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Photograph by Con Haffmans

Bringing in the Cavvy. Three Creek Ranch, southern Idaho. By Con Haffmans

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Ranch & Reata

Volume 2, Number 1 • April/May 2012
www.yourvoiceofthewest.com
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Ranch & Reata
PO Box 637, Santa Ynez, CA 93460
www.rangeradio.com

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

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

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

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Cowboy Photography

By A.J. Mangum

A couple of hours of daylight remained as photographer Jay Dusard coached Arizona hunting guides Warner Glenn and Kelly Kimbro, a father-daughter team, into position against the backdrop provided by the Malpai Ranch barn. Glenn and Kimbro, astride mules that had carried them on a long day of tracking mountain lions along one of the most rugged and remote stretches of the Arizona-Mexico border, dutifully followed Dusard's direction, cueing their mounts for subtle changes in foot placement, the light action of their reins letting the animals know that their day's work was not quite finished.

Dusard took his place behind a Leica mounted atop a tripod. He carefully surveyed the scene in front of him and asked for one or two minute adjustments from his subjects. Then, satisfied at last, he pressed the camera's shutter release, taking a single photograph, an act with the weight of a thunderous cymbal crash at the end of a slow-building anthem.

The resulting black-and-white image bears the traits that define classic cowboy photography, beginning with an integrity built upon the ethic of depicting subjects as they

are. There were no wardrobe changes or tack swaps for the sake of the camera, no attempts to hide the thin layer of grit and sweat the mules earned on the day's 12-hour ride in the Peloncillo Mountains. Nor were subjects asked to act. Their expressions convey, in equal measure, both a genuine fatigue and an unmistakable satisfaction with adventurous lives led in a beautiful but challenging landscape. It's an emotional blend displayed with a conviction no actor could conjure. Such moments of truth simply can't be manufactured. That fundamental premise gives cowboy photography its value.

Sadly, the genre's most visible efforts are too often


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photo by Con Haffmans

A buckaroo, spied through the window of the bunkhouse kitchen. With such images, Utah's Con Haffmans continues the journalistic tradition established by the likes of pioneering cowboy photographer Jay Dusard.

the result of staged and scripted shoots, elaborate theatrical exercises that have subjects dragging themselves and their horses through multiple takes to satisfy a photographer whose envisioned result, however ambitious, might be laughably suspect, earning the scorn of viewers who will inevitably consider it phony and inane. Marketing and journalism just don't mix.

Fortunately, though, a minority of photographers have opted to follow through on the mission of truthtelling that Dusard himself established so long ago, with the publication of his book, *The North American Cowboy: A Portrait*. Setting aside hopes for fortune or widespread fame (for there's little of either to be had in the profession), these photographers embark on long and poorly funded road trips – excursions marked by skeptical ranch cowboys, the most difficult of shooting conditions, and workdays that can seem endless – all to make art of poignant and timeless moments discovered through a combination of good fortune and a keen eye.

This issue features the work of one such photographer, Utah's Con Haffmans, whose black-and-white portfolio provides one of the finest visual records of contemporary Great Basin ranch culture. His images depict the long stretches of quiet that define much of cowboy life (or buckaroo life, if you prefer), as well as the controlled chaos of real-world stock-handling. In the Dusard tradition, Haffmans' work provides a record of the ranching culture, a visual archive that'll be of journalistic value for generations. Its added benefit: it's all real, as Haffmans approaches every shooting expedition with a set of intertwined, self-imposed directives: never pose anyone, never stage events, and bring back to the world nothing short of truth, an increasingly rare commodity in a marketing-driven niche-media landscape.

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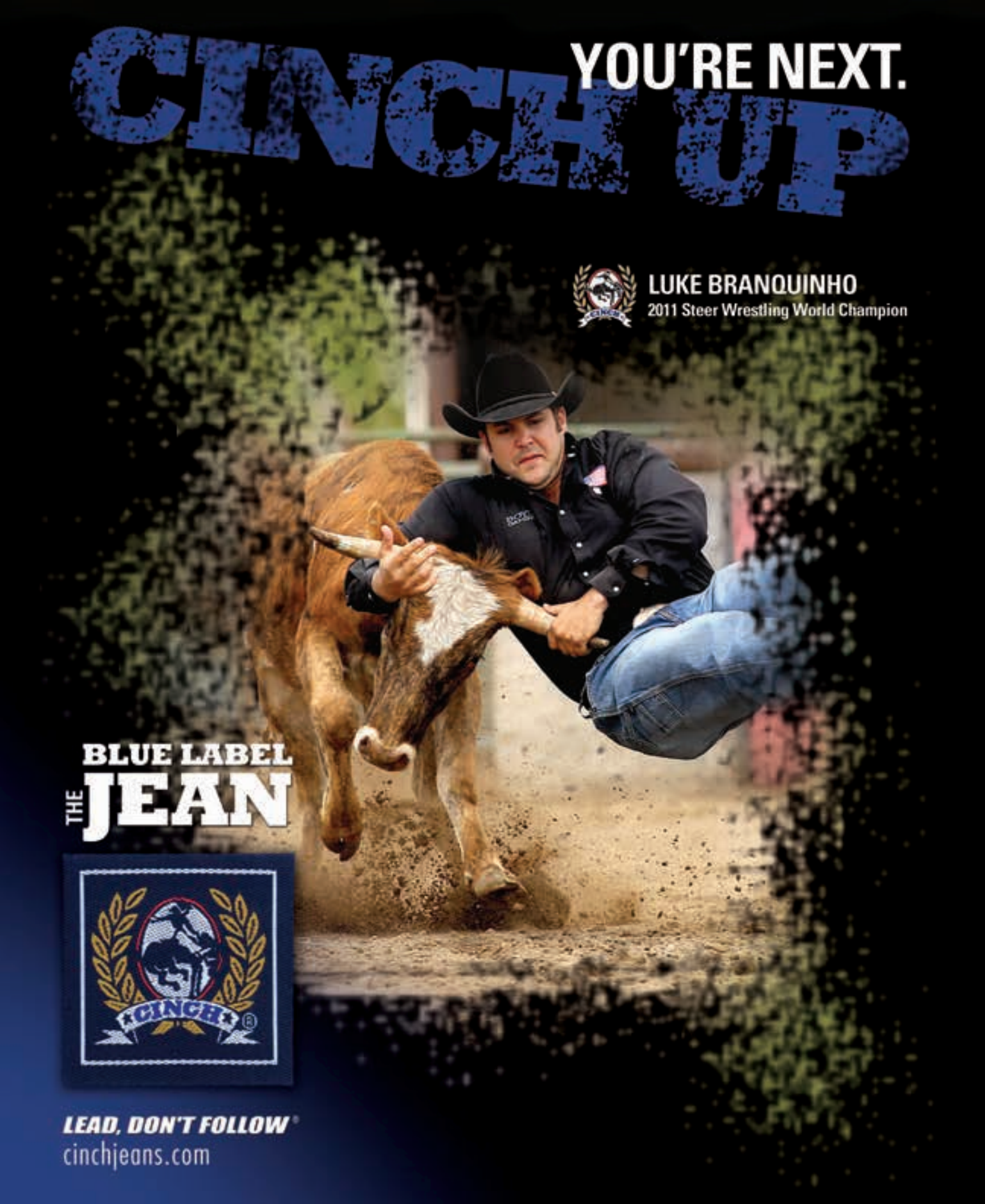

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The Winchester 94

The lever-action rifle is as much a part of the West's iconography as the cowboy hat or lariat. For generations, when a cowboy carried such a rifle in a saddle scabbard or in the rear window of a pickup, it was most likely a Winchester Model 94.

Designed by pioneering gunmaker John Browning in 1894, the gun was the first commercial repeating rifle made for use with then-new smokeless powder cartridges. The 94 went on to become the best-selling high-powered rifle in U.S. history. By the time production ceased in 2006, more than 7 million had been sold. Over its long lifetime, the 94 was offered in a variety of calibers, including .25-35 (shown here), .32-40, .38-55 and a variety of handgun rounds, but the rifle became most associated with the .30-30 cartridge. Model 94 rifles chambered in .30-30 remain ubiquitous throughout the West, with models produced prior to 1964, when Winchester began machining parts that had once been forged, considered highly collectible.

photo by Carol Moates

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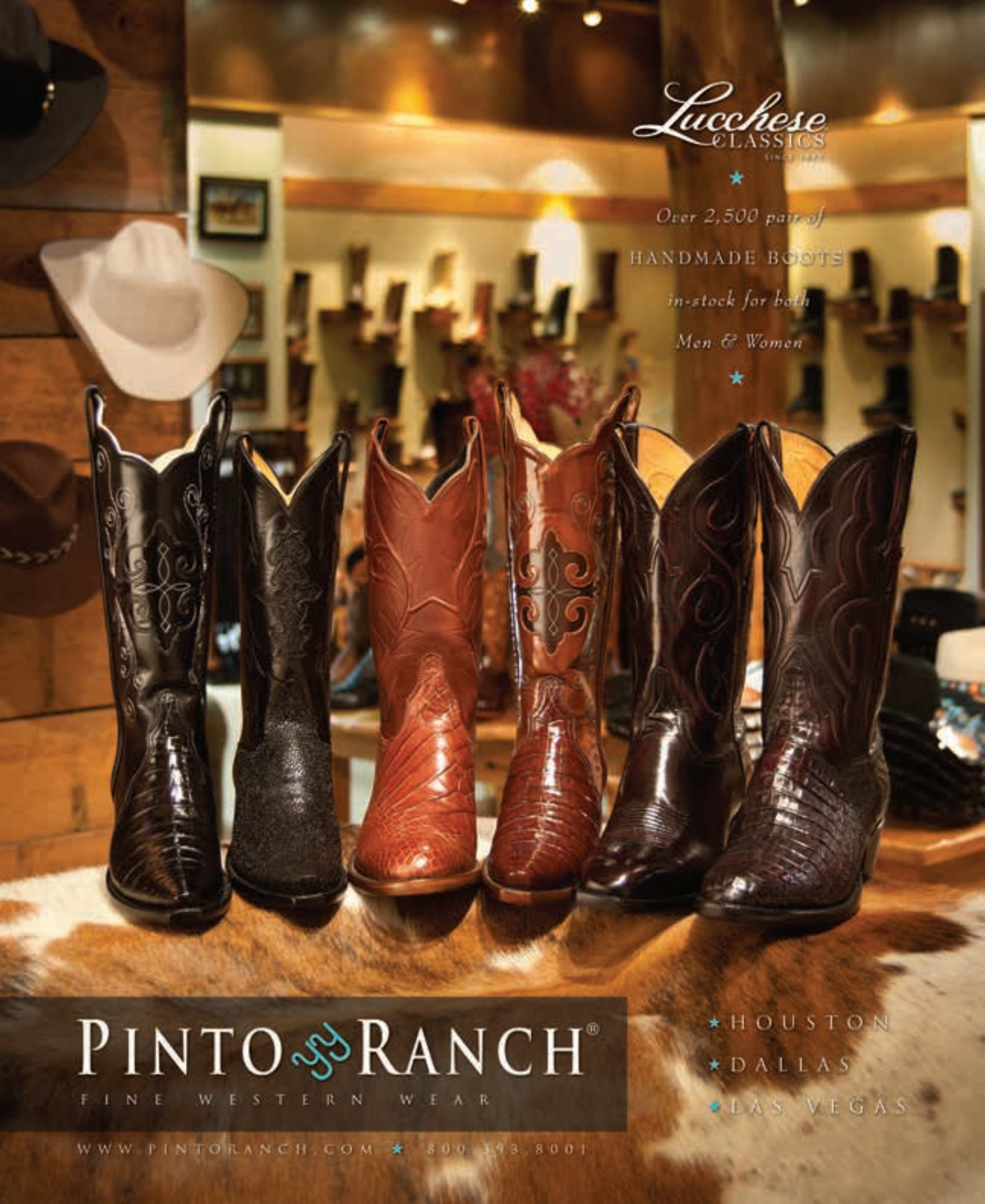
Nicolette Larson
1952 – 1997

Charm is deceitful, and beauty empty,
the woman who is wise is the one to praise.
Give her a share in what her hands have worked for,
and let her works tell her praises at the city gates.

Proverbs 31:30

Nicolette Larson was a huge talent who left us too soon. She was born in Helena, Montana and dreamed of a music career since singing along to the radio as a child. She eventually settled in San Francisco where she worked in a record store; her volunteer work as support staff for the Golden Gate Country Bluegrass Festival brought encouragement for her vocal ambitions and she began performing in Bay Area showcases. In 1975 Larson auditioned for Hoyt Axton who was producing Commander Cody with the result that Larson also performed with "Hoyt Axton and The Banana Band" during their gig opening for Joan Baez on the 1975 *Diamonds and Rust* tour. Larson would also provide background vocals for Commander Cody albums in 1977 and 1978. Other early session singing credits for Larson were for Hoyt Axton and Guy Clark in 1976 and in 1977 for Mary Kay Place, Rodney Crowell, Billy Joe Shaver, Jesse Colin Young, Jesse Winchester and Gary Stewart. Her work with Emmylou Harris – the album *Luxury Liner* (1977) prominently showcased Larson on the cut "Hello Stranger" – led to her meeting Harris' friend Linda Ronstadt, who became friends with Larson. In the spring of 1977 Larson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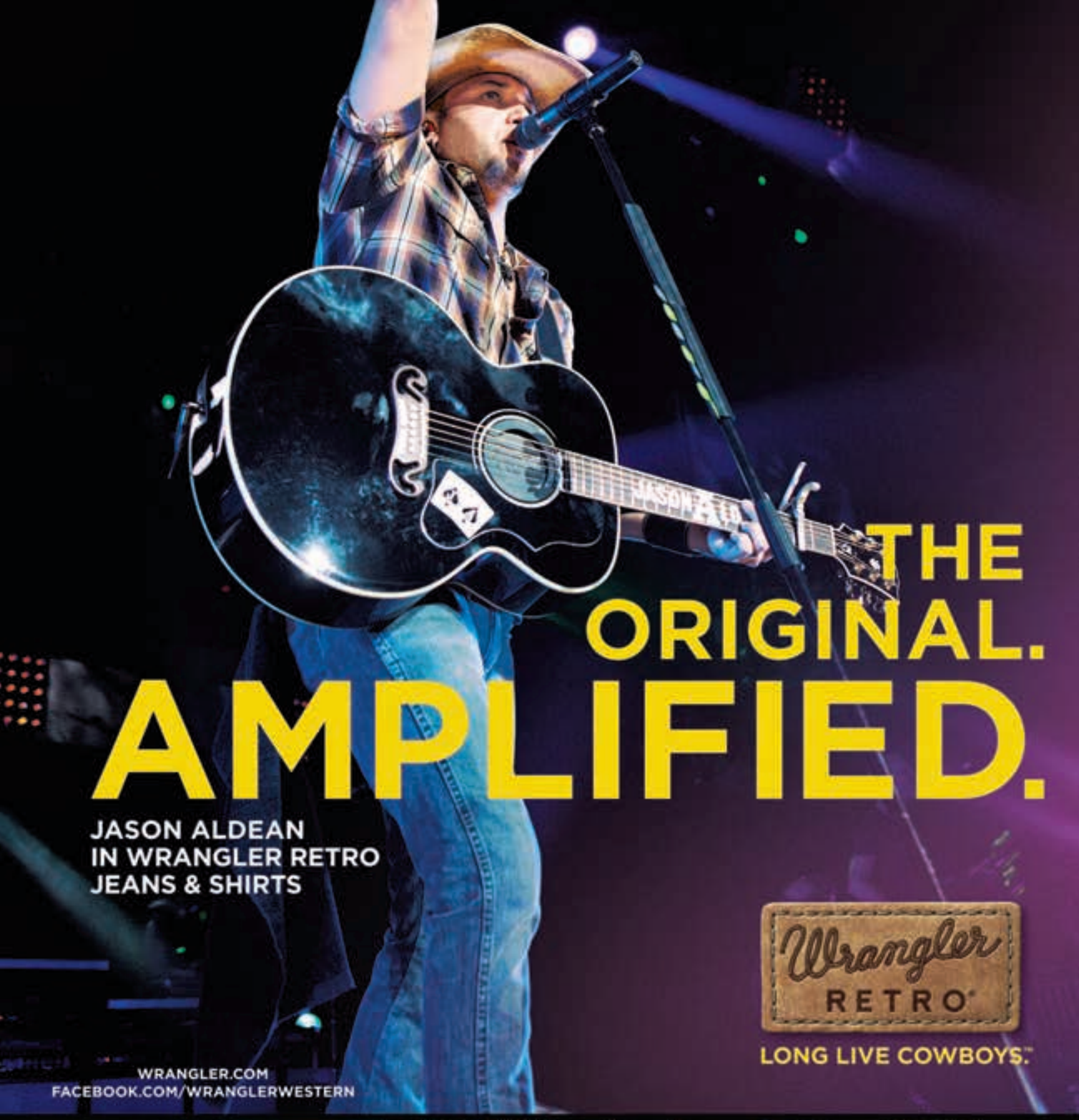
was at Ronstadt's Malibu home when neighbor Neil Young phoned to ask Ronstadt if she could recommend a female vocal accompanist, and Ronstadt suggested Larson, becoming the fifth person that day to put Larson's name forward to Young. The following week Ronstadt and Larson cut their vocals for Young's *American Stars 'n Bars* album at Young's La Honda, California ranch. The two women were billed on the album as the "Saddlebags" – and in November 1977 Young invited Larson to Nashville to sing on the sessions for his *Comes a Time* album, an assignment which led to Larson being signed to Warner Brothers, an affiliate of Young's home label, Reprise. Larson continued her session singing career into 1978 accruing credit on recordings by Marcia Ball, Rodney Crowell, Emmylou Harris' *Quarter Moon in a Ten Cent Town* and Norton Buffalo. Larson also contributed vocals to the Doobie Brothers' *Minute by Minute* whose producer Ted Templeman would be responsible for Larson's debut album, *Nicolette*.

Nicolette Larson died as a result of complications arising from cerebral edema triggered by liver failure. Her singing career brought her work with the most stellar musicians of her time. She had a unique gift for contributing her "rough-edged, down-home tone. Her two big albums, shown here, the self-titled *Nicolette* and her sophomore release, *In the Nick of Time* are true classics. But she will be best remembered for the back-up she gave Neil Young on his 1978 release, *Comes A Time* and her breakout single, *Lotta Love*.

Late '70s press photo of Nicolette Larson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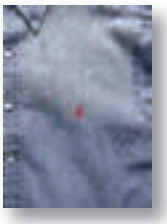
The West of Ralph Lauren

"It's not fashion, it's life." That statement helped single-handedly start a revolution in what was to become "lifestyle advertising." A Bronx-born New York designer said that back in 1978 in describing his new line of apparel that would celebrate the cowboy way of life for urban customer's everywhere. Today Ralph Lauren continues to refine and create looks that blend American values with fashion. Western all the time? Nope. But timeless when it is. Of his western influence in the past he says, "I gave the style what I thought it should have. I did it because it's what I believe in. The West. The look represents my way of being part of the world today. It reflects me."

It also reflects a style that endures. In a 1978 *Esquire* interview he said of his line, "This is not Roy and Dale. It's not a costume; I wanted to capture the classical, romantic look of Gary Cooper." www.polo.com



Ralph Lauren and models in a 1978 ad image

Ralph Lauren ad and website imagery today

OF NOTE

New and Interesting Things from Out West.

McCulloch Saddles

When Scott McCulloch is not roping somewhere he is building fine using saddles.

photos by Chris Leschinsky

A second generation saddle maker, Scott started building saddles out of college and never looked back. His customers are cowboys and stockmen who make their living from horseback. That's about the best testimonial a maker needs.

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The Spirit of Dogie Long

J.P.S. Brown

A back-of-the-envelope review from Tom Russell

photo courtesy Tom Russell

J.P.S. Brown and Tom Russell in front of Joe's rose garden. Patagonia, Arizona.

The celebrated Western author J.P.S. Brown has published over a dozen classic novels about cowboys, horses, and cattle. His novel Jim Kane was made into the film Pocket Money with Lee Marvin and Paul Newman. Joe Brown is in his 80s now. Going strong. Writing strong. We don't have the space here to name the writing awards Joe's won, or the hellacious moviesque life he's lead: from sparring with Rocky Marciano to running corriente cattle out of Mexico. This is to announce the release another fine J.P.S. Brown novel: *The Spirit of Dogie Long*.

"Dogie is all I've ever been called. A cowboy is all I've ever been. I'm probably about 12 years old..." Thus commences this grand yarn of a kid who has been orphaned as a baby, abandoned in a covered wagon, and then picked up and raised by a cattle outfit. Little Dogie grows up wild, in the saddle, as the outfit moves from camp to camp. Their trail heads into the wilds of Apache country, and all the hair raising, hang and rattle adventures which await. Joe Brown knows the terrain. This is Huckleberry Finn crossing the Sonoran desert on a mustang. You get the drift. American literature.

I asked Joe where folks can purchase the book. Here's his answer: "At present only signed copies can be obtained from me at Box 972, Patagonia, AZ 85624, or at www.jps-brown.com at $30 including shipping. Only a limited edition of these hardcover copies will be published. Hold Fast, Joe."

