” in 1989, and “Go Leave” was covered by Anne Sofie von Otter with Elvis Costello. This record is a classic of the folk-rock period that started to



decline in the late 1970s. Guest musicians on the album include Lowell George, Bobby Keys and Anna McGarrigle’s husband, Dane Lanken.

**Mike Beck**

*Feel*

[www.mikebeck.com](http://www.mikebeck.com)

At age 13, Mike Beck, born and raised in Monterey County, California, went to the Monterey Pop Festival and liked what he heard. He picked up a guitar and never looked back. Since that time, he has been composing and performing a wide array of folk, rock and Americana music. Mike’s songs reflect his life as a professional musician and a working cowboy in Montana and Carmel Valley near Big Sur.



According to Ramblin’ Jack Elliot, “Mike Beck plays the guitar like a bird. His strings do things that mine could never do. They obey the slightest finger-touch commands like a fine Reining Horse.”





*Feel* is a compilation of some of Mike's most requested songs. Among the classic cuts is "Patrick" – a song about the late Bill Dorrance's favorite bridle horse. "Amanda Come Home" tells the story of a parent's love and worry for a daughter who has chosen to serve her country in Iraq. Beck writes from the heart and the experience of a horseman. His love of the ways of the vaquero and the Pacific Slope region of the West comes through his songs and superb guitar work.

**Gary McMahon**

*Goin' My Way*

Horse Apple Records ([www.singingcowboy.com](http://www.singingcowboy.com))

Gary McMahon is Western music's Robin Williams – hugely talented, can make you laugh or cry like no other, and is a master of timing – this being his first studio album since 1992. McMahon is among very few artists in the Western genre who can be credited with creating true classics, such as "The Ol' Double Diamond," "Skeeter," "Beer Can Bob" and "Pete & Pat,"



to name just a few. McMahon's songs have stay and this new album is as welcome as a newborn calf. As Gary says of the record, "You

know I'm about half proud of this album. It's packin' seven new songs, a yodeling meltdown and three poems.



This is original, true storytelling about the new and the old West. It'll take you from 500 years of cowhunting in the Florida swamps to a cowboy's take on Ralph Lauren. It's a little unpredictable, and it might surprise you now and again. You may laugh out loud and shed some tears before it's over. It's got all the fun, feelings, real stories, music, lyrics, licks, yodelin', and harmonizin' we could tamp into it."

Gary McMahon is unique in the Western genre with an equally unique sense of humor and read of his audience. As he says, he likes to leave his audience uplifted and laughing and he takes great care that his shows are as wholesome as the glorious West he sings and talks about – "I'm as careful about that as a naked man crossing a barbed-wire fence!"

His spoken word selections – including the enlightening "Chaps" – are always entertaining. McMahon's voice has great feeling and reminds us of the great cowboy singers of the past. His song "Uncle Fred" will mix into the cavy of music's great story songs with ease. This album will be a welcome addition to your "Road Trip" library.



# A Western Moment



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Here's another moment with Gus. Nothing would be better than to come home and see Augustus McCrae sitting on our porch. This photo is from *A Book of Photographs from Lonesome Dove*, published by University of Texas Press. [www.utexas.edu](http://www.utexas.edu)





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## TWO WRAPS AND A HOOEY

# The Legacy of Paul Sollosy

There is something about riding out in the very early morning. The smells and light are special that time of day, as there is a crispness that amplifies the senses. Sounds are few – the songs of morning birds and the music of spur rowels and rein chains. During his 101 years, artist and cowboy Paul Sollosy experienced that and more, working on ranches all over the west. And for the last fifty years of his life, he depicted the life he loved in his art, mostly subjects from his own experience – the outfits, the horses and the cowboys he worked with during his days on horseback. He was, maybe to his chagrin, one of the most “quietly collected” artists of the American West. Until his death this past summer, he remained one of the last of the few who rode the fence line of the remaining Miller & Lux ranch in

California – which at one time counted some 100,000 cattle spread over 1.25 million acres in three states.

Born in 1911, Native Californian Paul R. Sollosy began cowboying back in 1926 in the Simi Valley area

of Southern California. Back then it was ranching country, and Sollosy found work at a number of ranches in the Southern California area and it was on those Southern and Central California outfits he befriended many working vaqueros and learned the time-woven expertise working cattle and horses. He learned the ways of the bridle horse, the long *reata* and the spade bit. For a young cowboy, it

was an apprenticeship in living history.

We had a conversation last spring, “I guess I just always like thinking about horses and way back when I started to sketch and draw on anything I could find,” he



photo courtesy the author

Paul Sollosy and his gelding Chick, 1986. Of the horse Paul said, “Chick was one of the best horses I ever had. He wasn’t an affectionate horse, but as the years progressed we became very close.”



Principally self-taught, he spent a short time in art school in Los Angeles but his life drawing instructors couldn't keep him directed on the models. He kept drawing horses on the edges of his paper. Of the western artists of the early 1900s, cowboy artist and writer Will James had a huge influence on him and Sollosy's mother actually arranged a meeting between the two.

In the 30s, Sollosy worked for a

remembered, "used everything – old cardboard boxes, anything." Sollosy had always loved the work of Russell and Borein because they made sure that the scene was right and could have actually happened. "My work is mostly about where I've been and what I've seen," he continued, "the cowboys and horses I painted were all part of my life. They were important and I wanted to remember them right." And right they are, there are few artists who depicted proper horse conformation, head set and gear as closely as Sollosy. It was a skill that came mostly from time and observation.



image courtesy Bill and Ellen Reeds

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photo by Blaine McIntyre

Paul at the drawing table working on the top left painting of three vaqueros roping a bear.

number of different saddle shops including Litchenberger-Ferguson and Hollywood Saddlery in Los Angeles and later Jedlicka's Saddlery in Santa Barbara. The 30s were a golden time for the romanticized cowboy in Hollywood. But real cowboying was his life and he worked around the west until 1967 when finally decided to make his art his life's work. He rode until the age of 90, but the great horses and the big gathers inhabited his dreams and he continued to paint and draw the best parts of his life – all from memory. "I rode some great horses and with some really good hands." He pauses, "most all of them are gone now but not the memories. They will stay with me forever." BR





*Keith Seidel*

*AWA Saddle Maker  
of the Year*



“RANAHAN”

*By Hand and Heart*

This “Top Hand” saddle is a Hubbard style, one-piece with the swell, seat, skirts, and riggings all arduously shaped and molded from a single piece of leather. This difficult construction method creates a large canvas where one can focus on the art – both in workmanship and decoration. The fenders and stirrup leathers are also one piece of leather with hidden buckles, supporting the saddle’s minimal structure.





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