

The Journal of the American West

Ranch & Reata

Volume 5.4 \$15.00

Artist William Matthews
and his Martin LE Cowboy

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FRONT GATE



photo by Kent Reeves

Paul Zarzyski: These are a Few of My Favorite Things, 1993

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FRONT GATE	1	Paul Zarzyski by Kent Reeves	YOUR HORSE'S FEET	116	Feeding the Dogs By Pete Healey, APF
EDITOR'S NOTE	4	Hat Policy By A. J. Mangum	FEATURE	118	Old Hank's Journey: How the Guitar Won The West By Tom Russell
OF NOTE	10	Interesting Things and Stories from Out West	FEATURE	133	Sacred Sheep By Hal Cannon
GIFT GUIDE	34	The West's Ultimate Holiday Gift Guide Assembled by Thea Marx	A VISIT WITH BUCK BRANNAMAN	136	Cake
BY HAND AND HEART	56	The Hatter and the Hound By Melissa Mylchreest	THE HEN HOUSE	138	Fall Arrives at the Hen House By Hannah Ballantyne, Reata Brannaman and Nevada Watt
BOOKS TO FIND	66	Holiday Gift Books	PHOTOGRAPHY	144	Bucking Straight Images by Kent Reeves
FEATURE	72	MC Ranch 1979 Photography by Kurt Markus	FEATURE	154	Bleu Horses By Brain D'Ambrosio
THE COOK HOUSE	76	Rocky Mountain Oysters By Kathy McCraine	MUSIC	158	The Road Trip List: All Vinyl
FEATURE	82	A Lucky Man The Art of Steve Devenyns	A WESTERN MOMENT	161	Time to Think
FEATURE	94	Western Winemaking By A. J. Mangum	PUBLISHER'S NOTE	163	Two Wraps and a Hooey By Bill Reynolds
THE WESTERN HORSE	100	Massacre at Loon Creek By Jayme Feary			
UPCOMING CLINICS	112	Ride to Live, Live to Ride			

Cover image: Longtime friend of *Ranch & Reata*, artist William Matthews is shown with his new Martin LE Cowboy guitar model. Matthews designed the imagery for the guitar in conjunction with Martin Guitars CEO, Chris Martin. It would tune up anyone's Christmas morning. Photographed by Brad Bartholomew.

Ranch & Reata

Volume 5, Number 4 • October/November 2015
www.ranchandreata.com

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your address/email if we need to contact you.

Publisher:
Ranch & Reata Magazine,
PO Box 714, Santa Ynez, CA 93460

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Advertising Information:
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949.234.1281 • Buddy@rangeworks.com

Subscriptions:
www.ranchandreata.com
or to subscribe by phone call 800.551.5109
Customer Service 877.458.1320

View issue at www.ranchandreata.com. Limited Edition print
journals published six-times a year. Subscriptions are available
at the website. Current individual, Limited Edition copies are
available for \$15.00 and are sold in U.S. dollars with
appropriate postage for destination additional. Some hard-
copy back issues available. All online editions are available
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Hat Policy

By A.J. Mangum

4

You're not going to wear *that*, are you?" The question came from a colleague leaning against the open window of my truck. It was a hot fall morning in the late 1990s, and I was working as a writer for a well-known equestrian magazine. I'd just parked at one of the Southwest's largest fairgrounds, a venue where we'd spend the next week covering the finals of a major horse show. Her question referred to the black felt hat I'd removed from its box in the back seat. The hat was a recent purchase, worn only once, in the store.

"That was the plan," I said.

"It's *black*," she replied. "Bad guys wear black hats. We're the good guys."

Beside me, in the front passenger seat, sat an accomplished news photographer I'd talked into traveling from his home a few hours away to shoot with me. An equestrian event presented a new opportunity for him, unfamiliar material, and he was eager to get

moving. An assembled camera hung from his neck and he gripped a gear bag in each hand. He looked at the young woman's unflinchingly serious expression, then at me, confused at the gravity of the topic (*hats?*), and the delay it was causing us. His impatience was unmistakable as he unconsciously tapped the toe of a tennis shoe on the floorboard.

"You're serious?" I asked my coworker.

"You'll hear about it if you wear that hat," she continued. "I know it's stupid, but you *can't* wear a *black* hat."

I reminded myself that our magazine, published by the organization sponsoring the horse show, was notoriously conservative. In describing it to friends outside the horse world, I had taken to comparing the work environment to that of an IBM office in 1950s Alabama. There was genuine weirdness. Employees were unofficially divided into distinct social groups and



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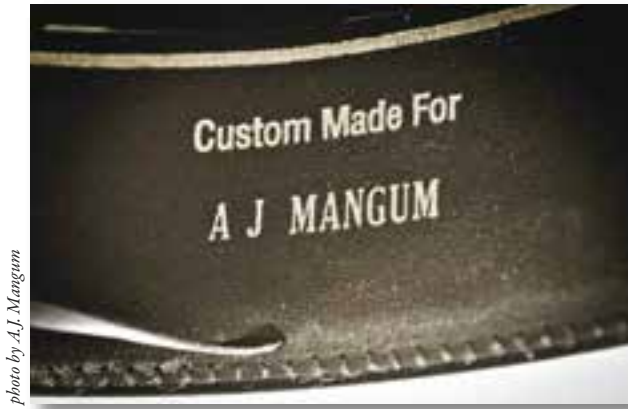


photo by A.J. Mangum

When it comes to cowboy hats, I contend that the wearer should honor only his own rules.

discouraged from fraternizing outside their assigned classes. An art director claimed to have been disciplined after being spotted wearing a ponytail – on his own time, at a weekend barbecue. The employee manual was three inches thick and did, in fact, contain vast sections on apparel, including hats. A no-black-hat policy could've certainly been buried in there somewhere.

“Fine,” I told her as I returned the felt to its box. “I have another hat.”

Satisfied, she suggested we reconnect that afternoon to compare notes, and walked toward the nearby coliseum to begin her workday. I again reached into the truck's back seat and retrieved my day-to-day hat, a palm-leaf. The palm-leaf was understated and practical, more *me* than the new black felt, and seemed a better choice for the long hours ahead in unseasonably warm weather.

The hat issue seemingly resolved, I set off with the photographer. By noon, I'd recorded three or four interviews, and he'd shot several rolls of film. (Google it. It's how cameras used to work.) Throughout the morning, though, an ominous cloud had hovered, taking the form of a registry marketing associate who

seemed to be shadowing us, appearing a little too often to chalk up to coincidence. Perhaps distracted by our interviews, I hadn't actually given him much thought outside of those moments when he was in direct view. He appeared once again as the photographer and I finished our concession-stand lunch. Just as we pointed ourselves in the direction of our last remaining interview for the day, Marketing Guy tentatively reached out to take my arm.

“Got a minute?” he asked in a near-whisper. The photographer stepped away to give us some privacy, signaling that he'd wait nearby. I nodded to him in acknowledgment and turned to Marketing Guy.

“Is that the only hat you have?” he asked.

Hats, I thought. The theme of the day.

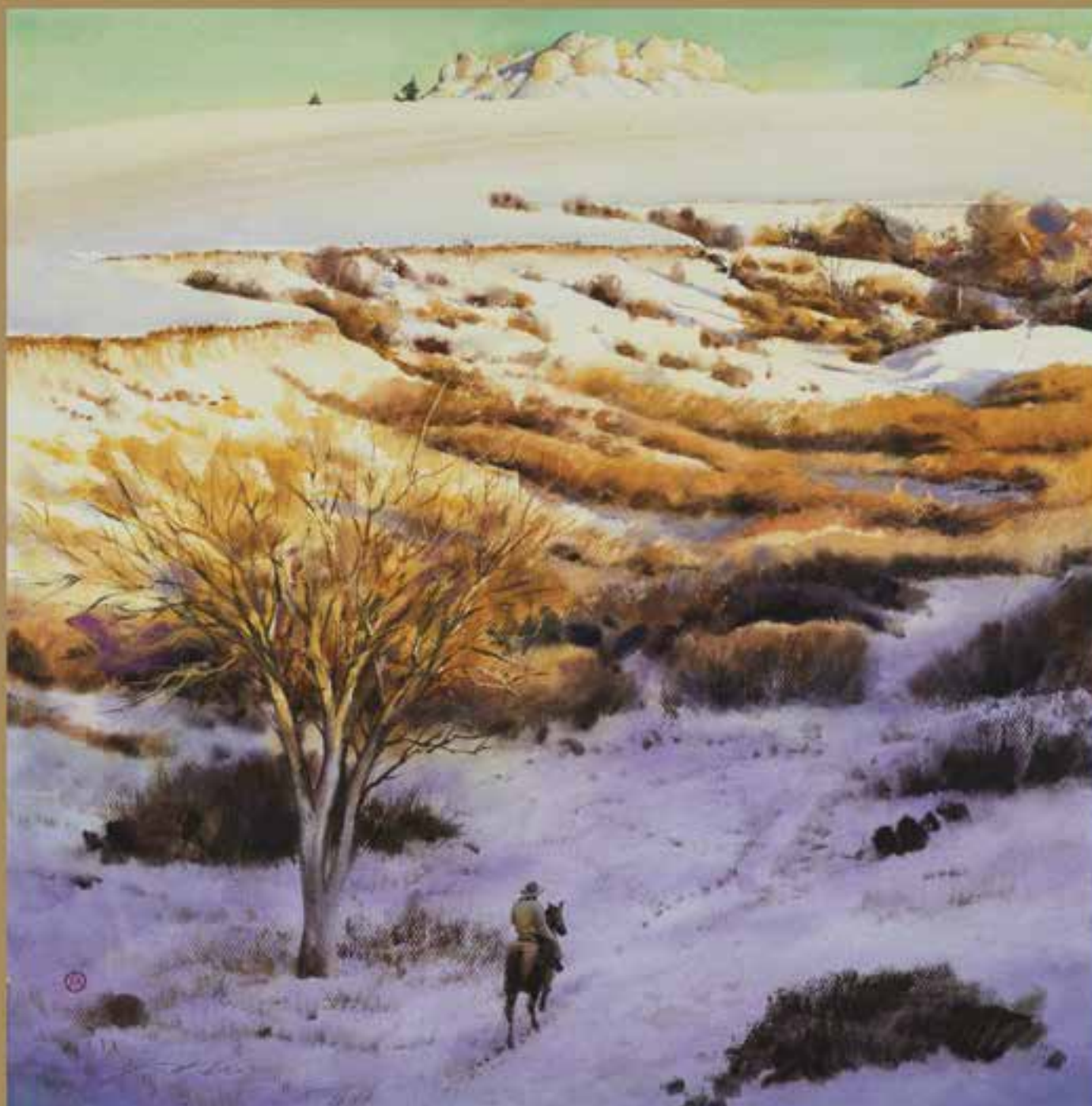
“It's not my *only* hat,” I replied.

“It's after Labor Day,” he said. “*Real* cowboys don't wear straw hats between Labor Day and Memorial Day.”

I never would've guessed the stock-horse scene had its own version of Mr. Blackwell, dispensing fashion insight for the sartorially misguided, yet here he seemed to be. I imagined my dad and his brothers, sometime in the 1930s or '40s, stationed in a remote New Mexico cow camp with no power or running water, carefully noting the calendar dates on which they were to make the switch from straw to felt and back again. I smirked at the image, further entertained by Blackwell considering himself an authority on “real” cowboys; he lived in the 'burbs, rode a horse twice a year, and this event was a rare opportunity for him to break a sweat.

“My other hat's a black felt,” I said, “so I'm kind of stuck. I prefer this hat, anyway.”

I noted the pristine silverbelly atop Blackwell's head, and took that as evidence he must've known the score regarding a hat policy. In my peripheral vision, I caught my photographer waving at me, pointing to his



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watch. Our interviewee awaited.

“What do you mean, *stuck*?” Blackwell asked.

“The whole bad-guys thing,” I said.

Blackwell looked puzzled.

The absurdity of the moment caught up with me. This is a *real conversation*, I told myself. I couldn't decide which seemed sillier: the idea of a no-black-hat policy, or that Labor Day business. I imagined the challenge of explaining this moment to people in other fields. Could my friends who work at Microsoft begin to relate? (“Someone was griping about your *hat*? Did it say something obscene on the front?”)

Don't get me wrong: in this culture, hats are serious business. But to me, cowboy hats have always embodied a blend of utility and personal style. The western way of life is supposed to be founded on a certain brand of unapologetic independence. Following someone else's rules when it comes to selecting your hat, or the way you wear it, would seem to reduce one of the culture's most visible means of self-expression to nothing more than a conformist affectation.

But, back to Blackwell.

“I was told it was against policy to wear black hats at events,” I said. I figured throwing the rulebook at Blackwell would end our conversation. I figured wrong.

“I don't know who would've told you that,” Blackwell said, loading his comment with an accusing tone.

“There's [the registry CEO]. He's wearing a black hat.”

Blackwell gestured some distance behind me and, sure enough, there stood the head of the registry, wearing one of the blackest hats I'd ever seen. It seemed to have an actual *event horizon* from which light couldn't have escaped. I sent a silent curse to my colleague who'd kicked off the hat topic that morning, hoping its broadcast strength was mighty enough to smite her wherever she happened to be on the fairgrounds.

“You should get another hat as soon as you can,” Blackwell whispered conspiratorially. “I think the employee manual lists your choices. You could call the office and have someone check.” With that, he hurriedly sashayed away, likely fearful of being seen with me.

I stood alone, amid the hubbub of the busy fairgrounds, wondering if, in fact, I was the crazy one. I seemed to be in the minority, so there was evidence to suggest as much. I smiled and nodded to the registry CEO as I walked past him to catch up with my photographer friend. Later, I would admonish myself for not having tipped my palm-leaf to him. When we reconnected, the photographer again had a look of confusion on his face.

“Hats?” he asked, guessing at the subject of my conversation with Blackwell.

“Yes,” I confirmed. “Hats.”



In this issue, contributing writer Melissa Mylchreest profiles Cate Havstad, an Oregon hatmaker reinventing her craft with an emphasis on individuality and self-expression.

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Interesting Things and Stories from Out West

ON THE COVER: WILLY MATTHEWS' MARTIN – THE LE COWBOY 2015

For well over a century and a half, The Martin Guitar Company has been continuously producing superb acoustic instruments that are recognized, played and coveted worldwide. And since Christian Frederick Martin founded the company in 1833, Martin has had the unique history of being a family owned enterprise ever since the first Christian Martin opened the doors. The current chairman and CEO is C.F. 'Chris' Martin IV – the great-great-great-grandson of the founder.

The Martin Guitar Company has, through the years, introduced many of the characteristics common with most flat-top, steel strung guitars made today including the Dreadnought body style or "D" series. That said, any company's continuous operation under family management is a feat bordering on the remarkable, in Martin's case reflecting six generations of dedication to the guitar maker's craft. It has been stated about Martin quality that, "A good guitar cannot be built for the price of a poor one, but who regrets the extra cost for a good guitar?" Amen.

Over the years, Martin has produced a number of Limited Edition Models, mostly relating to important performers and singer/songwriters – many in the western music arena – including the likes of Roy Rogers and Gene Autry. Recently, a model was introduced that celebrated an "important" individual known in the music world but as a superb album package designer and as a significant watercolor artist.

Artist Willy Matthews (*R&R* 4.5) has been a friend of ours – and of Chris Martin's for many years as Chris stated in a recent telephone interview along with Martin historian, Dick Boak, director of the Martin archives, its Museum and for special projects. Chris and Willy first met early on at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival held each year in Colorado. Willy had been creating the posters for the event since the 11th festival in 1983. The two had a love of music and art and vowed someday they would work together on a project. As Dick Boak explained, "It took technology to present a solution of how we merge art with the instrument."



CEO and Chairman Chris Martin
with William Matthews



Which brings us to the Martin LE (Limited Edition) Cowboy which features Matthews' artwork of a painting created of his friend, the late horseman, Jay Harney. Chris and Willy had been putting their heads together for quite some time as to just how to "afix" an image on a guitar that was not like the decal method used for so many years in the early 1900s when novelty "cowboy guitars" were made. As Dick Boak explained to create an image that both Willy and Chris would be happy with it took a special technology that involves, effectively, high-resolution ink jet on a white substrate. The process requires an intricate, formed jig that holds the guitar body in place. The result is what both Willy and Chris Martin have been looking for all these years. Of the process, Willy Matthews is quite pleased, "It's really a wonderful replication of the artwork but beyond that, it is an incredible sounding guitar." And of course that's the point. Making limited editions models is not new to Martin, as Chris Martin explains, "While many people collect them to display, even more buy them to play."

Martin's Limited editions have, in the past, celebrated some of music's finest. Here are just a few:



Hank Williams Group



Lee Moore



Hank Williams



Wilf Carter



The Kingston Trio



Chris Hillman



Roy Rogers



Texas Rough Riders



Gene Autry



Charles Sawtelle



The Martin LE Cowboy features Willy Mathews art of his friend, the late Jay Harney.

Chris Martin and Willy Mathews represent two of the finest coming together, crafting an idea and having it turn out better than they dreamed. So if you want one for yourself, as Chris Martin reminded me, “The guitar debuted at the 2015 NAMM Summer Show in Nashville, and we are only going to be taking orders for this model through the end of 2015.”

The LE-Cowboy-2015 is a 000-12 fret with a Sitka spruce top finished with Martin’s Vintage Tone System (VTS). The top is inlaid with a multi-color rope design, and the back and sides are made of goncalo alves. The new Martin Vintage Tone System (VTS) uses a unique recipe that is based on the historic torrefaction system. The VTS acts much like a time machine in which Martin can target certain time periods and age the top/braces to that era. This focused method allows Martin’s craftsmen and women to recreate not only the pleasing visual aesthetics of a vintage guitar, but also reproduce the special tones previously reserved for vintage instruments.



Mathews is no stranger to designing for Martin Guitars. He designed the inlaid steer head that graces the headstock of Chris Hillman’s model.

Here is the ultimate Holiday gift for someone who loves music and art of the West. To learn more about the LE Cowboy Model and to find a dealer, go to www.martinguitar.com/new/item/3946-le-cowboy-2015.html?Itemid=6

HIGH SCHOOL RODEO: WHEN LIGHTENING STRIKES.

One of the grand organizations in this country that young people can participate with their horses in is the National

High School Rodeo Association. The NHSRA is one of the fastest growing youth organizations in the nation, with an annual membership of over 12,000 students from 41 states, five Canadian provinces, and Australia. The Association sanctions over 1,100 rodeos each year.

Each year, the NHSRA produces the two elite Junior High and High School youth rodeo events in the world – The National Junior High Finals Rodeo (NJHFR) and the National High School Finals Rodeo (NHSFR). The NHSFR is the “World’s Largest Rodeo,” featuring



Kathryn Varian rounding a pole as lightening lights up the Wyoming sky.



about 1,500 contestants from across the United States, Canada and Australia. Athletes vie for national titles, assorted prizes and their share of thousands of dollars in college scholarships. Action at the event is non-stop, with rodeo performances being conducted twice each day. The top-twenty contestants in each event then advance to a final round of competition to determine who will walk away with the coveted championship buckles. Boys' events at the NHSFR include Bareback Riding, Bull Riding, Saddle Bronc Riding, Tie-Down Roping, Steer Wrestling, Team Roping, and Cutting. Girls' events include Breakaway Roping, Barrel Racing, Pole Bending, Goat Tying, Cutting, Team Roping, and the NHSRA Queen contest. Boys and girls compete together in Team Roping, but are separate in all other events.



Kathryn Varian and Mizzy

The real story is that young people from all backgrounds and capabilities compete and work together – all year. The process of determining who goes to the Finals involves going to district rodeos and competing during most of the school year. Students learn valuable lessons about how to manage time and take responsibility beyond the tasks of taking care of their horses. And every year there are amazing “Cinderella” stories of kids



Varian and Mizzy working the poles

who seemingly come out of nowhere, perform superbly and end up gaining one of the slots to go to the finals. One such young person, is Kathryn Varian, a high-school student and ranch kid from near Paso Robles, California. She lives on the family ranch, the V6, some 30 minutes out in the small town of Parkfield. Kathryn's story is about passion and perseverance. Her mare “Mizzy” that she rode all last year was raised and trained on the ranch and their journey together in high school rodeo last year – ultimately led to the Finals held this past July in Rock Springs, Wyoming.

High school rodeo is a family event and Kathryn's story of her rodeo experiences – which follows here in her own words – gives a feeling of the commitment families make to pursue the rodeo adventure.

“My mare Mizzy is not a “common horse.” She wasn't started until she was nine, that's pretty unusual. We have come a long way with her and today she is living up to her full potential – at age twenty. My grandmother, Zee Varian raised this exceptional horse and my sister, Lauren Varian, started working her at the age of ten. The mare has been extremely competitive for the last 10 years. Lauren had great success on her when she competed but every year when it came to competing at the State Finals – which can lead to the National Finals – something would happen, like hitting a pole in Pole Bending. But running poles is not all Mizzy can do, she also is very competitive in Barrel Racing, Goat Tying, and Breakaway Roping as well as any ranch activities we need to get done at home – including calf branding. When my sister decided to go to college and not do college rodeo, she wanted Mizzy to become a brood mare. But, I was in need of “her” so with some convincing, Lauren agreed to let me start riding her.

Lauren became my coach and instantly Mizzy and I clicked. I won the pole bending at the first rodeo I went to on her and ended up winning the All-Around for the day. In addition I made it to the State Finals all three years in junior



In the winners circle, Kathryn Varian is seated in the front row, far right.

high but I had the same problem as my sister in 6th and 7th grade: downed poles. After my 7th grade year I told myself: I was going to do everything I could possibly do to make the National Finals.

I went on to win the 2013 West Coast Junior Rodeo Association Girls All-Around and the 2014 California Junior High School Rodeo Association All-Around Cowgirl for our district. After my all around wins I went to the State Finals on a high, ready for success and I made it to the National Finals, in Des Moines, Iowa. Unfortunately Mizzy and I had no luck. With a time of

21.5 seconds and a downed pole later, we headed back home. My freshman year 2014-2015, after a semi successful year, I ended up splitting 4/5 in the poles and also placed in the top five in barrels. The 2015 California High School State Finals, held in Bishop, California was next. After the first go of my freshman high school state finals I got to do my first victory lap. Second go I was slow but kept the poles up. I came back to the short go in 2nd place and had another textbook run, placing me 2nd in the state. Mizzy and I made it once again to the Finals. This year we only had to drive to Rock Springs, Wyoming as each year, the Finals are held in different parts of the country. The competition was insane, the fastest I – and many others – had ever seen. My hope began to fade as I looked at those incredible times and then at my Mizzy – a 20 year old, ranch raised, cow horse bred, barefoot, mare. But after a couple days of anticipation and preparing her, it was time for my first go and I was ready.

I remember turning that end pole and thinking, “This is going to be good.” I looked up at the big screen and I had run, by far, the fastest time of my career: 20.519. The second go came and I had another 20.518. I was to come back to the Saturday night short go in 9th place out of 180 top qualifiers in the world. Keeping my cool was the hardest part. I kept telling myself the same thing over and over again. “Kathryn you are not nervous. Kathryn you are not nervous. Kathryn you are not nervous.” And finally I believed it. While warming up my Mizzy on that beautiful Saturday night, surrounded by my family that stayed an extra day to watch me, (my dad was sitting by the gate to help me) and so many amazingly talented people from 48 US States, Canada, and even Australia – I felt so lucky and I knew whatever happened I would never forget that week. I rode into the arena for the last time and put full trust into my Mizzy and it was good. A lightening strike later a 20.5 popped up on the screen, the announcer said my name in the 10th place. In my mind – as I received the award buckle – Mizzy and I had succeeded beyond my dreams. Heading for home and already thinking about 2016, I had a feeling of happiness unlike any other, all thanks to my incredible little Mizzy Girl.”

Kathryn’s story, like so many kids’ stories of high school rodeo, revolves around very supportive families. And like the photo of her at the beginning of this story, lightening can “strike” anywhere, creating incredible opportunities. To learn more about High School rodeo and how you can help support it, visit www.nhsra.com. To learn more about the Varian family’s V6 Ranch and its activities in Parkfield, California, visit www.parkfield.com



The California contingency.



NOTES FROM THE ROAD: THE MARK TWAIN MUSEUM

by Dave Stamey

The old guy said it was five bucks apiece to go down into the museum. I winced, but handed over the money. This was a pilgrimage, after all; you couldn't really put a price on such things. I asked for a receipt.

"Don't hardly ever do that," he said. He was weathered and wizened, somewhere in his late seventies, I'd guess, with a long beard and baggy Levi's, leaning hard on the image of the grizzled prospector that was so prevalent here in Virginia City, Nevada. "Have people ask for a receipt, I mean."



Song man Dave Stamey

"You're tax deductible," I said. He grumpily ratcheted out the slip of paper from the cash register and handed it over. "I'll deny it to my dying day."

I didn't know what to say to that, and so said nothing. He moved with arthritic slowness from behind the counter, out from behind the displays of snarky bumper stickers and cheap turquoise jewelry and copper bracelets and T-shirts advertising the Bucket of Blood Saloon, to the stairwell leading to the basement. It was cordoned off by a length of swag lamp chain with bells hanging on it, a makeshift alarm in case some sinister person should attempt to sneak down there without first paying his five dollars.

Above it, a sign dangled: "Mark Twain Museum." The old guy unhooked the chain. "There's lots of antiques and old stuff down there, so don't touch nothing, all right?"

We nodded our agreement and headed down the steps.

According to the official Historical Landmark plaque on the boardwalk outside, this was the original Virginia City Territorial Enterprise building, home to one of the most famous newspapers on the Pacific Slope, the place where Samuel Clemens began his career and first signed the name "Mark Twain." I had no way of verifying if this was true. I knew Clemens had left town for other adventures before 1865, and that there'd been a disastrous fire in 1875 that leveled most of the town's business district, but this building might have survived, or at the very least its basement, where we were heading. And not just any basement. This, we were told, had been the pressroom. *The* pressroom. I was willing to go along with the idea.



Piper's Opera House

It was dusty and dim, the steps were narrow and worn and splintered, as was the hardwood floor they led to. A sign told us it was the original floor. It looked it. In the corner, beside a portrait of old Sam himself, stood a desk full of drawers and cubbyholes. Another sign informed us it was on this desk that Clemens began work on his famous book, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*. I wasn't sure how they knew this – I thought he'd written it in San Francisco, and anyway it was a short story, not a book, but never mind.

The floor was worn smooth in places, and in other places sheets of tin had been nailed down where the planks had been scuffed completely through. Dirt and ink had been ground into the wood by over a century's worth of printers' boots. It was uneven, as if the timbers below were buckling.

The original floor.

There was a linotype machine and a water-operated printing press, and type cases and more type cases, and ink rollers and facsimiles of Territorial Enterprise front pages, and two composing tables – both topped with marble, one of which Clemens purportedly slept on, perhaps on several occasions. Posters on the wall announced long gone circuses and forgotten theatrical productions, one at Piper's Opera House, where I was to perform this evening. There were two deer heads mounted on the wall, and one steer head, their taxidermy work crumbling and peeling. I had no idea what they had to do with newspaper printing. In another corner stood the first telephone switchboard used in Nevada.

And it was the original floor. I kept coming back to that.

The rest of this stuff they could have carted in from anywhere. Aunt Mamie's desk from Winnemucca. The linotype machine from Reno. The type cases from other nameless rags around the state, even the composing tables. But if this was in fact the Territorial Enterprise pressroom, Clemens had walked here. His feet had trod these same boards that my feet now touched. Maybe. Maybe not, but close. I wasn't going to be able to breathe the same air my hero had breathed (come to think of it, stale as it was, there might be a few 1863 breaths still lurking about) but I could by God walk where he walked.



Mark Twain's House



photo by William Reynolds

Dave Stamey performing at the Ranch & Reata Roadhouse in Santa Ynez, CA, 2013.

Later that afternoon we arrived at Piper's Opera House, at the corner of Union and B Streets. Up the hill. In Virginia City everything is either up the hill or down the hill from C Street. Piper's stands very near the courthouse, with a saloon taking up much of the first floor, which I found very fitting. I don't know if there has always been a saloon here, but in my opinion there ought to have been. Upstairs the opera house spread out in its fading Victorian glory, all arching ceiling and scroll work, partially restored and hanging on, it's paint yellowed in places and the curtains a bit threadbare here and there, but a gorgeous place, a proud place and still stately, a reminder that attending the performing arts was once a very large event in peoples' lives and theaters were built to reflect that awe and wonder.

With a hardwood floor. The original floor.

This version of the opera house – there were several, at least twice it went down in flames – dates from 1885. That is the same year, according to the signs on the walls, Mr. Mark Twain came to deliver his humorous lecture on the Sandwich Islands right here on this very stage. Knowing what I know about his lecturing career I am not 100 percent convinced. I would have to do some research to verify it and I am afraid if I delved too deeply, the image – or the illusion – would crumble away and I don't want that. Again, I am willing to go along with



Mark Twain's House Office

the idea. I have come to play music, but this is still a pilgrimage. I want to go home with something.

Piper's Opera House can seat 400 people. We are only expecting 200 or so, stalwart fans of the music, who enjoy coming to a show in such an historic spot. And we will have a good time. The folding chairs are set up. The premium seats in the boxes at both sides of the stage have iced buckets of champagne waiting, just as they would have in 1885. It's a little warm this evening and both side doors have been propped open in the hopes of catching a stray breeze, just as they would have been back then. Right now, sitting in the rough lumber of the backstage area, tuning my guitar, I am hugging to myself the idea that my feet are touching the same floor that Twain paced before striding out to "inflict himself upon the masses." His playbills would state: *Doors Open at 7:00. The Trouble Begins at 8:00.* My show tonight will begin at 8:00, and I feel a kinship with him, as if he is looking over my shoulder to inspect my set list. I smell a whiff of cigar smoke, of bay rum. Ridiculous? Not in the least. It's my pilgrimage, after all. I get to say what happens in it.