Drop Joe a line. Get a signed first edition. Hold fast.

Find This Video: *Comanche* Treasured Hero of the 7th Cavalry

The story of the only survivor of the Battle of the Little Big Horn.
Clue: The last film by the great Burt Kennedy.

AQHA Names a New President

Recently the new AQHA Executive Committee, elected at the 2012 AQHA Convention in Las Vegas, named a new President who also is a great friend of Ranch & Reata – Gene Graves. Gene and his wife Barbara own and operate Barranada, (Spanish for "bar none") a maker of fine western shirtings for men and women. Gene brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to AQHA as the new president. In addition to being involved with AQHA, Gene is a member of Rotary International, Habitat for Humanity and the Nebraska Thoroughbred Breeders Association.

AQHA's new Executive Committee includes President Gene Graves, First Vice President Johne Dobbs, Second Vice President Johnny Trotter, Member George Phillips and Member Dr. Glenn Blodgett.

Gene's wife, Barbara, shows in western riding, showmanship, western pleasure and horsemanship. Congratulations Gene! www.aqha.com and www.barranada.com

The Solace Cross

Crosses carry with them a variety of symbolic meanings beyond their religious affiliations – hope, remembrance, and finality – all things that enter our lives. These crosses, as their maker describes, "Represent the suffering that often comes before victory." Andy Andrews of A Cut Above Silver tells the story of these crosses as inspirational. A friend fighting cancer had to endure several chemotherapy treatments and to help him endure he carved a small wooden cross and placed a marble in the center that he would rub as he prayed for strength. These replicas are designed to inspire others who may face the uncertain trials of life with the same hope, grace and courage of that man. To find out the whole story, email solacecross@gmail.com

Western Wishes: The Montana-Made Gibson J200

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Quirts – A Couple of Sketch Studies

By Teal Blake • www.tealblake.com

By Joe DeYong (1894-1975)

Pinto Ranch

By Mark Bedor

Houston's Pinto Ranch is celebrating both its eighth anniversary and the opening of its third store. Just like its Dallas and Houston locations, Marketing Director Bea Garcia told us that shopping at the new Pinto Ranch in Las Vegas, will be very special.

PR: We're very proud of our stores. We actually have a Western-style lodge built inside of each store. It's one of our design signatures.

R&R: So the entire store looks like a lodge?

PR: It's the design centerpiece and it's a unique concept of our C.E.O., Walter Pye, Jr. He recognized there was a need for something special as he comes from a long line of retailers and there is nothing in the U.S. like Pinto Ranch. Our focus is to keep the old traditions and craftsmanship of the Old West alive. We only carry handmade boots, pick only the best silversmiths in the U.S. Everything's hand engraved. Same for the jewelry. We have exotic skin belts handmade just for us. Local designers, made in the U.S., designed in the U.S, make a lot of our apparel. It's all about recognizing those crafts and the artisan skills that really comes from the West."

R&R: You have a saddle shop and build saddles, do you make chinks and chaps?

PR: We do! Made to order. So people come into the store, here in Houston. We don't have a saddle shop in Dallas or Vegas. But we do take orders in other cities for the saddle shop in Houston and we do a lot of saddle repair.

R&R: Is there a particular type of person that Pinto Ranch attracts?

PR: We do have our loyal followers. We started in Texas, but we don't like to be known as only a Texas store. We're really more about the Western life-style and culture, as a great majority of our business is based on tourism. Folks come through the cities where we actually have a brick and mortar store; looking for a piece of Western culture. In Texas, they want a piece of Texas. In Vegas, we get a lot of international tourism looking for that piece of Americana... that Western, iconic type of merchandise they want to take back that they got in America.

R&R: Do you do a lot of Internet business?

PR: Yes. We've had an online store for a little over five years. And we're involved in social media. We love to support the Western culture! So we talk about Western artists, books, movies and local artists and jewelers, what our vendors are doing, new things coming out, and the crafts that we see.

R&R: I see lots of cool boots...

PR: Yes. We have the largest collection of handmade boots in the U.S. – meaning they're in stock. Handmade boots used to mean you get measured and wait months for your boots. Today one can walk into Pinto Ranch and walk out with a pair of handmade boots, *because* we stock them. Customers get handmade boots the same day.

R&R: Your choices are amazing.

PR: We don't just pick up any maker. Work has to meet our quality standards, and it has to be unique. Rocketbuster Boots... are like works of art, every pair. Luchesse boots have a legacy and a history... They've been around since 1883. We're just really proud of what we have, what we offer... we love the West.

www.pintoranch.com

Tapadero Vatalaro

California bit and spur maker Mike Vatalaro looks to the horse for inspiration in his work

By Jameson Parker

In "The Story of the Cowpuncher," from the book *Trails Plowed Under,* Charlie Russell's narrator, Rawhide Rawlins, describe a cowboy from his hat down to boots "...finished off with steel spurs of Spanish pattern." He goes on to distinguish between California and Texas cowboys, describing the Californian as "... generally strong on pretty, usin' plenty of hoss jewelry, silver-mounted spurs, bits, an' conchas..."

photos by Peggy Vatalaro

Mike "Tap" Vatalaro of Hopland, CA

However unknowingly, Rawlins described the work of Hopland, California, bit and spur maker Tap Vatalaro.

Californio is a 19th century word referring to a person of Hispanic descent living in California; it has morphed into a more contemporary term to describe a highly refined way of riding, a specific way of working cattle, and a lifestyle that evolved out of the original Spanish vaqueros, known for their ornate tack and use of the reata. It is a way of life embraced by buckaroos from the Pacific Coast through the Great Basin and from Canada to Mexico. It is a way of life Mike "Tapadero" Vatalaro has embraced.

Tap wasn't born into the cowboy life. His father worked in the steel business in northern California and his mother was something that has now gone the way of

the old *caballeros* and *vaqueros*, a stay-at-home mom. Tap's small-town middle-class life changed abruptly when he was 10.

"My mother took each of us kids to riding lessons,"

When it comes to rowels, Tap says, bigger is better. A larger rowel, he argues, allows for a more subtle cue.

he recalls, "and I guess I'm just a genetic throwback because I got completely hooked on horses."

He got hooked enough that, by 15, he was working on a ranch in California's Sonoma County, where the cowboy lifestyle seeped into his bloodstream.

"My mom and dad thought it was great," he says, "until I wanted to quit high school and cowboy full time."

That plan was not greeted with enthusiasm, and Tap remained in school, college-bound. But when the time came for him to begin his higher education, he chose Sheridan College in Sheridan, Wyoming, where he studied farm and ranch management. As soon as Tap graduated, he went to work as a cowboy.

"I worked on the Padlock, and on the MC in Oregon," he says, "but I was on the PK Ranch the longest, and ended up as cow boss there. I stayed in the Sheridan area for 18 years. That's where I got the nickname Tapadero. There's a lot of buckaroo influence in that part of Wyoming, and I guess I was just always drawn to the old traditional ways of doing things.

"We were always messing with different bits. None of us had any money, so we'd swap and trade. We weren't rocket scientists. We were just a bunch of cowboys trying to get by on what we had. The ranch would cut me out five horses I didn't know anything about, so I'd start with a snaffle and adjust from there. Mostly I rode a snaffle in the summer and a hackamore in the winter. Winters were pretty cold there, but one year it got down to 40 below, and you don't want to go putting a piece of metal in a horse's mouth when it's 40 below."

But after 26 years of cowboying, the wrecks began to catch up with Tap. A spinal injury in the early 1990s caused him to look for another line of work. He attended the Miller Bit and Spur School and began making bits and spurs in, naturally enough, the traditional, Spanish-influenced Californio style.

Tap marks points on a spur in his California shop.

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In building a bit, Tap makes the process about the horse and its needs.

There is an intangible quality to anything made by human hands, a result of the brain and heart behind those hands. A Timex undoubtedly keeps better time than a Patek Phillipe, but one of them is much more than just a watch. A Remington 11-87 will bring down a quail just as well as a Purdey, but one of them will take your breath away when you look at it. A plain steel band with a decent rowel can make your horse move off your leg, but an engraved pair made to fit your boot and your leg length, with a custom rowel and maybe a pair of jingle bobs, will make your chest swell with pride every time you put them on.

"I can make whatever a customer wants, as plain or fancy as he likes, but I prefer the old Californio style with chased steel and silver mounts and inlay," Tap says. "And a big rowel. Bigger is better. Think about it. Which hurts more, a poke with a finger or a push with the whole hand?"

And, if you have good hands and timing, you can put almost anything in a horse's mouth and get some kind of result, but a bit handmade by a skilled maker who knows, loves and understands horses transcends the status of a mere tool and becomes a work of art in the same way that a custom shotgun does. But more important than pleasing a customer, the right bit made by a great maker will please a horse.

To make a good bit, it is not enough to be a good metalworker. A master bit maker must understand equine anatomy, how a horse's mind functions, and how the bit interacts with the horse.

"I try to keep traditions alive," Tap says. "It's all about the horse, not the person. We have to take care of these animals and be their friend. Don't try to dominate them. Instead, try to understand them. I try to build a product that will help people go forward, not backward. Gimmick bits, to make a horse stop or set his head, never work. You're doing something wrong if you rely on the bit. I spend a lot of time talking to the customer to figure out what will work best for his horse: what kind of spade or spoon or half-breed, the degree of tilt,

Tap also makes jewelry, as well as saddle and bridle silver.

California's history and heritage emanates from much of Tap's work.

what kind of bend to put in the braces from cheek to spoon, all of it. It depends on how good the rider is, how good his hands are, and what's best for his horse."

Tap's twists on traditions include offset brass rollers that encourage the horse to work the bit, exquisite engraving on the outside and *inside* of the cheekpieces, and intricately braided rein chains and slobber chains, details that benefit the horse and transform a tool into a work of art.

The work is not only functional and beautiful, but speaks to California's heritage. When former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger wanted to present a uniquely Californian gift to Mexican President Vicente Fox, he had two pairs of spurs made by Tap. The spurs, a matching pair made in the traditional Californio style and featuring intricate high-relief floral engraving, inlaid silver, and the governor's seal, were such a success that when Schwarzenegger attended the annual Governor's Conference in Washington, D.C., he presented a third pair to then-president George W. Bush.

In keeping with Rawhide Rawlins' description of a California cowboy, Tap also makes saddle and bridle silver, buckle sets, scarf slides, and jewelry, all featuring the same exquisite hand-engraving that goes into his traditional bits and spurs.

Rawhide Rawlins opens "The Story of the Cowpuncher" with an anecdote about an Eastern girl who "asks her mother, 'Ma,' says she, 'do cowboys eat grass?' 'No, dear,' says the old lady, 'they're part human,' and I don't know but the old gal had 'em sized up right. If they are human, they're a separate species."

Of course they're a separate species; they're part horse. For Tap Vatalaro, it's a trait that's proved a valuable asset in his craft.

California writer Jameson Parker is the author of the memoir *An Accidental Cowboy*.
Mike "Tap" Vatalaro can be reached at 707-744-8443 or at tapadaro@att.net.

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Big Creek Ranch STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO

5,034 acres in its own valley 15 minutes from Steamboat Springs with 85% of the perimeter boundary on National Forest, five miles of Big Creek, 11,000 sq. ft. lodge and privacy that is virtually impossible to duplicate. $59,900,000. *Ron Morris, Billy Long or Christy Belton*

Yellowstone Farms LONGMONT, COLORADO

Northern Colorado Equestrian Estate with incredible mountain views priced well below appraised value. 107 total acres borders a large reservoir and has extensive riding trails, grass pastures, a 7,000 sq. ft. brick home and superb equestrian facilities. $2,900,000. *Ron Morris*

Shepardsbend on the Colorado River KREMMLING, COLORADO

The prime fishing spot and formerly part of the Elktrout Lodge, 172 acres lie on both sides of the Colorado River and are located two miles upstream from Kremmling and two hours northwest of Denver in the heart of sportsman's country. $1,850,000. *Ron Morris or Billy Long*

Fazenda das Pedras WESTCLIFFE, COLORADO

Nestled in the Wet Mountain Valley near Westcliffe, this 140-acre horse ranch has a 7,000 sq. ft. log home with breathtaking views, guest quarters, two horse barns, hay barn, equipment barn, indoor and outdoor arenas. $2,200,000. *Ron Morris or Richard Peterson*

Deep Creek Homestead STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO

This 40-acre horse property north of Steamboat Springs and 20 minutes from the slopes exemplifies the mountain recreation lifestyle with plenty of room for hiking, riding and biking. Includes a custom home, new horse barn and horse shelter. $899,000. *Christy Belton*

North Platte River Ranch CASPER, WYOMING

69,556 total acre production ranch with twelve incredible miles of the North Platte River, two homes, cattle facilities, runs 2,800 sheep, 550 yearling ewes & rams, 430 cowcalf pair and 80 head of replacement heifers and bull battery. $26,000,000. *Ron Morris or Matt Johnston*

Flattops Wildlife Ranch EAGLE, COLORADO

Located in northwest Colorado between the resort areas of Vail and Steamboat Springs, this 960-acre private ranch at the base of the Flattops Mountains offers spectacular scenic vistas, abundant wildlife, cattle grazing, recreation and hunting. $3,360,000. *Carl Luppens*

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RANCH MARKETING ASSOCIATES

Moonshadow Ranch STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO

Gated-entry 39-acre equestrian ranch near Lake Catamount with incredible views and just 15 minutes from ski area and resort. Exquisite main residence, carriage house, caretaker's home, horse barn, outdoor riding arena with round pen and fenced pastures. $5,900,000. *Ron Morris*

Five Star Ranch WESTCLIFFE, COLORADO

Exquisite estate on 71.6 deeded plus 480 state lease acres with masterpiece mountain-modern residence, attached log cabin, guest house, unobstructed panoramic snow-capped mountain views, abundant wildlife, tall pines and plenty of privacy. $4,900,000. *Ron Morris*

Mountain View Ranch COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

60-acre turnkey horse property near Colorado Springs with a 5,900 sq. ft. ranch-style stucco and stone home, seven-stall barn and heated indoor arena. A horse lover's dream with outstanding facilities and breathtaking views of the Front Range. $1,900,000. *Happy Broussard*

Two Rivers Cow Camp STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO

Bordering thousands of acres of national forest, private yet accessible with custom carriage house, guest cabin, bath house, gazebo, barn, loafing shed, corrals, 36' round pen and spring-fed trout pond on 23 acres. $1,950,000. *Ron Morris or Carl Luppens*

Lower Elk River Ranch STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO

116 acres eight miles from Steamboat Springs with over a mile of water frontage and ski area views. Convenient to town but off the beaten path with great fishing and homesites nestled in the cottonwoods near the river. Seller will consider dividing. $3,100,000. *Christy Belton*

Shadow Creek Ranch SILVERTHORNE, COLORADO

70-acre shared-amenity ranch less than two hours from Denver, situated among 6,000 acres of pristine Colorado landscape adjoining over 4,000 acres of wilderness land. World-class trout fishing, elk hunting, horse-back riding and hiking. $1,500,000. *Carl Luppens*

Saguache Creek Ranch MOFFAT, COLORADO

Quality commercial cowcalf operation at the northern end of the San Luis Valley with combined leased and fee land of over 350,000 acres - allowing seven months of high yield grazing. Runs 800 pair, puts up 1,900 tons of hay. $4,000,000. *Ron Morris or Jason Legler*

Eagle Ridge Ranch Homestead 11 GUNNISON, COLORADO

35 deeded acres and 1/15th interest in 4,900 acres of premier shared-amenity ranch with 5,000 sq. ft. home, 2 1/4 miles of Ohio Creek, trout ponds, two remote hunting cabins and equestrian center located seven miles from town. $2,195,000. *Ron Morris or Billy Long*

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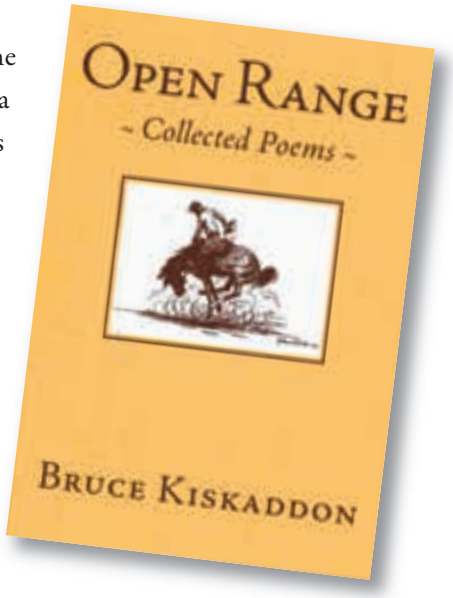
BOOKS TO FIND

Open Range

The Collected Poems of Bruce Kiskaddon



I was initially introduced to the work of cowboy poets in the early 1980s. The first of many popular cowboy poetry gatherings was being held in Elko, Nevada and I attended to hear what all the hubbub was about. The early gatherings were very casual affairs and primarily populated by mostly, the real deals – cowboys and buckaroos straight from the surrounding sagebrush of Nevada's high desert and surrounding mountain states. All sorts of poems and songs were recited but it became apparent that a favored source for these performers was the body of work by a deceased poet named Bruce Kiskaddon (1878 – 1950) – a Los Angeles bellhop who had been a real cowboy early in his life and who quietly and persistently wrote poetry – over 470 poems – until his death in 1950. He wrote of the authentic cowboy experience in a style and tone that was uniquely unromantic. His was a world of unflinching realism that held an artistic strength that still sets it apart making his work relevant for modern readers. He was described by a contemporary as, "an old cowhand who just naturally thinks in rhymes. He never took no poem lessons, nor for that matter not many of any other sort of lessons, but he's got 'em all tied to a snubbin' post when it comes to building cowboy and range poetry." Little was written about Kiskaddon although his poetry was published regularly in a variety of livestock publications including the *Western Livestock Journal*, a weekly Los Angeles periodical. There his poems were accompanied by charming pen and ink line drawings by a young, unknown illustrator, Katherine Field (1899 – 1951). Field was self-taught in her art, growing up on her family's New Mexico ranch. Although a victim of polio, it did not stop her from being horseback as much as any ranch kid. Her artwork was so authentic it has been compared to the works of Will James and Edward Borein.

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Over the years between 1919 – 1959, Kiskaddon's poetry continued to be published in a variety of books and publications. In 1947, he self-published a volume entitled *Rhymes of the Ranges and Other Poems* which contained many previously unpublished writings. The book was re-published in 1987 through western publisher, Gibbs Smith and under the watchful editing of the folklorist and historian, Hal Cannon – a carrier of the flame of cowboy poetry and largely responsible for shining the spotlight on Kiskaddon's work. While Kiskaddon's poetry continued to be remembered and spoken, it wasn't until 2007 that a true history and collection of Bruce Kiskaddon's life work would become available. Enter Bill Siems.

The term "passionate collector" could aptly describe Mr. Siems. He is a true patron of the poetry and life of Bruce Kiskaddon. I learned of his efforts over a year ago, reading a rare book catalog from a dealer in San Francisco. It seemed an extensive collection of fine western books was being sold to enable the Washington-state collector to pursue his next project – that of a major book on the life and range poetry of Bruce Kiskaddon – a project that literally took him all over the country in search of Kiskaddon's trail. Here if ever there was one was a passion-based, publishing effort that could bring a broader and deserved voice to the poetry of an authentic westerner, who, as Hal Cannon described. "lived the last third of his life as a bellhop in Los Angeles. Every day he went to work at the Mayflower Hotel. Between calls, he sat in the corner of the lobby with a stubby pencil and opened up a world of memory – of cow camps, horses, and open land." Siems' homage to Kiskaddon – all 609 pages of it – entitled *Open Range*, features the first complete collection of the poetry of Bruce Kiskaddon ever seen, let alone published, 481 poems. The book includes 337 illustrations, most importantly 242 pen and ink line drawings by Katherine Field – all rejoined to the poems they were created for. Siems' incredible achievement in bringing together Kiskaddon's life work is underscored by the remarkable modern grass-roots revival and artistic expansion of rangeland poetry that continues to thrive.

The poem that follows is classic example Kiskaddon. It is a favorite of those who know his work and has been recited at countless cowboy poetry gatherings and in the quiet of a ride down the trail. With Bill Siems' – the help of his graphic designer wife, Dawn Holladay – the work of this important western poet will receive broader recognition some 63 years after his passing.

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Bruce Kiskaddon, 1904

Bruce Kiskaddon, 1932

Katherine Field

historic photos courtesy Bill Siems

The Time To Decide

Did you ever stand on the ledges.
On the brink of the great plateau,
And look from their jagged edges
On the country that lay below?

When your vision met no resistance
And nothing to stop your gaze,
Till the mountain peaks in the distance
Stood wrapped in a purple haze.

On the winding water courses
And the trails on the mountainsides,
Where you guided your patient horses
On the long and lonesome rides.

When you saw Earth's open pages,
And you seemed to understand
As you gazed on the work of ages
Rugged and tough, but grand.

There, the things that you thought were strongest
And the things that you thought were great,
And for which you had striven longest,
Seemed to carry but little weight.

While the things that were always nearer,
The things that you thought were small;
Seemed to stand out grander and clearer.
As you looked from the mountain wall.

While you're gazing on such a vision
And your outlook is clear and wide,
If you have to make a decision,
That's the time and place to decide.

Although you return to the city
And mingle again with the throng;
Though you heart may be softened by pity,
Or bitter from strife and wrong.

Though others should laugh in derision,
And the voice of the past grow dim;
Yet, stick to the cool decision
That you made on the mountain rim.

Open Range was published in 2007, in a numbered, limited edition of 300 copies and a limited edition of 26 leather bound books. Both editions are sold out and no longer available from the publisher.

Information about the book can still be be seen at www.cowboypoetry.com/openrange.htm. This is a book worth looking for.

Frontier Justice

A modern-day stock detective protects ranchers' herds and combats livestock theft in Big Sky Country

By A.J. Mangum

Pete Olsen has few workdays he'd call typical. A district investigator for Montana's Department of Livestock, he might begin the morning with a plan, a sequenced schedule of events he expects to play out over the next several hours, only to adjust course on the fly when he receives word of stolen or missing cattle, or a steer butchered by thieves in the night.

One of 18 investigators employed by the livestock department, Olsen is a modern-day stock detective. In addition to ensuring brand laws are followed in the three-county area for which he's responsible, he investigates livestock thefts and tracks down modern-day rustlers, occasionally engaging in interstate manhunts to trace stolen herds and ensure ranchers back home are compensated for their losses. Each district investigator is a graduate of the Montana Law Enforcement Academy, carries a sidearm on the job, and has powers of arrest on par with that of a deputy sheriff.

The job's roots go back to the mid-1800s, when cattlemen ran Montana. Five stock detectives were appointed to combat rustling and fraud within the state's livestock market. Olsen, a native Montanan who began working on Billings-area ranches as a teenager, joined the livestock department as a brand inspector in the late 1970s, after the rancher for whom he'd been cowboying lost his herd to brucellosis and laid off his ranch hands.

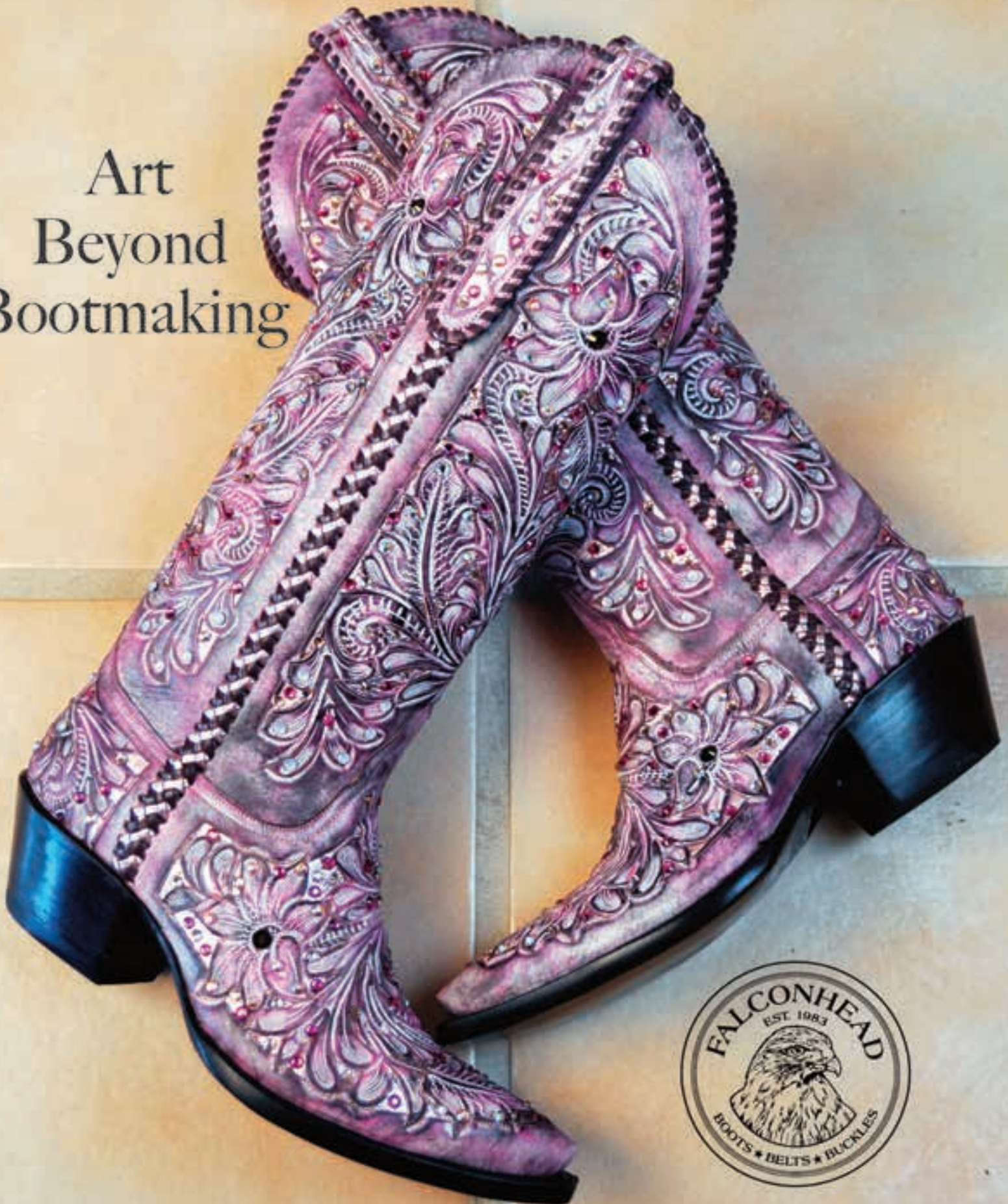
"I took the job thinking I'd stay with it until the rancher got back on his feet," Olsen says. "Here I am 33 years later."

Olsen first worked as a traditional brand inspector, sorting cattle and reading brands and earmarks at Billings' two stockyards. When an investigator's position opened in his district – which includes Carbon, Stillwater and Sweet Grass counties – he made a successful bid on the job.

District investigators oversee local brand inspectors within their regions. Day to day, the job involves the routine matters with which stockmen in the West associate with brand inspections: ensuring livestock entering the state have proper health papers and that rules are followed regarding documentation of ownership. Routines, though, are interrupted by the occasional crisis: during a brucellosis outbreak in his district in 2008 and 2009, Olsen spent many of his workdays coordinating testing of local cattle herds.

Much of Olsen's work is done on horseback, including inspections of cattle in vast, remote pastures, such as summer ranges within Montana's Pryor Mountains. State inspectors and investigators working "in the field" identify well over 2,000 strays each year. Any strays discovered often have to be roped in open country so they can be returned to their owners. For

Art Beyond Bootmaking



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photos by Casey Riffe

Each of Montana's 18 district investigators is a good hand on horseback, Olsen says. A 33-year-veteran on the job, Olsen does much of his work on horseback, and prefers to use his own saddle horses, typically Quarter Horse-Thoroughbred crosses.

such work, Olsen often partners with another investigator or inspector. "All the investigators are good hands," he says, "both with horses and working cattle."

Olsen also conducts what he calls "preventative riding" on isolated public ranges where cattle thieves might operate with less fear of being caught. "If we maintain a presence," Olsen says, "there are a lot fewer cattle missing by the time a herd goes home."

The state provides Olsen with a half-top livestock trailer. He uses his own horses. He recently sold the last of his broodmares, but for years he raised and started saddle horses, preferring a Quarter Horse-Thoroughbred cross that offers both cow sense and stamina for long working days. "If they've got a little Thoroughbred in them," he says, "they can handle the miles and I don't have to feel sorry for them. It's a lot better than if I have to pedal."

When livestock are stolen in Montana, the state livestock department leads an investigation, or partners with the local sheriff's department. Cases can begin in any number of ways. A thief might butcher an animal overnight, leaving behind a discarded hide or gut pile.

A rancher might appropriate a cow from a neighboring outfit and raise a calf from her, or steal calves to put on cows who've lost their own. A cattle-feeding operation might brand stock with a mark other than those of the animals' owners, laying the groundwork for fraud when it comes time to sell. Investigations begin as local events, but can easily spread to other parts of Montana, or even extend beyond state lines.


Pete Olsen is a Billings-based investigator for the Montana Department of Livestock.

"I've followed cattle that weren't paid for to other states and worked with local sheriff's offices to get the rancher his money back," Olsen says. "I was just out in Minnesota on an investigation last year. Cattle had been sold on a contract and the guy never paid for them. The job can take us all over."

Rustling suspects are often given felony notices to appear in court. When a suspect poses a flight risk, though, a district investigator makes an arrest. Olsen says the risks of the job aren't quite on par with that of a typical law-enforcement role, but are still significant. "You're not in danger daily," he says. "Just occasionally."

Modern-day cattle thieves can be shrewd when it comes to the law, Olsen says, as more offenders know how to use the legal system to their advantage, not only in defending themselves, but in clouding the fact that a crime has taken place.

"What we're seeing is people more knowledgeable about ways of going around the law," he says. "For instance, if you buy a horse from someone for $3,000, give $1,500 down and never pay another dime, the county and state won't see that as theft. In their eyes, you just haven't finished paying. People tie things up in civil court that way."

Another complicating factor offered by the modern age: the diminishing sizes of contemporary cattle brands. Olsen's detective work revolves around reading brands, thereby establishing points of origin for animals whose ownership is in question. Modern brands are often made with small irons akin in size to those once used exclusively for branding horses. The resulting marks are smaller in comparison to brands of past eras, making them harder to read. And, Olsen adds, not all ranchers brand as skillfully or as cleanly as their counterparts from earlier generations.

All in all, though, Olsen enjoys the work.

"It's a fun job," he says. "Most brand inspectors might've taken the job for the benefits and retirement plan, which cowboying didn't offer. Of the 18 investigators in Montana, though, I'd say more than two-thirds are more than three decades into the job. When you're past that 30-year retirement mark, you must like what you're doing."

THE WESTERN WEB

A look at all things cowboy on the information superhighway.

A non-profit based in Elko, Nevada, the Western Folklife Center documents the traditions and diverse culture of the American West. Best known as the host of the annual National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, the Center also produces numerous exhibitions and workshops in Elko, as well as a long lineup of video and audio programming.

In 2006, the Center launched a podcast, *Ranch Rhymes: Cowboy Poetry and Music from the Western Folklife Center*. Production on the podcast is currently suspended due to budget constraints, but the Center's web site, www.westernfolklife.org, is home to a deep archive of material that can be enjoyed for free online. The lineup includes recordings of classic Gathering performances by poets and musicians, all captured live in front of audiences in Elko.

Some of the many highlights:

"Are You a Real Cowboy?" by poet John Doran

Doran, a veteran outfitter, muses on a child's innocent question as to his authenticity as a cowboy.

Those of us who live that life
Like they did in years gone by,
Well, we've an obligation to uphold the past
And never let the legend die

"Ghost of April, 1978" by poet Carolyn Dufurrena

A Nevada geologist turned teacher, Dufurrena presides over a one-room schoolhouse 75 miles from the nearest town. In a poem inspired by the discovery of some unusual artifacts on the Nevada landscape, she reflects on the motivations of those that come to the region, and what inspires them to stay.

Next morning I climb most of the way up through sage and stunted juniper,
New boots, stiff and cold,
To a smooth, blonde ledge in the blustery dawn.
There, a woman's fur coat, black caracol lamb,
As though she had shrugged out of it watching the moon last night.

"A Cowboy Song for Elko" by singer-songwriter Mary McCaslin

Inspired by her past performances at Elko, McCaslin penned this song as a tribute to the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

You can find me in a cowtown
On the high Nevada plain
I'll be settled in by sundown
Where the old west lives again

Browse through the Western Folklife Center's podcast lineup, and you'll find performances by Gathering legends such as Baxter Black, Don Edwards, Wallace McRae, Waddie Mitchell and many more. Listen online at the Center's site, or download selections via iTunes. The site also features a link to the Center's YouTube channel.

The Gift of Tom, Bill and Ray

Reflecting on the influence of Tom Dorrance, Bill Dorrance and Ray Hunt

By Joel Eliot

Horsemanship through feel, timing and balance – an ongoing, dynamic philosophy of communicating with horses. Perhaps this concept is what Tom and Bill Dorrance had in mind as they lived and worked with horses. They eventually shared their ideas and observations with Ray Hunt, a man that would bring this concept to the masses. When viewing the world of modern horsemanship, each of these men is inextricably linked to one another.

Bill and Tom grew up in the early 20th century on a ranch in northeastern Oregon. In those days, most of America was horse-drawn or horseback. The Dorrances lived and worked with horses on a daily basis. They were particularly intelligent young men and, along with their siblings, were encouraged by their parents to explore, experiment and think for themselves. While their father, Church Dorrance, worked the family ranch, their mother was a schoolteacher. Both parents instilled in their children an ethic of personal progress.

According to Bill's son, Steve Dorrance, "Even from the time they were young, my dad and Uncle Tom would observe other people work with horses and learn from them." Tom, later in life, would often recommend that habit to students: "Observe, remember and compare."

Tom adjusted his approach to horses early in life. In Tom's words, "I was kind of a small fella as a child, and I'd watch the bigger guys work with their horses and I thought, 'I'm not big enough to do that so I'll have to figure out a different way.'" Tom often worked alone as a young man. Not seeing another human for a week or more was common. Consequently, and largely for safety's sake, he worked with horses from a quieter, less

Bill Dorrance, Ray Hunt and Tom Dorrance

forceful position. Perhaps, even at this young age, Tom was considering the horse's thoughts and feelings.

Known to be a quiet, pensive man, Tom was certainly not one to seek attention. He enjoyed the company of horses and dogs when he was a child and carried this affection for animals with him throughout his life. Steve remembers seeing Tom, who would visit Bill's ranch in California during the winter, spend long periods of time just quietly petting horses out in the corral or doing the same with dogs around the place.

Tom eventually married a woman named Margaret. She shared his love of animals and riding and encouraged Tom to help people with their horses. Both Margaret and Ray Hunt, Tom's friend, had told Tom

that he should think about teaching horsemanship clinics, but Tom humbly declined at first.

Horseman and clinician Bryan Neubert, who grew up on a ranch neighboring Bill's outfit, tells a story of when he and Tom were fixing fence together; the subject of horsemanship clinics came up. "Tom told me that Ray told him he really should be out there doing clinics," Bryan recalls. "I asked Tom, 'What do you think about that?"

photos by Julie Baldocchi

Bill Dorrance was a rancher, horseman, rawhide braider and roper credited with elevating ranch roping to an art form.

Tom, who had conducted a couple of clinics by then, answered by telling a story – a common conversational tactic for Tom. His story centered on a pig that kept escaping the pig pen.

"We had a pig pen with several young pigs in it and one day they all got out," Tom began. "We gathered them up and put them back in and then put an electric wire around the pen that they'd hit if they tried to get out again. The wire worked pretty well but, somehow, there was one pig that continued escaping. He'd end up in the shop or just any ol' place and was a real nuisance, and we'd catch him and put him back.

"This happened almost every day 'til we made a plan to just sit and watch that pen and see how that pig got out. We sat and waited for hours and were about to give up and just get on with our chores when we heard a terrible squealing come from the pen. We looked back at the pen while the squealing went on and there was that little pig, backed up and making a racket. Then he makes a run for the fence and wire, hits them and keeps going, still squealing away.

"Well, when I have to do a clinic, I feel just like that pig, squealing away before I even start."

Gradually, Margaret encouraged Tom to do more clinics and he complied. A big challenge for Tom was communicating what he saw, felt or sensed in a horse. Over time and with considerable effort, Tom was able to increase the awareness in many people of what their horses needed and thereby, help their horses. The experience changed the lives of some horse owners.

Bill Dorrance was also influenced by his younger brother. Over time, Bill became aware of the subtleties Tom would speak of in relating to horses. He garnered a reputation for making bridle horses and went on to win awards in the show ring as well as help others with their horses.

A rancher, horseman, talented rawhider and remarkable roper (he's said to have made ranch roping an art form) Bill led a quiet life on his ranch and couldn't devote a lot of time to working with outside horses. However, according to Neubert, "Bill happily

gave his time to anyone looking for help with their horses or their roping. He was just a great guy and we became close friends even though there was almost 50 years between us."

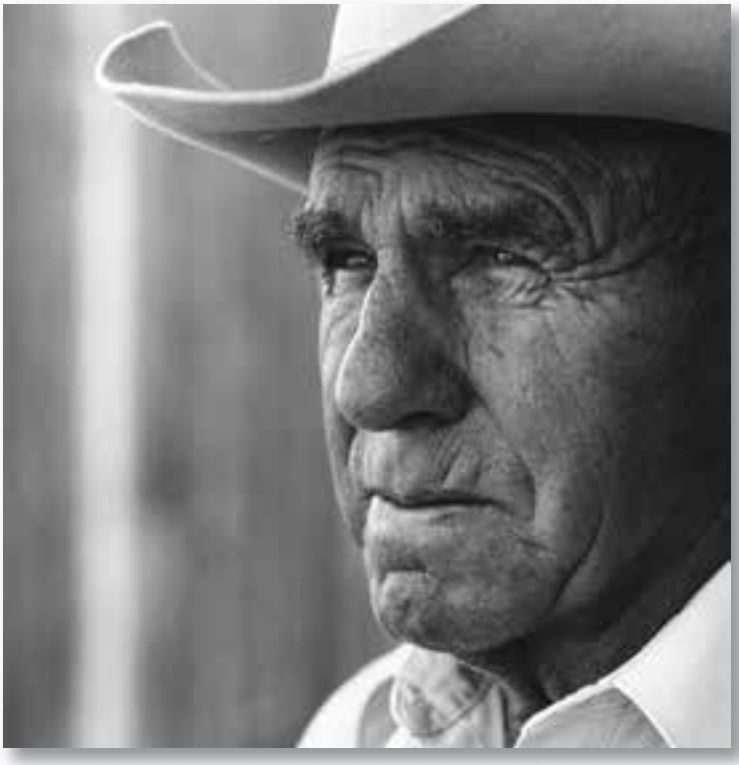
Bill could see Bryan had a passion for horses and cowboying, and helped young Bryan with his horsemanship. He also taught Bryan to make and braid rawhide into beautiful, useful horse gear, a talent both Bill and Tom learned from their brother Fred, who drowned in 1940. Bill and Tom spoke highly of Fred and passed on stories of his athleticism and his talent for riding bucking horses. On separate occasions, they each told Bryan, "No one ever saw Fred buck off."

Fred, his brothers claimed, had a photographic memory; if he had seen a person doing something well, Fred would teach himself the skill in a short time. Fred set for Tom and Bill a high standard for which they both would strive.

Oddly enough, during Bill and Tom's lifetimes, many horse owners disregarded their approach to working with horses. It went against the long-held, widespread belief that horses were merely beasts of burden and must be forced to perform their tasks and do our bidding. This attitude turned around in later years, but it took Ray Hunt to instigate the change.

Ray and Tom's relationship began through a horse named Hondo. The story surrounding Hondo could fill a book but, in short, Ray first approached Bill at the Elko Fair in 1960. Ray asked for Bill's advice on how to get this talented, athletic horse to stop bucking at inopportune moments. Bill told Ray that he should really talk to his brother Tom, who he described as "really good with horses." Ray, of course, went on to meet with Tom and Hondo, with Ray in the saddle, eventually became a champion in working cow horse classes. Thus began the relationship that would change horsemanship worldwide, forever.

For Tom, Bill and Ray, horses and horsemanship were never about fame or fortune. Yes, Ray went on to become a world-renowned horseman and clinician, but that was not his goal. For all three men, "it was always about the horse," a phrase so often used to describe the motivation behind their work.



photos by Julie Baldocchi

Tom Dorrance adapted his approaches to horsemanship as a young man. Too small to use force against a horse, he began searching for gentler, non-confrontational methods.

For over 40 years, Hunt brought forth the message that force, coercion and bribery are not necessary when working with horses. As Ray would say, "The horse is a thinking, feeling, decision-making animal. He doesn't need to be treated like a slave." This was a shocking statement for many.

Now, in the early part of the 21st century, the Dorrance-Hunt message is widely presented and practiced. Several clinicians working today are worthy ambassadors for their message. Buck Brannaman is among them.

"[Tom, Bill and Ray] wanted us to work with horses as if the horse had a say in it," he says. "A lot of people – trainers or clinicians – have the physical or mechanical part of what Tom and Ray were talking about, but they're missing the *feel* and that's the most important."

Bill, Tom and Ray are no longer with us. They each passed away over the past dozen years and are profoundly missed.

"Ray changed my life," says Maria Kastros, a longtime student of Hunt's. "Everything he taught me applies to how I live my life."

photos by Bill Reynolds

Ray Hunt

Brannaman, Neubert, Joe Wolter, Peter Campbell and Martin Black are among today's widely known horsemen who spent a great deal of time with Tom, Bill and Ray. They are considered the next generation of horsemen who adhere to the principles and philosophy of those three great men and purposefully continue to spread their message. Others, like Mike Thomas, a longtime friend and student of Ray's, keep their memories alive in other ways. Mike maintains a web site dedicated to the men he calls, "The Trinity of Horsemen." Mike's site preserves the men's stories and messages about working with horses.