Dave Stamey is a singer/songwriter, beloved amongst western music aficionados. Dave told us he would be sending dispatches from the road "occasionally or every-now-and-then." To find where Dave is playing or to learn more about his music, www.davestamey.com

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WESTERN STYLE WITH ASHLEY RIGGS

A Ranch & Reata Holiday

As a little girl my Christmas shopping consisted of a silk wildrag for Mom and a wool, “Scotch” cap for Dad and I purchased it all at Capriola’s, our local western shop. Fast forward what seems like a million years later to living in New York City and I’m in a magical place to spend the Holiday season. All the windows are fabulously trimmed and lit with sparkling lights. Stores are laden with more than your heart could desire or dream of. Reflecting on the season, I bet we all can feel the pressure of that four letter word – more. Do more, eat more, buy more. The steady drumbeat engrained in the Holidays. But I also think about the quote “quality over quantity.” Living in our small apartment (which is about the size of some folk’s horse trailers), I have had to learn to be selective. Only my



My favorite store in Elko, Nevada



photo by Fryd Frydenlund

favorite items and clothes make the cut and quality has a strong influence on my selections. To quote Tom Wolfe, “I have no problem with quality, the best will do just fine.”

Growing up Cowboying, you learned early to appreciate quality. Cowboys don’t have a lot of worldly possessions, but what they do own are items of pure functionality and beauty. What they have must perform miles out from headquarters. Through the creativity and craftsmanship; utilitarian items like bits, spurs, and hats have been taken to the next level of artistry. Many a paycheck are saved and horses traded in exchange for a new saddle or pair of custom boots. Lots of gear is carefully and laboriously made at home.

A lot should be said in the defense of buying just what you need or love and not just consuming. Perhaps a pair of Paul Bonds, or an Hermes silk scarf. Maybe it’s a piece of Western art from Teal Blake or a classic blazer from Ralph Lauren. Those are my favorites. I feel like a little kid again, getting that one thing you really want. Then I’ll have more time with family, more laughs with friends, more appreciation for the things money can’t buy. More wood on the fire of life and one more thing – happiest of holidays to you. Follow Ashley on Pinterest at [Ashley_e_Riggs](#) and on Tumblr at [nynv-ashleyriggs.tumblr.com](#).

Some favorites...



My favorite store in NYC!
RRL on West Broadway.



The Classic 23B Style from
Paul Bond Boots
www.paulbondboots.com



RRL tweed blazer
Made in USA
www.ralphlauren.com



Handstitched moccasins
for men and ladies
www.arrowmoc.com



Hermes Silk Twill Scarf
www.hermes.com



Vintage Navajo Squash Blossom
Necklaces (examples)
www.ciscogallery.com



Handbag made from
antique Indian beadwork
www.jaugurdesign.com



Silver and gold Garcia style
www.capriola.com

DESTINATIONS

Autumn Back Roads in California's Gold Country

By Donna Stegman



California Gold Country, a scenic journey for today...

Some people wait all year for summer to roll around bringing with it the heat and out door activities, but I'm a dyed-in-the-wool autumn girl. I call the high desert home, our summers are hot and dry and our winters cold, snowy and punishing. So when the blistering days of summer slowly fade away and fall rolls around, I'm in my comfort zone – warm enough during the day for short sleeves and



...and yesterday's history.

cold enough at night to sleep under a down comforter. There's just something about the season that speaks to me, with trees showing off their finest colors and plump orange pumpkins adorning front porches, what's not to love? So when late October approaches, I jump into my car to experience one of the finest fall spectacles in the west, California's Gold Country Highway.

California's Highway 49 gracefully traverses the western slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountain range. The half-way point between Lake Tahoe and Sacramento sits California's gold country, its claim to fame was for it's...well, gold. Just



The glorious western slope of the Sierra Nevada holds memories of the California Gold Rush

in case you never had American history in 3rd grade, this is where gold was discovered in the late 1840s in the creek at Sutter's Mill. The once booming epicenter of gold rush fever is now just a spec on the map, a charming little one road town in the middle of the sticks. Many mining towns sprung up from Shasta to Yosemite with hopeful men looking to strike it rich along the gold trail, now named HWY 49, yes a play on the gold seeking 49ers. Many of those towns from the gold rush days have crumbled and blown away with time,

but a handful remain that have not only survived, but in fact have reinvented themselves and flourished as great destinations for history, food, shopping and even wine production.

We start our trip on the northern point of 49 in the historical town of Nevada City, just 45 minutes northwest of the California state capitol. Back in the 1850s Nevada City was the third largest town in the state and the center of the Great California Gold Rush. And now? Most of the charming historic town is condensed to an easily walkable 3-block radius along the period enhanced Broad Street. Park your car and stroll through specialty shops that are housed in the old original



Placerville, CA

brick buildings with quaint Victorian trim. We enjoy shopping for one-of-a-kind treasures found in the popular artist studios that crowd the streets of town. For lunch you need to indulge in a local delicacy, the Cornish pie. The locals call these hand-held treats Pasties, which is a simple savory meat and potato pie that Cornish immigrants brought with them when they flooded to this neck of the woods hoping to strike it rich. It's not hard to find one of these savory pies, there seems to be a vendor on every corner. If you're lucky enough to be there for dinner, you can't miss Friar Tucks. It's hard to describe the décor; old school steak house meets Pirates of the Caribbean perhaps?

But the menu is one of the most diverse and well prepared that I've

seen in a long time. Everything from creamy cheese fondue for an appetizer to fresh trout salad and perfectly roasted prime rib served with Yorkshire pudding. The bar's as crazy as the restaurant's choice of décor, a glossy grand piano sits next to the salvaged bar-back

from the 1860s complete with a piano player who seems to specialize in Captain and Tennille and Cher. After all, who doesn't want to sing aloud to "Gypsies Tramps and Thieves" with 30 complete strangers? It's a hoot, don't miss it.



High Hill Ranch in Camino, CA – Apple lovers paradise.

Fall kicks off the busy tourist season in the area, the trees are changing and the temperatures become pleasant. The summer months in this area are brutal, when the heat of the central California valleys bump up against the mountains, the foothills roast. July and August can easily hover around 110 degrees plus and can make for a miserable walk about town, so visit in fall when it's moderate and beautiful.



Larsen Apple Barn in Camino, CA

And for those of you who appreciate original Victorian architecture, you'll be

in your glory. Nevada City has a program in place that not only preserves its period homes, but you can take tours once a month through participating residences that help finance accurate restoration projects. So take a walk down the old original residential streets and gawk at these elegant Victorian ladies that shine brightest from autumn through Christmas, while they're framed by the brilliant red maples of the area.

This is truly an excursion where the drive is as exhilarating and wonderful as the destination. As you cut across Interstate 80, south of Nevada City, you'll need to keep both hands on the wheel. The road from Auburn to Placerville isn't for the faint of heart. Climbing in elevation, this 25-mile stretch is like driving your car on the rails of a



There's always time for a caramel apple.

roller coaster. The ups and downs and hairpin turns are all worth the effort for the spectacular view. The El Dorado hills hold on to autumn for months, brilliant full fiery color paints the sides of the foothills with all the splendor of the season for leaf peepers. As you round one of the many corners you'll find yourself



Apple Hill Farm. The area's grower association has over 50 members. The apple and fruit farms, bake shops, wineries, and Christmas tree farms of the Apple Hill™ Growers have been a family destination since 1964.



suddenly pulling into the minute town of Coloma, which sits perched on the bank of the south fork of the American River. The main attraction for this little settlement is the California historical landmark of Sutter's Mill; you can even try your hand at panning for gold. It's actually more of a ghost town than a town, but it does have an interesting array of trinket shops and a restaurant or two. Walking down the street in town gives visitors a true sense of what life must have been like in the mid 19th century, the restoration and preservation of Coloma is impressive.

Just a few short miles away from Coloma you'll find the heart of all things fall, Apple Hill. Scattered along Apple Hill's picturesque country roads are over 50 small family run orchards that will entice you with all things apple. You'll find splendid fresh-air picnicking among the red

maples and golden aspens, with their best colors saved for the first week of November. Most of these little country farms have picnic tables with fruits and sweets to sell. A handful of orchards have a u-pick setup that allows you to stroll down the neat rows of fragrant apple trees that are loaded with ripe fruit. I hung out in the Fuji and Macintosh section and was able to fill my basket rather quickly. After an hour of hard farm work, I was ready to visit the stand selling fresh baked goods located in an old Amish looking barn on the property. You can smell the cinnamon and vanilla from the parking lot; I wasn't leaving without doing a little shopping. Caramel apples, mile high apple pies, apple fritters, cakes, sauces and cider, yes please. This was just one of the many charming farms in the area and each one has a different hook. Some farms have only a few apples but are all about pumpkin patches and buggy rides. You could easily spend a full day just at Apple Hill.

The past decade has ushered in many changes to this area from when I visited as a kid. Now you pass signs for snobby restaurants that offer tasting menus and wine parings. The huge jump in the price of real estate in the area will tell you that the city dwellers have in fact landed with a loud thump right in the middle of all this wholesome cuteness. So hurry up and visit before its charm is gone and Larsen's Apple Barn is turned into a yoga studio that serves Tibetan coffee.

WHEN TO GO

From mid-October to Christmas, you'll get the best weather and enjoy all the local festivities. I always avoid the weekends, the area can become rather congested.

EVERYTHING ELSE YOU NEED TO KNOW

This will give you links to everything from overnight accommodations, interactive maps of the area and even a chart of when your favorite variety of apple will be ripe. www.applehill.com



An Incendiary Change of Plans

I had originally intended to include the southern reaches of Hwy 49, which encompasses the beautiful Calaveras County that's known for its sprawling vineyards, wineries and intimate tasting rooms. However, unfortunately, as I am writing this there are multiple wildfires ravaging the once peaceful hillsides. Driven by wind and fueled by 4 years of unprecedented drought, the small towns that line the highway are burning. Some will survive and some have already been taken. Unless you've experienced wild fires first hand, no words could ever describe the terror and devastation they bring. Fire season no longer ends on November 1st, due to the explosive conditions – unfortunately it's with us all year long now.



January 19th 2012, I had just returned home from a trip to Denver and I was catching up on laundry and housework, like ya do, when my sister called to say there



was a fire in a neighboring valley. If this would have been in the summer months I would have been more proactive. I looked outside and couldn't see any smoke in the distance, I chose to ignore it and go about my business. Twenty minutes later we lost power and thick black smoke poured into our little rural valley, I couldn't even see our driveway. My teenage daughter and I quickly looked out the back door and were shocked to see 40-foot orange flames in the trees on the back acre, licking our

propane tank. The fire wasn't coming, the fire was already here.

It moved so fast that the authorities weren't even able to send out an alert. Manually opening the garage door, we jumped into the car with only our old poodle. I didn't have my purse, shoes or a bra on, but I had everything with a heartbeat. For a brief second I couldn't remember how to put the car in reverse,



I had never been this scared. We backed out into the darkness with ash and burning embers landing on the windshield, even with all the windows closed the smoke burned our eyes and throat. We couldn't see much, but we could hear explosions coming from every direction. If I hadn't known every square inch of our little ranch neighborhood I would have been in serious trouble, we could make out flames to the left, so we turned right. As we pulled out onto the highway that leads to town, I couldn't drive more than 5 miles an hour due to zero visibility. Several times during our trip we

encountered horses and goats running wild on the highway, neighbors only had time to open their gates and hope for the best.

By some miracle our house was saved that day, just moments after we pulled out, fire trucks pulled into our back yard. We lost all our fencing and more than 65 beautiful mature trees. We were unbelievably lucky, but many of our neighbors weren't. After two days of not knowing anything, they let us back in, our house was there, but 28 of our neighbors lost everything.

So today I said a prayer for the more than 23,000 people that are sitting in evacuation centers south of Sacramento, I know how they feel.

So please give to your local Red Cross, you think you'll never need them, until you do. www.REDCROSS.ORG

WESTERN WRITERS OF AMERICA BOOKSHELF



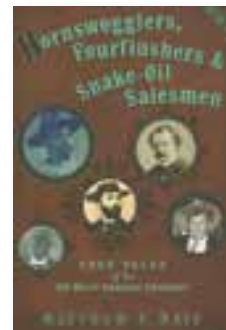
Forensic psychologist Jemimah Hodge and detective Rick Romero have another murder to solve in *The Mariachi Murder* (Camel Press), the fourth in **Marie Romero Cash's** New Mexico-set series.



Best-selling novelists **William W. Johnstone** with **J.A. Johnstone** keep traditional Western action in the forefront while paying tribute to Winchester Repeating Arms's Wild West legacy in *Winchester 1887* (Pinnacle).



The efforts of Vernon, Texas, and Altus, Oklahoma, to document and preserve the route of an often overlooked cattle trail is the focus of *Finding the Great Western Trail* (Texas Tech University Press) by **Sylvia Gann Mahoney**.



Matthew P. Mayo provides a fun glimpse of some real slippery swindlers in *Hornswogglers, Fourflushers & Snake-Oil Salesmen: True Tales of the Old West's Sleaziest Characters* (TwoDot).



James R. Swenson shows the link between John Steinbeck's novel and Farm Security Administration photography in *Picturing Migrants: The Grapes of Wrath and New Deal Documentary Photography* (University of Oklahoma Press).

MORE BOOKS

Eric Sloane

Writer and artist, Eric Sloane (1905 – 1985) had an abiding love for America. An America that was rooted in the simple virtues of our native soil: love of freedom, respect for the individual, sensible frugality, and determined self-reliance – all of which went to make up what Sloane perceived as our true American heritage. Sloane saw great importance – and example – in the work and ways of the early Americans of our pioneer days – the importance



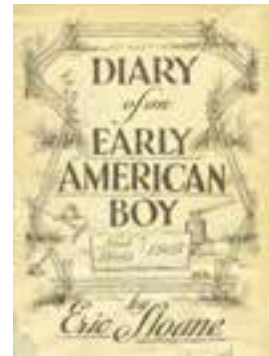
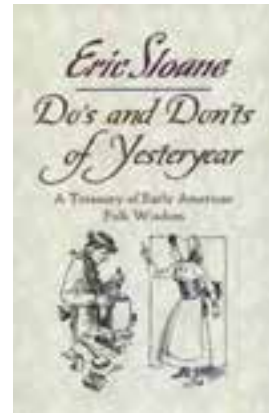


of home and hearth, farm and field and the virtues of hard work.

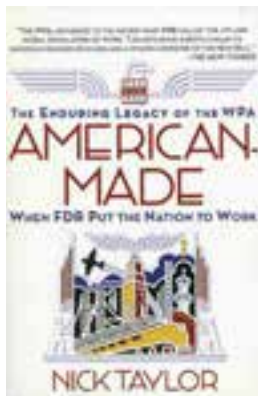
Sloane wrote and illustrated a number of books that celebrated these ways, using them as inspirational examples for a contemporary life well lived. *Once Upon A Time* – reprinted by Dover Press – reminds us of “The Way America Was,” and in Sloane’s mind – the way it should continue. In his Postscript in the book, he writes, “The spirits and habits of yesterday become more difficult to apply to modern life. You never could grow pumpkins on Main Street but the whole nation is becoming a

vast Main Street. The American heritage, however, is a lot more than yesterday’s pumpkins

or romantic nostalgia, and if we can only mark time with our scientific progress long enough to let the old morals and spirits catch up, we shall be all the better for it. The heritages of godliness, the love of hard work, frugality, respect for home and all the other spirits of the pioneer countrymen, are worth keeping forever. What we do today will soon become once upon a time for the Americans of tomorrow and their heritage is our present day responsibility.”



Sloane’s artwork – he was considered a member of the Hudson River School of painting – and information about his many wonderful books of America in a simpler time may be seen at www.ercisloane.com



WPA Redux

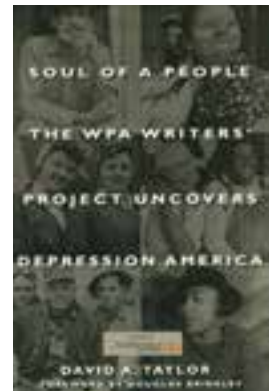
Here is more than you may want to know. The Works Progress Administration (renamed in 1939 as the Work Projects Administration, WPA) was the largest and most ambitious of Roosevelt’s New Deal to help the country get back on its feet after the Great Depression. The WPA helped put people back to work on infrastructure, employing millions of unemployed people to carry out public works projects, including public buildings and roads. In a much smaller but more famous project, Federal Project Number One, the WPA employed musicians, artists, writers, actors and directors in large arts, drama, media, and literacy projects. Almost every

community in the United States had a new park, bridge or school constructed by the agency.

The WPA was liquidated on June 30, 1943, as a result of low unemployment due to the worker shortage of World War II. The WPA had provided millions of Americans with jobs for 8 years. It was a national program that operated its own projects in cooperation with state and local governments, which provided 10–30% of the costs. This was a boot strap program that helped a hurting nation back on its feet and it was received with great appreciation.

Many have spoken of creating a similar kind of program today for the many who were affected by the Great Recession.

There are many books that have been written on the WPA over the years but these two books tell truly compelling

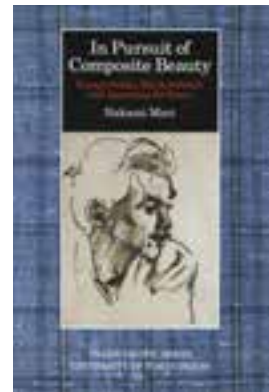


aspects. *American Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA* by Nick Taylor tells a compelling story of its passionate believers and its angry critics – along with its amazing accomplishments. For a program that lasted only 8 years, Taylor’s book tells us of its lasting accomplishments, pitfalls and opportunities for the future.

Soul of a People: The WPA Writers Project Uncovers Depression America by David Taylor tells the story of the creative side of the WPA, Federal Project Number One, and is about a group who were on the Federal Writer’s Project in the 1930s and gave a glimpse of America at a turning point – including the likes of John Cheever, Ralph Ellison, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, and Studs Terkel. In the 1930s, selected writers were tasked an effort to describe America in a series of WPA state and regional guides. What we see is a view of America and its people trying to navigate very difficult times. We suggest these two books as thoughtful examples to learn from the past and to see what if anything, with our crumbling roads and infrastructure of today, we can do for the future.

Pursuing Beauty

Today’s western craftspeople borrow a great deal of inspiration from the work of past masters – and not just from within the genre. Many take great value in the simple work of historic and contemporary Japanese artisans. The simple, natural elegance of many Asian designs play directly into much of American craft: think of the scrollwork and natural aesthetic of engraved silver and bridle pieces. One of the foremost thinkers about the aesthetic and simply beauty of craft was Japan’s Yanagi Soetsu (1889 – 1961), a philosopher and the founder of the Japan’s Folk Craft movement (mingei) in the 1920s and ’30s. In *Pursuit of Composite Beauty: Yanagi Soetsu, His Aesthetics and Aspiration for Peace*, Nakami Mari, a professor of Cultural History at Japan’s Seisen University, lays out a fascinating and compelling look at one the 20th century craft movement’s most important and thoughtful individuals along with the effects of World War II on his thinking of craft.



All these books are available at 1) Your local library – they will be happy to order them for you from another library if they do not have them; 2) Your local indie book store – if you still have one. They will order them as well; 3) Online at amazon.com

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A WESTERN ARTIST

By J.N. Swanson

Sam Elliott remembers his friend, Jack Swanson and considers his book.



The first time I met Jack Swanson was in the summer of 1977. I’d driven up from Los Angeles with a friend whose family had a home in the upper Carmel Valley, in an area called Cachagua, where Jack and his wife Sally built their home and raised a family.

My friend’s dad owned a couple of Jack’s paintings and I’d seen a number of photos and transparencies of Jack’s work. They all spoke to me. There was a party



Greeting the Hide Ship, 30 x 44, oil

to be thrown at my host's home the following evening and I was eager at the prospect of meeting Mr. Swanson, should he decide to show up. The word was Jack was recuperating from a recently broken back.

The next day, sometime after noon, I walked around

the side of the main house and was stopped short at the visage of a man in repose, leaning against a wall in a patch of shade. It was hard to tell which was holding the other up. He wore a weathered straw hat, a very distinctive pair of aviator sunglasses, a blue chambray shirt, blue jeans, and a pair of well-worn cowboy boots. It was the classic look. It was Jack Swanson.

I approached Jack and extended my hand with, "Mr. Swanson, I'm Sam Elliott." I could tell that he was in pain as he uncoiled himself from the wall and shook my hand, "just call me Jack," he said.

It was not long after that meeting that Jack most often greeted me with "howdy Pard" an endearment from a man whose friendship and memory I will forever cherish.

Through the course of the afternoon and into the evening past dinner most of those in attendance enjoyed

A CUT ABOVE BUCKLES
By Andy Andrews

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a few cocktails, Jack and I included. I learned later that because of his bad back, Jack was also taking pain pills at the time. There came the moment when Jack was feeling no pain and he obviously needed to head for home. It was my good fortune along with my friend from Los Angeles, that we would extricate Mr. Swanson from the festivities and see him home.

I heard Jack recount that event more than once and he wrote about it in his book, saying something about me grabbing him by his armpits and dragging him out through the astonished crowd, hoping that no one noticed. And he was picking up rugs with his heels as he went through the room. But the way I remember it, chips were flying from the hardwood floor as Jack had his spurs on and they were digging holes and burning the floor as I dragged him across the room.

I leave it to you which lie you want to believe.

Though never enough, I spent a lot of time with Jack over the years. My wife, Katharine and daughter Cleo and I are blessed to call the Swanson family our dear friends. They are relationships that transcend time, that pick up where they left off regardless of the passage of time. A true measure of a true friend.

In terms of sensibility, there was a common bond between Jack and I. We were both artists, both inspired by many of the same things, both striving to represent and tell stories of a culture we dearly loved. We were both determined to get it right in the doing of it. Jack was the cowboy, the real thing; I was a wannabe, a movie cowboy...it never came up, and didn't matter, but that's the simple truth.

The last time I spoke to Jack was a few months before he died in September of 2014. I'd called him

earlier and left him a message on his cell phone. Jack was never very long winded on the phone, at least with me. It was another thing I liked about him. I knew he wouldn't answer the house phone as he was in the hospital again, so I left the message on his cell and wondered if he would ever get it. He was on my mind and I wanted to talk to him, to hear his voice. I was



Fall Gather, California, 32 x 48, oil

also feeling guilty that I hadn't made the time to get to the Ranch and see him. But for me there is something about seeing people dear to me...dying. I know now that I chose not to see Jack on his deathbed. A selfish decision possibly. Though I had seen him during his decline, I want my final recollection to be of that vital man I knew. So when I called and he didn't answer and the message prompt came on, I thought, I really don't want to leave a message, I want to talk to him. I felt that I had missed him. Felt for sure that he was gone. But it was the only connection I had so I left a message saying something about how much I valued his friendship and something...some lame thing about I will see him across the river or something like that. I really believed that I was talking to myself and was suddenly at a loss for words.

A few weeks later I was up in Oregon and my cell



phone rang “Sam? It’s Jack. Uh, I just got your message, I couldn’t find my damn cell phone.” It was the briefest of conversations and it ended with “so long, Pard.” I got off the phone and just sat there, looking at some cows in the pasture...I didn’t know whether to cry or laugh. I did a little of both.

Which brings me to Jack’s book, *The Life and Times of a Western Artist*. It is the reason I’m telling you this long-winded story. I’d like to quote some passages from Jack’s book, because along with his paintings, they tell his story, and as I once told Jack, if I ever get the opportunity to pedal your book, I will seize it. Let’s begin with the book’s dedication.

“Respectfully Dedicated to My Parents
Margaret and Leonard

For if I hadn’t come along, to their great surprise, this book would never have been written, and the man who rode for \$50.00 a

month, shod his own horses and lived on a can of beans, is a thing of the past, never to return. To my wife, Sally, who was always by my side thru trials and extreme “ups and downs” of an artist’s life.

And to the many old time vaqueros, buckaroos, cowboys – call them what you wish – cattlemen, horsemen, farmers – friends I have known for over 65 years – the backbone of any nation – the food producers.”

Here is the book’s Introduction, written by Jack:

“It seems an artist always paints a horse that he would like to ride – and I am guilty of that. For the most part, I have taken an active part in what I paint.

More than 65 plus years on horseback can provide the basis for a lot of stories and

paintings. Being in my early 80s now, I can still rope well, but have decided to keep off the colts – and that I miss the most. I’m glad I lived when I did.

These stories have brought back fond memories, a lot of chuckles and were meant to be written just for my family’s interest. Life was different 50, 60, and 70 years ago, and that might explain to them my eccentricities, for the man who followed the horseman’s or cowboy’s life of the first half (and on) of the 20th century, had to be practical, ornery and tough. “Welfare” was an unknown word.

It naturally occurred to me that if I wanted a house, I had to build it. If I wanted water, I had to dig my own well – and that you waste a lot of time waiting for anyone to help you. Roll up your sleeves and “Ride your own bronc!”

In my eventual career as an artist, I never followed the crowd, and my advice to anyone even in this day and age is to “Follow your dreams, forget about the crowd.”

You’ll never regret it.

JNS”

There is a section in the book called “The Secret Is In Good Hands” and it’s a series of thoughts on good horsemanship and what constituted a good horse. And Jack’s summation of the bottom of this lengthy page is “You can throw away all of the above if he doesn’t have heart. That’s the most important thing a horse can have, bar none.”

There is a poem in the section by a gentleman by the name of Monte Baker called “Heart” that was very dear to Jack.

Heart

*I talked to a friend just the other day
Who’s got lots of opinions and plenty to say.
We discussed what we both like to see in a horse
His requirements and mine were different of course...
He likes a clean throatlatch and a long skinny neck,
And prefers that their hocks are set close to the deck.
Short backs and hard feet and clean slopin’ shoulder,
And a gaskin that looks like it swallowed a boulder.
He likes a short face and a big ol’ soft eye,
And says these are the horses he’s likely to buy,
And when he’d completed his lengthy discourse,
On all of the attributes of the quality horse,
He asked my opinion, and where do I start?
And I said that I...just want horses with heart.
I said I want heart above all the other.
I don’t care if he’s Smart Little Lena’s full brother,
Or just how much money that his grandmother won,
Or whether he’s roan, palomino or dun.
But give me a horse with some grit and some try,
And some heart and some guts and that’s one that I’ll buy
And I’ve found it’s the same with a woman or a man...
The good ones won’t quit you when the soot hits the fan...*

Jack wrote in a later section of his book, “I hope to leave a legacy through my paintings of the right way to work a horse or a cow.” And it occurred to me when Jack’s son Cache talked to me about what he thought his dad’s legacy was – it certainly was his family, the ranch, the work he leaves behind and, frankly, maybe where it came from as well. Further, for me, the legacy that Jack left us is how to be a good man. Will Rogers once said, something about how he never met a man he didn’t like. Well, I never met a man that didn’t love or like Jack Swanson. And to me that’s part of Jack’s legacy. It’s what he stood for, its how he carried himself, it’s the character that he was and the family that he raised.

Jack also wrote, “I am proud of all my children. A family such as mine couldn’t have gone wrong with the



mother they had.” Sally Swanson is something very special – she’s every bit a woman as Jack was a man.

I am going to close with a poem called the “Vaqueros.” I figured all the poems in his book are there for a reason as Jack was an artist. I believe the poems surrounding the artwork in the book were important were as important to Jack as a kind of verbal connective tissue, I don’t know. Maybe they were more than that, certainly this poem is. Anyway, in the book, Jack writes up above the poem, “I would like to thank Larry Maurice for letting me close with his fine poem.”

The Vaqueros

Buenos Dias, Viejo Vaquero

*Your eyes hold the tears of your age
Can you tell the truth of this grand hacienda
What is written on your faded old page?*

*Ola Viejo Cabbellero, Que tal?
What was the grulla stallion’s name?
That you bucked out for the two silver dollars
Held tight between boot sole and stirrup
The one with the long flowing mane*

*Does your heart long for the feel of the romal and the
rawhide?
Does your back feel the sweat of the day?
Does your heart ache for your family so dear?
All who have now gone away*

*Kern River and Madera are calling
Back to the time of the dream
Back to the time of the hidalgos
Made rich by the rush of the stream*

*This land will never forget you
It owes you its life and its flower
When these days are gone and only memories linger on
Via con Dios, Viejo
You gave us our finest hour*

On the last page of this book, is a picture of Jack standing in his studio, and his last words from himself say: “Adios Vaqueros – Adios Buckaroos, you truly did give us our finest hour. JNS”

For those of us that had the good fortune to know Jack Swanson, this book is a treasure – it keeps Jack alive in our hearts and minds.

For those that didn’t have the pleasure of knowing Jack, this book is an opportunity. It is the window into the soul of a truly special man – a proud American, brilliant artist, dedicated husband and family man, and cowboy to the core. A man I am honored to have called my friend. SPE

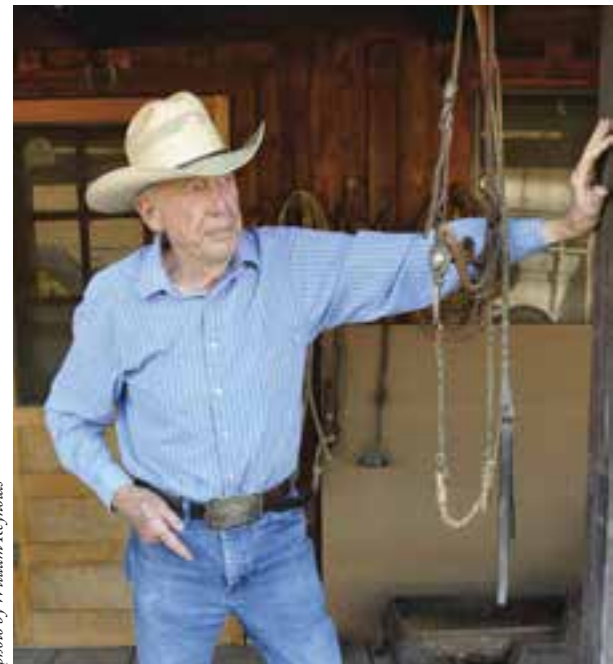


photo by William Reynolds

Jack Swanson, October 2011

To learn more about Jack Swanson and his art, www.jnswanson.com

WESTERN HERITAGE FURNITURE



In the beginning (circa 2002), Tim McClellan began his passion of furniture design and craftsmanship utilizing reclaimed logs and buildings. Western Heritage Furniture offers sustainably harvested American hardwoods in many different products. The Teton Buffet (shown) is typically built from weathered barn wood, but here is brought to a much lighter and crisp look using American Cherry with Walnut detailing. McClellan still incorporates his unique crinkled

copper and hand-dyed leather panels, making it truly one-of-a-kind. More at www.whf-inc.com.