After Ray's passing in March 2009, Carolyn Hunt, Ray's widow, organized an event to honor her legendary husband. The Ray Hunt Memorial Clinic was held in Fort Worth, Texas, in February 2010 and featured the talents of some of Ray's finest students. The event was such a success that Carolyn, along with Buck Brannaman and Martin Black, wished to repeat it but with a slight twist. They wanted the event to focus not only on today's horsemen, but also the horsemen of tomorrow. The result was, "A Legacy of Legends," held last December. The event was another success and there has been talk of developing a scholarship program for young riders interested in pursuing the horsemanship that Tom, Bill and Ray shared with us.

Ray Hunt would occasionally speak of his hope for the future of horses and horsemanship: "My dream is that one day there might be a young boy or girl riding a horse and they are in perfect harmony together – the horse and rider turning, stopping, changing leads, all effortless as if they are one body, one mind. Someone watching might ask the youngster, 'Where did you learn to ride like that?' And he or she would answer, 'Is there any other way?"

Perhaps the realization of Ray's dream is right around the corner.

Joel Eliot is a horseman, musician and cowboy poet living in Arizona. For their help in researching this article, he thanks Bryan Neubert, Steve Dorrance, Buck Brannaman, Maria Kastros, Mike Thomas, and Margaret Dorrance, who's at work on a new book about her husband, Tom.

THE CHOICE OF COWBOYS SINCE 1927

Once Wild

Wyoming's Mantle Ranch starts mustangs under saddle for the Bureau of Land Management's wild-horse adoption program

By A.J. Mangum

It's a late afternoon at the Mantle Ranch and, inside the horse barn, a quiet drama is unfolding. Veteran horseman Steve Mantle rides a stout gelding – a buckskin paint called Dog – inside the perimeter of a small arena bordered by steel panels. He holds a lead rope, on the other end of which is an eye-catching blue roan, a mustang filly newly arrived from Wyoming's vast public ranges. She stands near the center of the pen, ears up and eyes wide, as Steve and Dog slowly orbit around her.

The filly is one of dozens of once-wild horses gathered from public ranges and brought here to the Mantle Ranch to be gentled and started under saddle in preparation for adoption by the public through the Bureau of Land Management's mustang-adoption program. Other than being haltered a time or two, the filly's had no handling. She's visibly unsure of what's happening around her, but has so far been given no reason to panic at her environment or its confusing goings-on – endlessly fascinating events marked by men, horses under saddle, walls, fences, and foreign, if increasingly comfortable, routines.

Steve and Dog come parallel to the filly and she arcs her neck to watch their progress along the pen's perimeter. Steve applies light, even pressure to the lead rope and its slack disappears. The filly braces for a moment, then turns to stay square with Steve and his horse. The scene repeats several times and, soon, the youngster, having discovered that such pressure can be avoided altogether, falls in behind the two, the lead rope's slack hanging heavily between the filly's head and Steve's right hand.

Before long, Steve dismounts, leaving Dog ground-

photos by Christian Murdock

Nick Mantle works to teach a young mustang about achieving relief from the pressure of a lead rope. Nick works with Steve and Bryan, and runs his own horse operation in Wheatland.

tied in the pen's center. The filly has taken a position along the fenceline. Steve cautiously approaches her, one hand holding the lead rope, the other outstretched toward the young horse. As he walks, Steve motions gently with two fingers, lightly stroking the empty air several feet in front of the filly's face, as if petting an animal that isn't there. The distance between the two gradually diminishes until Steve's hand is just inches away from her forehead. The filly's still wide-eyed, but doesn't offer to flee. Steve at last makes contact, tentatively brushing the backs of two fingers against the filly's forehead. The touch is as light as it can be and lasts for the briefest of moments, just enough to register as something real for the young horse. It's the first step in a process that will transform the rest of the filly's life.

The BLM estimates that the West's publicly owned ranges can support approximately 26,000 wild horses; the current on-the-range population is estimated at more than 33,000. As one means of relieving the pressure of overpopulation, the agency gathers mustangs from open ranges and offers them for adoption to the public. Since the adoption program's start in 1971, the BLM has placed more than 225,000 wild horses (and burros) with owners.

The Mantle Ranch is the only privately owned operation contracted by the BLM to gentle mustangs and start them under saddle; similar programs exist

Steve Mantle and his sons arrived at their Wheatland, Wyoming, ranch in 1996, and began work with the BLM's mustang program in 1998.

inside prisons, where inmates are enlisted to work with the horses. Steve and his sons, Bryan and Nick, work with around a hundred wild horses each year, readying them for new lives off the range and under saddle as trail companions, ranch mounts and competitive horses.

Located southwest of the small ranching town of Wheatland, Wyoming, the ranch headquarters consist of a house and collection of barns and corrals – a tightly grouped enclave deep within the outfit's boundaries and surrounded by the kind of open, windswept range that defines much of Wyoming.

Steve, a veteran horseman, arrived with his sons at the ranch in 1996 and, soon after, attended a BLM mustang adoption, where he learned the agency was on the verge of soliciting bids for contracts to start wild horses and ready them for adoption. Steve made a successful bid on the contract; he and his sons began working full-time with mustangs in 1998.

"Our contract is for everything from weanlings to five-year-olds," Steve says. "We work mainly with two- and three-year-olds." Older horses, he explains, require more work to start, and typically need to be kept busy by adopters so that ground isn't lost in the horses' training progression. Few adopters have that volume of work to offer a horse. "Twos and threes can stand more prosperity," Steve says. "If they're idle for a few days at a time, they'll be fine."

The Mantles work mustangs in stages, bringing in around 15 head for training at any given time. Colts are brought into stalls and initially worked lightly, with early training consisting simply of getting them accustomed to going into and out of a round pen. The next phase involves a fundamental principle of horsemanship: getting the colts to "hook on" to a handler positioned inside the round pen.

"When a horse chooses to move away from me," Steve says, "I'll encourage that decision." In essence, a handler positions himself at the pen's center and applies pressure through his body positioning, encouraging the horse to stay on the move. When the horse chooses to be with the handler – stopping to turn inward toward the center of the pen, for instance – the handler relieves that pressure and allows the horse to relax.

"All colts are looking for the relief of pressure," Steve explains. "We're getting the horse to shut down his feet, lock onto us mentally and physically, and find out that, when he's with us, that's when he gets that relief."

Gradually, the distance between a mustang and his handler diminishes, until the horse can be touched and readily haltered. A first saddling might be attempted three

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to four days into training, but the Mantles point out that, in their program, a horse always dictates the pace at which he's worked. Saddling too soon confuses and frightens colts that aren't mentally prepared; such information overload guarantees bucking or otherwise violent reactions to saddling. By contrast, a horse that's confident he won't be hurt by a saddle or rider has fewer reasons to buck.

"You can't have a set of rules for working with wild horses," Bryan says. "With wild horses, you're better off to focus on small things, moving from one small step to the next. All you can do is take experiences that worked with one horse and try them again on other horses."

How willingly a mustang accepts handling can often depend on his geographic origin or, more accurately, the specific gene pool that developed in his home region as domestic horses escaped or were turned loose – particularly during the Great Depression – by ranchers, farmers and miners who could no longer afford them. For example, many Wyoming mustangs show a heavy draft influence and generally accept training readily. Nevada horses, by contrast, descend from smaller, more fiery stock, and tend to be tougher to start.

"Nevada horses' tendency to fight and defend themselves," Bryan says, "is twice as high as these Salt Wells [Wyoming] horses that have more draft blood."

Once a mustang is under saddle, the training process revolves around consistency and routine, with gradual additions to each horse's skill set. They become more

Bryan Mantle, aboard "Dog," works a group of mustangs. The Mantle Ranch contracts with the BLM to start wild horses under saddle and ready them for adoption.

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accustomed to being around people, to being haltered and saddled, and to carrying a rider. They gradually tune in to signals to move out, stop, back up and travel freely at any gait. When a colt seems to need more time to process his surroundings or regimen, he gets it.

Generally, the mustangs are ready for adoption after 60 to 90 days of work. The Mantles supply horses for adoptions in the region, and host their own annual adoption event the third week of June. Adopters pay a minimum fee of $125. Many adopted mustangs go on to new lives as "backyard" horses and trail mounts. Others are put to work on ranches or in outfitting strings. Still others are ridden competitively in open horse shows or mustang-only events.

"You can do almost anything with them," Bryan says. "Their limitations are defined by the limitations of the people who adopt them."

Horsemen with an affinity for mustangs extol the horses' virtues, believing their feral roots give them certain advantages over domestic horses. According to the Mantles, the horses' strengths are not exaggerated.

"They're hardy, they've got good feet, and they're easy keepers," Nick says. "And they'll eat just about anything."

Mustangs are thought by many to develop with their handlers especially tight bonds, connections stronger than those forged by domestic horses. Bryan says this is no myth. "If a Quarter Horse is friendly, he's friendly to everybody," he says. "But if I work with a mustang for several days, then Dad works with him, it's a new person, a new smell, new movements. The horse won't be as trusting as he was with me."

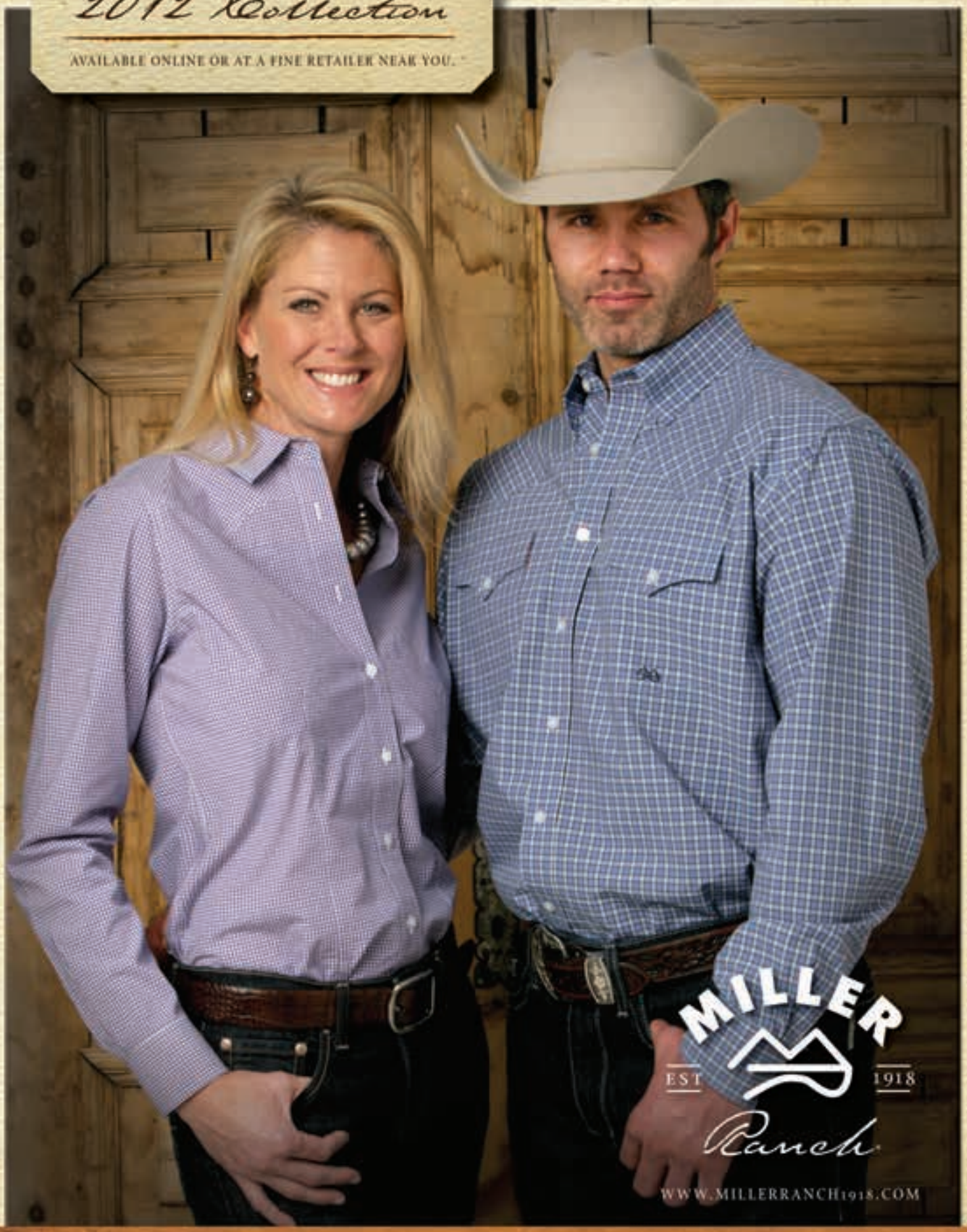
Back in the Mantles' horse barn, the blue roan filly relaxes in one of several stalls. Steve leads Dog down the barn's wide aisle and ties him to a steel panel. There are more horses to work, so the gelding's day isn't quite finished.

For Steve, Dog is the embodiment of a mustang's potential as a saddle horse. The 12-year-old gelding – the kind of aged horse that seems willing to do anything asked of him, but would likely prefer to spend the day relaxing with a hind foot cocked – came to the Mantles as a mustang colt fresh from the open ranges of northwestern Colorado. Steve started him under saddle and, in the process, recognized something special, the makings of a solid, dependable ranch horse. Years later, Steve purchased Dog (as in "gentle as a ...") from his adoptive owner. Any signs that the horse might've once been a hard-to-handle mustang have long since faded; his dependability makes him a go-to horse in the Mantles' saddle string. In addition to starting colts aboard Dog, Steve uses him for roping and other ranch work.

"He's rock solid," Steve says. "I can rope on him, sort cattle on him, drag hay bales. I can take him to the neighbors' brandings and not worry about him kicking somebody. We raise a pretty good crop of prairie dogs. I can take that old horse, hit a trot across a prairie dog town and never look at the ground. I can look where I'm going because he's watching every dog hole, and he'll never step in one. He knows how to take care of himself. That's bred into him."

Recognizing the strengths and unique needs of each horse is key to Steve's approach as a trainer. He counts among his mentors California horseman Bryan Neubert, himself a protégé of Tom Dorrance, Bill Dorrance and Ray Hunt, three men who made popular the philosophy of horse-handling that's come to be called by many "natural horsemanship." The school of thought offers the premise that each horse is an individual, embodies a new experience for a handler, and is capable of not just learning, but teaching.

"We might run through a hundred of these horses a year," Steve says. "So, we have a hundred different 'trainers' working with us, telling how things should be done, as long as we're willing to listen to what each horse is telling us."



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NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION

Just as a sonnet by Shakespeare, a painting by Picasso or a song by Sinatra never goes out of date, neither do the principles on which the National FFA Organization were founded. Those principles remain as relevant today as they were in 1928 when the organization was founded.

The Future Farmers of America was established 84 years ago to give young men in rural communities an opportunity to "develop confidence in their own ability and pride in the fact that they are farm boys." Among the purposes set out for the organization were achievement in agriculture, nurturing a love of country life, thrift, cooperation, recreation and scholarship.

Today, FFA looks a bit different than it did in those early years – with 540,379 members (both male and female) in 7,489 chapters throughout all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Yet the organization still stands on its original principles and envisions a future in which all agricultural education students will discover their passion in life and build on that insight to chart the course for their educational, career and personal future.

From the early 1950s through the mid-1980s, a collection of original paintings was commissioned for the FFA calendar program. Each painting conveyed an FFA theme, ranging from "World Friendship Through Food Power" to "Experience Is the Best Teacher." Here we have matched up five of those timeless paintings with current photos to show how FFA members, then and now, engage in agricultural education and develop their skills for leadership roles in the far-reaching world of agriculture.

Photos and images of the calendar paintings courtesy of the National FFA Organization and Journal Communications.

To order prints of the calendar paintings, go to www.ffa.org/shop and search "print."

"Our American Heritage"

In "Our American Heritage," artist Bill Medcalf portrays a group of FFA members at the Mount Rushmore National Memorial in the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota, where they are reminded that we are a nation founded on the principles of freedom, democracy and shared responsibility. To succeed, every segment of society must be served by individuals with the skills of leadership, teamwork and cooperation.

With such a group gathered before them, it is not difficult to imagine the granite lips of these giants of American history stating again their belief that the "roots of freedom" are in the soil:

> George Washington – "I know of no pursuit in which more real and important services can be rendered to any country than by improving its agriculture ..."
>
> Thomas Jefferson – "Let the farmer forevermore be honored in his calling; for they who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God."
>
> Theodore Roosevelt – "It is the men from the farms who in the past have taken the lead in every great movement within our country ..."
>
> Abraham Lincoln – "... no other human occupation opens so wide a field for the profitable and agreeable combination of labor with cultivated thought, as agriculture."

Inspired by these words from the past, we can understand why FFA members are so proud to recite the FFA Creed, which begins, "I believe in the future of agriculture ..."

Today, FFA members have countless opportunities to develop their leadership abilities at conferences such as the Washington Leadership Conference (WLC), held in our nation's capital. Each year, FFA members from across America travel to Washington, D.C., to attend the five-day event, where they learn how to become effective leaders by knowing their purpose, valuing people, taking action and serving others. They leave WLC with the knowledge and the confidence to act in ways that help their schools, their communities and their country.

"Future Farmers – Future Leaders"

Learning to Do

A common and cherished FFA tradition is the local chapter meeting, where FFA members learn how to take part in meetings, follow parliamentary procedure, speak in public and cooperate with their fellow students in programs for

individual and community betterment. Each FFA chapter develops and follows an annual program of activities, and each member shares in planning the program and participates in its execution.

In "Future Farmers – Future Leaders," artist Harold Anderson portrays an FFA activity that helps FFA members become leaders. The FFA chapter meeting is held at the school, for FFA is an intracurricular activity, having origin and root in the regular program of instruction in agricultural education that is offered in schools throughout America.

FFA members learn to do by doing. Experiences gained in meetings such as this one train them for their future roles of participation and leadership in business and in civic organizations. Regular rules of parliamentary procedure govern the conduct of FFA meetings. Officers who preside, and members who participate, learn to follow the rules and to express their opinions in an effective, persuasive manner.

The agricultural education teacher serves as advisor of the local FFA chapter, participating in the meetings and offering suggestions and advice when needed. Experience and confidence gained here will serve FFA members well in the future as they cooperate with others to work out solutions to problems that will confront their community, state and nation.

Today, FFA leadership roles are shared by a dynamic group of members – both male and female and bringing the experiences of their diverse backgrounds. Whether they come from a rural or urban setting, or whether their interests lie in production agriculture or agriscience, all members can find opportunities to develop their leadership skills in FFA.

"Good Management"

Doing to Learn

From the earliest days, mankind has passed along skills of a trade to their sons and daughters. Adults, especially parents, have provided that training. In some professions, apprenticeship systems were developed.

In American agriculture, the traditional role of farmers and ranchers was to provide learning-by-doing experiences for their children. Eventually the young person got "his feet on the ground" and was on his own. He was prepared for farming or ranching or a job that called for someone with a strong "farm background."

Vocational agriculture courses in high school came onto the scene

in 1917. They provided a systematic approach to educating young men interested in agriculture. But soon after introducing "vo ag" (now called agricultural education), educators saw the need for a continuation of the already successful learning-by-doing approach. You couldn't teach it all from a book.

Future Farmers of America (FFA) was developed to provide a learning laboratory so vo-ag students could apply lessons from the classroom to their own farm or ranch. In Arthur Sarnoff's painting "Good Management," we see a group of FFA members roping and branding a steer on the Bar S Ranch. In this real-life setting, students discover firsthand the skill, strength and speed needed to rope a steer and apply a brand, learning in a way that cannot be taught in a classroom.

FFA members love to get their feet wet, do it themselves, dig in with both feet. Succeed. Fail. Grow. Expand. Lose. Win. Change. Experience is still the best teacher.

Today, FFA members participate in a wide variety of supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs where they complete projects or enterprises using agricultural skills and knowledge learned in the classroom. With the hands-on experience gained through their SAEs, FFA members are well prepared for more than 300 diverse careers in agriculture, ranging from agronomist to rodeo competitor.

"Partners"

Earning to Live

The pride a father holds in his son knows no more joyful moment than the day when the son becomes a full partner in the operation of the family farm. From the proud moment of birth, through the toddling stages of childhood, Dad has coached and encouraged his son toward the accomplishment of this day. In Harold Anderson's painting so aptly named "Partners," father and son survey a farm homestead scene that they will manage as business partners.

Over the years, the boy was given greater responsibilities as Dad taught him to perform the myriad routine tasks of a farmer's work. Son had farm projects of his very own to tend, providing incentive for him to develop stronger interest in the farm. In high school, he studied agricultural education to learn more about the science and business of farming. Frequently, he brought home new ideas and convinced Dad they were good. Through participation in FFA activities, he developed abilities in leadership, cooperation and community service.

When the son was ready to make a business arrangement with Dad

for a full share in the total farm, the father welcomed the vigor of youth in this enterprise. The investment he had grown over a lifetime would provide the foundation for even greater achievement by the father and son together.

Today, some may be surprised to learn that 97 percent of all U.S. farms are owned by individuals, family partnerships or family corporations – and nearly one-tenth of those farmers are women! As a new generation of farmers brings their education, experience and enthusiasm to production agriculture, they will continue a tradition that allows them to make a living by doing what they truly love. And to the greater good, they will produce products for the four essential parts of life: food, clothing, shelter and energy.

"Useful Citizenship"

Living to Serve

Community service is not taught in a classroom, nor is it inspired by a mere suggestion on a sign or billboard. In Arthur Sarnoff's painting "Useful Citizenship," a group of America's young people is learning to be useful citizens without giving much thought to the fact that, in the process, they are becoming better citizens.

The setting is a community park where FFA members recognized the need for some improvements. They set their minds to take action and not just complain that the park needed work. Participation is a major key to useful citizenship. It takes getting in there and doing whatever needs doing, just like these students who are painting the bandstand and planting trees and flowers.

FFA chapters across America are active participants in community service projects, and the list of activities that they undertake is a long one: picking up trash along highways, making picnic tables for local parks, conducting auto safety checks, helping to clean up after a barn fire, conducting canned food and clothing drives, and teaming up with other community groups. Through these actions, FFA members become enthusiastic, engaged leaders in their chapters, their schools and their communities.

Today, the National FFA Organization continues to embrace the idea of giving back to our communities. The last line of the FFA motto, "Living to Serve," signifies the vital role service plays in the organization. Community service engages individuals or groups in an organized activity that contributes to the local, national or world community. During the annual national FFA convention, hundreds of FFA members participate in the National Days of Service event, partnering with a host site to address critical needs of that organization and receiving information on how to replicate similar service projects in their own communities when they return home.

The Frontier Project

A short-subject documentary series tells the stories of the horsemen, craftsmen and artists defining the contemporary West's cowboy culture.

By A.J. Mangum

Since its launch in late 2010, *The Frontier Project* has introduced viewers to some of the West's most intriguing figures, ranging from influential horsemen and inspiring artists to the most inventive and gifted cowboy craftsmen working today.

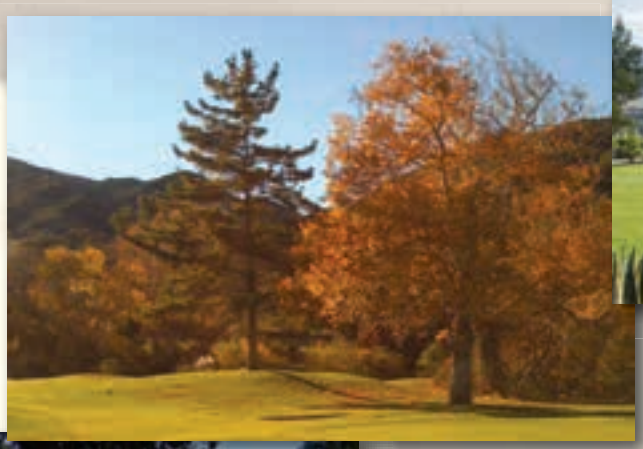
Each segment is built around an interview in which a subject tells his or her own story. Interview footage is intercut with shots of the subject at work – in the arena, in the workshop, or in the studio. The result: an original approach to documentary journalism about the American West.

A snapshot of the series, so far:

Episode 1

Horseman Peter Campbell discusses his approach as an educator, and the influence of his mentor, the great Tom Dorrance. Kansas craftsman Tuffy Flagler shares how personal adversity led him to a career as one of the West's most gifted makers of traditional working gear. Novelist J.P.S. Brown explains the origins of his iconic character Jim Kane, resurrected in Brown's novel, *Wolves at Our Door*. And painter Harley Brown, a member of the Cowboy Artists of America, offers rare insight into his creative process.

View the trailer: vimeo.com/17901881.



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Episode 2

Steve, Bryan and Nick Mantle discuss their work starting mustangs under saddle for the BLM's adoption program. Bit and spur maker Bill Heisman demonstrates the fundamentals of inlaying silver. And sculptor Herb Mignery, a Cowboy Artists of America member, brings viewers into his studio.

View the trailer: vimeo.com/35157388.

Episode 3

Craftsman Russell Yates explains the artistry behind some of today's best bits and spurs. Historian J. Martin Basinger sheds light on the lasting legacy of Adolph Bayers, one of the West's most influential bit and spur makers. Saddlemaker John Willemsma demonstrates how to use traditional tools to carve a floral pattern on a saddle. And artist Terri Kelly Moyers shares her inspirations in an interview at her Santa Fe, New Mexico, studio.

View the trailer: vimeo.com/35098055.

Episode 4

New Mexico's Clint Mortenson explains the career path that took him from training horses in South Dakota to performing in EuroDisney's Wild West Show to becoming one of the West's most sought after makers of cowboy gear. Clint also offers insight on saddle construction, debunking some mainstream myths about fit, style and design. And, Colorado performance-horse trainer Jason Patrick explains the origins of Rescued to Ride, an effort to give much-needed second chances to our country's overpopulation of rescue horses.

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Episode 5

NPR contributor Hal Cannon, the founding director of the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, discusses his work as a journalist and folklorist, and performs two songs from his self-titled CD. Idaho's Rick Bean explains the path of his career as one of the West's top saddlemakers. And, western artist John Moyers offers insight on the process of painting "from life."

View the trailer: vimeo.com/25919875.

Episode 6

Scott O'Malley discusses Western Jubilee Recording Co.'s unique approach to making music. Artist Jim Rey shares the philosophies that have shaped his career as one of the West's leading painters. And bit and spur maker Ernie Marsh explains how horsemanship guides his work.

View the trailer: vimeo.com/34167368.

Each episode of *The Frontier Project* is available on DVD via www.thefrontierproject.net. Episodes can also be downloaded from Amazon.com; search for "the frontier project" under the Amazon Instant Video category.

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

One Day In Paradise

The Lazy EL

By Mark Bedor

A blustery day in June. Horseback in Montana. The snowcapped Rocky Mountains loom in the distance. Storm clouds threaten above. The vast grasslands are painted a deep green from the abundant recent rains. Our horses are spunky and glad to be movin'. Our energetic cow boss trots up on her painthorse; She's dressed in an oilskin slicker and a flat brimmed buckaroo hat, topped off with an ear-to-ear grin.

"Isn't this a great day!!" beams Jael Kampfe, General Manager of the Lazy EL Ranch.

Yes it is! And I'm feeling lucky to be here.

We're riding out to gather a few hundred cattle, on a day that began with saddling horses as the first rays of the sun slowly lit up the morning sky about 6:15. After a 6:30 breakfast, we load the horses into trailers and pile into two pickup trucks, for a short drive to the neighboring C&H Ranch. We'll gather about 120 cow-calf pairs that'll then be transferred over to the Lazy EL to spend the summer grazing. And the guests here to help find those cows on this Advanced Rider Week are loving it. "It's definitely not a dude ranch," says Minnesotan John Steinfort. "You pay to go work. It's the greatest! And I *love* the country up here."

The country is spectacular. We are after all, right on the edge of the Yellowstone wilderness. The great Park lies just on the other side of the Beartooth Mountains that rise up on the horizon, still packed with tons of snow after an especially wet winter. The grass has benefited from all that water. And the vast land that surrounds us is unspoiled as far as the eye can see.

The Lazy EL actually is a member of the Dude Ranchers Association. But it's also a working cattle ranch. And working cattle horseback is what time spent here is all about.

Our horses clamber out of the trailer. Cinches are tightened, we swing up into the saddle, and meet the men who own the cattle we'll gather. "My grandfather started the ranch," tells Scott Ostrum. "Everything here...to the far ridge...is ours."

That's about 15,000 acres. And they still use horses to work it. "We like to use horses around the cattle," he tells me. "It's just easier for us. A lotta places we go...some of the hills are fairly steep...horses are better."

The hills are really steep. They're not mountains.

And they're not dangerous. But they are beautiful. From a distance the ground looks like a manicured golf course.

"Scott, you guys got a ranch in a not half bad place!" exclaims Jael, as we trot out from the trucks.

"It is a nice office," I offer, as I gaze across the landscape.

"You get all the different mountain ranges from up here," points out Jael, as we take in the surroundings. "You can see all the Beartooths...You can see down to the Pryors...On a clear day you can see to the Crazy's."

C&H runs about 1,000 cow-calf pairs, 500 yearlings, plus some sheep. They're sending some of their herd to the Lazy EL for the summer to preserve some of their own grass for later in the year. "We always save a lot of feed," explains Scott. "Because when we do run cattle, then we like to 'winter-out.' I'll graze 'em out until the snow completely shuts me off."

It's chilly enough up here on this grassy plateau to feel like it might snow today. And the wind at times is fierce. But no one's complaining, even those who aren't

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

- Buck Brannaman

Houlihan Ranch, Wyoming *A.J. Mangum*

www.brannaman.com

as advanced at riding as they claimed to be on the application. "What's a sore butt in the scheme of things?" smiles Mike from New York, as he bounces along in the saddle.

The week has just begun, and he's already signed up to return in September. "There's one spot left...I said it's mine!" he laughs.

Jael does a lot of that too. She looks like she was born to do this work. And it is in her blood. Her great-grandfather Malcolm S. Mackay founded the Lazy EL back in 1901. The son of the president of the New York Stock Exchange, Malcolm first came to this country as a 19-year old looking for adventure. He bought up old homesteads and went into the cattle business. Just a few years later, his father's sudden death forced him to return east to take over the family banking business. But the ranch would be a treasured retreat for Malcolm for the rest of his life. And along the way, he became a friend and patron of legendary Western artist Charles M. Russell. Today the Malcolm S. Mackay Collection of Russell paintings, sculptures and illustrated letters is one of the crown jewels of the Montana Historical Society Museum in Helena, Montana.

There's also a memento of that friendship between Charlie and Malcolm at the ranch. Russell carved his name and his trademark buffalo skull into a wood mantle piece when he visited Malcolm at his New Jersey home. Today it adorns the stone fireplace of the ranch's Russell cabin, which I was very fortunate to stay in.

Built in 1920 as a bunkhouse, the Russell cabin is rustic cowboy cool. Log timbers hold up the ceiling. One buffalo skull hangs over the fireplace, another hangs on the porch outside. Old pictures, wool blankets, and a historic saddle are among the decorations. I could

have spent hours in that rocking chair in front of the fire.

But there was too much riding to do! Back at the C&H, we made two circles of the pasture that morning, driving the cows into the holding pens. We shook hands with the Ostrum clan, loaded up the horses, and headed back to the ranch.

We arrived in time for a one o'clock lunch, but we had to make it quick. Another ride was headed out on the Lazy El's 12,000 acres. Wranglers were ridin' the herd to see if any cows needed doctoring. And did I want to go? Of course! I gobbled down the hearty fare, and off I rode again.

We didn't find any sick cows. But we sure saw some country on a splendid and relaxing ride of about three hours. This land is home to wolves, some of which make their den right on the ranch. Jael works with government agencies and wildlife groups to protect both this area's wildlife, and the ranchers who call it home. "Partly because I want to be a voice in the discussion," she explains. "One of the things I do is I have 'em come up and go up the East Rosebud Valley, which is all subdivided...And then come and take them up to the top of Ingersoll Creek...Where as far as you can see, there's no houses."

"And I say to them, 'You know, you gotta work with ranchers. If you want habitat for your wildlife, you gotta have us on board. Because we're what's helping to preserve open space. And the more that you can support us, we can support you. But we gotta get on the same page.'"

How do you do that? "The devil's in the details," says Jael. But despite that, she does seem optimistic. It sure is worth the effort. Because they're not making any more of the kind of country that we are in today.

Meanwhile – and dare I say this but – 'back at the ranch,' a truckload of cows we gathered this morning has just arrived, just as we arrive at the end of our bovine medical mission. The new arrivals need to be driven out to pasture too. And I don't care if it's late in the afternoon! Of course I'm game for another ride!

So off we go again. This time we push the herd maybe a half-mile or so, and then let the bawling animals settle, as the mommas and calves separated during their road trip reunite. It takes a while. But that's okay. No one's in a hurry for this day to end.

We dismount back at the barn around 7. Long day. After dinner, I visit with my fellow guests staying in the lodge-like Summer Cabin. They have a roaring blaze going in the fireplace of the rustic living room on this cold June night. We enjoy a drink and watch the fire burn. The end of a perfect day, one of many to be had at the Lazy EL. Horseback in Montana. Snowcapped Rockies. Working cattle. A great day indeed.

Learn more about the Lazy EL by visiting the Ranch Association website at www.duderanch.org

The Michelangelo of the Western Saloon

By Tom Russell

"I was once a painter, boys,
Not one who daubed on bricks and wood,
But an artist! And for my age was rated pretty good...
And then I met a woman...now comes the funny part.
Come, boys, who'll buy me a drink?
And I'll draw here a picture of the face that drove me mad....."

The Face on the Barroom Floor
Hugh Antoine D'Arcy, 1887

There's a rusted-out pickup truck filled with art supplies and cowboy gear, parked in a back alley in Calexico in 1932. A man is passed out across the front seat, grabbing a few hours of shut-eye. Dawn is coming on. The heat rises. The truck's cab is filled with empty beer bottles, rags, and paint brushes. Our man is a cowboy artist, and he stirs and snores and dreams in full color. His hands are stained with tobacco, charcoal, chalk, and red and yellow paint. A wasp is chasing a fly around the rear view mirror. The border cantina, a few yards away, is opening up for the day. "*Volver, Volver*" is whistled and sung and howled by an old Mexican cook in the kitchen.

The sun rises higher and shines through the back window of the barroom, illuminating a half-finished cowboy mural on the white-washed adobe wall. The painting depicts

Two Crows" by Tom Russell

"Chief Old Crow" by Tom Russell

cowboys spurring bony broncs and Mexican vaqueros throwing loops over skeletal wild cows, against a landscape of saguaros and prickly-pear cactus. On an opposite wall there's a panorama of covered wagons attacked by Sioux Indians. *The West of the imagination*. Our cowboy painter jerks awake as the wasp lands on his cheek. The movie begins. *Fade on scene one*.

Here's the back story: Our cowboy Michelangelo, waking up in his truck, plies his trade in the border saloons, cantinas, cowboy bars, and whore houses – from the Mexican border up to the Canadian medicine line. He's a wandering cowboy muralist. One of the last of a breed of travelling folk artists, cowboy sign painters, carnival Botticelli's, and vagabond portrait sketchers. When his chips are low, and the cash runs out, he trades drawings for drinks, or offers to paint a sign or a mural in exchange for a meal and a place to park his truck.

Back to the movie. In the next scene, *let's say,* he rolls out of the truck, squeezes his eyes open, and yanks on a sweat stained cowboy hat. He staggers inside for a cup of coffee and a little hair of the dog. Maybe he's feeling healthy enough to tackle the *huevos rancheros*. Red salsa and *Asadero* cheese running over the top of egg yolks and corn tortillas. Once the artist is feeling human he goes to work, mixing up a concoction of shoe polish, coffee, chalk, Epsom salts and fish glue. It becomes a thick black tint.

He squints up at one of the bare spots on the wall, grabs a charcoal stick and begins to sketch the famous *Strawberry Roan* horse of song and folklore. The ballad about the bronc who *could never be rode* encountering the cowboy who *could never be throw'd*. The renegade *cayuse* with spavined legs, pigeon toes, little pin ears, and a big roman nose. The u-necked, rank old sun fishin' son-of-a-gun who *only lacks wings for the be on the fly*. Yes, that very horse. The Strawberry Roan is probably the most descriptive bronc song ever written. The *Roan* deserves to be painted.

The cowboy muralist likes the look of the horse's anatomy lines and traces them again with the shoe polish concoction. Then he begins to fill the Roan in with a red tint made from crayon wax, pink ink and pigeon blood. The Mexican bar owner walks over and admires the bronc. *Es un caballo muy bravo*! The old man goes back to the bar and brings the artist a bottle of cold Mexican beer. The work day has begun in earnest. The cook in the kitchen is now singing *Siete Leguas*, the song about Pancho Villa's horse. The beers arrive in regular half hour intervals as the *Strawberry Roan* comes to life on the old adobe wall. The cantina fills up with charros and vaqueros and gringo tourists, as the morning

fades into afternoon border light. Our artist begins to sway back and forth from the beer and the loud mariachichi *corridos* on the radio. *Fade on scene two*.

Roll the film title across the screen: *The Michelangelo of the Western Saloon*.

"Chief Joseph" by Tom Russell

Consider the history of art and drink. Pablo Picasso was known to doodle on bar napkins and sign them. Then he'd tear them up and laugh. *There goes a million dollars, boys.* Van Gogh must have tried the bar-sketching ruse to handle his wine and absinthe tab in Arles. The poverty stricken impressionists, expressionists, and cubists were known to coin their drink money with pencil and pen on the boulevards and in the bistros of Paris. Ragged and thirsty bohemians, drawing for drinks. It's a tradition which goes back to the cave men, who painted bulls and horses on ancient walls. They needed their grog. An artist has to eat and drink. Exchanging art for booze and grub eliminates needless middlemen and agents.

Trading art for drinks is also a notable tradition the American West. The young maestro, Charles M. Russell, swapped early drawings for drink and grub. Ed Borein, Will James, Maynard Dixon, and the best of 'em, were not beneath doodling on napkins in local watering holes. I'm assuming this, of course. I imagine Will James left hundreds of bronc scribbles on Hollywood cocktail napkins. Will was known to imbibe on occasion.

Then there was Pete Martinez, an itinerant bronc rider and cowhand who hung out at the *Tap Room Bar* in the Congress Hotel in Tucson, circa 1939. Pete drew bucking horses, wild cows, vaqueros, and desert scenes. He traded drawings for drinks. Pete's paintings and western drawings are still there, in the coffee shop and *Tap Room Bar* of the old Congress Hotel, long after Pete has drawn and drunk himself into the big railroad hotel up yonder. I'd recommend a stop at the Congress and a drink in the Tap Room. Beer, whiskey, tequila, coffee: *your call, amigo*. My favorite is the fresh lime juice Margaritas with 100% agave tequila. Pete's drawings look better with every round. They come alive, as bronc dust rolls off the pictures.

The Congress sits across from the train station in Tucson. It's one of the fine historic hotels of the Southwest, and the Tap Room is *vintage outlaw*. John Dillinger was caught outside the Congress during a hotel fire in the '30s. He'd bribed a fireman to go back up to his room and retrieve a suitcase. The fireman fetched the bag, which broke open, and Tommy Guns and revolvers fell out and rattled down the fire escape. Dillinger was busted. He was reported to have muttered: "*Well, I'll be damned.*" They say he broke out of jail with a gun carved out of soap. Another folk artist gone wrong. I used to sit in the Tap Room and ruminate over all of this history, right beneath the bucking horse art of Pete Martinez. *The cowboy who drew for drinks.*

That leads us back to the story of our cowboy artist in Calexico; Guy Welch. It's a *western* movie, sure enough. Guy Welch damn sure drew and painted for food and drinks. *The Michelangelo of the western saloon*, that's how Guy's daughter

described her father's life. I'll tell you how I stumbled upon Guy's work. Seven years ago I was driving through the outback of Alberta, forty miles away from Ian Tyson's ranch. I'd been co-writing songs with Ian and needed a break. Those long cowboy ballads like *Claude Dallas* take a lot of energy to compose, face to face, *mano a mano*, with the legendary Tyson. He's a master writer. I needed to clear my head and think about a few verses. Near the town of Nanton I saw a worn sign that heralded a "Ranch Antique Store," five miles outside of town. Figuring I might unearth something like an old Navajo rug, I drove down the gravel road.

The store stood on high ground near the main house of an old horse and cow operation. Two women ran the place, and they were quite knowledgeable about the West of yesteryear. We chatted and I perused the stock. Lots of first editions of Will James books. I thought of Will, or whatever his real name was, drinking himself to death in a Hollywood hotel bar. A French Canadian who had re-invented his destiny in the West, as did many more western artists, novelists, and ranch hands. One of the appeals of the far west was that a man could walk away from his past, concoct a new name, and cowboy, *paint*, or write himself into history. Will James could sure enough write yarns and draw bucking horses, and his illustrations inspired Ian Tyson to write the great cowboy song "*Will James*."

Guy Welch

I was thinking of Will's story and those old Hollywood hotels, when I spied and odd piece of art hanging from the back wall of the store. It was a crayon drawing on newspaper. Black crayon, with reds and blues. Wild scrawls set against newsprint and yellowing paper. A cowboy on a saddle bronc. The bronc rider was a rather toothy, cartoonish looking buckaroo with pop-eyes and a red bandana. He was waving his hat and fanning the bronc, like the *top hands* used to do on old postcards, when their horses were *going some*.