20TH ANNUAL COWPOKE FALL GATHERING

This fall, November 12 – 15, Bert Braun and his crew will put on the twentieth Cowpoke Fall Gathering in Loomis California, about thirty miles from Sacramento, in the historic Blue Goose Fruit Shed in Loomis. The Gathering features cowboy poetry, music and story telling that help reinforce the “cowboy way” that’s at the heart of western traditions. Educational programs in local schools and youth performances at The Fall Gathering ensure that young people can continue to participate in traditional oral folk art forms.

www.cowpokefallgathering.com



CLASSIC TV

If you love old time westerns – and all sorts of nostalgic television, then you have to visit Vintage-tv.com. They feature all sorts of clips, classic commercials and western heroes. It’s a grand site to revisit the golden age of TV. www.vintage-tv.com





SONIC PIONEERS

Western music historian and *Ranch & Reata* contributor, Hal Cannon, along with Greg Isaac and Eli Wrangle make up the band 3hattrio. Their new album,



Dark Desert Night features what the band calls American desert music and celebrates their homeland near Zion National Park in Utah. Their music is of a placed



people who have come from all over and created community. It's a grand listen. Here's what artist, singer/songwriter – our own renaissance man, Tom Russell has to say: *3hattrio's* American Desert Music *is an important new angle on a wide*

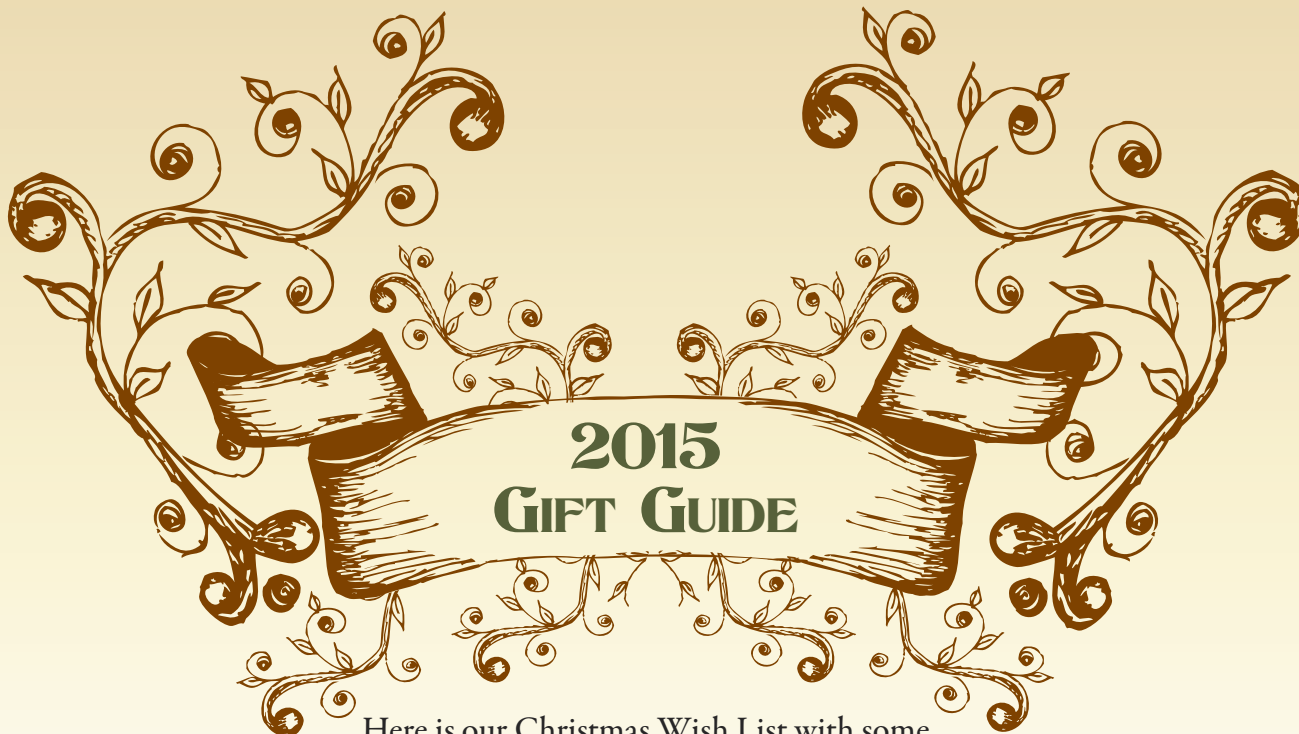
body of music called "Western" – which we've taken too much for granted, and allowed to stagnate. Theirs is a fresh, original sound tied to a love for the desert land...and I'm a desert rat. These guys are sonic pioneers.

Get the album at www.3hattrio.com

COMING SOON

Artisanal
WEST.COM

A UNIQUELY CURATED COLLECTION



Here is our Christmas Wish List with some great gift ideas for the upcoming holiday season – something for every cowboy and cowgirl on your list, whether they’ve been naughty or nice!

— Thea Marx

HOME & RANCH

KNIFE LINE



Count on this little beauty from New West KnifeWorks as a lifeline to delicious meals. It is for the friend that doesn't ever have a sharp knife or cooks that need a reliable piece. The Deli Knife will cut anything and remain sharp forever. www.Newwestknifeworks.com, 877.258.0100

BALANCED EFFORT

Husband hard to buy for? Get him a new Priefert Scale with a big red ribbon and whisper that, “it is also a good a tax deduction, honey.” You’ll have accurate weights on calves, a storm indicator and a happy guy on your hands. www.priefert.com or 800.527.8616





ALL-IN-ONE GROOMER

StripHair is the single grooming tool you need to keep your horse looking fantastic. It sheds a winter coat without ever harming the horse's skin. Massages and shines as it sheds. Now, that is multi-tasking! www.striphair.com



CUT TO THE CORE

Cut the issue to the core, get her a new cutting board emblazoned with vintage cowgirl photos from the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame. She'll be happy to have this useful piece in her kitchen. Solid wood, made in USA. www.shopthecowgirl.net 817.336.4475



CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS



No need to get home looking like 50 miles of bad road, even if you've been on one. *FoxxMD Evolutionary Skin Care Sanctuary Gel Cleanser* is just plain good and good for you. Made with Mother Nature's own natural ingredients it will get rid of the grit with the help of some cold creek water, then you're good to go. The container doesn't leak and can be tossed into your saddlebag. By the way, who said clean skin on the trail is only for women? www.foxxmd.com 844.369.9963

COLOR ME HAPPY



Add this bright, happy canoe pillow by fabric artist Maggie Revel Mielczarek to a room and elevate its mood. She also creates wall-paper and custom fabrics for her shop Leland Gal in inspiring colors and designs. www.lelandgal.com 773.203.7716





SIT DOWN

And enjoy the season in this stylish chair exclusively from Copper Creek Canyon. This divine beauty is as gorgeous as it is comfortable. What are you waiting for? www.CopperCreekCanyon.com 317.577.2990

FASHION

ICONIC STYLE

Love him in a tux? Jeans and a white shirt? Then you want him to have a pair of Justin Black Iguana Lizard Roper Boots. They are iconic and down right handsome just like he is... www.justinboots.com



WOMEN'S CLASSIC

A classic western boot is always welcome amongst the fashionistas in the closet. You never know when you want to convey that, "Seriously – don't mess with me – I am a cowgirl," look. Justin's tan goatskin classic western boots. www.Justin.com



MODERN COWBOY

Every modern cowboy needs a pair of boots that works as hard as he does. The Renegade Buckaroo from Tony Lama fits the bill. He'll wear them all day on the ranch and still be able to two step into the night. www.Tonylama.com



PRETTY LITTLE THING

Wear these pretty little boots anywhere but the sortin' pen. Perfect for going to town, waltzing, parent-teacher conferences and having coffee. www.Tonylama.com





CHARM THEM

Gentlemen, charm them with your sense of cowboy style with these Nocona beauties. Uh-huh, they'll be sayin', he's so fine! Cognac Caiman with half-moon toe. www.Nocona.com



TIMELESS

Beautiful black cherry boots are timeless and can transcend day or night. A must for the cowgirl that goes between the ranch and the city. www.Nocona.com



CLASSIC

A classic Schaefer piece makes a fabulous present under the tree. Why? Schaefer is always western, made in the USA and timeless. While you are gifting, get one for yourself, too. Classic is classic – you can't go wrong. www.schaefer-ranchwear.com 800.426.2074

MAKE IT SPECIAL

Custom buckskin leather pants with hand dyed top by fashion designer Meredith Lockhart... this uber-talented designer can custom make an outfit for any special occasion or just to add to your already fabulous closet. Call her at 913.886.2247 or peruse her website for ready-to-buy pieces. www.meredithlockhart.com



HANDSOME

He will be so handsome in this ombre wool blend sweater from Stetson. The bonus is he will be warm too! www.stetsonapparel.com 303.571.2296





COWBOY GIFT

A cowboy always enjoys a good shirt under the tree. Roper has just the one with this classic long sleeve, snap front with foulard print. www.erooper.com 800.825.6555



FRINGE IT

Add warmth and flair with Roper's Chevron Cardigan this winter. Easy to wear, pretty to look at. How can you go wrong? www.erooper.com 800.825.6555



TOP THE LIST

A boot that must be on the top of your wish list. Tall, dark and built to impress, this beautiful combination of wool and leather is downright cool, I mean warm. Ask for the Adriana Boot from your favorite Stetson retailer. www.stetsonapparel.com 303.571.2296



The JBS Houston Boot from Stetson is a handsome representation of western men's chic. Details and rich caiman belly leather make this boot a staple dress boot. He will be ever so happy with this present! www.stetsonapparel.com 303.571.2296



SHORT & PRETTY

Perfect with jeans or over a little black dress, Stetson's Asymmetrical cardigan provides warmth and style without being stuffy. www.stetsonapparel.com 303.571.2296

RITCH RAND HATS

For almost forty years, Ritch Rand has created some of the finest in outdoor enthusiast and western headwear. Always fashion forward, Rand continues designing with grace from his Billings shop. www.randhats.com





HANDSOME IS AS HANDSOME DOES

From Hollywood's favorite western clothier, Old Frontier, a handsome jacket that will make blue eyes spark and ladies swoon. www.oldfrontier.com
323.643.0000

ONLY THE FINEST

Give only the finest from Montecristi to the love of your life. Like a fine glass of champagne, this hat conveys the essence of elegance. Finished with 18K conchos on alligator and three piece tip set, this hat is shown in Crystal, but many other colors are available. www.montecristihats.com 505.983.9598



EASY TO WEAR

Black and white Rancho Estancia Avery Blouse with velvet burnout detail is easy to wear and easy on the eyes. It is a great piece to have in your closet to mix and match. www.ranchoestancia.com



TRUE BLUE

Haven't met a man yet that doesn't look good in blue. With that in mind, this shirt is a sure bet. Resistol's Goliad – it is Classic, western cut and blue. You can't go wrong. www.resistol.com



CELEBRATE WITH STETSON



In honor of Stetson's 150th anniversary they've created a 150X fur felt beauty. The limited edition hat features a genuine leather roan sweat band and a bridal satin liner with the 150th logo. It comes with a 3 piece buckle set with inset stones on self felt band and its own carrying case. Be a part of the legend. www.Stetson.com





STAND OUT

If edgy, but not over the top is your style, then you need a Calamity from Charlie 1 Horse hat. It is brown wool with leather on the brim. The perfect hat for a day when you just don't want to be like everyone else. www.charlie1horsehats.com



PALM IT

There is nothing like a good palm leaf hat: they are comfortable and easy to wear. Don't have cows to chase, wear it in the garden to express your cowgirl spirit. Good for cowboys too, but they know that! Ask for the C Brand 7x. www.Atwoodhats.com 800.496.1086

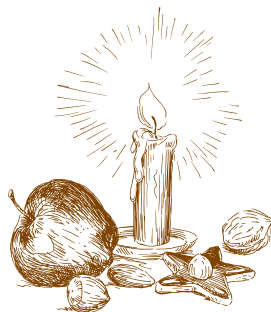
HAVE IT YOUR WAY

Your hat will easily win the popularity contest when you wear an Atwood 20Xfelt, especially since it can be styled as a low crown or cattleman crown. You can also choose your brim width. www.Atwoodhats.com 800.496.1086



CORBIN DOBBY MEN'S PLAID

Handsome. Rugged. Downright Sexy. Yep. This is the shirt. You've got the man. Get the shirt. Corbin Dobby Plaid is all you need to know. www.Ryanmichael.com 844.738.7424





A MUST!

Gorgeous in every way, this beautifully tailored shirt by Ryan Michael is a must for every woman who has a love of the West, even if it was the handsome wrangler from years ago, let this be a sweet reminder. Dress it up, wear it casual. Look for the Emma Whip stitch online at ryanmichael.com or ask for it by name from your favorite retailer. www.Ryanmichael.com 844.738.7424



WEST CHUKKA

Gentlemen: need to infuse a little of the West into your everyday life in the city? Then get this pearl alligator chukka made exclusively for WEST by Lucchese – in a cool grey and bronze tone that is a nice departure from the brown or black dilemma. It will look good with every color of pants. www.Westbh.com 310.470.9063

GIFTS

TOASTING TRADITION



A delightful gift for the wildlife lover in your life, these stylish glasses from Anteks curated with matching decanter that echoes the centuries old tradition of hunting in the Bohemian countryside. Sold individually, so mix and match colors and motifs. www.Antekscurated.com 214.706.6983



HE HAS EVERYTHING?

Betcha Brighton Saddlery has something he doesn't. Give him these miniature saddle bags that hold playing cards or business cards. They'll look good on his desk or coffee table too. www.brightonsaddlery.com 800.237.0721



COVER THIS

A custom iPad cover from JM Capriola conveys the feel of your favorite saddle and your love of the West. Use it on your next flight or in tomorrow's board meeting. www.capriolas.com 775.738.5816



DON'T...

Start the party without at least one bottle each of Rebel Coast Winery's Reckless Love and Sunday Funday. (You get the bag free) Never had it? Now is the time. Plus their story is really good and tag line ... distractingly sexy, is the best. www.Rebelcoast.com 818.425.3354

PENDLETON MIDNIGHT

Here's what Pendleton says "This new super premium whisky, accentuated by the intense fruit and floral nuances absorbed from the American brandy barrels, is a unique addition to the Canadian whisky category, and provides a more premium offering that's smooth and complex." That is probably right, but we just like it. Let'er buck. www.pendletonwhisky.com



YAK IT UP

Need something new for dinner? Try the Yak Basket from Gill's Pier Ranch. Enjoy the benefits of this delicate high protein low fat red meat and delight your dinner guests. Call Chris and choose your own cuts: steaks, burger, roasts even add in jerky. And if you are feeling decorative add in a skull or hide. www.gillspierranch.com 231.256.7355

RAMBLER DELUXE



What are the holidays without music and what could be better than finding a new Rambler Deluxe in your stocking? American Built, with great tone and volume, this square neck, resophonic guitar is hand built in the RedLine shop, just outside of Nashville, Tennessee. How can you go wrong? www.redlineresophonics.com





ADD ONE TO YOUR COLLECTION

Every Pendleton Blanket has a story to tell. The legendary maker of American wool blankets does not disappoint with the Midnight Eyes Blanket. The design is a tribute to the Cherokee legend of how nocturnal animals won their ability to stay awake at night. A beautiful piece to add to your collection or help someone you love start their own. www.Pendleton-USA.com 877.996.6599

HOT DOG!

Laguna Beach, CA artist, Debby Carman creates the “World’s Most Beautiful Pet Ceramics.” Who knew? Now you do. Custom treat jars, bowls, tabletop and paintings. www.fauxpawproductions.com 949.497.4307



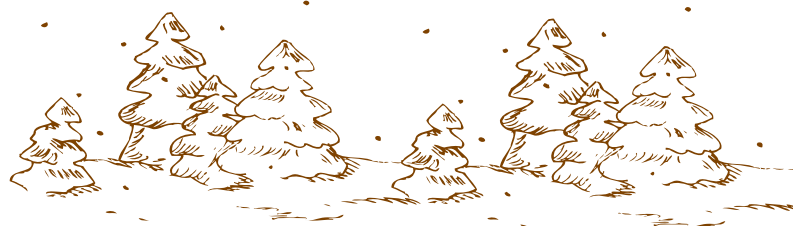
HOLD ‘EM UP

He will be tickled pink if you have a custom hand-tooled holster from Custom Cowboy made for his favorite firearm. All you have to do is tell Julie the make and model as well as your favorite color and pattern. She’ll make sure it is just right. www.customcowboyshop.com 800.487.2692



TRUE BLUE

I bet you’ve never seen anything like this! Beautifully rendered in crystal and silver to emulate a shotgun shell these treasures are the epitome of a shot glass. A wonderful gift or addition to your bar. www.silverkingusa.com 818.700.1999





ACCESSORIES

FRINGE IT!

Flip the fringe and walk with purpose with one of these zip top totes from American West's Canyon Creek Collection. Take it on the plane, train and automobile, over passes, mountains and rivers... who would have guessed this stylish bag had a lifetime guarantee? Perfect for the woman who is intent on winning the west. www.AmericanWest.cc for retailers 888.367.2383



TACK

COMFORT

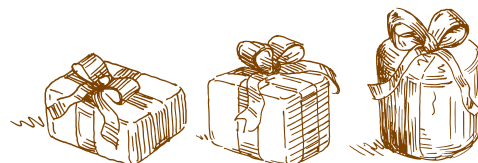
Are your feet comfortable when you ride? No? Then you need a pair of Nettle's stirrups. Hall of Famer Ronnie Nettles

knows that the stirrup can make a big difference, that is why there are several kinds available at www.nettlescountrystore.com 800.729.2234



PLAY DRESS UP

If girls can dress up their dolls, boys can dress up their horses, right? Sure. Though we don't like to admit to dressing up our animals, we all do it. Really! These gorgeous headstall buckles are perfect to fulfill your silver fetish and they'll make your horse look purdy! Promise! www.spillerranch.com 325.668.9915





A LITTLE BIT

Any horseman or woman would appreciate this gorgeous Santa Barbara Bridle Spade Bit from Ernie Marsh of Marsh Brothers under the Christmas Tree. It will give them a good reason to buy a new headstall.... www.spanishspade.com 307.899.3301

SHOSHONE ROSE

Using Shoshone Rose beadwork, chink maker and Riverton, Wyoming's Western Supply owner, Rhonda Slack created these hair-on-hide and hand tooled chinks. The chinks celebrate some of the nearby Wind River Reservation's western traditions: cowboying, rodeo and hand beaded craft. Don't hesitate, this one-of-a-kind pair is available to add to your collection. www.facebook.com/westernsupply 307.856.5116



READY TO RIDE

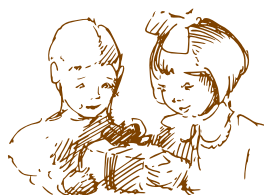
Need a new ranch saddle? Call Buckaroo Businesses. They have a showroom full of saddles ready to ride. If you have a custom saddle in mind, they can have one made completely customized to fit your needs. www.Buckaroorobusinesses.com 406.252.5000

JEWELRY

VINTAGE APPEAL

Express your love of the West with traditional western craft inspired cuff bracelets from Montana Silver. Rendered in copper, silver and gold, these vintage styles echo beadwork and tooled leather designs of yesteryear in materials that will take the abuse of today's lifestyle. Perfect for men or women.

Purchase at your local western retailer or visit www.montanasilversmiths.com





OLD COWDOGS

These Alamar cuffs from Old Cowdogs – superbly polished by Old Cowdogs intern Cooper – are available in either all sterling silver or with gold alamar knots. www.oldcowdogs.com



CLASSIC BEAUTY

Enhance her classic beauty by putting Gist Silversmith's Desert Rose Collection of silver and gold accessories in her stocking. She will appreciate the hand tooled leather inspired pieces in silver and gold as well as the timeless appeal they bring to her jewelry box. www.Gistsilversmiths.com 800.456.4478



SWEET NOVEMBER

Leave it to Nathalie to find a most unusual, but exquisite piece: a bracelet hand beaded with 22k gold beads... a piece made for exclamations. By Teri Greeves and available from Nathalie nathaliesantafe@gmail.com 505.982.1021

CUFFED

Cufflinks are like ribbon on a package; the finishing touch that really makes it special. Pinto Ranch offers these hand engraved sterling silver cufflinks in a variety of styles so you can add that crucial final touch to your look. Made in Texas www.pintoranch.com 800.393.8001



STATEMENT BUCKLE

Choose silver, gold, rose gold, sapphires, rubies, diamonds. Have it engraved. Add your brand. This buckle is fully customizable to his taste and yours. He'll love you and his statement buckle from A Cut Above. www.Acutabovebuckles.com 951.600.0444





THE COMSTOCK LOAD

Comstock Heritage – America’s Oldest Western Silver and Goldsmiths – has been family owned and operated since 1886. They create “Hardware for Gentlemen and is a must see for your shopping list. www.comstockheritage.com

CUFF IT

With this wide antiqued bronze cuff spattered with silver... and channel the Greek Goddess in you. Hand made by award winning fashion designer Meredith Lockhart. www.meredithlockhart.com 913.886.2247



EAST MEETS WEST

The zen combination of horses and Buddha is beautifully rendered in a silver, turquoise and coral necklace from Sweetbird Studios. A delightful gift for yourself or that girl who loves her horses. www.sweetbirdstudio.com 303.440.9891

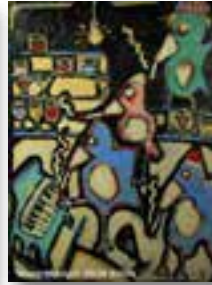
ART

TEAL BLAKE



Teal Blake is one of the newest members of the Cowboy Artists of America and also painted our little corner section fillets you see in ever issue. Teal has an assortment of “usable” size watercolor sketches and studies – perfect for holiday gifting. www.tealblake.com





TOM RUSSELL

What says the Holidays more than Tom Russell art? Now is the time to liven up the holiday dinner with a “Tom Russell” over the mantle. www.rainbowman.com/tom-russel/

VICTORIA ADAMS

Santa Fe artisan Victoria Adams creates truly one-of-kind buckle sets, jewelry along with insanely cool purses that she crafts in her studio. She has been featured before in our Gift Guides and she continues to blow us away with her design and style. www.victoriaadamsjewelry.com



JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED



Hang Sandra Jones Campbell’s “The Wild Bunch” print on canvas... it is just what the house doctor ordered to add a little of the Wild West to your space. www.sandrajonescampbell.com 949.310.0074



KELLY DONOVAN *GOOD GRASS YEAR*

When the rain and sun is plentiful, you have happy cows and cowboys with grass everywhere. Kelly Donovan’s *Good Grass Year* bronze celebrates this phenomenon westerners so appreciate. kellydonovanstudio.blogspot.com 435.225.3435





FOR THE LOVE OF THE HORSE

Wyoming artist, Colleen Drury, captures the amazing relationship between feminine and equine energies in this moving piece. A wonderful gift for the horse lover in your life. www.Colleendrury.com
307.858.2210

JILL HARTLEY *SAGEBRUSH SUNRISE*

Feel the warmth of the sun rising over the cool, quiet Wyoming plains in Jill Hartley's *Sagebrush Sunrise*. Known for her dusk and dawn work, Jill is an award-winning artist who works in oil on cradled board capturing ethereal landscapes. www.jillhartleystudio.com 307.389.8592



STEVE JOHNSON *SHEER COWBOY*

Celebrating the beautiful toughness of a cowgirl, Steve Johnson, created *Sheer Cowboy* in charcoal and it is now available in a giclee. A perfect Christmas gift for anyone who appreciates the American Cowgirl. www.Stevejohnsoncowboyart.com 385.206.9529 or 801.458.9315

49
[Small logo]

BOOKS

THEA MARX *CONTEMPORARY WESTERN DESIGN BY THEA MARX*

Give the gift of daydreams, ideas and future plans with this beautiful coffee table book. Anyone who is drawn to the design world will enjoy this take on the genre in a tour through every room in the house and beyond. Find exquisite hand crafted accessories, one of a kind furniture pieces and inspirational rooms. www.Amazon.com or 307.272.8432 for your personalized copy.



A GRAND STORY

Author Sue Royo has written a heart-warming children’s book about an inspiring, true-life story of a little injured dove that discovers the power of love and kindness. The story will grab your heart and never let go. www.sueroya.com



TERESA JORDAN
THE YEAR OF LIVING VIRTUOUSLY
 (WEEKENDS OFF)



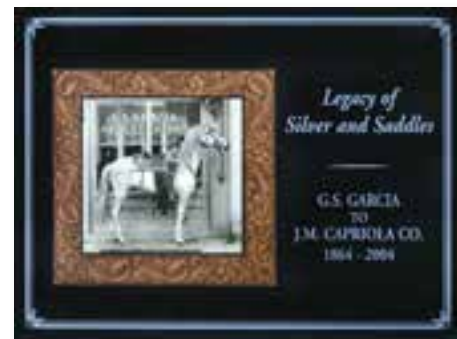
Writer Teresa Jordan’s new book, *The Year of Living Virtuously (Weekends Off)* is Drawn from Teresa’s popular blog of the same title, this book starts with Benjamin Franklin’s list of thirteen virtues and asks the question: do Franklin’s perhaps antiquated notions of virtue offer guidance to a nation increasingly divided by angry righteousness? “This is a book you will want to have on your bedside for the rest of your life.” – Betsy Burton, *RADIOWEST* Holiday Book Show. www.teresajordan.com

FROM G.S. GARCIA TO J.M. CAPRIOLA
LEGACY OF SILVER AND SADDLES

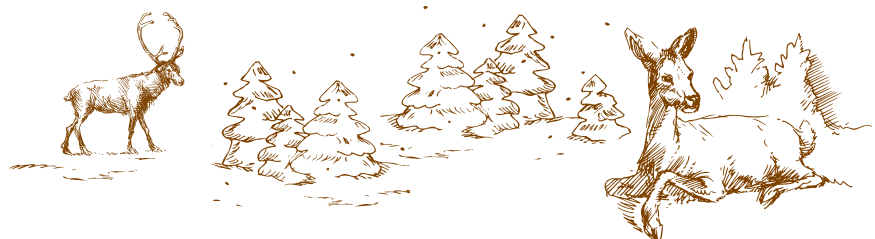
Both legendary purveyors of fine buckaroo trappings, Garcia and



“Caps” are celebrated in this lovely volume – *Legacy of Silver and Saddles* –



showing the history of the two companies. Family is the reason they both thrived and it is heart warming to see the evolution of two legacies that continue today at J.M.Capriola in Elko, Nevada. www.capriolas.com



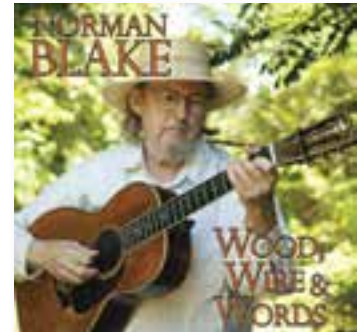


A.J.'s LIST

We couldn't leave our Editor out of the gift list search so here are some items A.J. Mangum figured would be pretty nice to give (or get!)

WOOD, WIRE & WORDS

Bluegrass legend Norman Blake calls *Wood, Wire & Words*, his first collection of original songs in more than 30 years, "kind of a downer if you listen to the words." Despite Blake's self-deprecating review of his own work, fans of the bluegrass genre are sure to enjoy the dozen tracks on this long-overdue CD, which features collaborations with Nancy Blake. \$15, Western Jubilee Recording Co.; www.westernjubilee.com

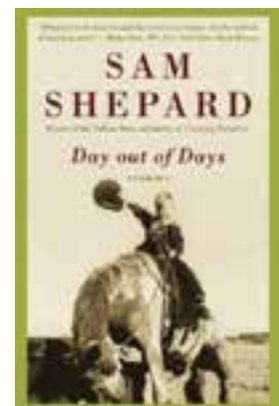


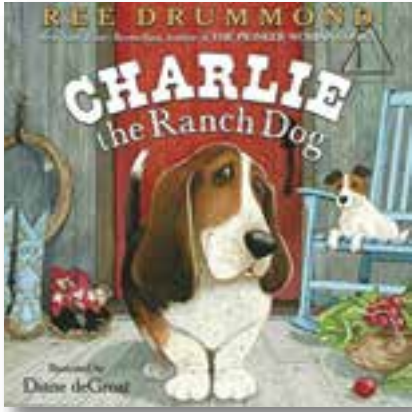
BOHO WEST

LA-Boho style meets the West in a collection of new hand-shaped hats from Laura Noelle featuring quality leather sweatbands, natural leather banding and copper appointments. The perfect hat for town or that last minute roping. www.wearlauranoelle.com

FICTION BY SAM SHEPARD

Actor and playwright Sam Shepard might also be one of the most overlooked writers of contemporary western fiction. Revered for his stage plays – he's written more than 45, and his plays are among the most produced in America – Shepard is also the author of the short-fiction collections *Day Out of Days*, *Great Dream of Heaven* and *Cruising Paradise*. Each book offers a lineup of stories set in the West. The works can be dark, but Shepard's writing and storytelling are unmatched. All titles are available from major booksellers.





CHARLIE THE RANCH DOG

Authored by Ree Drummond, author of *The Pioneer Woman Cooks*, *Charlie the Ranch Dog* is a children's story that tells the tale of a goodhearted, if low-energy, Basset Hound who lives on an Oklahoma ranch, where his adventures include keeping up with Suzie (his Jack Russell buddy), chasing the occasional cow out of the garden, and observing the goings-on of a working ranch. Illustrated by Diane deGroat, the book offers youngsters an entertaining look at ranch life from a canine point of view. *Charlie the Ranch Dog* and several sequels are available from major booksellers.