The bronc is coming directly toward the viewer, jumping off that yellow want-ad page of long ago. The horse's tongue is hanging out and, with hundreds of wild crayon lines, the artist has done a fine job of creating action. It's almost as good as a Borein or a Charles Russell sketch. Welch's work was not as controlled as these masters, but the picture's essence shimmers with that gut knowledge of western life. The drawing is signed "*Guy Welch '49*." Beneath the bronc the artist wrote: "*They sure go in for horseback ridin' down this way!*"

I loved it. The ladies hauled it down from the wall. I took a closer look. The newspaper which served as a "canvas," was a June 5, 1949 page from the want ads of the *Los Angeles Times*. A nice co-incidence, since I was born in Los Angeles around that year. As I looked closer, the real estate ads declared that houses near Wilshire Boulevard, in West L.A., were going for twelve thousand dollars in 1949. *Helluva deal*.

There was a letter written in crayon on the backside of the drawing, from Guy Welch to a friend named "Bill."

> Dear Bill: this is a sample of what I can sell for $1.00. Will send postpaid to anyone six of this size. All of different scenes of the old west. Cowboys, Indians, covered wagons, Buffalo, Long Horn steers and etc.
> So long for now,
> Guy

The other newsprint drawing was dated *April 6, 1949, North Hollywood.* On the front it said: *"Dear Friend Bill: How's every little thing up in the old cow country? Okay I hope."* Below is a drawing of mounted cowboy leading his packhorse away from a saloon. On the backside was another letter and a crayon drawing of two cowboys herding longhorns. Crayons are limited as to possibilities for shading line and color, but Welch was a *crayola maestro*. He pushed kids' coloring sticks to their limits. The letter read:

> "Well, Bill, looks like spring is just around the corner and it's time to get the old chuck wagon loaded and start feedin' the work stock some oats about twice a day with their hay. *If there is any hay*. I'll bet you're glad to see the snow go. I hope someday I'll be able to take a trip up that way again. I sure do. So long for now. Guy."

Once again this letter was drawn on the *Los Angeles Times* real estate section. April 3, 1949. I peered closer at the ads, and saw a 20 acre horse ranch listed, with barns, ranch house, and a half-mile racetrack, going for $135,000. The house had four fireplaces. The ranch was *30 minutes from downtown Hollywood*. Looked like a race horse operation gone belly-up. I wondered if my father might have been involved. Listed beneath this was a two acre chicken ranch with houses and barn for $17,000. The price included "*500 laying hens*." The

"Red Desert" by Tom Russell

headline of another ad read: "*Famous Singer Making European Tour Forced to Sell His Home:*" featuring three bedrooms, three bathes, a patio, badminton court, and gorgeous swimming pool. *Frank Sinatra? Nat King Cole? Gene Autry?* Who knew? I couldn't read the price, because Guy Welch had drawn a longhorn steer over that portion of the ad.

I kept perusing his curious form of art and I imagined old Guy Welch holed up in a North Hollywood apartment with a pile of newspapers stacked beside his easy chair. I imagined him smoking a hand-rolled cigarette and tossing back beers, as he sketched his letter-art, destined for his old cowboy drinking buddies back down the painterly trail.

I bought two of the newspaper drawings and eventually framed them. Then I began digging around for any further information about Guy Welch. He'd evidently been living in that L.A./Hollywood era of stockyards, horse and mule auctions, rodeos at Crash Corrigan's ranch, movie-horse stables near Griffith Park, and cowboy bars near the "river bottoms" in Glendale. These were cowboy watering holes where Casey Tibbs hung out, and cowboy stunt men drank and used the public phones as their business contact numbers with the film studios. The territory my father came from. The old cowboy edge of Hollywood. Welch always returned to this area.

I kept digging for more facts on Guy Welch. The Glenbow Museum in Calgary had a file on Guy because he'd painted murals in Calgary back in the 1940s. There were a few biographical facts and letters. Fragments of a roving artist's life. Welch was born in Valentine, Nebraska in 1886 and died in Vallejo, California in 1958. He grew up near the Rosebud Indian reservation and eventually married and fathered five children. He learned to sketch. He

gathered up art supplies and hit the trail. The *lean years*. A man had to feed his family.

Welch took off during the depression and made a hand-to-mouth living as painter of barroom walls. His range extended from the Mexican desert and the border towns, up to the Rockies. He established his own migratory trail. He made a few bucks here and there, or traded art murals for food, drink, and tobacco. He sent the extra money home. I don't wish to create the picture of a dissolute old cowboy bum drawing and drinking up his life. It seems Guy tried to take care of his family in the best way he knew how.

There are rumors of Guy Welch murals in Arizona, Mexicali, and the Morongo Valley of California, but I've never seen one. Time erodes mural art. I'd bet if you scraped off the walls of a dozen old cowboy bars in Salinas or Bisbee or Calexico, you might unearth interesting bucking horse frescoes by Welch. Or at least a covered wagon or a longhorn steer, or maybe faded chips of black coffee paint and a bronc head. I keep my eyes open in the old bars. I sometimes think that an extra strong Margarita might make one of those Guy Welch bucking horse scenes magically appear, like the image of our Lady of Guadalupe on the cape of Juan Diego.

The western saloon mural faced a curious shelf life. The art wasn't made to last forever. It was designed as a colorful backdrop for beer drinking and boozy contemplation over ranch palaver and a beer and a brisket sandwich, or a trio of *carne asada* tacos. Guy Welch, living dollar to dollar, beer to beer, and sleeping in his truck, was inventing his own art materials as he conjured up his personal vision of the west. He painted on burlap, newspaper print, cardboard and whitewashed adobe saloon walls. His paint was an odd concoction of chalk and fish glue; Epsom salts, beer, and ground-up crayon chunks. He

alchemized his colors and filled in the pencil and charcoal lines with homemade hues.

The fish-glue tints would fade with time, dust, cigar smoke, and afternoon sunlight. The murals went the way of the saloon and cantina west, and Guy Welch's painterly road slowed to a stall somewhere near North Hollywood, and finally Vallejo. He sent off his newspaper letters and occasionally sold his crayon bucking horses and western scenes. A dollar bought you six. They were probably mailed off in manila legal size envelopes which had drawings on front and back. That was in an era when people actually *wrote* letters and drew on them. These days not many of us can't hand-write a page without having our hand seize up.

I came across more pieces of Guy's art in a Bakersfield antique store. I bought two more paintings. They were fashioned with crayon, watercolor and ink on cardboard. The frames were handmade out of old fence slats tacked together with nails and wood glue. The corners were whittled down with a pocket knife. *True folk art*. These were scenes of cowboys and cattle drives. On the backside of one of the paintings were more little studies of horses and cattle. Wonderful little unfinished renderings in the tradition of Russell and Borein.

The Glenbow Museum unearthed even more fragments of Welch's life and sent me files. There was an odd newspaper column from Alberta about the discovery of a large Guy Welch painting on a canvas tarp that had been thrown over a Farmer's haystack. Guy might have enjoyed that particular ending. There were also pictures of a few bars in which Guy painted murals. One was the *Rodeo Card Room* in Salinas. Another was the *Morongo Valley Inn* in California. Finally, there were tell-tale letters and anecdotes from Welch's daughter about her father's creative process:

> *My father was sort of a Michelangelo of the Western Saloon...when he painted, he forgot to eat. He drank beer all day, because it was offered to him by the bar owners... during the great depression he slept in his car in the alley behind saloons...when he ran out of paint he painted with a concoction of shoe polish, beer and Epsom salts...*

I have an affinity for Guy Welch' story. I've dabbled with the brush myself. And I've drawn for drinks. A few years ago I painted a six foot painting of two Mexican vaqueros with jars of *pulque* in their hands. Pulque is the fermented sap of the *maguey* plant and a traditional native beverage in Mexico. It was my first large, rudimentary oil. I called it "*The Pulque Drinkers*," and hung it in our laundry room out here in El Paso. I'd always imagined it would look good in the right Mexican bar. Eventually my wife hauled it over to a famous cantina in Austin, Texas, and traded it for a voucher for 500 bucks in dinners and drinks. *Homage to Guy Welch*. Those Margaritas and taco plates, enjoyed over span of a year or two, have tasted great, since they were bartered for with art. As I drank up the voucher I sometimes lifted a glass to Will James, Pete Martinez and Guy Welch. The Western brotherhood of all those who've drawn and painted for drinks.

Guy Welch's life is worthy of a movie, or at least a cowboy ballad. He stepped right out of the classic cowboy verse: "*The Face on the Barroom Floor*." I first heard that poem recited by my tobacco-chewing cowboy brother Pat, who'd packed mules into the Sierra Nevada's in the 1950s. I think Pat might have learned the poem from an old muleteer named Rayburn Crane. I heard the poem again, in different variation, on an old Tex Ritter 78 record. Whenever I hear it now

I close my eyes and see a beat up truck parked in an alley down in a Mexican border town. This old cowboy painter is sleeping on the front seat, you see. He wakes up and staggers into the cantina, and right into our poem and movie:

"And as the songs and witty stories came through the open door
A vagabond crept slowly in and posed upon the floor...
"Say, boys, if you give me another whiskey I'll be glad
To draw right here a picture of the face that drove me mad..."

He draws a woman's face. Then maybe a bucking horse. A long horn steer. A blood-red sunset over giant saguaros. The true west of the spirit, rendered in tints of shoe polish, beer, fish glue and Epsom salts. Art conjured up by a wayfaring cowboy artist living hand to mouth. Beer to beer. Guy Welch. The Michelangelo of the western saloon. Roll the credits, boys.

A book of Tom Russell's art: *Blue Horse/Red Desert* was published by Bangtail Press. Tom Russell's new record *Mesabi* is available on Shout! Factory Records. See www.tomrussell.com
Russell's paintings are available from The Rainbow Man in Santa Fe: www.rainbowman.com

The Photography of Con Haffmans

Born and raised in the Netherlands, photographer Con Haffmans emigrated to the United States at the age of 19 to take a job working for a Swiss trainer of Thoroughbred hunter-jumpers. After six years on the job, he took up a career as a television cameraman, learning the trade through internships and on-the-job training.

In 1990, Con began traveling throughout the American West, visiting ranches and photographing the cowboys who worked them. His black-and-white images of Great Basin buckaroos have come to be one of the most important photographic records depicting the culture. "My mission has always been not to ever pose anything," he says, "and to shoot documentary-style photos so the viewer could get a glimpse of the real working cowboy life."

Con still works as a cameraman, filming the Thoroughbred Triple Crown races (the Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes and Belmont Stakes), the Breeders Cup, and major races in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates. He now bases his photography career in southern Utah, where he relocated in 1998. When he isn't filming or shooting photos, he often day works on area ranches.

To view more of his images, visit www.conhaffmansphotography.com.

Sam Brown throwing a nice heel loop. Texas Panhandle

Nevada Cow Boss. Brent Smith, Fallon, Nevada

Jeff Wolf getting a drink alongside the horses at the Wood Ranch near Cedar City, Utah

Starting a young horse at the old Porter Rockwell corrals near Eureka, Utah

Buckaroo cleaning his spade. Three Creek Ranch near Rogerson, Idaho

Working the Irons. Branding at the Quien Sabe Ranch, Texas Panhandle

Cowboy Coffee. Jeff Wolf and Bill Boswell at the Wolf family ranch camp near Goshen, Utah

Deahl Rooks saddling his favorite horse on the family ranch. Buena Vista, Colorado

Enough Said

A VISIT WITH BUCK BRANNAMAN

Patience, an important quality in any solid relationship

By Buck Brannaman

Horses are not the only ones who reveal things about themselves at my clinics. I often say that given a few days with you and your horse, I'll make some discoveries about you that you probably don't want others to find out. For some strange reason, when people come to an arena full of horses and people with a crowd watching them, they almost want to be discovered, despite their attempts to cover up their fears. If you go to enough of these horse clinics, you'll soon realize that what's going on is as much about horses working on their fears as it is about people doing the same thing.

And fear can be projected in a lot of different ways. Some folks try to cover their fear by being pushy in a way that it tends to make you want to push back. They can be aggressive toward their horse and aggressive toward anyone who approaches and tries to help by offering some constructive suggestions. Some people find all kinds of excuses why they don't or can't work with their horse, why they don't spend time with them, why they don't take care of their horse's needs. Some folks' fear even leads them to confront those who try to help them. And other folks' fear causes them to seek help in a way that only seems confrontational.

Frankly, some of the questions that get asked at some of my clinics can seem very confrontational at the outset. Folks doing the asking can seem to me that they were grasping the things I wanted them to learn, but at the same time, resisted accepting the fact that they just weren't where they wanted to be, yet.

When someone like this shows up, and the guys who work for me and I sit down for our meal at the end of the first day, I often hear comments like, "Boy, how about that guy that was asking questions there today? He was

photo courtesy Buck Brannaman

sure after you. It was like he wanted to pick a fight with you. What the hell was that all about?" Now I've been doing this for almost thirty years, and when I hear things like this, I always caution people to hold off a bit. I find myself saying things like, "Don't make up your mind the first day of a clinic about someone." I've done that myself in the past and I've been proven wrong more times than I care to admit. Sometimes folks just need a little time to believe in themselves, like their horses.

Even though I think I've gotten better at recognizing that, I didn't start out that way. There was a time that I didn't believe much in myself or what I had to offer, and I'd find myself coming across as defensive, or aggressive, or too ready to defend myself when I wasn't really being attacked anyway. I began to see that when I felt offended by something and felt like lashing out, it almost always had something to do with my feelings about myself at the time. If my self-esteem was low, so was my patience. Of course, some people would say that I've just mellowed over time and I probably have, but I don't think it's that simple. What I know is that I'm so pleased that what I do for a living does help people make this important journey of their own. I may not ever see them again, but I feel humbled that I was able to make a positive impact on their lives. It's a responsibility I don't take lightly. I know that I'm never going to hit 100% and help everyone, but when I can help people gain confidence to succeed, it underlines the importance of my responsibility to be a good example and not to judge others too quickly.

Hidden Water

By Dane Coolidge

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

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

CHAPTER VIII

A YEAR'S MAIL

A The beef herd was safely delivered at Bender, the feeders disposed of at Moroni, and the checks sent on to the absentee owner, who did not know a steer from a stag; the *rodéo* hands were paid off and successfully launched upon their big drunk; bills were paid and the Summer's supplies ordered in, and then at last the superintendent and *rodéo* boss settled down to a little domesticity.

Since the day that Hardy had declined to drink with him Creede had quietly taken to water, and he planted a bag of his accumulated wages in a corner of the mud floor, to see, as he facetiously expressed it, if it would grow. Mr. Bill Johnson had also saved his "cow money" from Black Tex and banked it with Hardy, who had a little cache of his own, as well. With their finances thus nicely disposed of the two partners swept the floor, cleaned up the cooking dishes, farmed out their laundry to a squaw, and set their house in order generally. They

were just greasing up their *reatas* for a run after the wild horses of Bronco Mesa when Rafael pulled in with a wagon-load of supplies and destroyed their peaceful life.

It was late when the grinding and hammering of wheels upon the bowlders of the creek-bed announced his near approach and Creede went out to help unload the provisions. A few minutes later he stepped into the room where Hardy was busily cooking and stood across the table from him with his hands behind his back, grinning mischievously.

"Rufe," he said, "you've got a girl."

Hardy looked up quickly and caught the significance of his pose, but he did not smile. He did not even show an interest in the play.

"How do you figure that out?" he asked, indifferently.

"Oh, I know," drawled Creede, "Got a letter from her."

A single hawk-like glance was the only answer to this sally.

"She says: 'Why the hell don't you write!'" volunteered the cowboy.

"'S that so!" commented Hardy, and then he went on with his cooking.

For a minute Creede stood watching him, his eyes keen to detect the slightest quaver, but the little man seemed suddenly to have forgotten him; he moved about absently, mechanically, dropping nothing, burning nothing, yet far away, as in a dream.

"Huh!" exclaimed Creede, disgusted with his own make-believe, "you don't seem to care whether school keeps or not. I'll excuse you from any further word this evenin'–here's your mail."

He drew a bundle of letters from behind his back and dropped it heavily upon the table, but even then Hardy did not rise.

"Guess the Old Man must 've forwarded my mail," he remarked, smiling at the size of the pack. "I've been knocking around so, I have n't received a letter in a year. Chuck 'em on my desk, will ye?"

"Sure," responded Creede, and stepping across the broad living-room he threw the bundle carelessly on the bed.

"You're like me," he remarked, drawing his chair up sociably to supper, "I ain't got a letter fer so long I never go near the dam' post office."

"Ever been in St. Louis?" he inquired casually. "No? They say it's a fine burg. Think I'll save up my *dinero* and try it a whirl some day."

The supper table was cleared and Creede had lit his second cigarette before Hardy reverted to the matter of his mail.

"Well," he said, "I might as well look over those letters–may be a thousand-dollar check amongst them."

Then, stepping into his room, he picked up the package, examined it curiously, and cut the cords with his knife.

A sheaf of twenty or more letter spilled out and, sitting on the edge of the bed, he shuffled them over in the uncertain light of the fire, noting each inscription with a quick glance; and as he gathered up the last he quietly tucked three of them beneath the folds of his blankets–two in the same hand, bold and dashing yet stamped with a certain feminine delicacy and grace, and each envelope of a pale blue; the third also feminine, but inscribed in black and white, a crooked little hand that strayed across the page, yet modestly shrank from trespassing on the stamp.

With the remainder of his mail Hardy blundered over to the table, dumping the loose handful in a great pile before the weak glimmer of the lamp.

"There," he said, as Creede blinked at the heap, "I reckon that's mail enough for the both of us. You can read the advertisements and I'll see what the judge has to say for himself. Pitch in, now." He waved his hand towards a lot of business envelopes, but Creede shook his head and continued to smoke dreamily.

"Nope," he said briefly, "don't interest me."

He reached out and thumbed the letters over

dumbly, spelling out a long word here and there or scrutinizing some obscure handwriting curiously, as if it was Chinese, or an Indian sign on a rock. Then, shoving back his chair, he watched Hardy's face as he skimmed rapidly through the first letter.

"Good news in the first part of it and bad in the last," he remarked, as Hardy put it down.

"That's right," admitted Hardy, "but how'd you know?"

He gazed up at his complacent partner with a look of innocent wonder, and Creede laughed.

"W'y, hell, boy," he said, "I can read you like a book. Your face tells the whole story as you go along. After you've been down here in Arizona a few seasons and got them big eyes of yourn squinched down a little–well, I may have to ast you a few questions, then."

He waved his hand in a large gesture and blew out a cloud of smoke, while a twinkle of amusement crept into Hardy's unsquinched eyes.

"Maybe I'm smoother than I look," he suggested dryly. "You big, fat fellows get so self-satisfied sometimes that you let lots of things go by you."

"Well, I'll take my chances on you," answered Creede placidly. "What did the old judge say?"

"He says you did fine with the cattle," said Hardy, "and sold 'em just in time–the market fell off within a week after we shipped."

"Um-huh," grunted Creede. "And what's the bad bunch of news at the end?"

The bad bunch of news was really of a personal nature, stirring up unpleasant memories, but Hardy passed it off by a little benevolent dissimulation.

"He says he's mighty glad I steered the sheep away, but there is something funny going on back in Washington; some combine of the sheep and lumber interests has got in and blocked the whole Forest Reserve business and there won't be any Salagua Forest Reserve

this year. So I guess my job of sheep-wrangler is going to hold; at least the judge asked me to say with it until Fall."

"Well, you stay then, Rufe," said Creede earnestly, "because I've kinder got stuck on you–I like your style." He added half apologetically.

"All right, Jeff," said Hardy. "Here's another letter–from my father. See if you can guess what it is like."

He set his face rigidly and read the short letter through without a quaver.

"You and the Old Man have had a fallin'-out," observed Creede, with a shrewd grin, "and he says when you git good and tired of bein' a dam' fool you might as well come home."

"Well, that's about the size of it," admitted Hardy. "I never told you much about my father, did I?"

"Never knew you had one," said Creede, "until Bill Johnson began to blow about what an Injun-fighter he was. I reckon that's where you git your sportin' blood, ain't it?"

"Well, I'll tell you," began Hardy. "The Old Man and I never did get along together. He's used to commanding soldiers and all that, and I'm kind of quiet, but he always took a sneaking pride in me when I was a boy, I guess. Anyway, every time I'd get into a fight around the post and lick two or three Mexican kids, or do some good work riding or shooting, he's say I'd be a man before my mother, or something like that–but that was as far as he got. And all the time, on the quiet, he was educating me for the Army. His father was a captain, and he's a colonel, and I can see now he was lotting on my doing as well or better–but hell, that only made matters worse."

He slid down in his chair and gazed into the fire gloomily. It was the first time Creede had heard his partner use even the mildest of the range expletives, for in that particular he was still a tenderfoot, and the word suddenly conveyed to him the depths of the little man's abandonment and despair.

"Why–what was the matter?" he inquired sympathetically. "Could n't you git no appointment?"

"Huh!" growled Hardy. "I guess you know, all right. Look at me!" he exclaimed, in a sudden gust of passion and resentment. "Why, damn it, man, I'm an inch too short!"

"Well–I'll–be–dogged!" breathed Creede. "I never thought of that!"

"No," rejoined Hardy bitterly, "nor the Old Man either–not until I stopped growing! Well, he has n't had a bit of use for me since. That's the size of it. And he did n't take any pains to conceal the fact–most army men don't. There's only one man in the world to them, and that's a soldier; and if you're not a soldier, you're nothing.