FLORAL DESIGN

Aimed at veteran craftsmen and beginners alike, this instructional DVD from Idaho saddlemaker Cary Schwarz outlines the process behind creating attractive and effective floral designs for leather projects. The one-hour presentation covers fundamentals such as balance, lines, and managing negative space. \$45. www.caryschwarz.com





HATS BY CATE HAVSTAD

Featured in this issue, Cate Havstad is an Oregon hatmaker who's quickly earned a strong following thanks to her original designs, youthful approach to longstanding traditions, and savvy social-media marketing. Lyle Lovett is a fan (and a client), as are many cowboys, artists and other folks, coast to coast, with an appreciation for great, handcrafted western hats. www.havstadhatco.com

SPUR OF THE MOMENT

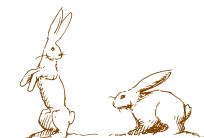
This 80-page coffee-table book offers a retrospective of Canadian cartoonist Ben Crane's cowboy-themed paintings and the stories that inspired them. Featuring text by Phil Callaway and an introduction by Boots Reynolds, the book includes more than 100 of Crane's best images, each packed with his trademark humor. \$21.95. www.bencrane.com



ARTWORK BY JIM REY



One of the western culture's most gifted painters, Colorado's Jim Rey has spent a lifetime documenting on canvas the cowboy culture. Much of his work is based directly on scenes he's witnessed firsthand or moments in which he's been a participant. Rey cites Will James and the classic illustrators of *The Saturday Evening Post* as influences; their effect can be seen in his work, in which Rey's characters and action are often front and center. Prints and originals are both available from the artist; prices vary. www.jimreystudio.com





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BY HAND AND HEART

The Hatter and the Hound

Oregon hatmaker Cate Havstad is reinventing her craft, a journey that began with a hat-craving canine.



By Melissa Mylchreest

The best stories always have dogs in them. The tale of how Cate Havstad became one of the West's most promising up-and-coming hatters just happens to be one of them.

A number of years back, Havstad was enrolled at the University of California at Santa Cruz, uncertain of her future and uninspired by classes. When a friend invited her to drop out, hit the road, and help film a documentary about folk and roots music, she jumped at the chance.

“Even though it meant explaining to my parents that I would be leaving school

for a while, going on tour with this musician they didn't know, for a project that I couldn't really explain,” she says, “I knew it was important.”

Shortly before they embarked on their adventure, her friend gifted her a vintage flat-brimmed hat.

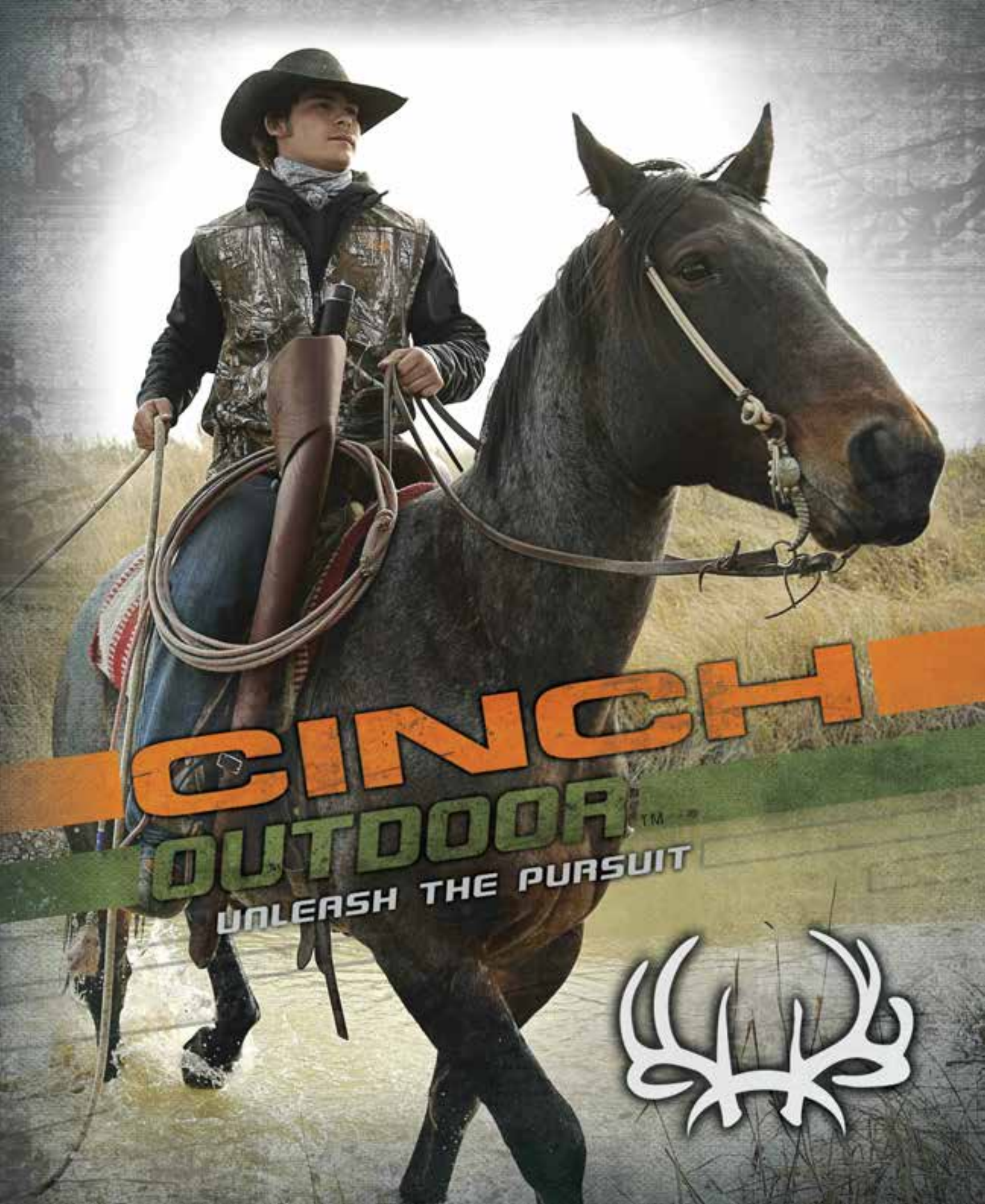
“He told me, ‘This is your moviemaking hat,’ she recalls. Havstad grew up riding horses and spending time on ranches, but it was the first western hat she'd ever owned. “I loved it. From that day forward it became part of my everyday uniform.”

Little did Havstad know, that hat – and the subse-



photo by Karyn Demidova/Courtesy Cate Havstad

Havstad measures a client for a custom hat.



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photo by Allison Harp/Courtesy Cate Havstad

Oregon hatmaker Cate Havstad.

quent whirlwind tour – would change the trajectory of her life. (Don't worry, we're getting to the dog.)

"I was transformed by the experience, meeting all these people who were living really inspired lives, chasing their passions, no matter how little money they might make doing it," she says. "They were 100 percent in it for the sake of their craft, and that inspired me to find what I was truly passionate about."

That search eventually led her to Vancouver, British Columbia, where she found herself working odd jobs and long hours to pay the bills.

"I was having a hard time making ends meet and wasn't sure what I was doing," Havstad says, "but I was also being stubborn about staying there. I had a puppy at the time, and it was no fun for her, because I was gone all the time."

And then, one day, she came home to find that Charlie, her pup, had torn apart her beloved hat.

"It was the only thing of value I had left, and it was

such a sentimental thing for me," Havstad says. "She had been alone with that hat so many times, and never chewed on it. So I just had a good cry and said, 'You're right Charlie, it's time to leave Canada.' So we went back to California, I reenrolled in school, and finished what I started."

But the story doesn't end there. Reluctant to accept the total demise of her hat, she started contacting hatters, asking whether it could be mended. Ultimately the verdict for the hat was grim, but in the meantime Havstad found herself unexpectedly hooked on the art of custom hatmaking. The passion and dedication she saw in the craftsmen she met echoed the same attributes in the musicians that had so inspired her while she was on the road.

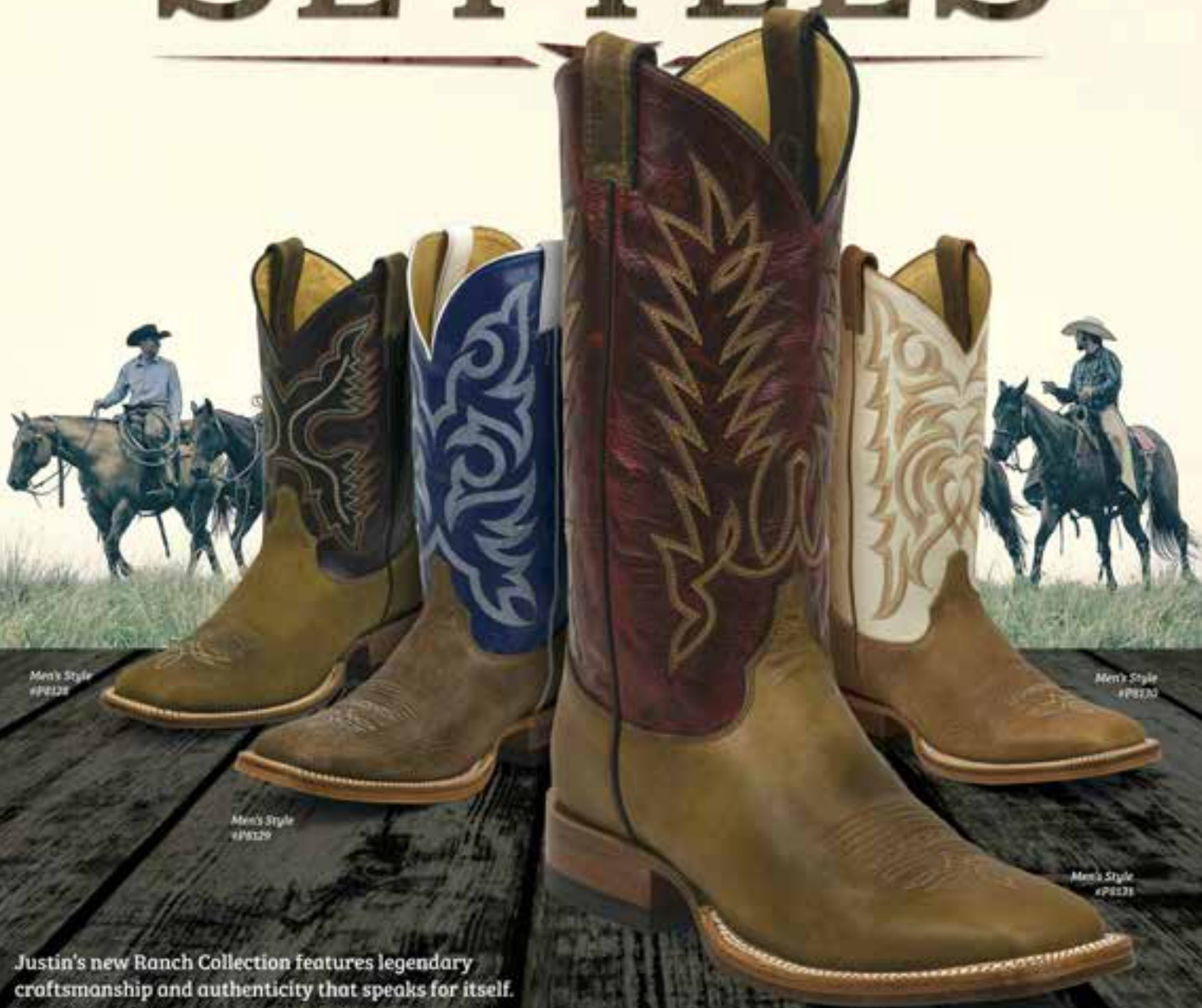
So after finishing college, Havstad moved to Sisters, Oregon, where she led horseback trail rides and apprenticed with traditional hatmaker Gene Baldwin every day after work.

"When it started out, I was just allowed to observe, and he would explain things," she says. "But with some time and some hints that I was pretty dedicated, he started letting me get hands-on. My first project was to build myself a hat."

The rest, as they say, is history. After spending a year under Baldwin's tutelage and hunting for her own machinery and equipment, Havstad lit out on her own and now runs Havstad Hat Company out of a little shop in Bend, Oregon. And even though she's only been at it for a little more than a year, her work is already garnering acclaim from some true hat connoisseurs, such as musicians Lyle Lovett, Shakey Graves and Nikki Lane.

Havstad credits her success to long hours of hard work, the use of social media (she's a hit on Instagram), and collaborations with other artisans, whether they're weavers or leatherworkers making hatbands, or photographers creating beautiful images of her hats in

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use out in Oregon's high desert. She also thinks people are intrigued by the fact that she's one of very few women who make western hats.

"I know about a couple of really great women hatters, one in Durango, Colorado, and one in Oklahoma, but we're not really represented in that



photo by Cate Havstad

Some of Havstad's creations. The hatmaker takes pride in being part of a younger generation keeping alive the craft's age-old customs.

world," Havstad says. "More women do millinery work, but that doesn't require the sort of labor that you have to do to work with these felts. You have to be strong to block a good felt hat. It's hard work. And I like being a young female who's strong and putting out as good a product as any of the guys."

Havstad also notes that there's been a sudden resurgence in demand for handmade hats.

"More and more, even just in the past year, I think there's been a comeback of hats in a crazy way," she says. "And because of that, I'm seeing a lot of new hat companies pop up. It's really trendy."

She worries, though, that not everyone is willing to invest the time and energy required to become a good hatter.

"You can tell just from a picture if it's a quality



photo by Sarah Gilliam/courtesy Cate Havstad



photo by Sarah Gilliam/courtesy Cate Havstad

product," Havstad says. "And truly, I understand that it's hard to find people who are willing to mentor you. But I have to say, it would be a shame if the popularity of hats turned into the popularity of shitty hats."

And so, in an effort to save the world from shitty hats, Havstad has decided to take her wares, skills and curiosity on the road. This fall, she and Charlie (all grown up now, and no longer prone to eating hats) are hitting the road for *The Hatter & the Hound* tour. Havstad and a few helpers are in the process of outfitting a 32-foot vintage Airstream to be a fully functional, mobile workshop.

"As far as I know, it'll be the only one that exists," Havstad says. "The hatters on the rodeo circuit are the best representation of what a traveling hatter might be, where they do shaping, but I haven't seen any fully functional shop that can start with raw product and



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create a finished hat on the road.”

Looping through several western states and then over to Nashville, the tour will bring Havstad’s brand to the people, but it will also bring the people to her. “What I’d really love to do is connect with as many hatmakers as I can along the way,” she says. “Every hatmaker that I meet has a slightly different, nuanced way of doing things, and a lot of these really great hatters are men who are getting older. They have these skills that will be lost if they’re not passed on. I want to learn as many of those traditional skills as I can, while I can, and be a representation of someone from a younger generation who’s authentically interested in carrying this on as best as I can.”

And that’s a big part of what drives Havstad: connecting with other young, dedicated makers committed to reviving artisanal craft. A part of the Handmade Movement – a group of artisans profiled in a documentary film series *The Makers* – Havstad draws energy not only from other up-and-coming craftsmen, but from the satisfaction of knowing that collectively, they’re keeping traditional utilitarian art forms alive.

“I had a really neat experience with this man in Tennessee who had spent his life as a custom spur maker,” Havstad says. The older gentlemen felt that his life’s work was no longer relevant, necessary or even appreciated. “But I started talking to him about the Handmade Movement series, and I showed him the Web site for it and the trailer for the film, and I explained what it’s all about. And I watched him go from this look of defeat, to realizing there’s this whole generation of people reviving these skills.”

Havstad sits at the intersection of past and present. While perfecting the traditional skills of yesterday, she’s using digital tools and social networks of the modern age not just to create buzz about her products, but to



photo by Matthew Grimes/courtesy Cate Havstad

Havstad at work in her Bend, Oregon, shop. She’s taking her trade on the road this fall, with *The Hatter and the Hound Tour*.

build enthusiasm for the hatmaking art form itself.

“We can take cues from the craftsmen from before and honor them by doing what we do, capturing it on film, sharing it with the world,” Havstad says. “Just to see that guy light up and realize that people still care, that’s really the heart of it.”

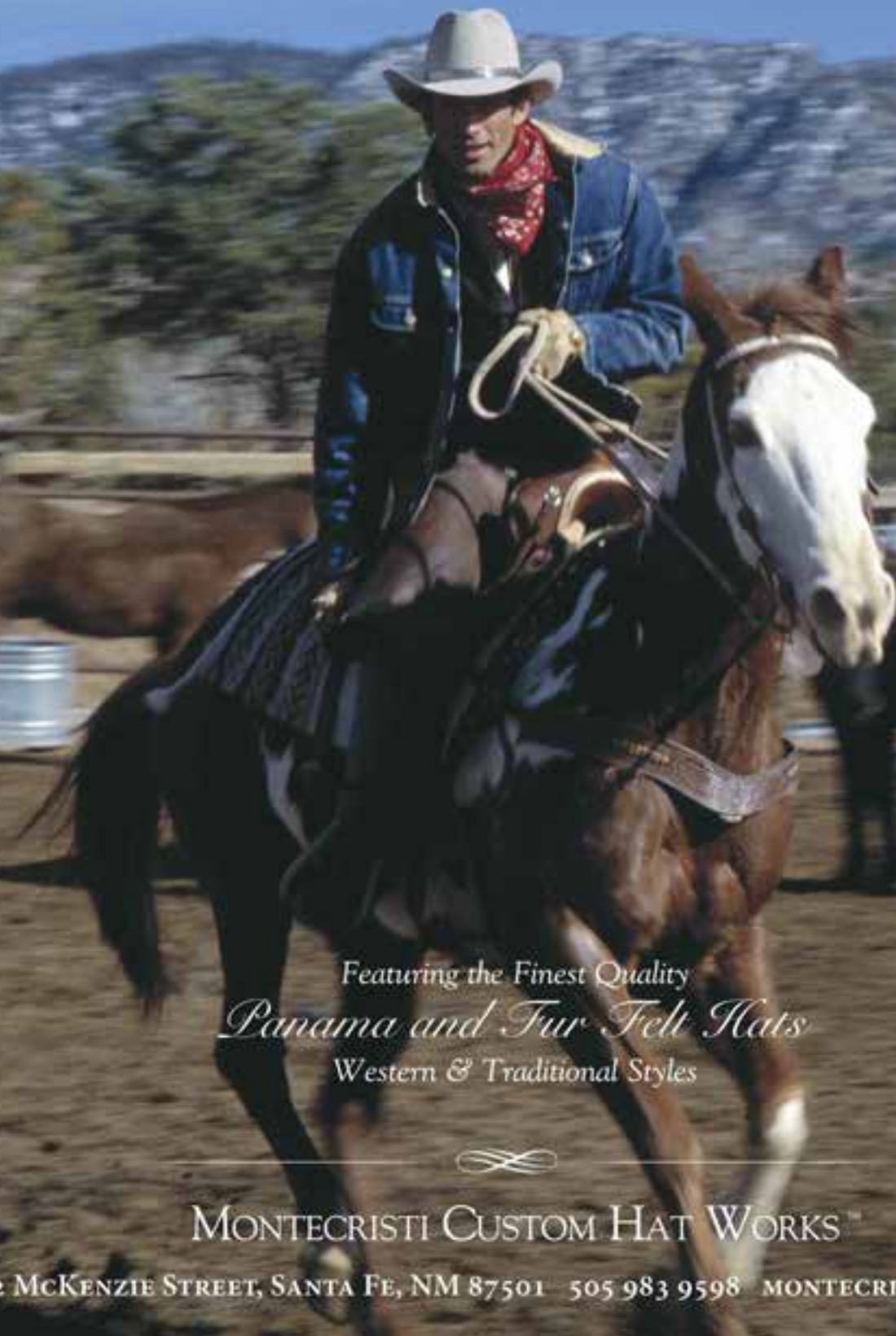


<https://youtu.be/tS39aVxyv18>
See Cate Havstad in the trailer for *The Hatter*, part of the short-film series, *The Makers*.

Melissa Mylchreest is a writer living in Montana. Learn more about Cate Havstad at www.havstadhatco.com.

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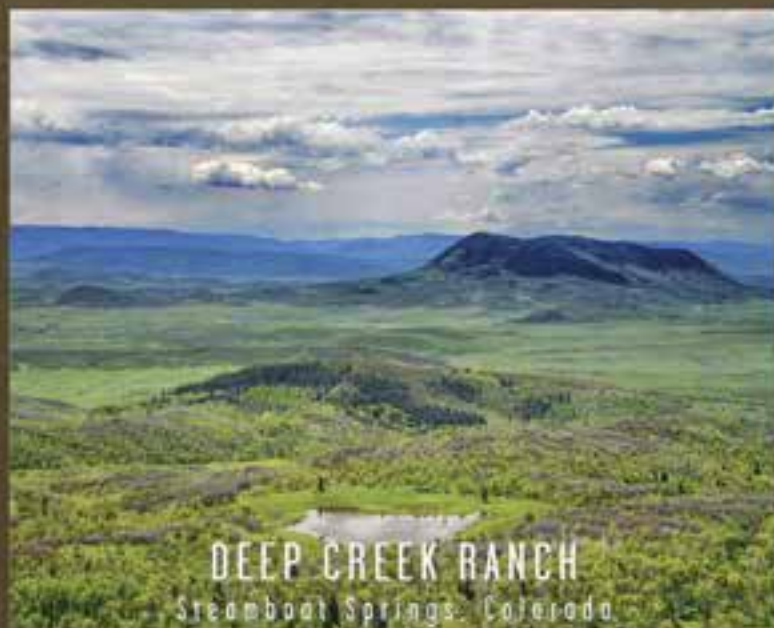


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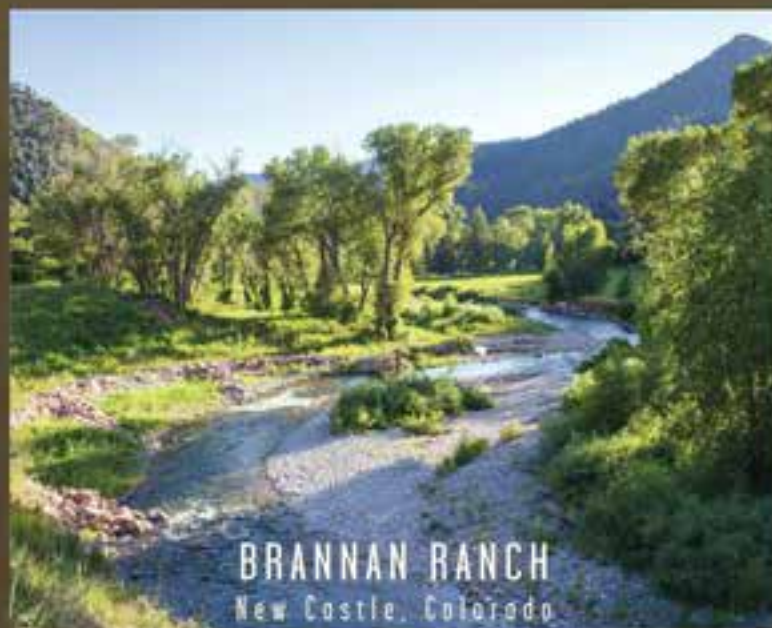
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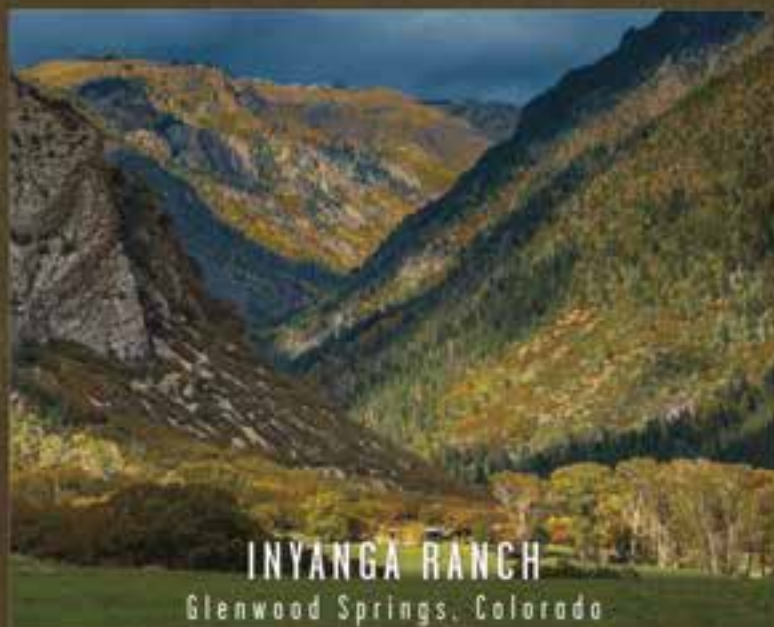
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The picturesque 243-acre ranch is convenient to Glenwood Springs, wilderness, a state park and championship golfing. With modest improvements, over one mile of water frontage and easy access to nearby amenities and recreation, Brannan Ranch offers a new owner unlimited opportunities to create a private ranch retreat. \$3,800,000. Mike Deer, 970.618.3081



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A horse lover's dream, the 20+ acre property's historic brick farmhouse, homes, barns and pastures are enclosed by white panel fencing. Chaney Ranch has excellent senior water rights and is conveniently located in Peach Valley with world-class amenities and airports of Aspen and Vail within one hour of the property. \$1,395,000. Mike Deer, 970.618.3081

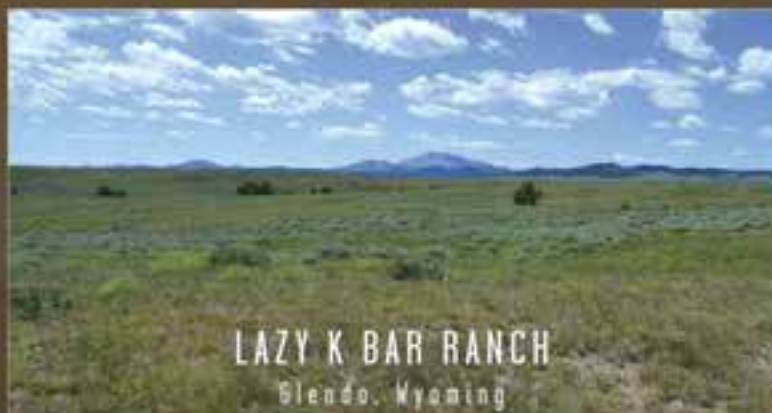
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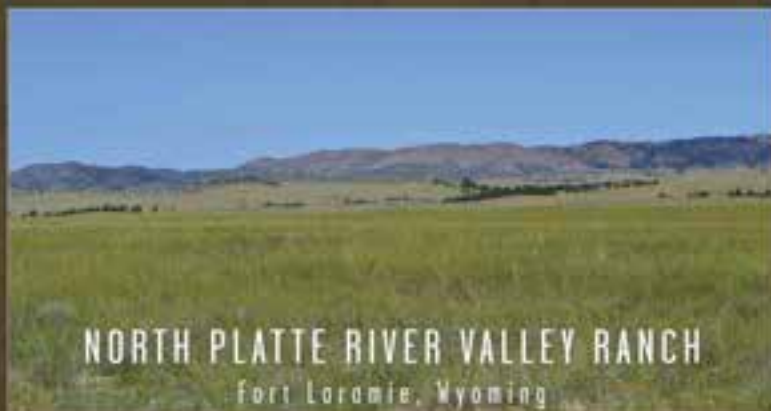
VALLEY PARK RANCH
Divide, Colorado

This convenient yet private 1,200-acre ranch has grand views of Pikes Peak, water resources and resident wildlife including herds of elk, red-tailed hawks, eagles, mule deer, bear, turkey and waterfowl. Restored improvements provide comfortable living and the ranch can be explored on horseback, foot or mountain bike. \$8,995,000. Ron Morris, 970.535.0881



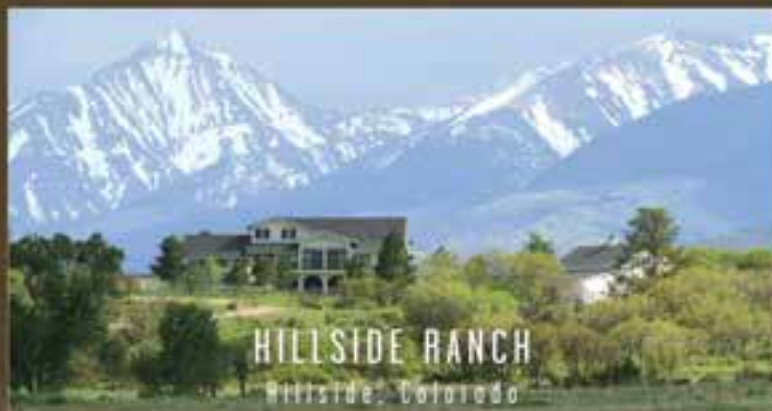
LAZY K BAR RANCH
Glendo, Wyoming

Located along the historic Oregon Trail, the 19,752 total acre ranch has excellent water rights irrigating over 900 acres with a rated carrying capacity of 800 cow/calf pair or 900 yearlings. Improvements include six homes, several barns, equipment sheds, two shops and complete set of steel pipe corrals with certified scale. \$15,000,000. Ron Morris, 970.535.0881



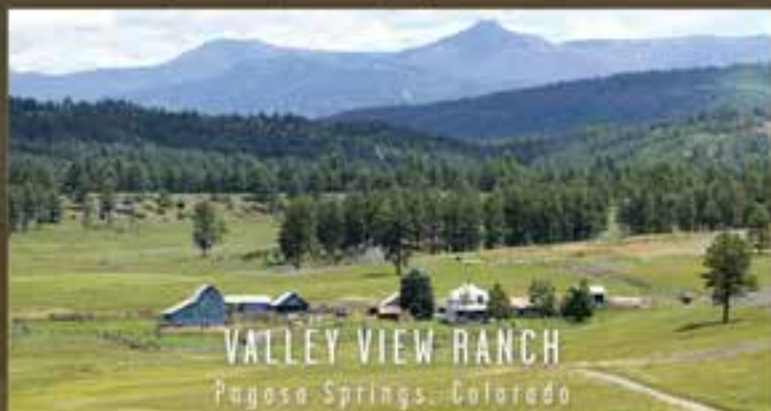
NORTH PLATTE RIVER VALLEY RANCH
Fort Laramie, Wyoming

7,254 deeded acres together with 1,160 BLM and state leased acres located five miles west of the historic settlement of Fort Laramie with 1 1/2 miles of frontage on the North Platte River. 140 acres are irrigated putting up 6 tons to the acre, excellent livestock grazing, abundant wildlife and running 350 cow/calf pair or 600 yearlings. \$5,200,000. Ron Morris, 970.535.0881



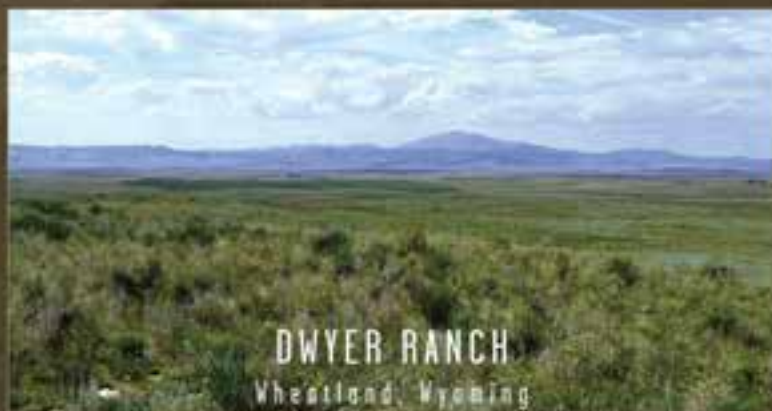
HILLSIDE RANCH
Hillside, Colorado

This 580+ acre executive ranch nine miles from Westcliffe features luxurious improvements, 360-degree views, pastures and meadows set up for livestock grazing. Ideal for entertaining, the elegant 7,350 sq.ft. home has a large open floor plan. A well-designed multi-function barn is set up for horses. \$2,900,000. Ron Morris, 970.535.0881 and Duane Daskam, 719.942.3734



VALLEY VIEW RANCH
Pagosa Springs, Colorado

Located two miles from Pagosa Springs with sweeping, unobstructed views of the Continental Divide and bordering the 2.5-million acre San Juan National Forest, the 1,353-acre historic homestead runs 900 yearlings on the ranch and adjacent national forest. The property includes senior water rights, seven ponds and springs. \$7,450,000. Ron Morris, 970.535.0881



DWYER RANCH
Wheatland, Wyoming

7,101 total acres with an older home with a 25 GPM well and set of corrals. Two center pivots irrigate 320 acres from two wells that produce 825 to 850 GPM, along with three stock water wells. The pivots are capable of producing 4 tons to the acre. Dwyer Ranch has been owner operated running 300 cow/calf pair or 500 yearlings. \$3,300,000. Ron Morris, 970.535.0881



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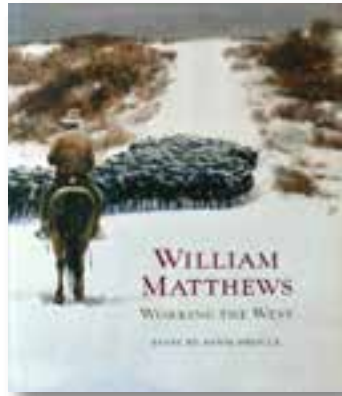


BOOKS TO FIND

Some Holiday Gift Books

Working the West William Matthews

Certainly no stranger to the pages of this Journal, artist William Matthews, who also graces the cover of this issue, released



Working The West back in 2007. It was and remains a glorious look at the West he has experienced along with some of the people he has encountered along the way – all in his exquisite watercolor style. His subjects love what they do and the paintings show them in quiet moments as well as in the heat of action. But Matthews can find the peace in his subjects especially during quiet moments.