He waved a hand as if dismissing himself from the universe, and sank moodily into his seat, while Creede looked him over in silence.

"Rufe," he said quietly, "d' ye remember that time when I picked you to be boss sheep-wrangler, down at Bender? Well, I might as well tell you about that now–'t won't do no harm. The old judge could n't figure out what it was I see in you to recommend you for the job. Like's not you don't know yourself. *He* thought I was pickin' you because you was a peaceful guy, and would n't fight Black Tex; but that's where he got fooled, and fooled bad! I picked you because I knew dam' well you *would* fight!"

He leaned far over across the table and his eyes glowed with a fierce light.

"D' ye think I want some little suckin' mamma's-joy of a diplomat on my hands when it comes to a show-down with them sheepmen?" he cried. "No, by God, I want a *man*, and you're the boy, Rufe; so shake!"

He rose and held out his hand. Hardy took it.

"I wouldn't have sprung this on you, pardner," he continued apologetically, "if I did n't see you so kinder down in the mouth about your old man. But I jest want you to know that they's one man that appreciates you for a plain scrapper. And I'll tell you another thing; when the time comes you'll jest as big over the top of a six-shooter as I do, and stand only half the chanst to git hit. W'y, shucks!" he exclaimed magnanimously, "my size is agin' me at every turn; my hose can't hardly pack me, I eat such a hell of a lot, and, well, I never can git a pair of pants to fit me. What's this here letter?"

He picked one up at random, and Hardy ascertained that his tailor some six months previously had moved to a new and more central location, where he would be pleased to welcome all his old customers. But the subject of diminutive size was effectually dismissed and, having cheered up his little friend as best he could, Creede seized the occasion to retire. Lying

upon his broad back in his blankets, with Tommy purring comfortably in the hollow of his arm, he smoked out his cigarette in speculative silence, gazing up at the familiar stars whose wheelings mark off the cowboy's night, and then dropped quietly to sleep, leaving his partner to brood over his letters alone.

For a long time he sat there, opening them one by one–the vague and indifferent letters which drift in while one is gone; and at last he stole silently across the dirt floor and brought out the three letters from his bed. There in a moment, if he had been present, Creede might have read him like a book, his lips drawn tight, his eyes big and staring, as he tore open one of the pale blue envelopes with trembling hands. The fragments of a violet, shattered by the long journey, fell before him as he plucked out the note, and its delicate fragrance rose up like incense as he read. He hurried through the missive, as if seeking something which was not there, then his hungry eyes left the unprofitable page and wandered about the empty room, only to come back to those last words: "Always your Friend, Kitty Bonnair."

"Always your friend," he repeated bitterly–"always your friend. Ah, God!" He sighed wearily and shook his head. For a moment he lapsed into dreams; then, reaching out, he picked up the second letter, postmarked over a year before, and examined it idly. The very hour of its collection was recorded–"Ferry Sta. 1:30 A.M." – and the date he could never forget. Written on that very same day, and yet its message had never reached him!

He could see as in a vision the shrouded form of Kitty Bonnair slipping from her door at midnight to fling a final word after him, not knowing how far he would flee; he could see the lonely mail collectors, half obscured in the San Francisco fog, as he scooped the letter from the box with the many others and boarded the car for the ferry. It was a last retort, and likely bitter, for he had spoken in anger himself, and Kitty was not a woman to be denied. There was an exaggerated quirk to the square corners of her letter, a brusque shading of the down strokes–undoubtedly Kitty was angry. But for once he had disarmed her–it was a year after, now, and he had read her forgiveness first! Yet it was with a strange sinking of heart that he opened the blue envelope and stared at the scribbled words:

> Dear Friend That Was: My heart is very sore to-night–I had trusted you so–I had depended upon you so–and now you have deliberately broken all your faith and promises. Rufus, I had thought you different from the other men–more gentle, more considerate, more capable of a true friendship which I fondly hoped would last forever–but now, oh, I can never forgive you! Just

when life was heaviest with disappointments, just when I was leaning upon you most as a true friend and comrade–then you must needs spoil it all. And after I had told you I could never love any one! Have you forgotten all that I told you in the balcony? Have you forgotten all that I have risked for the friendship I held so dear? And then to spoil it all? Oh, I hate you–I hate you!

He stopped and stiffened in his chair, and his eyes turned wild with horror; then he gathered his letters together blindly and crept away to bed. In the morning he arose and went about his work with mouse-like quietness, performing all things thoroughly and well, talking, even laughing, yet with a droop like that of a wounded creature that seeks only to hide and escape.

Creede watched him furtively, hung around the house for a while, then strode out to the pasture and caught up his horse.

"Be back this aft," he said, and rode majestically away up the cañon, where he would be out of the way. For men, too, have their instincts and intuitions, and they are even willing to leave alone that which they cannot remedy and do not understand.

As Creede galloped off, leaving the ranch of a suddenly lonely and quiet, Tommy poked his head anxiously out through a slit in the canvas bottom of the screen door and began to cry–his poor cracked voice, all broken from calling for help from the coyotes, quavering dismally. In his most raucous tones he continued this lament for his master until at last Hardy gathered him up and held him to his breast.

"Ah, Kitty, Kitty," he said, and at the caressing note in his voice the black cat began to purr hoarsely, raising his scrawny head in the ecstasy of being loved. Thief and reprobate though he was, and sadly given to leaping upon the table and flying spitefully at dogs, even that rough creature felt the need of love; how much more the sensitive and high-bred man, once poet and scholar, now cowboy and sheep-wrangler, but always the unhappy slave of Kitty Bonnair.

The two letters lay charred to ashes among the glowing coals, but their words, even the kindest meant, were seared deep in his heart, fresh hurts upon older scars, and as he sat staring at the gaunt *sahuaros*

on the hilltops he meditated gloomily upon his reply. Then, depositing Tommy on the bed, he sat down at his desk before the iron-barred window and began to write.

> Dear Friend That Was: Your two letters came together–the one that you have just sent, and the one written on that same night, which I hope I may some day forget. It was not a very kind letter– I am sorry that I should ever have offended you, but it was not gently done. No friend could every speak so to another, I am sure. As for the cause, I am a human being, a man like other men, and I am not ashamed. Yet that I should so fail to read your mind I am ashamed. Perhaps it was my egotism, which made me over-bold, thinking that any woman could love me. But if what I offered was nothing to you, if even for a moment you hated me, it is enough. Now for all this talk of friendship–I am not your friend and never will be; and if, after what has passed, you are my friend, I ask but one thing–let me forget. For I will never come back, I will never write, I will never submit. Surely, with all that life offers you, you can spare me the humiliation of being angry with you.
>
> I am now engaged in work which, out of consideration for Judge Ware, I cannot leave; otherwise I would not ask you not to write to me.
>
> Trusting that you will remember me kindly to your mother, I remain, sincerely,
>
> RUFUS HARDY

He signed his name at the bottom, folded the sheet carefully, and thrust the sealed envelope into an inner pocket. Then for the first time, he drew out the third letter and spread its pages before him–a long letter, full of news, yet asking no questions. The tense lines about his lips relaxed as he read, he smiled whimsically as he heard of the queer doings of his old-time friends; how these two had run away and got married in order to escape a church wedding, how Tupper Browne had painted a likeness of Mather in Hades–after the "Dante" of Doré–and had been detected in the act; and then this little note, cued casually near the end:

> Kitty Bonnair has given up art for the present on account of her eyes, and has gone in for physical culture and riding lessons in the park. She dropped in at the last meeting of The Circle, and I told her how curiously father had encountered you at Bender. We all miss you very much at The Circle–in fact, it is not doing so well of late. Kitty has not attended a meeting in months, and I often wonder where we may look for another Poet, Philosopher, and Friend–unless you will come back! Father did not tell me where you had been or what you intended to do, but I hope you have not given up the Muse. To encourage you I will send down a book, now and then, and you may send me a poem. Is it a bargain? Then good-bye.
>
> With best wishes,
>
> LUCY WARE.
>
> P.S. –I met your father on the street the other day, and he seemed very much pleased to hear how well you were getting along.

Hardy put the letter down and sighed.

"Now there's a thoroughly nice girl," he said. "I wonder why she doesn't get married." Then, reaching for a fresh sheet of paper, he began to write, describing the beauty of the country; the noble qualities of his horse, Chapuli, the Grasshopper; the march of the vast army of sheep; Creede, Tommy, and whatnot, with all the pent-up enthusiasm of a year's loneliness. When it all ended he looked at the letter with a smile, wondering whether to send it by freight or

express. Six cents in stamps was the final solution of the problem, and as his pocketbook contained only four he stuck them on and awaited his partner's return.

"Say, Jeff," he called, as Creede came in from the pasture, "have you got any stamps?"

"Any which?" inquired Creede suspiciously.

"Any postage stamps–to put on letters."

"Huh!" exclaimed Creede. "You must think I've got a girl–or important business in the States. No, I'll tell you. The only stamp I've got is in the glass frame, hung up on the wall–picture of George Washington, you know. Have n't you never seen it? W'y, it's right there in the parler–jest above the pianney–and a jim-dandy piece of steel engraving she is, too." He grinned broadly as he concluded this running fire of jest, but his partner remained serious to the end.

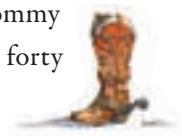
"Well," he said, "I guess I'll go down to Moroni in the morning, then."

"What ye goin' down there for?" demanded Creede incredulously.

"Why, to buy a stamp, of course," replied Hardy, "it's only forty miles, isn't it?" And early in the morning, true to his word, he saddled up Chapuli and struck out down the river.

From the doorway Creede watched him curiously, his lips parted in a dubious smile.

"There's something funny goin' on here, ladies," he observed sagely, "something funny–and I'm dogged if I savvy what it is." He stooped and scooped up Tommy in one giant paw. "Well, Tom, Old Socks," he said, holding him up where he could sniff delicately at the rafters, "you've got a pretty good nose, how about it, now–can you smell a rat?" But even Tommy could not explain why a man should ride forty miles in order to buy a stamp.



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Kicking it Up a Notch

The Western States Ranch Rodeo Association raises the bar on stock saddle bronc riding.

Photography by Mary Williams Hyde

Good bronc riders are often considered the elite and most highly regarded cowboys on a crew. It takes a special kind of cowboy to be a stock saddle bronc rider. Not only must the rider respect athletic, free-spirited broncs that have a single-minded mission of bucking off the riders, but the cowboy also must seek the thrill of getting one rode. It also takes someone who recognizes the risk of getting injured in the chute or during a ride and not being able to do his job back at the ranch.

Nolan O'Leary

The Western States Ranch Rodeo Association, now in it's third season of sanctioning rodeos throughout the West, recognizes the talent and dedication it takes for a bronc rider to qualify for the WSRRA National Finals. In its effort to evolve and offer the fairest and most dynamic competition for its members and spectators, the association has modified its stock saddle bronc riding rules for the 2012 season to help take the event to the next level.

Making it Count

Throughout the season, bronc riders enter WSRRA-sanctioned rodeos and earn points for placing. The past two years, the top 30 bronc riders based on total points earned in the association at the end of the season would vie for championship honors in a progressive, clean-slate finals. After the first 30 rides, only the top 20 riders from the first round advanced to the second round, and then the top 10 riders from the second round made it into the short-go to determine the champion.

"The problem with this format was that there were several guys in the top spots going into the finals who were going down the road hard and making a real effort to ride bucking horses and earn points in the association," says WSRRA founder and producer Marc Page. "If they bucked off in one of the long rounds at the finals, they didn't make it into the short round and really didn't get anything for their effort during the rodeo season."

Steve Gillan on Glen Shelley's great bronc South Mountain

Considering the suggestions of the membership, Page announced that only the top 15 bronc riders at the end of the season will qualify for the National Finals. Those riders will carry a point value into the finals, ranging from 30 point for first place to two points for 15th place. The top five riders in each of the four rounds will earn additional points. The rider with the most points at the end of the four rounds will be the champion. Riders also will be scored on a four-head average, and the top five average winners will also be awarded, as will the top three riders based on year-end points.

"This new format gives riders three ways to earn money and is designed to showcase the premier bronc riders and raise the level of talent at the finals," Page says. "A serious competitor exposes himself to the rigors of the event, enters several rodeos during the season and rides several horses to qualify for the finals."

Spectators will get to see the same 15 riders in each round, follow their scores and see where their favorite riders rank.

Better Broncs

Besides expecting more from its bronc riders, the association will also be encouraging the stock contractors to raise the bar. Five members who are also top bronc riders in the association have been appointed bronc riding representatives for the association. At least


WESTERN STATES RANCH RODEO ASSOCIATION
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THE COMPETITION TIGHTENS UP! THIS YEAR
ONLY THE TOP FIFTEEN RIDERS
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CONTACT MARC PAGE, WSRRA FOR MORE INFORMATION 916-296-7326
Photo of Wyatt Duncan on one of Glen Shelley's tough ranch broncs by Mary Williams Hyde

Travis Yutzie

one will be at each event evaluating stock contractors to decide who will be invited to bring their stock to the WSRRA National Finals.

"They will be the face of the association and will be grading stock contractors on their horses, conduct, pickup men and all the things that make a great bronc riding production," Page explains.

Six stock contractors supply broncs for the National Finals. For the past two years, Page has invited the same five stock contractors to bring horses. The contractors are Wally Blossom, Wes Clegg, David Hogan, Jess Jones and Glen Shelley. Now, the contractors will have to prove themselves and their stock to maintain their spot at the National Finals. Plus, they must provide stock for at least three WSRRA-sanctioned events and own the horses.

Page and the bronc riding reps have also developed a rating system to evaluate each bronc's performance at the finals.

"If the horses' scores don't meet our standards, the contractor won't be allowed to come back with the same number of horses," Page explains. "We want to make sure we have the best horses at the finals. The guys who qualify for the finals deserve to be on the best horses with the best chances of winning."

The WSRRA National Finals will be held November 1-4 at the Winnemucca Events Complex in Winnemucca, Nevada. For more information, visit wsrra.org.

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Your Horse's Feet, A Series

A Perspective on Horses' Feet

By Pete Healey, APF

Recently I read a terrific book called *Outliers: The Story of Success* by Malcom Gladwell. The point of the book was to show how successful people *made* them successful. A part that stuck with me was about how culture contributes to how we communicate and how that might dictate a certain outcome. An example Mr. Gladwell gave was about an airline from a foreign country that was having a rash of plane crashes. In that country it was culturally incorrect for someone to question the acts of a person with more authority than themselves. Subsequently a pilot would be on course to fly a plane into the side of a mountain without objection from the rest of the cockpit crew because it was incorrect to intervene. They finally straightened the problem out by finding a new way to communicate.

I see this same scenario here in this country between many veterinarians and farriers. Historically the Vet has always been the captain in how we address lameness and the farrier is the technician, applying the mechanical treatments. The problem is that neither of these two specialties has a standardized measurement system for evaluating the foot. This while in addition, both industries focus on different ends of the spectrum. The Veterinarian is studied in anatomy and diagnosis and the farrier is expert in hands-on application. The lacking middle ground for both parties is biomechanics. I work at a clinic that has the best diagnostic tools in the industry. Everyday I see the feet of horses that go through the MRI (we pull the shoes before they go in the magnet and replace them after they are done); I have yet to see a horse with good feet and rarely an accurately shod horse go through the MRI.

Most of these horses are not cheap, yard horses – rather they are mid- to high-level performance athletes. Although the injury may not be directly in the foot, the foot has a mechanical influence on the rest of the leg and although I work on about 10% of these horses, the rest go back to where they came from. Do they get help? I can't tell for sure, often we're not allowed to point out the mechanical problems to the referring vet. What's ironic is that I've never met an owner who didn't want their horse fixed. What's worse, I've never met a horse that didn't want to be fixed; you can see the pain in their eyes.

Many of us can't see the forest for the trees when it comes to the horse's foot. The reason is we, as horse owners, do not have a standard, learnable system. If this could be implemented in the universities and the shoeing schools, the result for the horse would be phenomenal. It would make life easier for the veterinarian and the farrier as well. A numerical evaluation system would help establish a language to communicate problems. And only when we start communicating can we stop flying these horses into the side of a mountain.

Visit www.balancedbreakover.com and see the basis for what I am talking about.

Sam Wisnom, Artist

Tucson artist, Sam Wisnom is throwback to the halcyon days of classic art school training. Having studied at the legendary Art Center School of Design (as it was called then) in Los Angeles – after using his GI Bill proceeds to study at San Jose State in northern California – Wisnom was hired right out of Art Center in New York by the prestigious Cooper Studio, doing everything from magazine covers to ad illustrations. This was an era of true, deadline based "commercial" art and as Wisnom remembers, "You did everything and anything you could to keep going. It was stressful at times, but it's what I do so choices are made."

Wisnom and his wife Dody loved the West and it's call was simply too strong so they packed up and moved to an area near Tucson and never looked back. That was 1966 and Sam Wisnom has had a successful career as a "portrayer" of the people and ways of the West ever since. We are pleased to show some of Sam's fine work. For more information, go to www.southwesternbronzes.com

Ridin High

Goin For Goal

Runnin Wild

Trinity Seely

'Thoughts and Music From a Ranch Wife.'

By Bruce Pollock

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDXBfjUqHJQ&feature=youtu.be (Rides For The Brand)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJGiS7fC2L4 (A Cowboy Song)

Thanks to Range Radio and *Ranch & Reata* magazine, we have the pleasure to discover new and amazing talent to write about and of course play their music on Range Radio. In this Issue we feature our cover girl, Trinity Seely, ranch wife and mother to three children and one more new baby due in June.

Trinity was born in Washington State and raised in the Chilcotin of British Columbia, Canada, where her parents operated a Guest Ranch flying visitors in and out of remote lakes. This is where Trinity learned the hard work of ranch life from cleaning cabins and rooms, helping to prepare meals and then at night, entertaining guests with music as a young member of the family band. Trinity credits her parents for giving her the opportunity to live in a special place and learn that family and hard work together are the bonds that last. Always on a horse after the chores, Trinity

learned to ride and trust in her horse.

"To him I owe it all...if it wasn't for my horse...if it wasn't for all those long hours of work...if it wasn't for the heartache and trouble I've seen...who would I be." These are the final lyrics from Trinity's song "Who Would I Be."

Trinity's first CD is a pure tribute to her belief and gratitude to live as a rancher's wife and a proud mother with the ability to give their children the Cowboy life...a life mixed with truth, commitment and love of life and family.

And then; "I know what it's like to be...the wife and the lover to a Cowboy...Cause he rides for the brand... and he rides for me...everything he does he does whole heartedly...and I know he will never quit on me...cause he rides for the brand." These lyrics by Trinity are from "He Rides For The Brand," a tribute song to her husband Jeff, on her first CD.

photos courtesy Mary Williams Hyde and Trinity Seely

Trinity credits her music inspiration from artists such as Ian Tyson, Chris Ledoux, Michael Martin Murphey, Don Edwards and of course, Brenn Hill, who produced her album along with Ryan Tilby.

We spoke to Brenn Hill, one of our core Western artists on Range Radio about Trinity and Brenn could not stop discussing the authentic values that are represented in Trinity's music. Her truth and representation of her life in her music and lyrics became his inspiration to help her get this start. Great job Brenn!

"Right now I just really want to keep the music real, to get through and speak to people in the few short minutes I have. To leave an impression on how much the Cowboy Way means to my family and me, how real this lifestyle is to so many more than just us and to help perpetuate the values and lifestyle of the Cowboy. I'm a pretty simple person; I don't need a whole lot to make me happy...just a horse, a good fittin' saddle and my family. We are very family oriented and my kids and husband are top priority."

Trinity wants to thank Roy Jaxon of Jaxon Built Hat Co., Bruce Bowers of Bar None Boots and Custom Cowboy Gear made by Mike and Cindy Keetch for their support and sponsorship. Trinity also has a special thanks to; "My Cowboy, husband Jeff, for his support of me. You truly Ride For The Brand."

You can hear Trinity now on www.rangeradio.com

The Road Trip List

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

#5, 6, 7, 8 – Emmylou Harris, Neil Young, Nicolette Larson and John Stewart

These four albums are go-to standards for long road trips – or even a quick trip to Home Depot for duck tape or a billion AA batteries. We have had multiple albums in the past but these are either launch vehicles – certainly for the late Nicolette Larson (See *Classics*, Page 8 of this issue) or seminal releases by the rest. The key to all of these is in the writing and to the unique sounds the individual artists brought to that writing. Former Kingston Trio great, John Stewart's *July, You're A Woman* and Neil Young's *Lotta Love* are windows to a simpler time. All four of these records will make any trip worth the price of gas. Well, maybe.