“I have always believed that you find your bliss, to quote Joseph Campbell, in the activity where you can tolerate the boredom,” he writes in the book’s Introduction. “A lot of tedious peripheral work and lots of seemingly wasted time are involved in painting. Plenty of destroyed watercolors stoke my woodstove.

But I appreciate all of it, and I recognize the value of every bit of work in the process.”

Matthews’ work does not fit the usual “western art” view. As writer Annie Proulx wrote in the books opening essay, “A great deal of art criticism is concerned with labels, influences, categories, and connections. It is not so easy to pigeonhole Matthews. He is not in the Western art tradition that still finds value in Remington’s and Russell’s storytelling action paintings. Nor does he fit in the “postwestern” (as Jean Roberts of Purdue University calls it) camp whose artists are more interested in (often defiantly) transforming or moving

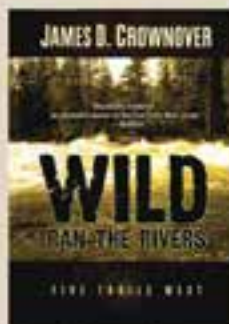


beyond that tradition. Matthews’ art is “Western” because of geography and subject matter. But if his

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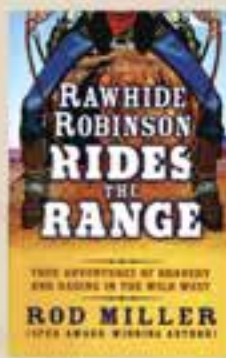
Traditional Novel
The Big Drift
by Patrick Dearen
(TCU Press)



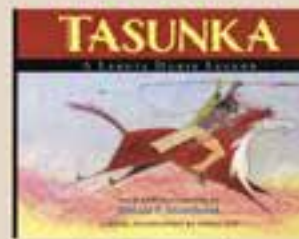
Historical Novel
Wild Run the Rivers
by James D. Crownover
(Five Star Publishing)



Contemporary Novel
Bad Country
by CB McKenzie
(Minotaur / Thomas Dunne Books)



Juvenile Fiction
Rawhide Robinson Rides the Range: True Adventures of Bravery And Daring in the Wild West
by Rod Miller
(Five Star Publishing)



Storyteller (Illustrated Children's Book)
Tasunka: A Lakota Horse Legend
by Donald F. Montileaux
(South Dakota State Historical Society Press)



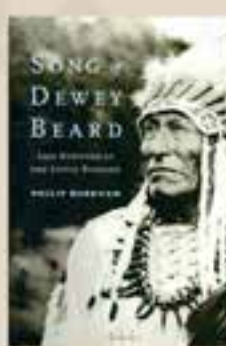
Short Nonfiction
"Calamity Jane: A Life and Legends"
by Richard W. Enslin
(Montana The Magazine of Western History)



Historical Nonfiction
American Carnage: Wounded Knee, 1890
by Jerome A. Greene
(University of Oklahoma Press)



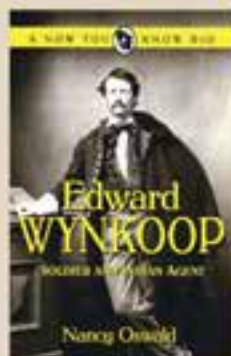
Contemporary Nonfiction
Red Light to Starboard: Recalling the Exxon Valdez Disaster
by Angela Day
(Washington State University Press)



Biography
Song of Dewey Beard: Last Survivor of the Little Bighorn
by Philip Burnham
(Bison Books/University of Nebraska Press)



Short Fiction Story
"Fingers"
by Andrew Geyer
(Steven E. Austin University Press)



Juvenile Nonfiction
Edward Wynkoop: Soldier and Indian Agent
by Nancy Oswald
(Filter Press)



Drama Script
The Homesman
by Tommy Lee Jones, Kieran Fitzgerald, Wesley A. Oliver
(Ithaca Films)



Documentary Script
State of Jefferson
by Kami Horton
(Oregon Public Broadcasting)



First Nonfiction Book
Reshaw: The Life & Times of John Baptiste Richard
by Jefferson Glass
(High Plains Press)



Song
"Charlie and Evangeline"
by Doug Figgs and Todd Carter
(self-published)

First Novel
Wild Run the Rivers
by James D. Crownover
(Five Star Publishing)

Poem
"A Little Longer Than the Moment"
by Alan Birkelbach
(Cowboy Poetry Press)

buckaroos – decent, upright, graceful – are closer to the mythic ideal of the noble cowboy than the world of dismounted, money-driven urban lives, it is because that is how his subjects see themselves.”

It is clear that Matthew’s paintings achieve a higher

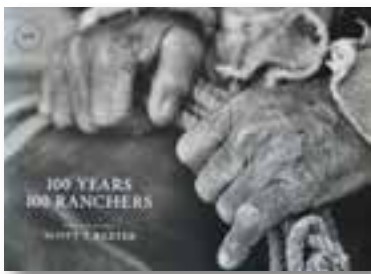


level of gesture and expression. His breathtaking control of his medium is at once understated, yet complete – the eye and mind seeing beyond the paper and paint. This is a book to be snuggled in with. *Working The West* is published by Chronicle Books and is available from Mr. Matthews’ studio. A glorious Holiday gift for someone you care about – or even, yourself!

www.williammatthewsstudio.com/shop/working-the-west/

100 Years, 100 Ranchers

Scott Baxter



2004, and worked to raise funds as he traveled his state.

Arizona photographer Scott Baxter started his massive look at ranching traditions in Arizona back in



Of the project, he wrote in the book, “The ranching tradition in Arizona is enduring and important. Even more so as, conditions such as encroaching development,

drought, and dire economic conditions have made a difficult way of life even more tenuous. Disputes over water rights, grazing fees and recreation have also deeply, affected the ranching way of life. The intense, difficult, work involved in running a ranch has led some children to choose not to stay on and pursue this lifestyle.



Ranchers love what they do, and cherish the land and tradition that has been passed down to them through their families.”

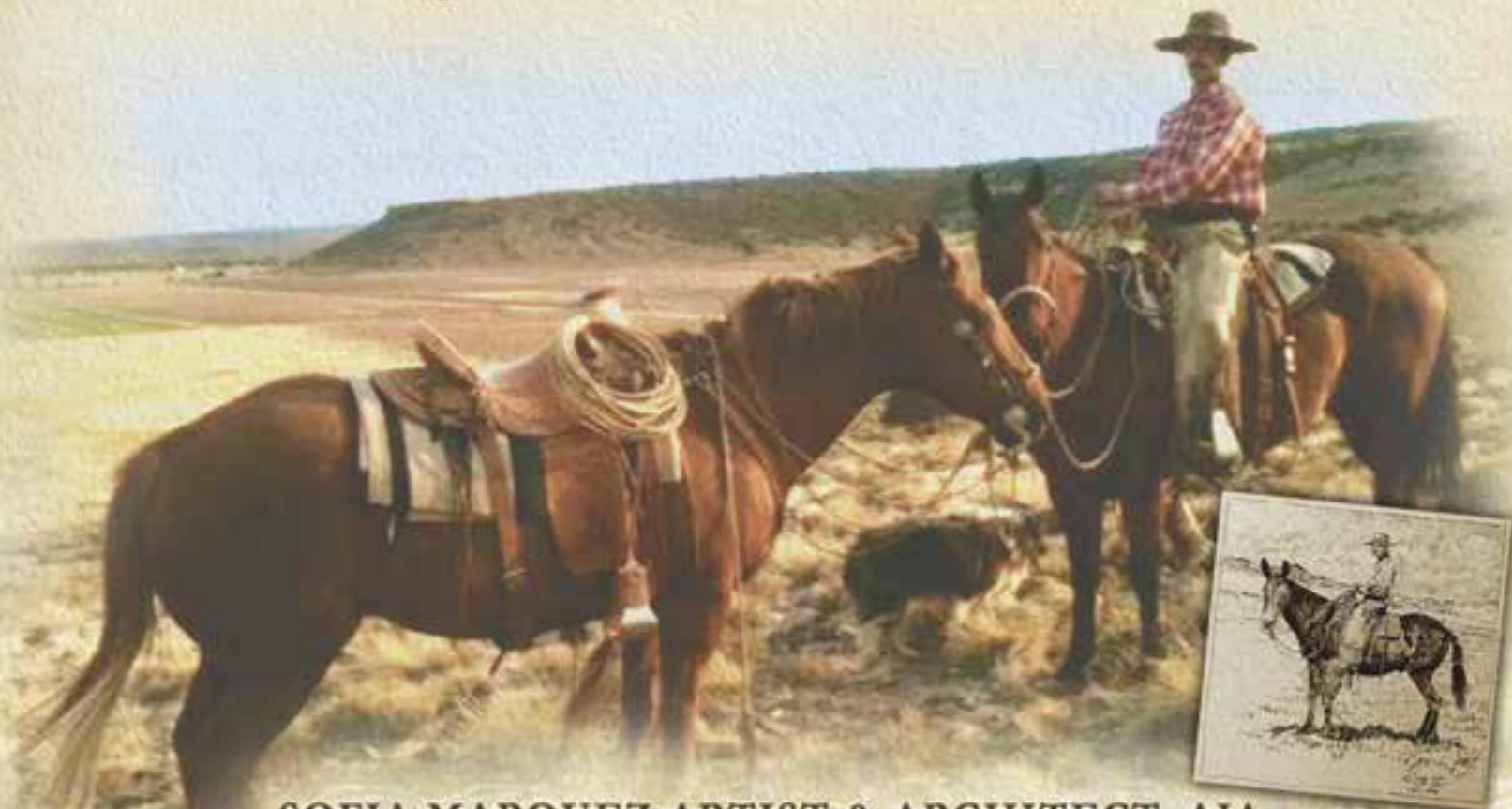
Baxter released the book in 2012 after having spent 7 years travelling through the state, documenting 100 Arizona ranchers whose families have been ranching in Arizona for 100 years or more. In a





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tribute to both the history and the quality of Scott's work, the



photographs are being featured in galleries across the state of Arizona. The



book is a collection of his black and white photos, elegantly printed and published.

The book can be ordered at www.100years100ranchers.com



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MC Ranch 1979

Photography and Text by Kurt Markus

Publisher's Note: I am pleased to announce the addition of a small section being added to Ranch & Reata. Photographer Kurt Markus is graciously sharing with us some of his previously unpublished photos, most from the late 1970s and 1980s. During his recent move to Santa Fe he has been going through his negative files – the images included in this issue were shot at the MC Ranch in Oregon in 1979. Kurt has scanned them for us from his own silver prints. BR

I couldn't have been greener when I made these pictures on the MC Ranch out of Adel, Oregon. The learning curve was steep. In ways too many to count, I should never have been allowed to tag along with these men, I barely knew enough to saddle a horse, let alone ride one.

Yet, it was a start – I could only get better, both horseback and photographically. I was into 35mm cameras then, both black and white negative and color transparency, the tools of photojournalism, which is what I was practicing. Reportage. “f8 and be there,” so goes the famous reply when a celebrated photographer was asked the secret of his success. I couldn't have cared less about the noticeable grain of the black and white film; if it was good enough for my mentor Bank Langmore, well then, it was damned sure good enough for me.

But, not all that much later, I discovered the Plaubel Makina, which was a folding medium format camera, and I could carry it in a saddle bag. I never looked back, the larger negative was a joy to print, such rich tones, and I put aside those 35mm negatives without printing but a few of the MC photographs. After having spent some time the past few months looking back at my beginnings, I revisited the 35mm work, and surprise, the prints look pretty good. I just wish I'd been a better photographer (and horseman) in 1979. I think of all the pictures I might have done.



Self-Portrait, Oro Ranch, AZ (1981)



Buckaroo crew on spring drive, warming up around sage fire. (left to right) Flint Schmetz, Tony Sarmiento, Tom Hudson, Frank Stanford, and Chet Carnahan. (not pictured, boss Don Hill)



MC cavvy entering a corral.



Trailing cows to summer range.





THE COOK HOUSE

Rocky Mountain Oysters



By Kathy McCraine

As long as there have been roundups in the West, cowboys have been cooking up and enjoying one of beef's greatest delicacies – the Rocky Mountain oyster. Also known as calf fries in Texas, prairie oysters in western Canada, and *huevos* in parts of the Southwest and Mexico, calf nuts, or testicles, are a tasty treat during branding season, whether you eat them right off the branding fire as you castrate the bull calves, or freeze them for a later celebration.

Actually, eating animal testicles dates back to ancient Roman times, when it was believed that eating the organ might correct ailments in the human eater's corresponding organ. To this day, some cultures still consider bull nuts to be an aphrodisiac, but here in the West, we just like the taste of them. They don't exactly taste like any other food, but when fried properly, they resemble a real fried oyster, tender on the inside and crunchy on the outside, without the briny taste of the ocean. Frying is the most popular method of cooking them, and like all fried food, that crunchy texture is the key.

At the Spider Ranch near Prescott, Arizona, Gail and Amy Steiger prefer to cook their oysters on the branding fire just as working cowboys have done since early times. Gail is a cowboy poet, songwriter and filmmaker, while Amy is an award-winning western writer, writing under the name Amy Hale Auker. Their day job, though,

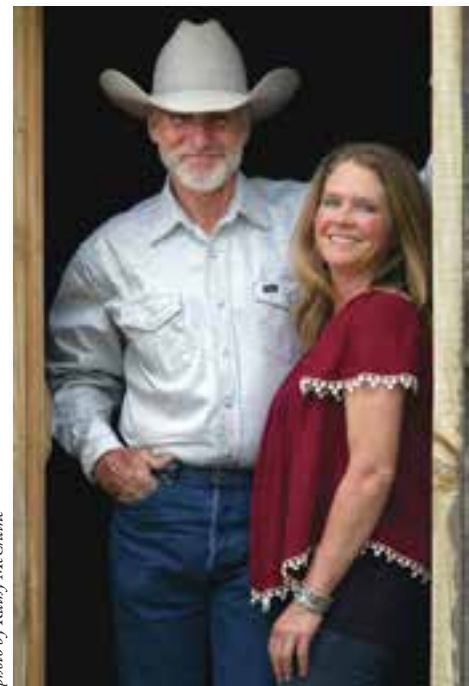


photo by Kathy McCraine

Gail and Amy Steiger of Arizona's Spider Ranch.



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is running the Spider and taking care of some 300 head of mother cows and their offspring. The 72-section outfit possesses some of the brushiest, rockiest, toughest country in Yavapai County, but they do most of the cow work by themselves, including all the branding.

Roads are mostly nonexistent, so when they're working, they pack food in, then trot out many miles from headquarters and camp until the work is done. They have devised a unique branding system that works for the two of them, even when, at times, they have to brand calves weighing 400 to 500 pounds.

"First I heel the calves by one foot," Gail says. "If you head them first, they'll start windmilling around and choking, so it's much easier on the calf."

Next, Amy ropes the calf around the neck and drops her slack on the ground in front of it. When the calf steps over the rope with its front foot, they both tighten up and lay it down.

"It's not fast, but it's real easy," Gail says. "I don't have to tail them or flank them. I just step off, tie their back feet together with my piggin' string, and put Amy's rope around their front feet, which she holds tight while I brand and castrate."

"If we're branding in a spot where we can haul propane, we've got a little brown cylinder, about an 8-inch pipe with a hole in the end where we put our burner," Gail says. "We welded two pieces of rebar on top of that so the calf fries won't fall off, and it's just like a hot grill."

A more refined method of cooking the nuts involves removing the outer membrane, a tough job made slightly easier by partially freezing them, but Gail doesn't take time for that. As he's castrating, he just runs over and throws the nuts on the branding pot and lets them roast until they burst open. When they're done branding and the calves are mothering up, they pop open a couple of beers and eat the oysters on the spot.

"They're not as tender (if you don't remove the membrane)," Gail says, "but if it's real hot and the beer is real cold"

"I haven't had an oyster in my freezer since I moved to the Spider," Amy says. "If we brand 26 calves at a time, that's a lot for the two of us, and who wants to ride home with a bunch of bloody calf fries? There are no trucks or coolers to put them in."

Of course, there are some folks who are squeamish about eating mountain oysters. I even know a few ranch wives who wouldn't touch them. Amy obviously doesn't have a problem with it.

"I'll eat them bigger and bloodier than Gail will," she says.

At that Gail just grins. "Yeah," he says, "she's scary."



Rocky Mountain Oysters

After rinsing the dirt and blood off the oysters, partially freeze them to make them easier to peel and clean. Halve each oyster lengthwise and squeeze the inner gland out of the membrane. If very large, cut the gland in half again. Place to soak in milk. Dip in fish fry or cornmeal seasoned with salt and pepper or Creole seasoning. Deep fry in hot oil, as you would chicken, until well browned and crisp. Drain on paper towels.



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- Juice of ½ lemon
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce, or to taste
- Tabasco sauce to taste
- Mix all in a bowl and adjust ingredients to taste.



<https://youtu.be/F02vnnJAR1o>
Watch Gail Steiger perform “The Sierry Petes” at the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

Kathy McCraine is the author of the award-winning cookbook, *Cow Country Cooking: Recipes and Tales from Northern Arizona’s Historic Ranches*. Visit her web site at www.kathymccraine.com.
Read more about Amy Hale Auker’s most recent books at www.amyhaleauker.com.

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A Lucky Man

The art of Steve Devenyns

Sometimes we choose our paths in life, and other times it seems our paths are chosen for us. Growing up, I had a talent for art, but my interests took me in different directions. At an early age, I was drawn to the friendship of a great saddlemaker in Colorado Springs. That friendship led to several years of apprenticeship, learning saddlemaking and the art of fine leatherwork. (That knowledge is still with me today, and lends authenticity to my work. Knowing how a saddle, harness or other equipment should fit a horse is a real asset to a western artist.)

Growing up with horses and competing in rodeos throughout high school and college exposed me to western values and the western way of life. I'd planned to become a veterinarian, but a car wreck derailed those plans and started me down a different path: a career as a western artist. The world of ranching, cowboys and wide-open spaces seemed a natural subject for me as I recovered and set out to pursue my artwork.

When riding with friends – at a branding, during fall work, or on an occasional pack trip – I'm fortunate to be there in two roles: as an observer and as a participant. This lends credibility to my work, an understanding of when elements of a scene are right or wrong. Another bonus: many of the subjects in my paintings are friends, and great cowboys who inspire me with their confidence and self-determination. Whether they're getting soaked in a rainstorm while looking for cows, or enjoying a beautiful day unfolding before them, they convey a sense of independence and dedication, traits I try to portray in my work.

My career has provided opportunities to experience the fringe benefits of cowboy life, such as seeing a herd of elk moving through a Wyoming meadow, or antelope running through the Nebraska Sandhills in early spring. As an artist, it's a blessing to see and sense such scenes in real time, and not from photos. That realization has helped fuel a motivation to portray the human subjects in my paintings as people with an appreciation for the beauty and abundance of nature, and as good stewards of their livestock and the land.

There is a certain feeling an artist has for each of his paintings, a feeling that somehow carries through to the canvas. For instance, that might take the form of the calmness and serenity that comes through in a rendering of a magical sunset, or the sense of wonder evoked by the depiction of the footfall of a good horse. A collector from New York City once told me that, although he could not live in the West, he *could* hang it on his wall. Those words meant a lot to me, as it's rewarding to have someone view my work and relate to it, whether that person is a rancher, an art collector, or simply someone viewing paintings at a show. It's the reason I paint the West of the contemporary cowboy.

Because of that opportunity, I am a lucky man.

— Steve Devenyns



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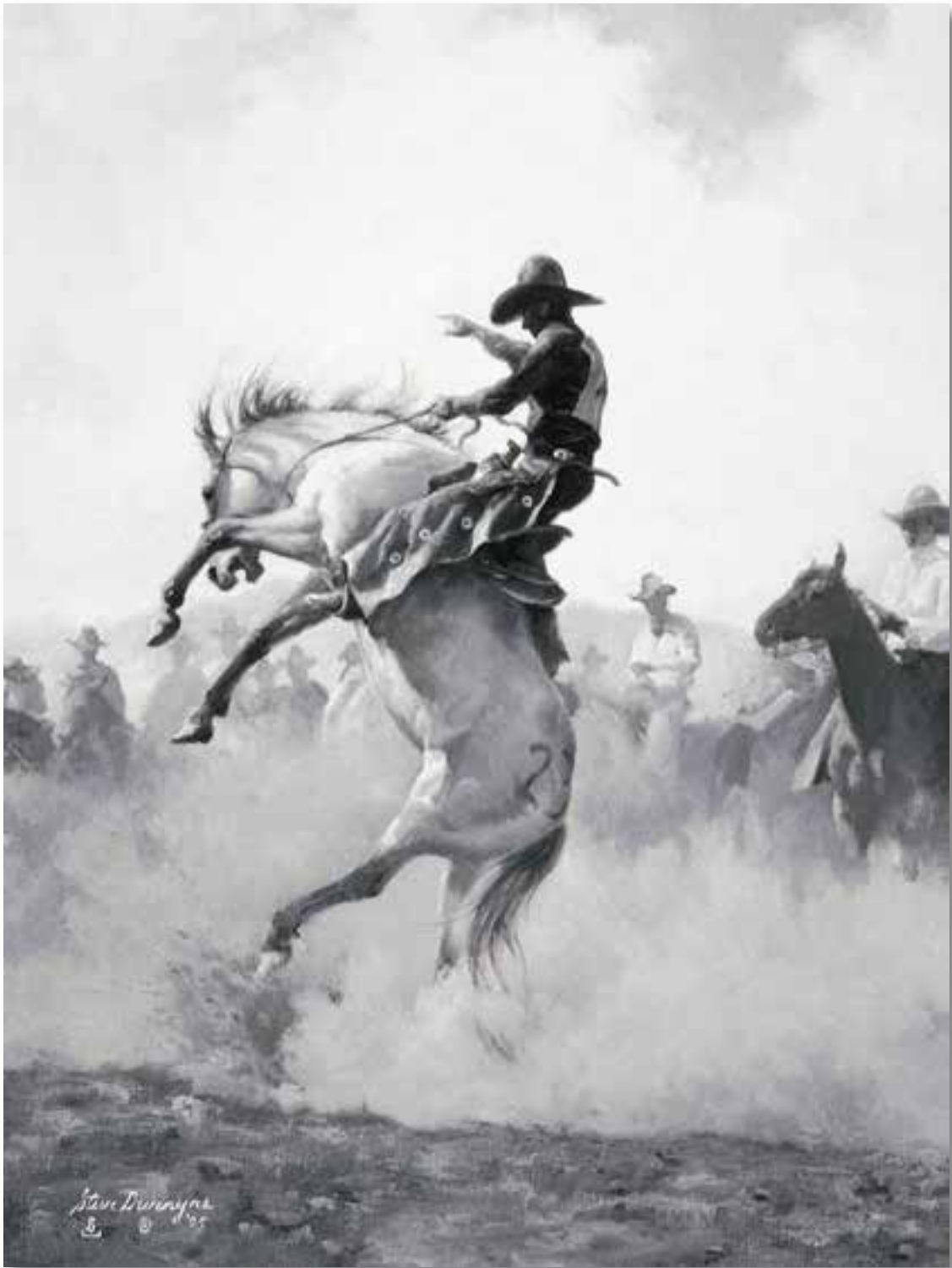
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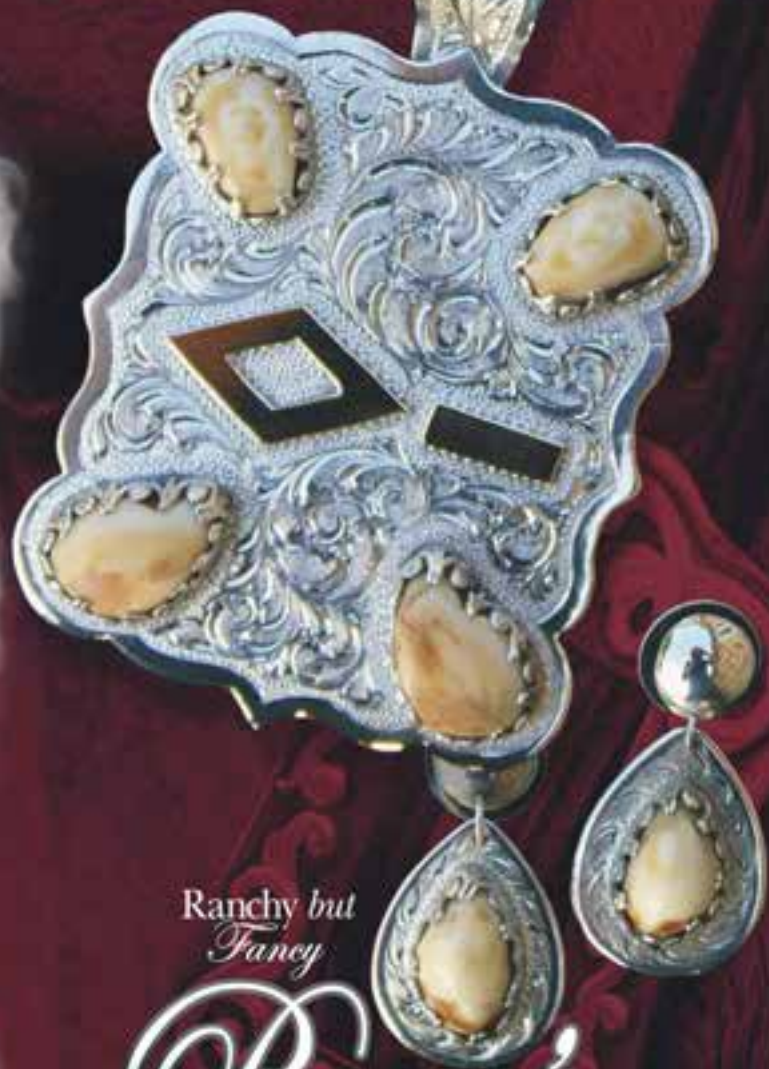
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Western Winemaking

Vineyards in the interior West rewrite the rules of American wine production.

By A.J. Mangum

When you think of American wine producers, Napa Valley likely comes to mind. In reality, though, acclaimed vineyards can be found coast to coast and border to border. Grape-growing and winemaking operations in the interior West are among those reshaping geographical conventional wisdom in the wine culture. Here, four western winemakers share what makes their regions – from the plains and Southwest to the northern Rockies – great wine country.

WINEMAKER: THOMAS INGMIRE

Vineyard: Clauren Ridge, Edmond, Oklahoma

Entry into the business: An ER physician in search of stress relief, Ingmire planted eight varietals on 10 acres about 15 years ago, and began studying winemaking. Initial results were anything but stress-free: “Before long there were *tons* of grapes, too many for me, and I was having to fight deer and birds, so I wanted to make the hard work worthwhile. One night, over a glass of wine, I decided to build a winery. My wife [Kim Ingmire, Clauren Ridge’s events consultant] thought I was crazy. Before a year was out, we were breaking ground.”

Signature wine: “The red wine, Meritage, is the best known and most popular. It’s a blend and very smooth. Our most popular white is our Symphony wine. It’s sweet, with a floral aroma, refreshing as a sipping wine or dessert wine.”

Oklahoma as wine country: “We have great soil for wine. The vines endure the heat just fine and go into survival mode when it gets too hot, but unexpected frosts can stunt the yield for that coming year. Storms are also a concern, with the hail and tornadoes that can pop up unexpectedly. When I planted our first vines 15 years ago, there was one winery in the state. Today we



photo courtesy Clauren Ridge

Clauren Ridge Vineyard and Winery
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have over 60. People are seeing that [Oklahoma] can grow some fantastic grapes.”

Ideal Oklahoma-themed pairing: “Being in the heart of Deer Creek in Edmond, I’d have to say venison, paired with our Clauren Ridge Syrah.”

Workload as of this interview: “This week’s work has been tending to netting and checking sugar levels. There’s also been work on the winery, making room for the upcoming grape harvest and the space it will take to crush and store the wine until bottling.”

Learn more: www.claurenridge.com



photo courtesy Pahrump Valley Winery

Pahrump Valley Winery, Pahrump, Nevada

WINEMAKER: GRETCHEN LOKEN

Vineyard: Pahrump Valley Winery, Pahrump, Nevada

Entry into the business: A former teacher, Loken and her husband, a real estate broker, were searching for a lifestyle change. In 2002, they encountered a Nevada vineyard whose vines had not been harvested since being trampled by wild horses in the 1990s. Intrigued with the operation’s potential, the couple relocated north from Arizona. “Needless to say, we’re hooked.”

Signature wine: “Our Estate Zinfandel. Our first vintage was 2005, and that was Nevada’s first

commercial red wine. To our amazement, it won seven National Wine Awards. We knew we were onto something.”

Nevada as wine country: “In southern Nevada, we have lots of sunshine, lots of land, almost complete control over growing conditions and, in some areas, lots of water – really. Our biggest challenge is the heat. Over the years, we’ve altered our practices to keep the fruit cooler, and we give more water than would be given in other parts of the country.”

Ideal Nevada-themed pairing: “This is steak country. What better wine is there to pair with a blackened ribeye than our Estate Zinfandel or our Estate Syrah?”

Workload as of this interview: “We’re up at 3:30 and in the vineyards until noon. Then it’s back to the winery to crush and prepare for kicking off fermentation. We repeat day after day until harvest is over and everyone can enjoy an ice cold beer or two. Yes, beer.”

Learn more: www.pahrumpwinery.com

WINEMAKER: LORI REYNOLDS

Vineyard: Sonoita Vineyards, Elgin, Arizona

Entry into the business: In 2011, Reynolds’ grandfather offered the family vineyard, in operation since 1979, to Reynolds, her brother and all their cousins; only Reynolds took him up on the offer. To prepare, she studied enology (winemaking) and viticulture (grape-growing) at the University of California-Davis, adding the resulting certificate to her University of Arizona bachelor’s degree in veterinary science and minor in chemistry.

Signature wine: “Whites – our Cochise County Colombard. Reds – our cabernet sauvignon or pinot noir. We’re currently the only growers of pinot noir in the state.”

Arizona as wine country: “Being in a desert state, we

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know the importance of harvesting water. Our vineyard is terraced so when it rains, water is trapped instead of running off. In the Sonoita AVA (American Viticultural Area), reds get deep flavor and color, while whites are bright and crisp. We can get late freezes in May, and hail during the monsoon season. We also have to deal with deer, and have an eight-foot fence surrounding our vineyard.”

Ideal Arizona-themed pairing: “Spicy chicken fajitas would pair beautifully with our Semi Sweet Arizona Sunset. With a juicy prime rib, I’d pair our McCaSah.”

Workload as of this interview: Reynolds’ time is occupied with pressing grapes, starting fermentations, and making daily checks of sugar, pH and acidity levels.

Learn more: www.sonoitavineyards.com



photo courtesy Tongue River Winery

Acclaimed vineyards and wineries can be found throughout the interior West.

WINEMAKER: BOB THADEN

Vineyard: Tongue River Winery, Miles City, Montana

Entry into the business: Thaden started making wine as an 18-year-old (“It was legal then!”), using wild fruits growing in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. When his daughter was attending a doctoral program at Washington State University, Thaden built her a cider press to process wild apples growing in the Palouse region. A successful experiment using the press on 600



photo courtesy Tongue River Winery

Tongue River Winery, Miles City, Montana.

pounds of merlot grapes triggered a new obsession. “The next week,” Thaden says, “I drove from our home in Butte, Montana, to Yakima and bought 800 pounds of grapes. The following year, we purchased 1,500 pounds.” Thaden subsequently planted Frontenac vines, proven to thrive in colder northern climates. “In about 2008, we realized we were growing more grapes than we could use for wine for ourselves,” he says, “and we began making plans for a commercial winery.”

Signature wine: Possibly La Crescent, winner of gold medals at Oregon’s Northwest Wine Summit and Iowa’s Mid-American Wine Competition. *Wine Journal* included La Crescent in its 2014 “21 Wines to Watch.”

Montana as wine country: “Montana is undiscovered as a wine-growing place because the climate can be so harsh. All of the other vineyards are in the northwestern part of the state, where winters are milder. Miles City has the longest, hottest summers in the state. If we can keep things alive, the lower Yellowstone Valley is an ideal place to really ripen grapes.”

Ideal Montana-themed pairing: “As a tongue-in-cheek answer, I might suggest our Frontenac Gris, a dry, buttery, barrel-fermented chardonnay-style wine, paired



with Rocky Mountain oysters.”

Workload as of this interview: In advance of a fall grape harvest, Thaden harvests apples and yellow raspberries for

Tongue River’s gold-medal winning white raspberry wine, and bottles the previous year’s vintage.

Learn more: www.tongueriverwinery.com



<https://youtu.be/3O597Hs5yK8>
Discover Oklahoma profiled Clauren Ridge in this video feature.



<https://youtu.be/DMXBkShXYKw>
Sonoita Vineyards is featured in this video.

A.J. Mangum is the editor of *Ranch & Reata*.





THE WESTERN HORSE

Massacre at Loon Lake

A backcountry vacation offers riders more adventure than they expect.



By Jayme Feary

Editor's note: This true story resulted from interviews with participants, and from the writer's eyewitness account.

100


WE tourists were standing around the fire ring in a clearing on a knoll above Wyoming's Loon Lake, laughing and trading stories about our day riding in the horse-drawn covered wagons, when gunshots rang out about a quarter mile away. An odd pattern, several in a row, a pause, and then two more. *It's too early for hunting season, I thought. Too many shots for someone putting down a horse, too erratic for target shooting.* The percussions sounded as if they had come from different guns, rifles or large-caliber pistols.

Rodney, 46, a used-car salesman from North

Carolina, thought someone was shooting at a bear. We guests continued laughing and chatting, but the trail boss, Jeff, as big around as a bear himself, looked concerned. He and one of the wranglers mounted up and rode out to investigate. Five minutes later, three more percussions, and then a volley of return fire.

Hellbent for election, the wrangler galloped back alone. He leaped off his horse, slapped its croup, and ran to the other six wranglers. Jeff's young son screamed, "Where's my daddy?"

I thought, *This was supposed to be a vacation.*



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photos by Jayme Feary

Wagons gather under a big sky.

I should have suspected something. Two days earlier, after a teeth-rattling ride in a shuttle bus, all 26 of us vacationers had arrived in Idaho's Targhee National Forest, where Teton Wagon Train and Horse Adventure was to transport us in covered wagons like pioneers. We sat in foldup chairs in a small clearing surrounded by pines. While we ate lunch, eight draft horses, muscular as power lifters, stood tied to hitching rails. Jeff's felt hat appeared to be melting onto his head. He and his wranglers, both men and women, walked around toting large-caliber revolvers, mostly double-action .45s and .44 Mags, holstered in handmade rigs. *That's odd*, I thought. *Why all the heavy iron?*

Two Chinese couples from Los Angeles wore huge, floppy gardening and fishing hats, and sat under the shade of trees. One of the men asked Jeff something like, "Why you so big guns?"

Jeff sported a Fu Manchu mustache that wiggled when he spoke. "The guns are for bears," he said. He bumped the grip of his pistol. "The country is thick with them." He pointed to the main wagon. "We keep a rifle and a shotgun under the seat."

Bears had been on Rodney's mind. Before traveling to Wyoming, he had pounded his chest and told his

girlfriend Sherry's family that he was going to sleep out under the stars, stay up all night long and scare away the bears. This declaration was in keeping with his desire to show Sherry and her family, prominent persons in their neck of the woods, that he was the marrying kind, strong and capable like the cowboys he idolized as a boy. Rodney had settled into the family used-car business but he continued to watch *Gunsmoke* every night. Matt Dillon was his idea man.

All the references to firearms and bears caused some of the Americans to look at each other with concern. They didn't pay for this kind of danger. Jeff said nothing more. He smiled as if saying, *You're on vacation. No worries.*

I, a local, could barely contain my smirk. *Jeff is just baiting them*, I thought, *giving them more entertainment*



Horses at the hitch rail.

for their money. Surely bears weren't the real reason for the large number of guns. When I had worked as a packer in the nearby wilderness, never more than one of us had "carried," and only in case a horse colicked or broke its leg. Sidearms are heavy and cumbersome. Bear spray is more effective for protection. But Jeff had worked that area for many years. *Maybe they have more bear problems here*, I thought.

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photo by Sherry Royal

Rodney at the wagon.

But as Jeff and his wranglers went about their work setting up for lunch, Rodney focused on their sidearms. He also paid close attention to their clothing and gear, to their hats, chinks, and wrist cuffs, all scuffed and worn, and compared them to his own garb: square-toed boots; a straw cattleman, straight out of the box, purchased in Jackson Hole; jeans with white stitching; and a pressed shirt.

The cooks laid out a spread of sandwiches and chips, which the Chinese supplemented with Ziploc bags full of sliced marinated Chinese beef and boiled pigs' feet they had cooked at home. One of them saw me staring. "You like?" she asked me, and then passed the feet.

I dropped a pliable hoof onto my paper plate, took

a nibble, and almost upchucked. "Pretty good," I said, and smiled.

After lunch and a quick orientation, we guests loaded into three wagons and moved out down Grassy Lake Road. Metal clanked. Wood creaked. The canvas covers flapped in the breeze. A chorus of hooves sang a melody of crunching gravel. Dust rose like fog and coated everything behind the first wagon. But no one complained. We gaped off to the north at the mountains in Yellowstone, and south toward the northern foothills of the Tetons. Everyone exchanged pleasantries and small talk.

An hour later, we pulled into camp, a forested area on a slight hill above Bergman Reservoir. There was a fire ring, a corral full of saddle horses, and more draft horses. The sweet smells of hay and horse manure hung in the air. Jeff's wranglers unloaded tents and sleeping bags. Each party of guests carried a tent and sleeping bags into the woods to find a good spot while the cook dragged out a Dutch oven the size of a dipping vat and built a fire three feet high.

The Chinese, their cameras seemingly attached to their faces, mounted up for an evening ride. Rodney, Sherry and I walked down to snag a canoe. A cow moose browsed in the water's edge.

Except for the ripple from our paddles, the lake was still. The sunset flamed pink and reflected off the water. A couple of loons squawked, paddled away, and then dove. Whispering to each other, wide-eyed at the wonder of such grandeur, we eased across the surface. Then I saw it, a small dark spot on the far bank, a color that didn't quite fit.

I watched for movement. Nothing. *Must be a stump*, I thought. But then, ever so slightly, the stump moved. I whispered. "Hey guys. Look over there. I think it's a bear."

Rodney's expression looked like a little boy's. The

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Bing, one of the Chinese guests.

three of us stared for the longest time, but the object didn't move. "I must be seeing things," I said.

The water and sky began to turn dark. We were about to turn around when Sherry spotted it, more of an outline than an actual human. "Hey," she asked, "Is that a person over there?"

I thought, *No way. What would someone be doing way out here?* But it was there, a shape tall and lanky, possibly wearing khaki shorts and shirt, standing stock-still with arms crossed and looking at us.

Rodney said, "Where could he have come from? What's he doing just standing there?"

I still wasn't sure it was a person. *Maybe our eyes are fooling us.* I blinked a few times and then the apparition was gone. I thought nothing more of it.

At camp the cook laid out enough roast beef, rice and gravy, and corn to feed the 2nd Marine Division. After supper, she heaved the lid off of another oven, and the smell of peaches wafted out. Rodney scarfed two helpings of peach cobbler a la mode and then leaned back in his folding chair, rubbing his belly. "Man, I'm full as a tick."

Rodney, Sherry and I told the group about the man we had seen at the far end of the reservoir. No one,

including Jeff, believed us. The talk around the campfire was mostly about bears. The men tried to act nonchalant and let their wives pepper Jeff with the questions.

Rodney insisted to Sherry that erecting their tent in the middle of the grouping had been a good idea.

When the fire died down, guests filed off through the dark to their tents. Like a police officer approaching a crime scene, Rodney scanned back and forth with his flashlight and eased through the timber. Sleeping under the stars was no longer in his plans. He wanted the protection of the canvas standing between him and the bears. He thought, *Maybe this [trip] wasn't such a good idea. At least these people [the wranglers] have guns.*

In the morning, we were all accounted for. Guests looked sore and bleary-eyed, but during breakfast the sunlight made all the worry seem silly. Whether man or woman, doctor or teacher, CEO or mechanic, we each worked to break down our tents, roll our bedrolls, and pile them next to the main wagon. The wrangler hitched and saddled horses. By ten, the entire camp was loaded. Some guests hopped in the wagons, but Rodney, Sherry and I joined several others in the horseback group. Rodney was worried because a year ago he had undergone a back operation to repair a ruptured disk. Since then, though others had urged him to be more active and strengthen his back, he had avoided most physical activity. This all-day ride would strengthen his back or ruin it.

The wagons lurched up a dirt road, and we rode off down the single-track to rendezvous with them at Loon Lake. An hour later, we broke into a small meadow where a field of arrowleaf balsamroot blazed yellow in the sun. Leather creaked. Forty hooves clopped along.

At Squirrel Meadows, the land opened up before us. Sitting tall and feeling no pain, Rodney pointed to the south. "Man, don't that beat all." The jagged spires of the Tetons rose into the azure. The whole group fell

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A burst of gunfire preceded the appearance of the attackers.

mute with awe.

By late afternoon, cumulonimbus clouds were roiling up from the southwest. We sighted the wagons and fell in behind them down a muddy Forest Service road dubbed “Cowboy Roller Coaster.” I have never seen horses pull wagons up, down and around such a rough road. “Gee,” “Haw,” and “Move ‘em up, boys.” The drafts surged into their hames to pull, or to plant their legs to hold. The wagons tottered, splashed and bounced along, guests holding fast to anything bolted down and squealing with glee as if riding the Canobie Corkscrew. The Chinese broke the world record for photographs taken per minute.

On a knoll overlooking Loon Lake, Jeff had his teamsters form their wagons in a large circle around two fire rings. Just before the sky let loose, they scurried to raise a canvas tarp the size of a circus tent. While the cook prepared supper during a downpour, we guests huddled under the tarp and recounted the days’ adventures: One of the Chinese had nearly flown out of the wagon on Cowboy Roller Coaster; one woman had been so sore from riding that she would ride in the wagon the next day; Rodney declared that his back felt a bit tight, but he was

feeling rejuvenated; another man’s face looked boyish and innocent. He said he had dreamed of being a cowboy since he was kid, and that today he had felt sort of like the real thing.

The rain stopped, and two of the Chinese took their cameras and left for a pre-supper walk in the forest. Under the tarp, we guests poured Kool Aid for each other, slapped backs, laughed and traded more stories. Twenty minutes later, the Chinese returned, and then we heard the shots.

When return gunfire rang out and the wrangler galloped back without Jeff, Jeff’s son looked panicked. The laughing and storytelling stopped. One guest, a woman, thought about the rash of recent shootings around the country. Silently, she prayed for Jeff’s safety.

My senses were suddenly and fully engaged. I wondered, *Is it a group of rednecks, drunks, or some anti-government militia whackos?* We guests stood bunched together, milling into a tightening circle like a school of fish. The Chinese chatted among themselves and then shuffled to the center of the group. The woman started to sob, and asked everyone to pray.

Now, here came Jeff, galloping back, whipping and spurring as if running from the law. He launched off his horse and screamed, “Get everyone under the tarp – now!” Wild-eyed he looked around at his wranglers. “You got your guns?”

The wranglers all had pistols drawn, looking around in confusion. The circled wagons provided some cover but we were easy picking. My thoughts whirled. I thought, *We need to spread everyone out in the woods, hide behind trees, make ourselves harder targets. Maybe a few can escape through the woods or across the lake.*

Rodney tried to convince Sherry to run. She felt the urge, but she is a teacher, a rule follower. The group had been instructed to stay together. Rodney pleaded with her.



“No, let’s stay with everyone,” she said.

Rodney thought, *It’s time for me to fend for Rodney.* He said, “Y’all can stay, but I’m getting out of here.”

Sherry was blocking him. *Don’t leave me.*

Suddenly I remembered the rifles and shotguns under the wagon seat. *We need those guns, I thought. We need to hand them to anyone who can shoot and set up a perimeter in the forest. Anything other than stand here in a bunch.*

I turned to the nearest wrangler. “Hey man, we gotta get those long guns.”

He ignored me.

I raised my voice. “We gotta defend ourselves.”

No response.

I thought, *Then I’m getting them myself.*

Jeff glanced back over his shoulder toward the forest and his eyes nearly bugged out. “We got riders!”

Someone gasped. A couple of cries went up. Wranglers took up positions behind the wagons. I sprinted toward the wagon seat, but the wrangler grabbed my arm.

Rodney’s face was sheet-white. He wheeled and sprinted toward the woods like an escaped convict, and then tripped over the wagon tongue, falling face-first to the ground. He scratched away on all fours, showing no hint of back surgery. Dirt flying, he scrambled under the low limbs of a spruce. He thought, *I gotta get low*, and then wallowed down on his belly like a badger.

Sherry’s brow was furrowed. She thought, *He left me. He left me.*

Hyperventilating, the woman prayed aloud in a sort of staccato.

Then we heard them coming: horse hooves thundering, a shrill wail, then a louder one, closer. The Chinese huddled in the middle. Jeff and his wranglers stood guns up, hammers cocked, and braced.

Gunfire erupted. Everyone, including one of Jeff’s



The wranglers were packing what seemed an excessive amount of firepower.

female wranglers, leaning against a wagon wheel and holding her .44 Mag with both hands, returned fire. I wrestled to reach the long guns.

Two horses galloped past. The riders wore buckskins. They both had long, black hair flowing behind and painted faces. Indians. They made one pass, disappeared, and thundered by again. Another burst of shots.

Finally, I understood, and my relief poured out in the form of laughter. The previous year, I had taken an evening wagon ride in Jackson Hole at the Bar T 5, an outfit owned by Jeff’s family. There, too, Indians had “attacked” us on the trail.

The wranglers holstered their pistols and cackled. Jeff heehawed like a mule. The Chinese remained



bunched together, wide-eyed, but a few guests began laughing, too. The woman was still hyperventilating, giggling and sobbing intermittently. “I thought...we were going...to die,” she said.

The wrangler who’d wrestled with me patted me on the back. “I was trying to keep you from getting at those guns,” he said.

Rodney was down on all fours under the tree, his mouth gaping and chin almost on the dirt, his eyes wide as saucers. His mind understood the joke, but his emotions hadn’t yet caught up. Seeing him, Sherry pointed, bent over to grab her thighs, and laughed uncontrollably. Now everyone saw Rodney, and the whole group guffawed. Sherry said, “You ran! You were supposed to be the one to help fend off the bears!” She cackled until she could hardly breathe, and every time she gained her composure, she lost it again.

The Chinese explained that during their walk they had run across the two Indians in the forest.

“You did?” a guest asked. “Were you afraid?”

“No afraid,” the man said.

“What did you do?”

He held up his camera. “I say to Indian, ‘I take-a your picture?’”

Our attackers, two of our wranglers who had painted their faces and dressed like Indians, had traded their wigs for cowboy hats. They were laughing, too.

I asked them, “What did you do when those guys asked to take your picture?”

“We were afraid they’d give us away. We just posed for the picture and asked them to stay quiet.”

Over the evening campfire, the wranglers presented each guest with a shell casing, a souvenir of our survival. Mine was a .44 Magnum from the young woman who had fired from the wagon wheel.

At our final campsite the next evening, a sense of camaraderie permeated camp. Small differences like culture, country, and languages posed no barrier. We were all cowboys now, pioneers crossing the country together. Everyone stuffed themselves to the gills with pork chops and apples, and listened to a mountain man who had emerged from the forest to share the grub and trade furs for a wife. He went around smelling each woman’s hair and pretending to look her over. He spun tales and let guests shoot his rifle.

Rodney borrowed Jeff’s vest, scarf, wrist cuffs and gun belt. His knees bent, he swaggered around, face beaming. Holding a lariat, he squatted and reached up with his free hand as if about to draw. And – I’ll declare – if he didn’t look a bit like Matt Dillon.

The fire licked at the night. The jokes flowed easily. To a person, everyone wanted to load up or saddle up in the morning and keep moving, but no one was traveling to a new life in the Oregon Territory. They had to return to houses and cubicles where all would remember what it was like to travel, laugh, cry and survive together. Guests swapped email addresses and phone numbers, and promised to trade digital photographs.

In the morning, the bus arrived. Jeff gave a speech, said everyone was family now. The men shook hands and the women hugged. A Chinese man, smiling widely, bowed. “Sank you,” he said. Everyone loaded into the bus. The wranglers formed a line alongside and fired in salute. Sherry sniffled, and Rodney slid on his sunglasses to hide his tears. He was sad to be leaving, and hoped Sherry would not hold his running against him. He had no idea whether the trip had made them more likely to marry, but he felt certain about one thing: He had never felt more like a cowboy.



Jayme Feary is a writer living in Wyoming.



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YOUR HORSE'S FEET, A SERIES

Feeding the Dogs

By Pete Healey, APF

Who enjoys shoeing day at the farm or ranch more than anyone? The dogs. There's nothing like a piece of hoof wall that wraps around your nose when you grab it or a little filet of sole or filet of frog, the more stinky the better. But how much foot left on the shoeing floor is too much?

Thirty-seven years ago during my last year in high school, I went to work full time for a large stocker cattle outfit. My uncle who was the foreman taught me how to shoe as every cowboy was required to shoe their own string of horses. It was that initial training that my uncle gave me that imprinted on my brain as to what a proper foot should look like and has led to the complex physical evaluation of the foot that I have developed today. What's interesting is that there wasn't one hoof knife on the whole ranch or were there any trailers to haul horses around in. What it did have was 53,000 acres of rough rocky ground to ride on. It wasn't until I started shoeing horses in town that I learned about hoof knives.

It is a common practice in the farrier industry to shape the bottom of the foot. The first thing a lot of farriers do is whip out the hoof knife and pare away at the sole and frog, most of this is just habit and for aesthetic appearance – but why? As soon as they're done the horse is going to stand in the mud or manure. Next comes the nippers so the wall can get trimmed down to the shortened sole. Then comes the rasp especially at the heels which the industry likes at the widest part of the frog no matter how short they are. If the frog is too high after trimming the heels too low we can just whack some frog off to make it even. If the sole is too flat at the toe just concave it a little more with the knife so there is no sole pressure, but now we have no sole. Since the foot looks too flat now, rasp the front of the hoof back to make it look like the correct angle. To top things off, let's put a flat shoe on this foot so we can leverage the weakened sole and wall.

This shouldn't bother the poor beast too much; if he gets to traveling with his head too high trying to get the weight off his front end, we'll just lever that down too or better yet just tie it down.

As the foot gets leveraged and shortened, the circulation is compromised and the growth centers shut down, now we have nothing to feed the dogs on shoeing day. Question: What to do? Answer: Reestablish equilibrium to the feet.

The length of the front of the foot from the coronet to the middle of the toe should be no shorter than the length of the frog from the tip to the widest part. The heels should be the height of a normal untrimmed frog. Only knock off what sole that wants to come off by itself and do not trim the frog but clean up the rough edges. When sighting down the bottom of the foot; the plane of the foot should be perpendicular to the pull of the tendon bundle on the back of the leg. The front of the foot just ahead of the central frog sulcus (Center of Rotation) should be slightly lower than the heels and should have a slight radius that allows the hoof to move with the internal bone. Rolling the foot from the bottom shortens up the break-over and eliminates the need to rasp the front of the foot which does nothing for break-over or the internal angle of the foot.

If there is not enough foot to accomplish this trim; build the foot up with artificial hoof and start over. You cannot trim hoof into a foot. Do whatever it takes to establish equilibrium; this could be two swipes with the rasp or 250 ml of acrylic. Once the foot is in equilibrium it will grow, and then we can feed the dogs. For more on 'Equilibrium' go to www.balancedbreakover.com.





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Old Hank's Journey

How the Guitar Won the West

By Tom Russell

*The minstrel boy to the war is gone,
In the ranks of death you'll find him,
His father's sword he has girded on,
And his wild harp slung behind him*

Thomas Moore (1779–1852)

The Minstrel Boy

I Old Hank's Nine Lives

I bought my first serious guitar in a used instrument store in San Luis Obispo, California, in 1967. It's sitting here behind me now. I call him, or her, *Old Hank*. Old Hank is a 1946 Martin D-18. I paid \$150 for it, back in the days when such miracles were possible. The sundown days of hockshops and pawnbrokers. Walls of guitars that were cleaned out of attics, cellars, and closets, smelling of grandma's cedar chest with a lingering



photo by Nadine Russell

Tom Russell and Old Hank. Inset photo shows the guitar's back. The scene being watched over by TR's painting of writer Dylan Thomas.

twist of had-rolled cigarette smoke. Tortoise shell pick guards. Abalone inlays. Sitka Spruce, mahogany, Brazilian rosewood, and ebony.

This old Martin was, and is, beat all to hell. Wounded, scarred and *proud of it*. I know nothing of the previous owner – an obsessed flat picker who tore into Old Hank. Deep grooves are worn into the top, extending beyond the pick guard and bordering the sound hole. Running off in wild directions. Civilization be damned.

Like *The Minstrel Boy* in



Roy Rogers

Thomas Moore's song of old, I consider old Hank my *wild harp*, slung over the shoulder and carried to the song wars. I put a few of those grooves and dents in there myself. Fifty years of picking. And I have fallen off stages. And slobbered beer and cheap white wine down onto old song lists rigged with tape on the side. Then there's the bullet hole, but I'll get to that.

I'd like to talk about the journey of this old guitar, alongside a glimpse of guitar and troubadour history, and surmise how the guitar won the West. In our

romantic mind the guitar is the cowboy's best friend, next to his horse, his dog, his gal, his sidekick, and the occasional shot of hooch – according to his or her order of ranked preferences. Good guitars never lie to you.

Dream up an image of Gene Autry and you'll likely conjure up Gene, with guitar, sitting on *Champion the Wonder Horse*. Gene would be cradling his Martin D-45, the first one ever produced. It was custom-made for him in 1933 by Martin, and his name was inlaid in pearl script along the fingerboard. And how about Roy Rodgers singing *Happy Trails to You*, strumming his 1930 OM-45 Martin Deluxe – one of only 14 made. It now rests in a glass display case in Branson, Missouri.

Any fool can learn three chords, and then the doors are open to the old songs and the magic of rhymed yarns filled with ghost riders, lone prairies, dark *senoritas*, paint horses, strawberry roans, and dogs named Blue.

*Blue chased a possum, way out on a limb,
Then Blue sat down and talked to him.*



Roy Rogers' Martin 00-21

No one ages during the course of a great song. Time stops. *Old Blue* corners a possum. *The Strawberry Roan* twists and rolls high in the air. God holds his breath. The angels applaud. The D-45 keeps ringing.

I believe a guitar absorbs the spirit of every room and circumstance it passes through. It inhales the silence, spit, and spilled whiskey in the sing-along world of campfires, parlors, back porches, honkytonks, and dressing rooms. The situations are ingrained in the living wood, as the guitar changes its *voice* for the better.

The journey informs the sound. First it must grow out of adolescence.

There comes a moment in a guitar's young life when it leaps beyond puberty and develops a sonic personality. Most well made guitars (and people and violins) get better with age. The spruce or rosewood or mahogany tempers, much like *anejo* tequila aged in whiskey barrels. The sound becomes subtly louder, more *wooden* and rounder, a voice that speaks with more assurance and authority. It will tell any tale you have the guts to coax out of it.

**II Old Hank's Journey:
A Wild Harp in The Biafra War**

*Mother Africa, you lay heavy on my breath
You old cradle of civilization
Heart of Darkness, blood and death...
But we had to flee you, running scared
When the crocodile ate the sun
East of Woodstock, West of Viet Nam*

Tom Russell

East of Woodstock, West of Viet Nam

Old Hank's first major excursion was to Nigeria, West Africa, in 1969. I had a year-long job as a student teacher in Criminology. The Biafra War was on, and the frontlines were 300 miles away from our ancient stone dwelling. We lived in the native quarter, in the middle of a palm grove, outside Ibadan. Up in those trees palm wine was naturally fermented. I learned to stay away from it. It coaxed weird rhythms out of Old Hank.

I was arrested coming into the country for taking photos in a war zone, and I was arrested going out a year later. By then I'd learned the art of the bribe. I had bribed armed policemen with English pounds,



Hank Williams

American dollars, chocolate, cigarettes, and a grapefruit, once, at a back road security stop.

That night I was in deeply over my head, lost on an off-limits road. The armed road guard was drunk on palm wine. He was swaying and sweating and his machine gun kept waving in my face as he was eyeing Old Hank in the back seat. Lord knows where Old Hank might have ended up.

Then the soldier's eyes widened when he saw the grapefruit on the dashboard, as if he'd never seen one. I offered it to him and sped away. I kept my head down low, beneath the wheel. He did not fire his weapon.

I didn't teach much Criminology because of the war and riots and such. I read Graham Greene novels,

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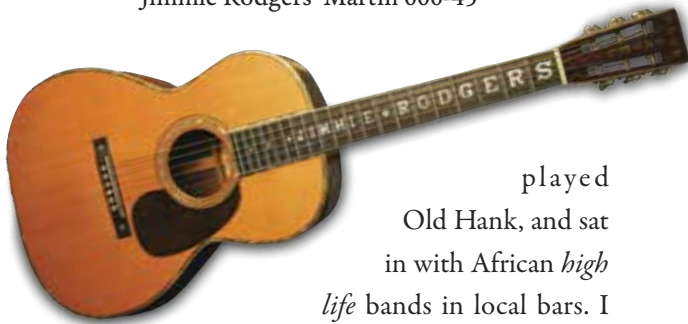
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Jimmie Rodgers' Martin 000-45



played Old Hank, and sat in with African *high life* bands in local bars. I dreamed of being a songwriter as I grew bored with the academic life. All the professors were sleeping with each other's wives, or hiding in their University compounds with three servants, a night guard, and a pet monkey. I stayed outside the compound. I learned to carve wood in the marketplace and from that vantage point witnessed a few miraculous cowboy moments.

Ibadan is one of the most populated cities in Africa. One morning, in the middle of the teeming, chaotic downtown traffic, I watched one lone Fulani tribesman move three-dozen head of long horn cattle through the jammed-up chaos. He swung a long stick and sang a herding chant. He moved them around cars, market stalls, and sharp corners. I told myself I'd just seen God's own cowhand and heard the oldest herding song in history. The ancestor to *The Night Herding Song*.

On another evening I watched a drumming exhibition – a dozen *talking* drummers creating a loud, jazz-like percussive piece. Talking drums have strings on the sides, which are attached to the drum heads – when the strings are pulled the drum changes pitch and *talks*.

The woman conducting this troupe looked like

Betty Davis. A middle-aged white woman in an African print dress and a floppy straw hat. She was a white priestess of the Yoruba Cult – an Austrian named Suzanne Wenger who ran off with a Nigerian drummer and created her own art colony. She lived to be almost 100 and died a few years back. She possessed powerful *musical juju*, and I'll never forget her.

What do African cults and cowhands have to do with guitars, the West, and old Hank's trip? Try this one.

Consider *The Father of Country Music*, Jimmie Rodgers. *The Singing Brakeman*. Then cogitate on the *Chemirocha* cult and the Kipsigis tribe of Kenya. This is

a tribe of traditional herders. Cowboys. At some moment in time, during the 1940s or '50s, a stack of Jimmie Rodgers 78s turned up in Kenya, either shipped there by mistake, or smuggled in by missionaries.

The Kipsigis became fixated on *The Singing Brakeman's* music – his singing, yodeling, and guitar strumming. It sounded otherworldly and lured them into a trance state. They called him *Chemirocha*, their pronunciation of *Jimmie Rodgers*. The tribe thought *Chemirocha* must have been half-man and half-

antelope in order to make those melodic noises.

Now consider that the ancestral links of the guitar lead back to Africa and we see guitar history swirling back and forth in cross-pollinating anthropological weirdness.

The Kipsigis singers played a 6-string bowl-lyre known as the *chepkongo*, and the lyre is great grandfather of the guitar. Jimmie Rodgers played a custom-ordered



Le Hot Club - Django by Tom Russell



Willie Nelson and “Trigger” – a Martin N-20 he purchased in 1969.

1927 Martin 000-45, with his name in pearl inlay on the neck, and the word *Thanks* inlaid upside down on the back. After Jimmie’s death his wife loaned the 000-45 to Ernest Tubb, who played it for forty years.

I opened a show once for Ernest Tubb on the West Coast, in the 1970s. After every song he’d flip the guitar over and show the *Thanks* to the crowd. I didn’t know at the time that this was Jimmy Rodger’s guitar. But I knew of the *Chemirocha* cult.

Charmed moments in my life have centered around the guitar, and encounters with guitar and troubadour history.

III *La Breve Historia de la Guitarra* – Lutes, Minstrels, Troubadours, and Buskers

Modern storytellers are the descendants of an immense and ancient community of holy people, troubadours, bards, griots, cantadores, travelling poets, bums, hags, and crazy people.

Clarissa Pinkola Estes

The troubadours invented love.

Graham Greene

It’s those bloody Moors again. They not only brought us paper, sugar cane, cuisine, horsemanship, bullfighting and such – they carried the fretless *oud* into Spain when they invaded in 711. From the *oud* came the fretted lute, then cometh the troubadours, who invented the love song. After the lute came the guitar.

The evolution of the classical guitar began with the influences of the *vihuela* and Moorish *gittern* in the sixteenth century. The guitar evolved into the modern classical shape by the mid nineteenth century.

Here’s a poem, called “The Book of Good Love,” from the year 1330:

*Then came out, with a strident sound,
the two-stringed Moor’s gittern,
high-pitched as to its range,
as to its tone both harsh and bold.*

*Big-bellied lute which marks the time
for merry, rustic dance,
And Spanish guitar which with the rest
was herded in the fold...*

The guitar and the old songs came to Western America with horses and cattle herds travelling on ships



Ramblin’ Jack Elliott and his Martin D-28 with hand-painted pickguard.



Leonard Cohen

with Cortez and the boys. When Don Juan Onate crossed the Rio Grande in 1598, near what is now El Paso, he travelled with his troops, horses, cattle, wine bags, and a priest who played a Spanish guitar and sang olden songs. The first folksinger to enter the West.

Around the year 1900, the steel string guitar appeared in America, as the quieter Spanish gut string couldn't compete with banjos, fiddles, and mandolins, volume-wise. Steel strings were louder, but the interior of the guitar needed more bracing. Then cometh the hillbilly flat pickers, bluegrass boys, country, and folk singers – the progeny of the troubadours and minstrels. I count myself amongst this crew.

Around 1931, the electric guitar was invented as an even louder necessity for jazz, big band, and blues guitar players like Charlie Christian, Les Paul, and T-Bone Walker. Next stop, Rock and Roll and *Johnny B. Goode*, who *carried his guitar in a gunnysack*. Then cometh Keith Richards and The Rolling Stones. Still on the road.

But what of those minstrels and troubadours, the forerunners of the guitar-toting folksingers and songwriters? Minstrels were prominent in medieval

times, usually employed by King and Royal Court, performing songs and stories of foreign places and historic events. They created their own tales or stole a story from another minstrel and embellished it. It's now called *the folk process*.

The troubadours were educated amateur poets of higher social rank than minstrels. They flourished in the period 1100–1350, composing ornate lyrics of courtly love, which had a broad influence on Western poetry and culture.

Buskers were street singers, thriving in the mid-1800s in Great Britain. The verb *to busk*, from the noun *busker*, comes from the Spanish root word *buscar*, meaning *to seek*. The guitar is the preferred instrument of the modern busker.

Old Hank and I *busked* for a few days, a long time back, on the streets of Oslo, Norway. If needs be, I'd do it again. It's the bottom line. There's nothing like buying bread, cheese, and a bottle of wine with money you've made as a *busker*.



IV Old Hank on Skid Row and The Carnival on The Road to Bayamon

*In a parking lot down in old San Juan
Out on the road to Bayamon
We set up tents and the alibi joints
And the freak show from Leon*

**The Road to Bayamon,
Tom Russell**



After Africa I wound up in Vancouver, B.C., and began my show biz career in the dives along Hastings Street, Vancouver's Skid Row. Eight sets a night, six nights a week, backing up topless dancers, sword swallows and female impersonators. We were *Skid Row's finest band*, *The Mule Train Review*, and these were the same bars Ian Tyson came out of a decade before. Knife and gun clubs. Old Hank felt right at home. Nothing Old Hank loved better than to accompany a Hank Williams or Lefty Frizzell song.



Andrés Segovia (1893 – 1987)

Fast-forward ten years through fifty sets of strings and a thousand bad gigs. Vancouver, Prince Rupert, Prince George, down to Austin Texas, back to San Francisco, then across the New York – playing the mechanical bull bars during the *Urban Cowboy* scare. Endless nights of *Cotton Eyed Joe*. Old Hank and I thought we'd seen it all – until we hit that Puerto Rican carnival.

Now, as I've stated, this Martin D-18 also has a

bullet hole in the back – an odd angled hole caused by a .22 caliber bullet passing through the sound hole and out the back. The shootout took place in a dressing room in a carnival tent in Puerto Rico. Back in the days (to paraphrase Warren Zevon) when my career had all the potential of a civil war leg wound.

No, I wasn't holding the guitar at the time. I was passed out about five miles away. I was the featured Urban Cowboy Singer on a two month gig on the largest carnival midway ever assembled. The gigantic Midway was in San Juan, Puerto Rico, near the Roberto Clemente Stadium, out on the road to Bayamon. Mid 1980s. A French Canadian disco band backed me up and I sang all the Johnny Cash songs I could muster up, as well as my freshly written chicken-fighting saga, *Gallo del Cielo*.

My biggest fan and bodyguard was a 250-pound *ride jockey* and biker woman named *Gypsy* who ran the Astro Ride. Gypsy schooled me in carny jargon – for instance *possum belly queens* were hookers who enacted their trade in the possum belly (tool boxes) of semi trucks. And so on.

Gypsy had my back, except for the night when we went out drinking and I carelessly left the guitar in the dressing room of the performance tent. Somebody broke in and shot the joint up. Old Hank took a round in the gut.

Gypsy surmised the shooter was the night guard who didn't dig my Johnny Cash imitations. Gypsy, and her carny henchmen, took care of the gentleman with the gun. He ended up a *Bozo* in the *Dunk the Clown* game – the last carnival stop on the road to being a geek and biting the heads off of live chickens. Gypsy's last words to me when I left Puerto Rico: *Don't let anybody mess with Old Hank*. I took that to the heart.

Time for a brief *intermezzo* of guitar anecdotes to freshen the *palette*.

**V How the Guitar Won the West:
Worthy Guitar Anecdotes**

*The guitar is a small orchestra. It is polyphonic.
Every string is a different color, a different voice.*

Andre Segovia



Gene Autry

My brother was running a filling station, and he took in a guitar and gave a guy a couple of dollars worth of gas when I was about 10. He brought it over to the house and set it there in the closet, and it stayed there for a while. My mother got it out and showed me a couple of chords my dad had showed her...

Merle Haggard

I always thought that one man, the lone balladeer with the guitar could blow a whole army off the stage if he knew what he was doing. I've seen it happen.

Bob Dylan

One man with an acoustic guitar. It goes back to the 11th century one troubadour with a lute. Troubadours to the Bards of Senegal to the traveling bluesman the solo songsters. In any case, one man and his guitar make a powerful statement.

Don Edwards

*Black Diamond Strings on a catalog guitar
That's pretty high cotton whoever you are
You break one you change one, that's as good as it gets
You can play all year long on two or three sets*

Guy Clark, Black Diamond Strings

I saw a drunken, angry, Hoyt Axton pour a glass of white wine into the sound hole of his Martin guitar, in front of five thousand people at a Berkeley folk festival...he poured the glass into the hole and a thousand folkies gasped in shock. "What the hell," declared Hoyt, "if it can't take it - it shouldn't be on the road!"

Tom Russell

*Remember that guitar in a museum in Tennessee?
The nameplate on the glass brought back twenty memories
And the scratches on the face told of all the times he'd fell
Singin' and the stories he could tell*

John Sebastian, Stories We Could Tell



Leonard Cohen with his Ovation guitar, late 1960s

There's a great photo of the song list taped to the top of Gordon Lightfoot's guitar in the early '60s. It speaks of Lightfoot's journey...It lists early Lightfoot classics as well as traditional cowboy songs...

I got to play that old Martin Guitar of his at a tribute to Gordon Lightfoot concert...Lightfoot magically appeared out of the hospital...he was in the dressing room, and he called me over and handed me his guitar and said "play me the song of mine you're gonna sing out there..."

*The guitar almost played itself
There was nothing I could do
It was getting hard to tell
Just who was playing who...*

Guy Clark, *The Guitar*

*My first guitar was an F hole sunburst
Silvertone my parents gave me for Christmas
around 1949 or 50...my favorite guitar would
be a 1921 Martin OO-45, one of only six made
that year braced for steel strings...Gene Autry's
D-45 Custom is the "Holy Grail" of acoustic
guitars...Said to be worth a million dollars.*

Don Edwards

*My first guitar was some cheap German one
that I can't remember the name of...the guitar I
wrote "Four Strong Winds" and "Someday
Soon" on is an old Martin D-28...I gave it to
my son, Clay.*

Ian Tyson



A cowboy themed guitar by Old Kraftsman, circa 1949. These guitars were sold in the Montgomery Ward catalog.

So I auditioned his song "For Lovin' Me" on his old guitar...and he smiled and said "one of the best versions I've ever heard..." What a great heart he has. You could see the old song-list tape marks on the top from thirty years back... And I could feel the ghosts of all those great old songs in that guitar.

Tom Russell

Will C. Barnes observed the traveling musicians who followed the cow-trails from ranch to camp to saloons and medicine shows. Will observed first hand these were professional musicians and the best of them were "colored men from Texas." Was he hearing music that would later be known as "The Blues?" More than likely it was.

Don Edwards

Sam tenderly and carefully tied his guitar across his saddle on top of his slicker and coat. The guitar was in a green duck bag...Sam Galloway was The Last of the Troubadours...The encyclopedia says they flourished between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries...

Oh Henry – The Last of the Troubadours
(Thanks, Don Edwards)

There never will be an end to the troubadours, and now and then it does seem that the jingle of their guitars will drown the sound of the muffled blows of the pickaxes and trip-hammers of all the Workers in the world.

Oh Henry

I inhaled the fragrance of cedar as fresh as the first day that I acquired the guitar. And a voice seemed to say to me, "You are an old man and you have not said 'thank you.' You have not brought your gratitude back to the soil from which this fragrance arose.

Leonard Cohen

VI Wood Never Dies: Leonard Cohen's Guitar and The King of Spain

If I knew where the good songs came from I'd go there more often.

Leonard Cohen

Leonard Cohen is standing at a podium, in front of an audience in Spain, in receipt of The Prince of Asturias Award on October 21, 2011. He is addressing the audience, The King of Spain, and attendant royalty. Hear his words. I have yet to encounter a more articulate statement on the profound meaning of a guitar in a musician's life.

Here's a capsule of Leonard's speech:

*Your Majesty, Your Royal Highnesses,
Excellency's, Members of the Jury,
Distinguished Laureates, Ladies and
Gentlemen:*

It is a great honor to stand here before you tonight...

I stayed up all night last night, wondering what I might say to this august assembly. And after I had eaten all the chocolate bars and peanuts in the mini-bar, I scribbled a few words.



When I was packing in Los Angeles to come here, I had a sense of unease because I've always felt some ambiguity about an award for poetry. Poetry comes from a place that no one commands and no one conquers. So I feel somewhat like a charlatan to accept an award for an activity which I do not command. In other words, if I knew where the good songs came from I'd go there more often.

I was compelled in the midst of that ordeal of packing to go and open my guitar. I have a Conde guitar, which was made in Spain in the great workshop at Number 7 Gravina Street – a beautiful instrument that I acquired over 40 years ago. I took it out of the case and I lifted it. It seemed to be filled with helium – it was so light. And I brought it to my face. I put my face close to the beautifully designed rosette, and I inhaled the fragrance of the living wood. You know that wood never dies.

I inhaled the fragrance of cedar as fresh as the first day that I acquired the guitar. And a voice seemed to say to me, "You are an old man and you have not said thank you – you have not brought your gratitude back to the soil from which this fragrance arose." And so I come here tonight to thank the soil and the soul of this people that has given me so much...

Leonard then talks about the great Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca. Cohen had studied the great English poets, but when he discovered the works of Lorca, Cohen realized that he could find a voice like Lorca's – *a voice that struggles for its own existence.*

He goes on:

And as I grew older I understood that instructions came with this voice. What were these instructions? The instructions were never to lament casually. And if one is to express the great inevitable defeat that awaits us all, it must be done within the strict confines of dignity and beauty. And so I had a voice, but I did not have



an instrument. I did not have a song.

And now I'm going to tell you very briefly a story of how I got my song. Because – I was an indifferent guitar player. I banged the chords. I only knew a few of them...

In the early 1960s Leonard was visiting his mother's house in Montreal. Near the house was a park, and Leonard walked over and heard a young man playing a Spanish *flamenco* guitar and there were several pretty girls listening. The sound and the way the young man played *captured* the young poet, Cohen. I would assume Leonard also noticed the effect the guitar playing had on the ladies.

As the speech (and story) go forward, Leonard approached the guitarist and asked for guitar lessons. They made a deal, and the young man came to Leonard's mother's house each morning. At first Leonard couldn't make the chords correctly. He was frustrated. The Spaniard urged Leonard on, assured him, and gradually Cohen learned six chords in a progression that many flamenco songs are based on. Cohen began to improve. On the third day the Spaniard did not appear.

Back to Leonard:

The next day, he didn't come...I had the number of his boarding house in Montreal. I phoned to find out why he had missed the appointment, and they told me that he'd taken his life – that he'd committed suicide. I knew nothing about the man...I did not know what part of Spain he came from. I did not know why he came to Montreal... I did not know why he took his life. I was deeply saddened, of course.

But now I disclose something that I've never spoken in public. It was those six chords – it was that guitar pattern that has been the basis of all my songs and all my music. So now you will begin to understand the dimensions of the gratitude I have for this country (Spain). Everything that you have found favorable in my work comes from this place. Everything that you have found favorable in my songs and my poetry are inspired by this soil.

So I thank you so much for the warm hospitality that you have shown my work, because it is really yours, and you have allowed me to affix my signature to the bottom of the page. Thank you so much, ladies and gentlemen.

VII Summation: Will the Wolf Survive?

*Sounds across the nation
Coming from your hearts and minds
Battered drums and old guitars
Singing songs of passion
It's the truth that they all look for
The one thing they must keep alive
Will the wolf survive?
Will the wolf survive?*

**David Hidalgo, Louie Perez
Los Lobos**

*The Minstrel Boy will return we pray
When we hear the news we all will cheer it,
The minstrel boy will return one day,
Torn perhaps in body, not in spirit.*

The Minstrel Boy



So I come here, in the manner of Leonard Cohen, to give thanks to Old Hank. The Minstrel Boy to the war has gone, and will go again. Wild harp slung behind me. But Old Hank is semi-retired from the fray now. He's sitting behind me a few feet away, staring out at the cows and workhorses. I still pick him up and sing a few songs every day, to keep our chops up.

Since that Puerto Rican carnival we've rounded the world: hundreds of nights in Oslo, Norway, in the '80s and '90s, where one time we were thrown in the Oslo drunk tank, and Old Hank and I entertained our fellow besotted pilgrims all night. In Finland we've jammed with a band named *Engels, Marx, Freud, and Jung*, who recorded my songs in Finnish.

Hank and I played the Irish bars of New York, the

back street theaters in Lyon, France, summer street fairs in Italy, a *Western Saloon* in the mountains of Switzerland, where I met my wife, every honkytonk in Canada, a church in the Yukon with a dome made out of hockey sticks, the bars and concert halls of Alaska, joints in New Zealand and Australia, music trains across Canada, trains down into the Copper Canyon of Mexico, and on and on.

As I write this, the next gig is a sold out show in a pub in Belfast, Ireland. And then on to Dublin and London. Old Hank won't make this tour, but he wishes me luck. He's seen it all. He's still a bit disgruntled at the wind whistling out of the bullet hole in his back. I've never had it repaired. I've let it remain as a souvenir of the wars we've fought together.





I take an old Gibson LG-1 on the road now, and have another 1948 Gibson J-45 I bought from a sailor in San Francisco. There's a decal on the back of a naked lady with a snake wrapped around her middle. That's a whole other story. I also have a few hand-made Collings guitars, but I'm downsizing. I don't believe in hoarding guitars that don't get played, or mummifying guitars inside glass display cases. They yearn to ring.

Yes, the guitar won the West, and Old Hank has enabled me to make sense of a world in which I've always felt an outsider – never good at playing the academic game, the music business game, nor gifted in

the art of socializing with chat or small talk. Never much interested in Nashville or the long lines you have to stand in to sell your soul. I sing and write and paint.

I wake up every morning as confused as any other person, but my world becomes centered and joyful after the first two cups of coffee, when I reach for my guitar.

*"Land of Song!" said the warrior bard,
"Though all the world betrays thee,
One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard,
One faithful harp shall praise thee!"*



Tom Russell's double *Ballad of the West, The Rose of Roscrae*, and all his records and books, are available from: www.fronterarecords.com His tour dates and other information are accessed at: www.tomrussell.com
Paintings and prints: www.tomrussellart.com

132
Page 132

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Sacred Sheep

Churro sheep return from near-extinction,
reviving Navajo traditions.

By Hal Cannon

For as long as anyone can remember, Churro sheep have been central to Navajo life and spirituality, yet the animal was nearly exterminated in modern times by outside forces who deemed it an inferior breed. Now, on the Navajo reservation of northern Arizona and New Mexico, the Churro is being shepherded back to health.

The Navajo Nation is the size of West Virginia, and at last count, 300,000 people live there. Most people are spread out in small clusters that you see off in the distance from the highway. Amongst modern prefab houses and *hogans*, the multisided traditional homes of the Navajo, are often corrals with small bands of sheep grazing nearby.

“Sometimes you find me, and I just want to sit in the corral with them,” says Navajo weaver Roy Kady. “Just find a corner and I sit there. They motivate me,

even just to see them. It’s that strong to me.”

Churro sheep are smaller than most breeds and have a long, wavy, lustrous fleece, low in lanolin. They are greatly valued by Navajo weavers like Kady. He lives

near Teec Nos Pos, where he is the former chapter president – sort of like being the town’s mayor. For him, this flock is part of something larger, something he calls *din’è bi iina*, the Navajo way of life. *Din’è* is the preferred name for the Navajo, and *bi iina* means “way of life.”

“Sheep are your backbone,” Kady says.

“It’s your survival. It’s your lifeline.”

For centuries, the Churro was all these things, providing the Navajo with what they needed to survive in the stark desert: meat for sustenance, wool for weaving clothing and blankets, sinew for thread. It’s no wonder the Navajo are grateful, even reverential when it comes to the Churro.



Navajo Churro sheep were pushed to the brink of extinction, but are on the comeback.

“Sheep are a very important part of this whole cosmology to us,” Kady explains. “You know, there are songs where it refers to ‘the first thing I see is the white sheep to the East when I wake up to make my offering. It stands at my doorway.’ And that’s how we know that the sheep is something that’s very sacred to us.”

The Churro were the first domesticated sheep in the New World. Most historical accounts maintain the sheep were brought to the Southwest by Spanish Conquistadors in the 1500s, though others believe these sheep came to the Navajo earlier, as a gift from the Creator. In any event, Churro sheep and the Navajo have woven a life together in a balance of nature. However, by the 1860s, America’s westward expansion collided with Navajo resistance. In a tragic move, Kit Carson and his troops were ordered to relocate the tribe and destroy their livestock.

“The eradication of this particular sheep breed – because we are connected to it with songs and prayers and ceremonies – when it was taken from us, that part of our life was also destroyed,” Kady says.

Eventually the Navajo were allowed to return to their ancestral lands, where they built their herds back. That is, until government agents returned in the 1930s with orders to eliminate the Churro.

“The U.S. government thought that they had too many sheep, and the wrong sheep,” says Lyle McNeal, a professor of animal science at Utah State University. He says the government cited environmental concerns. The Churro “were causing premature siltation on a new dam being built on the Colorado called Hoover,” McNeal says. “[The government] felt that the runoff and the overgrazing would make that dam worthless in a few years.”

In 1934, the federal government started a stock reduction. Killing off the Churro sent the Navajo

economy into a tailspin. Realizing the tribe could not survive without their herds, the government introduced standard breeds, whose meat and wool were more uniform to market demand.

For decades, most people thought the Churro had been eliminated. But in 1972, when McNeal was teaching in California, he took his students on a field trip to the Salinas Valley, where he noticed some strange-looking woolly creatures as they stopped to visit a rancher.

“At that stop is where I really first saw a living Churro,” he says. “I’d read about them before then, but I had never seen one up close.”

The discovery spurred what can best be described as a personal and professional calling, a 35-year mission to bring the Churro back from the brink of extinction. McNeal and his supporters scoured hidden canyons on the reservation for surviving Churro, and eventually found enough animals to begin a breeding program. This led to the establishment of the Navajo Sheep Project, which is dedicated to bringing back the Churro.

“When I had sheep in the truck and we were making deliveries down there, I’d stop to get some gas,” McNeal says. “Some of the elders would be attracted to the truck. They would say, ‘These are the *real* sheep. Where did you get them?’ That’s when I started getting the signal that these are more than just sheep, so it added a dimension to the Navajo Sheep Project effort that I hadn’t expected.”

A road somewhere between Gallup and Shiprock, New Mexico, leads toward a sheer sandstone cliff. In a corral with a few dozen Churro, weaver Tahnbah Natani gathers her ewes and rams as her husband prepares for a ceremony to bless and protect the sheep. Anderson Hoske is a medicine man. He’s lit up a mix of



local plants, making sure all the sheep breathe in the thick, aromatic smoke from the smoldering fire.

“The smoke is like a flu shot to them,” he says. “It’s all about chasing away the sickness spirits, different sicknesses.”

Hoske begins to chant. He sings an ancient prayer, then Natani fills a sacred pipe and blows smoke into the face of each sheep. This is a family that shows its gratitude for the gift of life that is given each time it takes an animal for food. They will shear these sheep, clean the wool, and spin it into yarn, which then goes to the loom to be woven, not just as a work of art, but as a visual representation of heaven on earth.

“So when you are weaving, actually you’re doing a prayer because the warp is considered a representation of rain,” Natani says. “The tension cord is lightning. The top of the beam of the loom, the very top, represents the sky, Father Sky. And the bottom bar represents Mother Earth. Everything on the loom has a special song for it. So it becomes a prayer.”

Natani and Hoske are committed to keeping the traditions of their ancestors alive in a modern world. They’re active in a region-wide community of herders, weavers and restaurateurs dedicated to the Churro. And now, many other ranchers outside the reservation have come to value this breed of sheep and have become part of a growing community of people dedicated to

heirloom breeds of livestock. Even though the Navajo Churro breed is a small minority of the sheep on the reservation – there are just over 4,000 of them – it’s no longer considered endangered.

But while the Churro are thriving, it may be that this weaver and medicine man are becoming the rare breed, even within their tribe. Like most Americans, Navajo have become tied to a paycheck economy and like everywhere in America, a new generation is growing up mesmerized by what’s beamed in on the satellite dish and through the Internet. Navajo Sheep are just one indicator of the health of a culture and its traditions.

On a background of pink sand, golden brush and a pewter gray sky, Kady and his mother enter their remote hogan to escape the cold. They occasionally trade words in Navajo, but otherwise she sits expressionless in her long skirt and bright scarf as her son reveals a deep worry for the survival of his tribe’s traditions.

“I think we are at the point where it could die out – tomorrow,” he says. “But coming from my heart is that this is good and has to be continued. You oftentimes hear the phrase, ‘The youth are tomorrow, they are our future.’ But I always say, ‘No. They’re *now*. It has to happen *now*. We as teachers need to stop and say, ‘Let’s get with it and teach them before it’s forgotten.’”



This article was first produced by Hal Cannon and Taki Telonidis, under the auspices of the Western Folklife Center, as a June 2010 National Public Radio feature. Hal Cannon revised the story for print. He and his wife, Teresa Jordan, have since joined the heirloom-livestock movement, and raise Navajo Churro sheep at their home in Virgin, Utah.



A VISIT WITH BUCK BRANNAMAN

Cake

In the last issue we spoke of horses being herd bound. Horses are herd animals, and like all herd animals they find safety and, at some level, peace of mind when within a herd. Safety in numbers, as I said, herd bound tendencies create situations where the horse will not give you his attention; he is more concerned about being part of something larger. My job is to help horses and riders realize their best and safest place is together – a mutually giving relationship. In many ways it's about finding satisfaction in simple successes for both horse and rider. Creating a relationship of asking and receiving – can be very healing for both on many levels.

I sort of think of life as a big cake. I'm perfectly content eating cake that doesn't have any frosting on it at all. It's okay with me. When you have the support and love of other people – to have that healing happen as a result of the positive reinforcement by other people – that's the icing on the cake. There's always the chance that you won't get icing on your piece of cake, and then you have options; you can either eat it as it is and call it good, or toss it away because it has no icing. Somewhere along

the line the human has an opportunity to make a change of direction, wherever they happen to be headed.

A lot of people find it remarkable that I've been able to put my past to rest, in spite of all the troubles I encountered as a youngster. Well, I don't live in the past, but I do look back sometimes to find important lessons in the good and bad things that happened to me. I'm careful how I live my life today. You see, there are a lot of people that accept the notion that if you grew up in a home where a parent was abusive, you are pretty much going to end up the same way. If your father was an alcoholic, well, it's pretty much a sure thing you're going to be one, too. I don't believe that, and I've met too many people in my life that have prevailed over what some psychologist assured them was their fate. We all have free choice and opportunity to do things with our lives and hopefully for others. In my case, that's helping horses and humans get to those simple solutions and successes that further mutually beneficial relationships. I have found, after all these years, that kind of giving is a pretty good way to go about life.



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THE HEN HOUSE

Fall Arrives at the Hen House



By Hannah Ballantyne, Reata Brannaman and Nevada Watt

138

Fall has rolled around again. When a lot of people think about Fall and college girls, it brings up images of gigantic scarves, UGG boots and enough pumpkin spice Latte to drown in. The picture is a bit different at the Hen House. When that chill hits the air, we celebrate a few things – Pendleton jackets emerging from the back of the closet, the fact that mountains are snow capped again, trips to the local hot springs, cattle being moved down from mountain permits and fall works



photo by

Take note: Reata is in the kitchen.



beginning. NO FLIES!! And all the kinds of delicious foods that seem to just taste better this time of year.

We don't sport UGGs, but who doesn't like Pumpkin?! However you choose to get into fall, it's a fantastic season and there's nothing better than sitting down after a busy day, at a table filled with friends and loved ones, for a delicious home-cooked meal.

At our house, meal-time isn't just about eating, it's time to spend talking and connecting, chatting about everyone's day, catching up, telling stories and generally laughing our faces off. We thought we'd share a few of our favorite recipes that round out those good times at the table.



Pozole Mexican Soup:

- 3 cans of hominy
- 1 bushel of cilantro
- 1 sweet onion
- 2 bell peppers
- 2 tbsp. Garlic
- 1 small can green chilies
- 1 fresh jalapeno
- 1 tbsp. cumin
- 1 tbsp. coriander
- 2 bay leaves

- 1 lime squeezed
- 2, 32-ounce containers of chicken broth
- 1 tbsp. Cayenne pepper
- 4 chicken breasts

You'll also need sour cream, cheese of your preference, flour tortillas and 3 avocados

Boil chicken breasts. Dump everything else (really, all of it at once, order doesn't matter) into a large pot.

Once the chicken breasts are done, shred them and put them in the large pot with everything else. Cook at medium heat for 2 hrs.

Cut a bunch of flour tortillas into chip-sized rectangles and fry them in vegetable oil (or your choice) until golden brown.

Garnish with sour cream, cheese and sliced avocado.

Enjoy!





Pumpkin Bread

- ½ cup of oil
- ½ cup of sugar
- ½ cup of packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs (beaten)
- 1 15oz can of pumpkin
- 1½ cups of flour (sifted)
- ¼ tsp. of salt
- ½ tsp. of cinnamon
- ½ tsp. of nutmeg
- 1 tsp. of baking soda

Mix the oil and the sugars into a large bowl. Then, mix in the beaten eggs and canned pumpkin. Add the dry ingredients and mix completely. Pour the batter into a greased bread pan. Cook for 1 hour at 350° F or until a toothpick poked through the bread comes out clean. Best consumed with a large glass of milk!

Vanilla Cupcakes with Mocha Butter-Cream Frosting

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon fine salt



Reata prepares to juggle limes....

- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- ⅔ cup sugar
- 1½ sticks (6 ounces) unsalted butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ½ cup milk

Preheat the oven to 350° F. This recipe makes 12 standard cupcakes, which are big enough to give anyone a sugar rush, so 12 always seems to be plenty. Whisk the flour, baking powder and salt together in a bowl.



In another bowl, beat the eggs and sugar until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. As you mix, pour in the butter and vanilla mixture.

While mixing slowly, slowly add the dry ingredients. Then add all the milk and the rest of the dry ingredients.

Pour the mixture into the greased cupcake tins.

Bake until a tester stuck in the center of the cakes comes out clean, about 15-20 minutes.



For the Frosting...

1½ cups butter, softened

3 cups powdered sugar

4 tablespoons cocoa powder

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 tablespoons instant coffee, dissolved in a splash of hot water



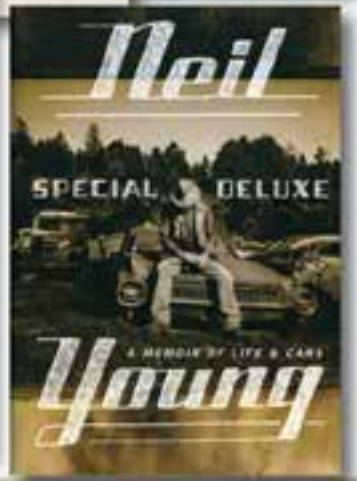
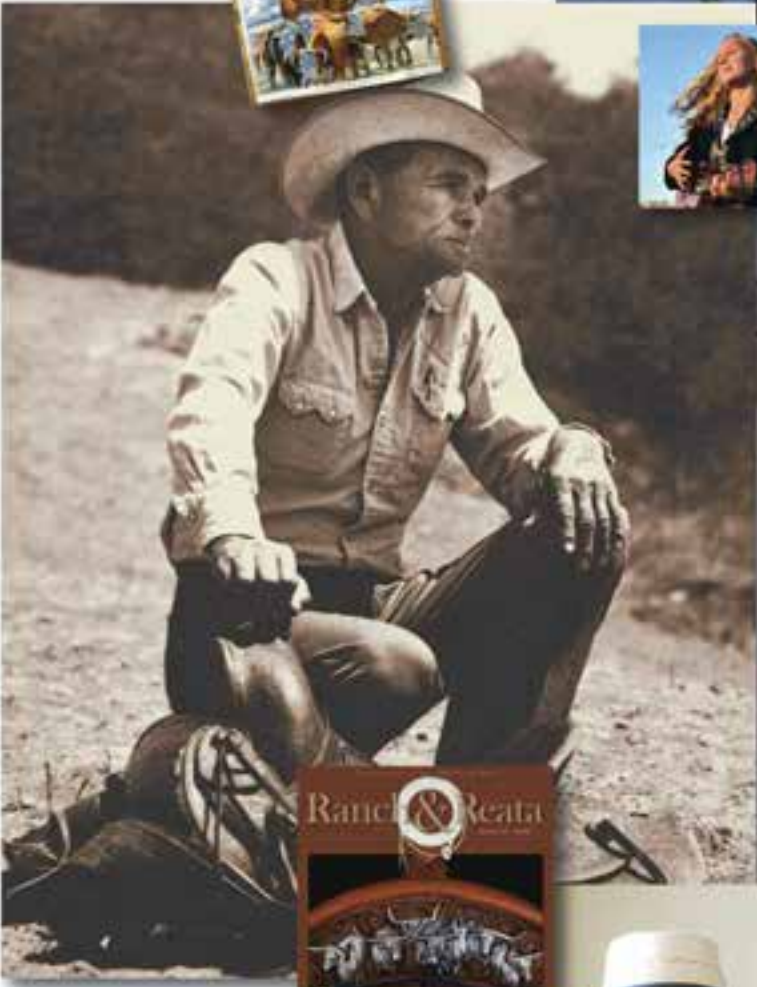
With a handy little mixer, beat the softened butter with the powdered sugar until it is creamy.

Add in the cocoa powder, vanilla extract and coffee.

Beat with the mixer until it's nice and fluffy (about a minute or 2)

Put frosting on cupcakes and enjoy the sugary goodness!!







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Bucking Straight

The photography of Kent Reeves

It started with rodeo. My camera was a means of paying my entry fees. I wasn't making much in winnings as a bareback bronc rider, so I sold photos to friends and competitors.

At the time, I was in graduate school and living on a ranch in northern California. The ranch manager, Bud Vann, would invite me to brandings or to gather cattle, and I always brought my cameras.

I ended up taking photographs on ranches throughout California. I photographed my family working cattle in the Sierra Nevada foothills. I photographed friends. I photographed what I liked, and what I knew. People, and the land. *Their* land. *Their* work. Eventually, I became more participant than observer, juggling a camera as I led a pack string, doctored steers, or rode an outside circle on a fall gather.

Mentors like Jay Harney taught me enough about horses that I could get a job riding colts in New Mexico. And, photographers like Bank Langmore, Kurt Markus and Bill Allard inspired me. Jay Dusard kept me honest about my photography, and wouldn't let me get away with resting on my laurels. Staying focused on gallery and juried shows, and on telling stories, kept me true to my work.

The stories from the people I meet in my work, and the moments I experience with those people, are gifts. One gift came from a cowboy named Slim Frank. We worked together on a ranch in the Sierra Nevada foothills. It was calving season, and Slim and I were checking cows and calves. I rode a roan colt that always tested me. Horses do that.

Slim and I were talking when a calf came up and tried to nurse the roan. The colt broke in two and started bucking out across the pasture. All I could think about was getting his head up and holding on. About the time I blew a stirrup and decided I'd be walking home, the roan stopped dead in his tracks. I was out of breath, thankful I wasn't afoot. I turned to look back at Slim, who was leaning over his saddle horn, smiling.

"At least he bucked straight," Slim said.

Photography bucks straight for me. I know it, and love it, especially imagery of those who live and work with the land. I love the people of the West because they give me more than just images. They give me truth from what they love. They share with me a life well lived.

—Kent Reeves



Fred Reeves, Mariposa County, 1982



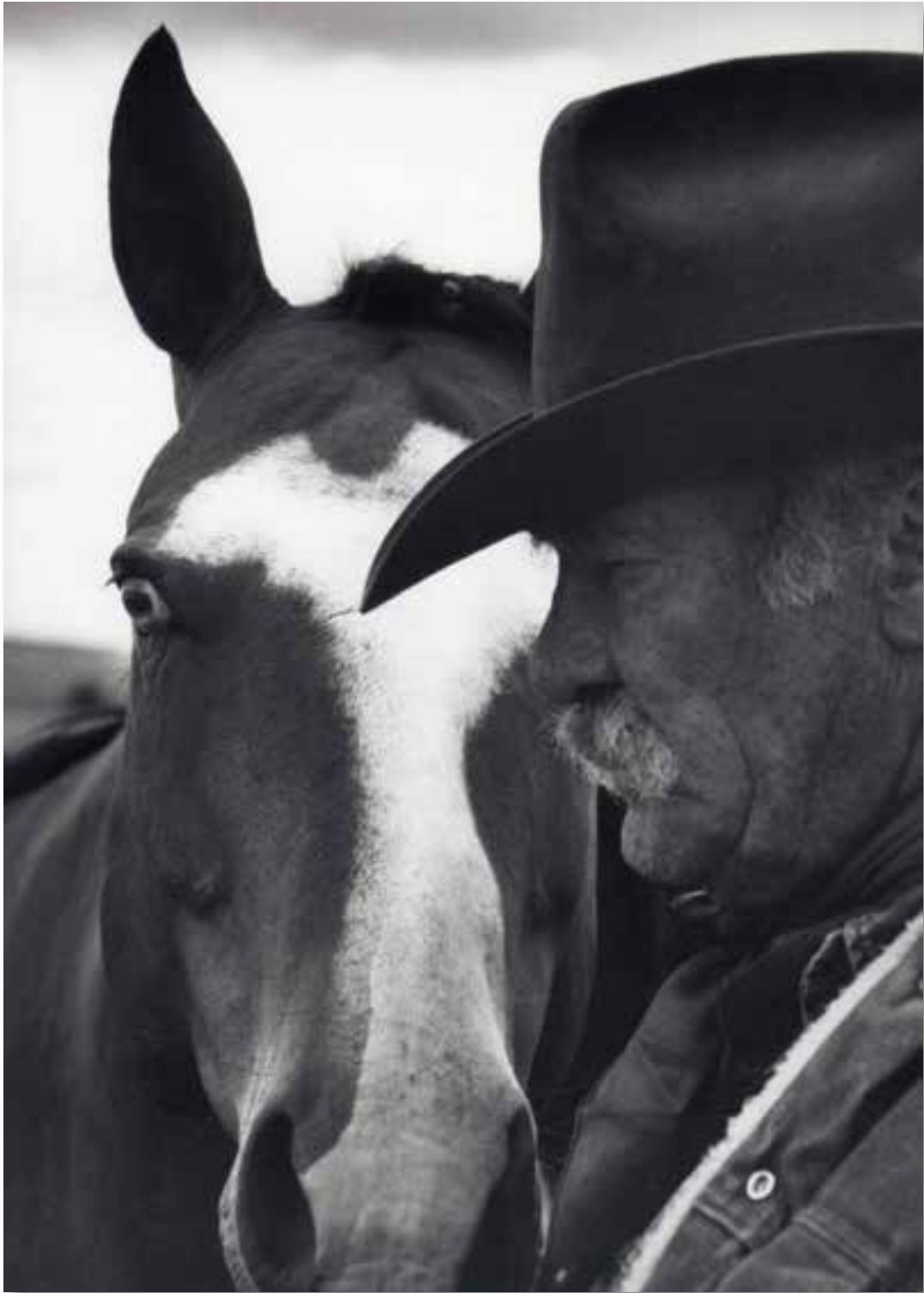
Tommy Borba and Jay Harney at Mel's, 1983



John and Hank Real Bird, 1993



Sue Wallis and Daughter Megan, 1993



Wally McRae, 1992



Jay Harney, Los Banos Arts Council Show, 2015



Slim Frank, Mariposa County, 1987



Troy Richardson and Jerry Masterpoole, Cross M Ranch, Nevada, 1986



Done for the Day, Likely General Store, 1984



Visit www.losbanosarts.org/concert-series.html to learn about the Ted Falasco Center for the Arts' retrospective of Kent Reeves' photography.

Bleu Horses

A herd of sculpted horses adorns the landscape along US 287 in Montana's Gallatin County.

By Brian D'Ambrosio

Horses symbolize hustle, passion and a craving for self-determination. Their fundamental nature suggests wild and open movement. Indeed, perhaps freedom is the most spiritual subtext of what it is to be the horse.

Likewise, there is a certain freedom in art that lies in being bold and emancipated, and in taking initiative. Artists are nothing else but what they make of themselves, and what they choose to make for others.

Bleu Horses, a collection of 39 life-size sculptures along US 287 in Montana, not only epitomizes the valiance and mystique of the horse and the American West, but the metal equines make clear the core of their creator, 67-year-old sculptor Jim Dolan, of Bozeman.

"There is a reason that the horses aren't fenced in," Dolan says. "And that's because of freedom. Horses need pure freedom. Who doesn't want to be free?"

Situated about four miles north of Three Forks, Dolan's herd gathers in collective free will for passersby, milling about on a bentonite-rich hillside west of the

road. From there, they appear painted blue with slits of black or white paint, emitting shadows and comprising a three-dimensional oddity. We see a patch of nature run artistically amok. Manes and tails – 4,000 feet of de-



The sculptures' manes and tails are formed from de-braided polyester rope. Ball bearings allow the horses' heads and necks to relax.

braided polyester rope – blow in the prairie wind. Heads relax on movable ball bearings. But as one looks closer at the shading, the forms, and the scale and perspective of the sculptures, it prompts careful and cautious thought about the scene of its making.

"I receive a lot of emotional comments about the horses," Dolan says.

"People have an emotional

connection to them. Horses are a real tie-in to humanity. We all dealt with horses in one way or another if you go far enough back."

Sometimes in life we do not know heaviness until we feel freedom. *Bleu Horses* delivers a sense of equanimity and liberation, the sort of serenity many thrive for, or often need, to carry them in life. I've spent only a few minutes among the cluster of mares and ponies, but the experience feels longer in all the right ways.



photos by Brian D'Ambrosio

Bleu Horses, by sculptor Jim Dolan, consists of 39 life-size sculptures.

“It is a very calming thing to be up here,” Dolan says. “It’s a sculpture of horses, but they are not horses. It’s my idea and interpretation of them, and they are not exact copies of horses. They are who and what they are. Nothing Hollywood or exaggerated.”

For around 40 years, Dolan has created more than 170 large-scale public pieces, as well as hundreds of commissions. He emphasizes craters, nooks and cavities, and the contrast of smooth and serrated. Making use of tools to sever and shape steel like margarine or dough, he conjoins networks of paths. Innovative structures take shape as he rearranges metal and translates the hardest of surfaces to take on the creases of flesh or the contours of anatomy. He is intrigued by the relation-

ships between the parts and the whole – hooves are tubes, eyes are crowned cylinder – and hopes viewers will resolve a work’s message independently.

He created all 39 of the sculptures comprising *Bleu Horses* in 15 months, but at that point, he had no place for them to call home. One morning, Dolan articulated his frustration to Dean Folksvord, owner of the wheat-farming operation Wheat Montana. Folksvord instantly offered Kamp Hill.

Kamp Hill is positioned with a sweeping view of the Tobacco Root and Elkhorn mountains. It’s not uncommon to spot a herd of mule deer or elk, or a pack of coyotes. In the spring, poppies and blue fax adorn the meadow.

“There are about 100 different species of grass and

flowers on this hill,” Dolan says. “Rattlesnakes, too.”

The sculptures were integrated into the arid landscape one Friday morning in September 2013. It was an imaginative tale come to life, an instant legend.

To the soundtrack of honking cars and tractor-trailers, a number of installations were placed on the ridge looking at the Tobacco Root Mountains. Several of the foals were placed down, one of them in a nursing position. A number of subjects were set up to appear as if grazing, and others stared down at the road with tilted ears. Depending on the perspective, some looked razor-thin.

“We had a jackhammer, a tractor, six trailers and three days of moving,” Dolan recalls. “We placed them left, right, placed them in moving positions, nursing,



The *Bleu Horses* installation can be found along US 287, about four miles north of Three Forks.

laying down. We just started placing them and somehow we had the intuition to set them up right.”

Sometimes you just need a cool ballcap. Your choice - \$20 bucks
www.ranchandreata.com



Dolan considers *Bleu Horses* his gift to Montana, presented in gratitude to the state's support of his work.

Heraclitus is credited with saying, "No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man." Perhaps the same can be said for the confluence of art, metal and the mountains, for *Bleu Horses* changes hourly, daily, seasonally. Dawn and dusk are the magic hours for glimpsing such variations.

"The sunset really highlights the horses," Dolan says. "In the mornings, the sun comes up from the east ridge. It's always spectacular, always different. I could come up here a couple of times a week and never see the same thing."

Dolan was born and raised in Livermore, California, and *Bleu Horses* is his gift to the people of Montana, a way of giving back to a state that has supported his art for many years. Dolan and Wheat Montana have made a gentleman's pact to allow *Bleu Horses* to exist as a permanent part of the Gallatin County scenery.

"Montana is great for metal art because nothing rusts in Montana," Dolan asserts. "These should never rust out, not with the nine inches of yearly rain we get. This is their home."



Brian D'Ambrosio is a writer living in Montana. Jim Dolan advises visitors to *Bleu Horses* to "be respectful of the land, watch for rattlesnakes, and enjoy their amble among the hardened herd."

Road Trip List

Publisher's Note: Be advised. This is an all-vinyl Road Trip List. There are ways of getting all these albums in other delivery modes but these recommendations come from after listening to the original vinyl records – true and joyous analog moments. You have been warned.

Pete Seeger Greatest Hits

Recently while having an extended time in traffic and flipping through the AM part of the dial – always a cultural adventure – I landed on a song I hadn't heard in years. I knew it was Pete Seeger, the legendary folk singer who had died last January, but it took me a minute to realize it was "Wimoweh" – his version of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" made popular by the doo-



wop group, The Tokens, in 1961. Actually the song's correct name "Mbube" as it was originally composed in 1920 by an South African singer of Zulu heritage named Solomin Linda – *Mbube* is Zulu for lion. ANYWAY, the



song got me thinking of Seeger's other truly classic sing-along songs that he had made famous during his long

career. Seeger didn't just perform live, he invited everyone around him to sing along as he felt songs are best sung by as many people as possible. That's why his work is so great on a road trip – songs to be sung



together, loudly, with the windows open. Pete Seeger's recording career covers more than 60 years, so a single collection is bound to leave out more than a few worthy songs. But the

selections on *Pete Seeger's Greatest Hits* include indispensable Seeger-composed classics like "Turn!





Bob Dylan
Nashville Skyline



So after we finished listening to the Seeger album I saw that right next to it was Dylan's 1969 landmark

journey into country, *Nashville Skyline*. Supposedly the album was due to his musical transitions one heard in his 1967 album, *John Wesley Harding*. This album has been written about for years as Dylan's "charming and happy album" which Dylan later said he had no intention of doing. The album came out in an interesting era and political climate – the year before, civil rights leader

Turn! Turn!," "Bells of Rhymney," and an abbreviated a cappella version of "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" Also included are songs Seeger popularized, such as "Wimoweh," which he learned from Solomon Linda's original South African recording in the 1940s, and "Guantanamera," which he picked up from some children at a Catskills summer camp where he was singing. All of the performances are drawn from his 1960s tenure at Columbia Records – only the first 12 tracks were included on the original 1967 album package – and include both studio and live recordings. There is a new CD that features 16 tracks – sometimes a CD can beat the old vinyl. Not often, but sometimes.



Here is Pete Seeger singing "Wimoweh" with Tommy Smothers on the CBS variety series, *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*, circa, 1969.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=kajnEIQGINw

Martin Luther King and Senator Robert F. Kennedy had been assassinated. It was the year of the riots at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago and soon a new President, Richard M. Nixon would be sworn and the nation was hip deep in the Vietnam War. Dylan's conscious move away from topical songs did not cost him his cultural status, rather, his popularity soared. The song "Girl From North Country" – performed with Johnny Cash along with "Lay Lady Lay" helped propel



the album to being one of Dylan’s best selling albums. It is simply a grand listen from a great and important artist, whether one lived through the sixties or not.



Here is the audio track of Bob Dylan singing, “Lay Lady Lay.”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WrZnnvEyTUs>

George Winston
December

Time for Holiday music and music of the Holidays is about memories. When guitarist and carpenter, William Ackerman and his then wife, Annie Robinson founded the label Windham Hill way back in 1976, it started a revolution in the record business creating a niche for acoustic, new age and folk music. One the founding artists, pianist George Winston, signed to the label in 1979 and went on to be described as the “Father of New Age Music.” A title he naturally hated and instead described his style as “rural folk piano,” appropriate for a native of Miles City, Montana. His album, *December* is was and is considered his “Christmas album,” but in classic Winston style he makes clear – on the back of the album, of his intentions:

“There is a great wealth of traditional and contem-



of this album and in doing albums for the seasons.

porary music to draw from in doing an album for the winter season. These four albums have been inspirational to me in conceiving

- Vince Guaraldi – *A Charlie Brown Christmas*
- Joseph Byrd – *A Christmas Yet To Come*
- Alfred S. Byrd – *This is Christmas*
- John Fahey – *The New Possibility*

The traditional pieces were chosen for their appropriateness as instrumental music for this project. They were not meant to convey any personal religious beliefs.”

The album contains what have become Holiday standards and went onto Winston’s highest selling album. The CD available currently has two additional tracks. Winston said he got into the piano game after seeing the animated *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and hearing Vince Guaraldi’s theme. The show has appeared every year on CBS since its debut in 1965. Those who love George Winston’s playing are very glad he didn’t miss the show.



Here is George Winston playing “Thanksgiving.”
<https://youtu.be/5aGTDvmNB-4>

A Western Moment

Time To Think

Back in 1963, the folk group, The Kingston Trio released an album titled, *Time To Think*. Recorded and released in December 1963 – in part in response to the assassination of President Kennedy a month earlier but also as the Trio was seeing that times were changing and they needed to connect to the changes. On the album was a song with lyrics, originally written as a poem by folk singer Woody Guthrie in 1948. (A decade later, Guthrie’s poem was set to a haunting melody written by a schoolteacher friend named Martin Hoffman.) “Deportee (Plane Wreck at Los Gatos)” was a protest song about a plane crash carrying 28 Mexican farm laborers being returned to the Mexican border. The crash occurred in an area near Coalinga, California



called Los Gatos Canyon. Guthrie was inspired to write the poem after hearing that radio and newspaper coverage neglected to give the names of the migrant workers who died in the crash while reporting the names of the flight crew and security guard. Reports referred to the others on

the plane simply as “deportees.” While the event had big local coverage, Guthrie was angered by what he considered the racist mistreatment of the workers before and after the accident as the song ultimately spoke to Guthrie’s criticism of the then recently established Bracero Program – a series of laws and diplomatic agreements created by the U.S. Congress in 1942, that permitted Mexican farm laborers (or braceros) to work in the United States due to the severe labor shortages caused by World War II – and then be returned. Guthrie’s song is less about the Bracero Program itself and more a comment on the attitude of American society and the media towards the Mexican farm laborers before and after the War.



Woody Guthrie

The West and the Southwest have always been filled with a mingling of cultures. Current political discussions and suggestions of “a wall” seem though to further much of the old combative dialogue. Whether refugees from Syria or Central America, people strive to find a safe place to live and raise their families. The Bracero Program lasted until, ironically, 1963 when it was given one additional year extension and then not renewed due to pressure from labor unions within the United States. The plane ride relocations ended as well.



Deportee

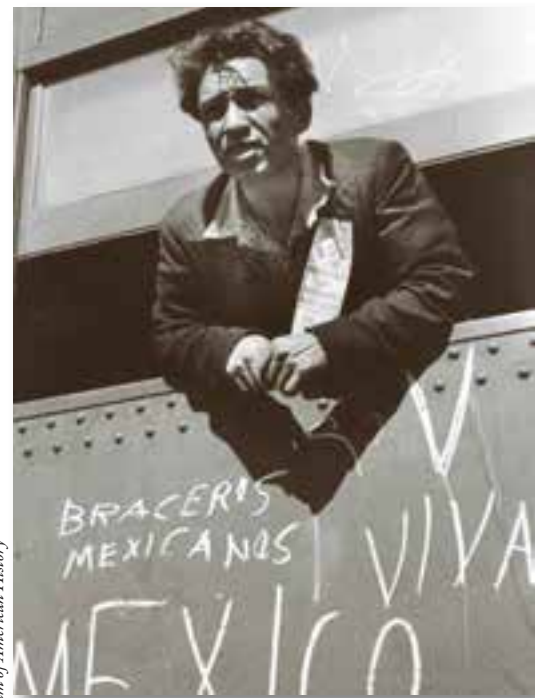
(also known as “Plane Wreck at Los Gatos”)

Words by Woody Guthrie, Music by Martin Hoffman

*The crops are all in and the peaches are rott'ning,
 The oranges piled in their creosote dumps;
 They're flying 'em back to the Mexican border
 To pay all their money to wade back again
 Goodbye to my Juan, goodbye, Rosalita,
 Adios mis amigos, Jesus y Maria;
 You won't have your names when you ride the big airplane,
 All they will call you will be "deportees"
 My father's own father, he waded that river,
 They took all the money he made in his life;
 My brothers and sisters come working the fruit trees,
 And they rode the truck till they took down and died.
 Some of us are illegal, and some are not wanted,
 Our work contract's out and we have to move on;
 Six hundred miles to that Mexican border,
 They chase us like outlaws, like rustlers, like thieves.
 We died in your hills, we died in your deserts,
 We died in your valleys and died on your plains.
 We died 'neath your trees and we died in your bushes,
 Both sides of the river, we died just the same.
 The sky plane caught fire over Los Gatos Canyon,
 A fireball of lightning, and shook all our hills,
 Who are all these friends, all scattered like dry leaves?
 The radio says, "They are just deportees"
 Is this the best way we can grow our big orchards?
 Is this the best way we can grow our good fruit?
 To fall like dry leaves to rot on my topsoil
 And be called by no name except "deportees"?*

162

The Kingston Trio's skillful rendition of the song brought a timeless quality to the lyrics. Listen to the Kingston Trio version
<https://youtu.be/2J1BILYVVuM>



Photos: Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program 1942 – 1964. Smithsonian: The National Museum of American History

The Bracero Program (1942 – 1964) was created due to farm labor shortages caused by America's entry into World War II, the program brought Mexican workers to replace American workers dislocated by the war. The program was intended to be temporary, but a growing dependence of American farms on Mexican labor kept it going for nearly two decades after the war ended.



TWO WRAPS AND A HOOEY

A George Phippen Christmas

A simple little story of love given and love remembered.

One of the finest westerners I ever met was one of the founders of The Cowboy Artists of America, artist Joe Beeler. Joe was not just an artist with paint and clay; he was an artist at life. I have never laughed as much as I did around Joe. He was a superb human being with an uncanny sense of humor. Joe reintroduced me to an artist I didn't know I already liked – George Phippen (1915 – 1966). George was also a founding member of the CA and its first president. He lived in Skull Valley, Arizona on his Lone Bar Ranch – the perfect name for a place where a western artist would live. He was self-taught and made art for only twenty-years, succumbing to cancer at the age of 50. In those twenty years, Phippen produced over 3,000 pieces



of art and was a friend and huge influence on Joe Beeler. Phippen did a number of illustrations, many for children's stories and as a child of the 1950s, I was obsessed with cowboy stories and Phippen's drawings were captivating to my cowboy-action craving eyes – even though I had no idea who had created them. I can remember on some Christmas morning in the early 1960s getting a little box of stationery that had four different paintings on the letterheads and they were beyond cool – even to a twelve-year old who figured he was starting to know just about everything.

I had met Joe Beeler through a mutual friend, the wonderful saddle maker Chas Weldon, at a show in Flagstaff, Arizona in the 1980s. We would sit for hours and talk about art, then Joe would tell a joke and we





would all fall apart laughing, then he would talk art again, tell a joke, art, joke – it would go on like that for hours. It was wonderful. And it was during that time



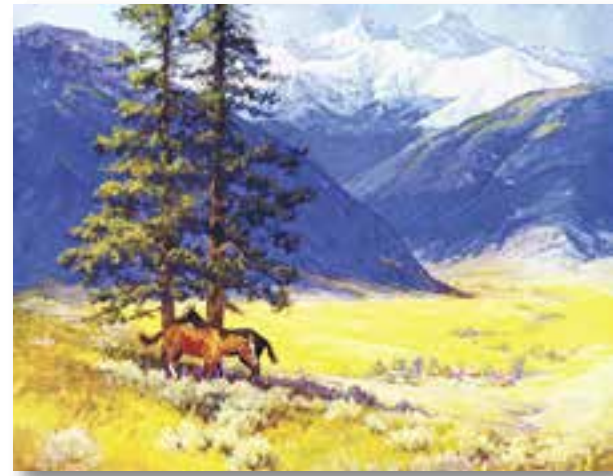
George Phippen in his studio



that I learned about George Phippen, first

hand from Joe and what a big part he played in Joe's life and career.

Beeler and Phippen were the "real deals." They lived their art. Joe led me to two books – the only books – on George Phippen, both lovingly written by Phippen's wife, Louise. *The Life of a Cowboy* and *George Phippen, The Man, The Artist* are two wonderful windows into an artist's life. Seeing those books brought back so many memories of images that shaped my youthful view of the cowboy world – created by an artist I did not know. One painting in particular stood out – its image and dreamy message has stuck with me through all of my life. It's a



Dream Ranch

painting called *Dream Ranch*. It's really a very simple image, no action but it projects such a sense of peace that to this day, it is an image I hold dear.

And that Christmas gift from the '60s? I didn't realize the lasting importance of those little sheets of stationery I received so long ago, and how the little paintings on them would stick in my brain (Two of those illustrations are below.). When you think about it, I guess that's what art can do – move the

viewer to a better place, or a thoughtful place or even more wonderful, a place of peace.

It is that place of peace I wish for all of you, dear readers, and for those you love this Holiday season. We truly couldn't do it without you. Thank you. BR



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