***NICOLETTE* – Nicolette Larson**

After backing-up on Neil Young's 70s *Comes A Time*, Nicolette Larson pounced with her self-titled freshman album. Born in Helena, Montana, her musical career took off after Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt introduced her to Young. After meeting with Young, she said, "Neil ran down all the songs he had just written, about twenty of them. We sang harmonies with him and he was jazzed." Ronstadt and Larson cut vocals for Young's *American Stars 'n Bars* album at Young's California La Honda ranch – the two women are billed on the album as "the Saddlebags." After that album, Young invited Larson to Nashville to sing on *Comes A Time*. Larson's self-titled album was very well received and included such classics as her big hit, "Lotta Love," "Rhumba Girl" and the always politically correct, "Mexican Divorce." Larson died in 1997 of a cerebral edema.

"A FINE HAT FITS LIKE A GOOD FRIEND."

– Charles M. Russell

KEVIN MURPHY

Hatter

3569 Sagunto St. Santa Ynez, CA 93460

805.686.4790 kjmurphys.com

ELITE HOTEL – **Emmylou Harris**

Emmylou Harris entered the spotlight during the singer-songwriter-seventies with *Pieces of The Sky*, a solid launch vehicle that she followed up with a strikingly similar sophomore effort in *Elite Hotel* that continued to blend traditional and contemporary elements. The album contained several songs penned by her pal, Gram Parsons including "Sin City" and "Wheels." But the big action came with her take on two country standards Buck Owens, "Together Again" and Don Gibson's "Sweet Dreams" (made famous by Patsy Cline).

COMES A TIME – **Neil Young and Crazy Horse**

Right after Young's release of the seminal, three-LP set, *Decade* and before the earth shattering *Rust Never Sleeps*; Neil Young quietly opened the gate on *Comes A Time* – a gentle record yet with some of his memorable songs. The LP was also the moment that Nicolette Larson moved from back-up singer to center stage. "Lotta Love" became a breakout hit for Larson and Young helped nurture her way-too-short career before her tragic death. From "Peace of Mind" to a fine rendition of Ian Tyson's timeless "Four Strong Winds;" this album rides the 'ol Victrola quite a bit.

CALIFORNIA BLOODLINES – **John Stewart**

In 1961, folk-singer and Civil War aficionado, John Stewart joined the legendary Kingston Trio with Bob Shane and Nick Reynolds, writing, performing and helping to steer the group through tumultuous 1960s. He wrote for a number of outside acts including The Monkees with "Daydream Believer." In 1969, Stewart released *California Bloodlines*, a strong collection that helped define his work for the rest of his career – "California Bloodlines," "Razorback Woman" and the game changer song, "July, You're a Woman." Stewart's writing always carried the day as many of his songs were covered by the likes Nancy Griffith, Rosanne Cash, Mary Chapin Carpenter and Joan Baez.

Dave Stamey

The acclaimed musician rode a wide circle as his career developed. The cowboy, packer and former novelist draws upon firsthand experiences to fuel his songs.

By Jameson Parker

The shopworn advice to young authors: write what you know. Dave Stamey has taken that advice to heart, but it was a rocky beginning, one typical of the ranching and cowboy life. He was born in Montana, east of Billings, where the prairie meets the mountains.

"My dad was a rancher, but when the cattle market went bust, he lost the ranch," Dave says. "So when I was 12, we moved to the central coast of California and he opened a feeder operation. Then Nixon got into a fight with the Russians and enacted a grain embargo that made the cattle cost more to keep alive than to kill.

photo by Lori Merritt

"I got interested in music and started playing the guitar around that time, but I was also interested in writing. No one in my family did either one of those things, so they were a little confused. They were supportive, but they didn't understand."

Dave started out working in feedlots and as a packer up in the Sierras ("I still host a pack trip up there with my partner every summer.") but then he decided to make the switch from packer to full-time musician.

"I played every bar up and down the Central Coast 10 times, but there was no way to keep it up professionally," he says. "No one listens to your music and you get insulted in some men's room once too often. So I quit music and set out to write the great American novel."

He jokes about his writing ("I wrote 10 novels I would fight to the death to keep out of print."), but he must have been better than he's willing to admit because he landed no less an agent than the late Knox Burger. A legend for his crustiness, an unwillingness to tolerate fools and pretenders, and his championing young writers with ability, Knox Burger worked with a who's who of 20th century fiction, including such authors as Louis L'Amour, Kurt Vonnegut, John Steinbeck, Ray Bradbury, and many other giants.

"I sold one Jake Logan novel," Dave says. "Jake Logan" is the pen name shared by the numerous authors

photos courtesy of Melissa Stamey

Some favorites by Dave Stamey

The Vaquero Song by Dave Stamey, photography by David R. Stoecklein: http://youtu.be/rh0DQ80kZoY

The Bandit Joaquin by Dave Stamey: http://youtu.be/s-5hhfNKCTY

of the nearly 400-volume *John Slocum* Western series. "But I won't tell you which one, and after 10 years Burger dropped me because he couldn't sell anything of my own. I went back to packing mules."

Fate intervened, as it so often does, in the form of Dave's wife, Melissa.

"She told me to go back up into the mountains and get my head right, so I picked up my guitar again and started writing songs," he says. "I had written prose for so long it took me a while to realize I could connect better with people with a song than with an 80,000 word novel. But that prose background is what makes lyrics so important to me. The people who come to my shows like a story, and I try to make them as true as I can."

Most of Dave's songs are shaped by his history and the places he has lived.

"Almost everything I write is personal," he says. "It's something that happened to me or something I know firsthand, something I saw happen. With "The Circle," the first two lines were based on my own horse."

The horse I ride is old but he has served me well
Coat like old tobacco rich and warm

"The rest of the song came out of that," Dave continues. "Trying to pinpoint the source of inspiration is like trying to nail grape jelly to the wall, but if I come up with a good line it gives me an approach and a sense of the form, whether it's going to be upbeat or a lugubrious, vein-opening ballad.

"I write all my drafts on an early 1970s Olympia typewriter, but when I was working as a wrangler, I used to write on horseback. When you're doing something you know really well you can sort of disengage and use your mind for different things. For me it was to rough out a song."

Dave and Melissa recently bought horse property in the foothills of the Sierras, but he doesn't get to spend much time at home. His show schedule looks like a horsemanship clinician's, bouncing from Arizona to Washington and from California to Montana and all points in between, circling around on trails he has ridden many times before, but that are always new, always inspiring new songs.

photo by Lori Merritt

"If I had to guess, I'd say I'm on the road 150 days a year," he says, "but I don't even want to know. But it's like the cattle business: if you have a good year, then next year you're up against [your own success] and you have to work harder and harder to reach your own goals. I want everything to be as good as it can be."

The life I live goes on it fits me oh so well
Old and new together evergreen
I mount my horse at dawning
My heart rings like a bell
And we ride through the canyons
Where the air is fresh and clean

— "The Circle"

California writer Jameson Parker is the author of the memoir *An Accidental Cowboy*.
Learn more about Dave Stamey at www.davestamey.com.

The Shoe Box

Publisher's Note: Years before my father passed away, he gave me a folder with some typed pages – typed meaning typed on a "typewriter" – you remember those pre-iPad machines? He explained that the folder contained a story someone had sent him with the idea of making a film. It was a story of a discovery in an upstairs attic in a rather famous old California home that had to do with a shoe box, writer Helen Hunt Jackson and Charles M. Russell. It was the Russell connection that had intrigued my father for so many years. He said the piece had been attributed to writer Charles Outland, an authority on Ventura, California ranches. Whether the story is true or not, it takes us to a place of wonder of finding something connected to our cultural past. A story of history and "placed" people, something wonderful that was found, in a shoe box.

It was only a shoe box gathering dust in the attic of the famous old adobe ranch house. Once its glossy texture had shone from the shelf of the some store – A. Hamburger & Sons, perhaps – the contents wrapped in delicate tissue awaiting the feet its leather would protect. Hopefully, the fit would be perfect when the buttonhook had drawn the bright new buttons through the loops. Now it was discarded, useless, dulled with age and soiled where an inconsiderate raindrop had discovered an entryway through the roof. Why had this humble shoe box been saved at a rancho that fairly reeked with genesis of California history?

The Indians had given the place its name, *Camulos*. The Sacred Expedition under Portola had tramped its soil and camped nearby. Antonio del Valle, a soldier of old Mexico, had admired the setting on travels between Missions and obtained possession through San Francisco Land Grant. John Charles Fremont and his band of ragamuffin "soldiers" had passed this way en route to Los Angeles and the Treaty of Cahuenga.

It was Ygnacio del Valle who enlarged a primitive adobe into the now famous ranch house and lived the good pastoral life through his declining years, pressing the oil from the olive and wine from the grape.

Helen Hunt Jackson, while dreaming her typically maudlin nineteenth-century classic, *Ramona*, had stopped here for a few hours to taste the flavor of California rancho period, an era that was lingering on its deathbed long before Ygnacio had completed the ranch house. Yet it was she more than anyone who would forever put the stamp of fame upon the place the Indians had called *Camulos*.

Now a new day was dawning. No longer would the descendants of Antonio del Valle dispense the legendary hospitality of the Californians. As a means of saying goodbye, the del Valle family would hold one last grand and glorious "bull's head barbecue" for which the old rancho had long been famous. Then the Camulos would be turned over to August and Mary Rubel, who had purchased this remaining acreage of the once vast San Francisco Grant of eleven square leagues. They were tenants who had promised to cherish and guard the land and its heritage with all the fervor of Ygnacio himself.

But there was work to be done. Dozens of historic documents and artifacts abandoned by the del Valle family were interlarded with worthless trivia in the attic

of the adobe and the loft of the winery. (One might suspect that to a del Valle a bull's head barbecue, vintage Camulos brandy, and a fandango rated higher priorities than an 1852 legislative document printed in Spanish or an ancient pistol plowed to the surface in the orange orchards of the Camulos. And who is to say that he might not have been right?) Even that old shoe box was abandoned, although there must have been some reason for its preservation. In an attic jammed with mishmash castoffs of generations, the wheat must be separated from the chaff and the accumulated dust swept clean. Here was a job for the new mistress of Camulos, Mary Rubel.

In the "wheat," Mary would find those Indian artifacts and ancient firearms plowed up in the fields; saddles and bridles of Mexican origin; and early California legislative pamphlets printed in the Spanish language, one on the condition of native Indians. These countless memorabilia of the del Valle family were carefully set aside, while the "chaff" of trivia was tossed across the attic to be carted away and burned. The old shoe box sailed through the air with all the grace of a derailed freight car, but in its fluttering Mary Rubel had seen something that had no business being on a shoe box. Walking over to the pile of trash, she examined her find.

It was a simple sketch, yet charming. The artist had drawn two horses front and center standing head to rump, each swirling the flies from each other with its tail. In the background were more horses, tossing their heads, stomping their feet, and tails flying in the desperate, eternal battle against flies. In the lower left corner were the initials C.M.R. over the legendary horned skull. Russell! Charles Marion Russell!

Mary Rubel smiled. She had always wanted a Russell. Yes, even a simple sketch on an old shoe box would do. The famous painter of horses and the West had not given his work a name (it was probably an impromptu doodling on Russell's part), but an appropriate title was obvious: *Damn the flies!*

Later, Mary would cut out the sketch, using the remainder of the box for matting. A recessed old-fashioned frame completed the preservation of this mysterious bit of Western Americana.

How had this homey piece of art, created by one of America's most famous painters, come to be in the attic of the old Camulos ranch house? It is tempting to imagine Russell's presence at that last bull's head barbecue, an affair now legendary in del Valle annals. A guest list that included George Wharton James, Carrie Jacobs Bond, Charles Wakefield Cadman, and William S. Hart would not have suffered from Russell's presence, particularly in view of the fact that Hart and Russell were close friends. However, the del Valle farewell was held at a time when America's foremost Western painter was severely handicapped with health problems. Further, Mary Rubel would have remembered if he had been there or known of the shoe box sketch before it ever got into the crammed attic of the adobe.

Possibly someday some obscure researcher will find documentation of when Russell was at Camulos and the circumstances of his visit. In the meantime, from the meager evidence and Russell's known sketching habits we can only imagine what might have happened.

Two friends in particular must be suspected of bringing Charlie Russell to the ranch: William S. Hart or Charles Lummis. Both men were thoroughly at home and familiar with Camulos. In fact, it is known that Lummis became so fascinated with "The Home of Ramona" that his visits were altogether too frequent and prolonged in the opinion of some members of the del Valle family. Charles Fletcher Lummis has to be the first choice as the one responsible for bringing Russell to Camulos, with William S. Hart a close second.

photo courtesy Montana Historical Society

Russell in front of his masterpiece, *When The Land Belonged to God*, finished in 1914.
It hangs in the capital rotunda in Helena, Montana.

Another consideration is the known sketching habits of Russell. Give the man any pen, pencil, or what have you, a piece of paper and those talented fingers would be at work drawing some Western theme. Indeed, there are those who will maintain that if Russell had been lost in the wilderness and stumbled onto a sliver of ochre and a large smooth rock, the result would have been a masterpiece to stir the envy of his Indian friends.

Finally there is the shoe box itself. Why, of all things, a shoe box? It is doubtful that even Charles Lummis would have had the audacity to request of Mrs. del Valle a shoe box upon which her guest might sketch some horses. No. There is a more plausible theory.

Old shoe boxes were and still are handy containers in which to pack picnic lunches. Is it difficult to imagine Charlie Russell and Charles Lummis, or possibly William S. Hart, throwing together a picnic lunch, packing it in the shoe box and riding horseback into the hills surrounding the Camulos? And to carry the fantasy still further, is it unreasonable to visualize the men resting in the shade of a native oak during a warm noontime, with Russell's restless talent scribbling on the side of that shoe box, now empty, the unique fly-swatting techniques of his favorite animal; or his companion, fascinated with the sketch, conjuring up some excuse to carry it back to the ranch house upon their return?

A fantasy it must remain for the present, to this writer at least. After all, it *was* only a shoe box gathering dust in the attic of an old California adobe ranch house made famous by Helen Hunt Jackson. But are there any finer ingredients for fantasy?

Her Rightful Place

Amy Hale Auker writes of her love affair with the working cowboy and the American West.

By Kathy McCraine

Every horseman rides beside an open grave. – Old Spanish Proverb

She thought, Being a wife and mother and cook just isn't *it*; there has to be more. At that moment she faced and conquered her greatest fear, "that terror of being substandard, middle-of-the-pack, good enough," and said, "I am a *writer*."

After years living in West Texas cow camps, writing her life down in notebooks and journals, sharing voluminous letters and e-mails with friends, writing bits and pieces about the ever-changing colors of life on the prairie, at 41, Amy has finally found her rightful place as an author. Her recently released book of essays, aptly titled *Rightful Place*, from Texas Tech Press, paints an intimate yet unsentimental picture of an almost vanishing way of life on the big outfits of West Texas, with its itinerant people, horses, cattle, wildlife, windswept prairies and unforgiving climate.

photos by Kathy McCraine

Amy's work chronicles her life on ranches throughout West Texas.

A petite young woman with a thick mane of long blond hair and eyes the color of robin's eggs, Amy knows life in the Texas Panhandle well, having moved within it some 27 times since she was born there. Her father was at various times a cowboy, feedlot hand, rancher, oil field worker and English teacher. When her parents moved to Guthrie, Texas, both to teach English at the Four Sixes Ranch headquarters, Amy knew she had found her roots.

Savoring the occasions when ranch manager Tom Moorhouse let her ride with the wagon, she knew she never wanted to go back to the city. But she soon faced a harsh reality – women could never be part of the cowboy's world on those outfits. Her only hope of living her dream was to marry a cowboy with a camp job.

She spent two miserable semesters at Texas Tech.

"College was a groomed and manicured world where the clock rules and my dorm room was the size of a coffin," she would later write. "I missed the sky." Then Amy found her escape in Nick Auker, a South Dakota farmer's son who had come to Texas to cowboy. Nick was tired of living in a bunkhouse and ready for a camp, so after dating for three weeks, he told Amy, "Hey, if you marry me, Bob Moorhouse will give me a camp at the Pitchforks." Not the most romantic proposal, but she accepted. She was 19, and Nick was 25. For the next 18 years she would move and move again – the Fulton Quien Sabe, the Pitchfork, the JA, Holt Brothers – always another cow camp.

Amy Auker, author of the essay collection *Rightful Place*

On the 7D Ranch that first spring, she learned that there was no cook for the crew and they packed sandwiches for lunch, so she offered to cook. "It never crossed my mind to ask why I couldn't just hire on as day help and pack my lunch too, because this was Texas," she says. Women simply had no place on a cowboy crew, so armed with the cookbooks she got as wedding gifts and a few instructions from her mother over the phone, she taught herself to cook, sometimes getting paid by the plate, and sometimes working for groceries and day wages.

She worked hard on those ranches, but never horseback. Besides cooking, she helped Nick dig ditches and build fence, calve out heifers, halter break and start

Amy now calls the Spider Ranch, near Prescott, Arizona, home. She's completed two novels and continues to write about her ranch experiences.

colts, though only on the ground. The rule was she couldn't get on them. After ground work she turned them over to the cowboys, and that was hard.

The early years were a crash course in being a camp wife. "I didn't know how to buy groceries for a month at a time, what to buy a lot of, what wouldn't keep," she says. "We didn't make a lot of money, and you just went to town for groceries once a month because once you did that, you were out of money." And, she hated the city.

"The city is in constant motion with cars and vans and pickups and trucks speeding by or waiting or turning the corner or baking in the sun. Every human being is going somewhere. Even the asphalt, concrete, and glass scream hurry, hurry, hurry." That was never the life she wanted.

Over the years, Amy and Nick raised two kids, Oscar and Lily. While other camp wives escaped their lot by taking jobs in town, Amy was determined to homeschool her kids at the ranch. "I could not fathom putting a child on a school bus for three hours a day. Why raise them on a ranch if they're never there?" she reasoned.

After many moves, the couple found themselves working on a yearling outfit owned by the Holt Brothers at Goodnight, Texas. It was the first time Amy had moved out of the river brakes and up onto the caprock and Llano Estacado, a land of flat prairie, blue northers and blizzards. Running yearlings was intense work.

"The man we worked for was a bargain hunter," she says. "They'd call and say there was a truckload of Mexican yearlings coming up from the border. Always, it would be Thanksgiving, or Christmas, or the middle of January when it was raining or snowing. They'd come dump them out, and you just hoped for a manageable death loss. Death loss is a personal thing to a cowboy. I never liked running yearlings."

Frustrated with her segregation from the world she longed for, Amy began to do two things: she walked endlessly over the prairie, and she began writing e-mails about her life.

"I ran to two places for solace. First, I ran to the land. And when I came back into the house with flushed face and full heart, I ran to the keyboard. I was becoming enamored with the watershed of the Salt Fork of the Red River, that place where I found myself when I needed it most. I wrote about colors, blue herons, blizzards, eggs warm in the nests, long-legged colts on yellow pastures..."

Amy sent some of her work to John Erickson, whose company, Laid Back West, marketed the work of several western humor writers and cartoonists. Erickson was enthusiastic and encouraged her to write more. Soon her humorous "ranch wife" stories were being published in magazines and small-town newspapers. Still, she was discouraged because she felt "the writing was not good, and I got tired of being funny because there is so much to this lifestyle that isn't funny."

Meanwhile, Amy had gotten acquainted with singer and musician Red Steagall at the JA Ranch, where, every year, he pulled a wagon out for Texas businessmen to help brand calves. Amy's son Oscar was growing up to be a cowboy and, after studying poetry in his home schooling, discovered he was a natural performer. Steagall took him under his wing and became his mentor. Amy and Oscar began to travel with him to shows, and then to the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada. It changed her life forever.

"All of a sudden I was around all these people who were living the lifestyle, most of them, and they were making art," she says. "It was a time when my children were getting very independent and sailing away from me. I hated that, and I had to find something positive."

Steagall introduced Amy to Andy Wilkinson, series editor for a Texas Tech project called *Voice in the American West*. He was looking for undiscovered talent, and when he read Amy's work, he was "knocked out." He told Amy, "Stop writing e-mails. You're wasting your writing." Wilkinson began sending her essays to read, and she attended his writing workshops.

"She has a very strong, clear, fresh voice in the way she writes," he says. "Those essays are poems as much as they are prose, but even more important, she has something to say. There is nothing predictable or trite about her writing."

Between the spring of 2005 and 2006, Amy completed the manuscript for *Rightful Place*, but it would be five years before it was published. A university press differs from a commercial publisher in that every book has to go through a review by peers to determine if it is scholarly enough to make the cut. In the end, Amy's book was accepted and praised by the established writers that reviewed her.

"When I finished the book, I realized two things," she says. "One, I had to break free from a culture where I couldn't be a part of what I loved, and two, I couldn't stay in my marriage."

Amy made the break in the winter of 2008 and wound up living in a "terrible house" in Chino Valley, Arizona, where she took a miserable job at the local Sonic and continued to work on perfecting the book. She now saw it as her only future.

Then her life took another turn. At that January's poetry gathering in Elko, she met Gail Steiger, an

Arizona cowboy who was managing the 68-section Spider Ranch near Prescott, Arizona. A songwriter and filmmaker, Gail was a regular performer at Elko and other poetry gatherings. When he heard about Amy's book, he insisted on reading it before it was published.

"My heart went out to her," Gail says, "because she seemed so lost without the prospect of living on a ranch or finding a ranch job. As soon as I read the book, I was a goner. I just fell in love with her."

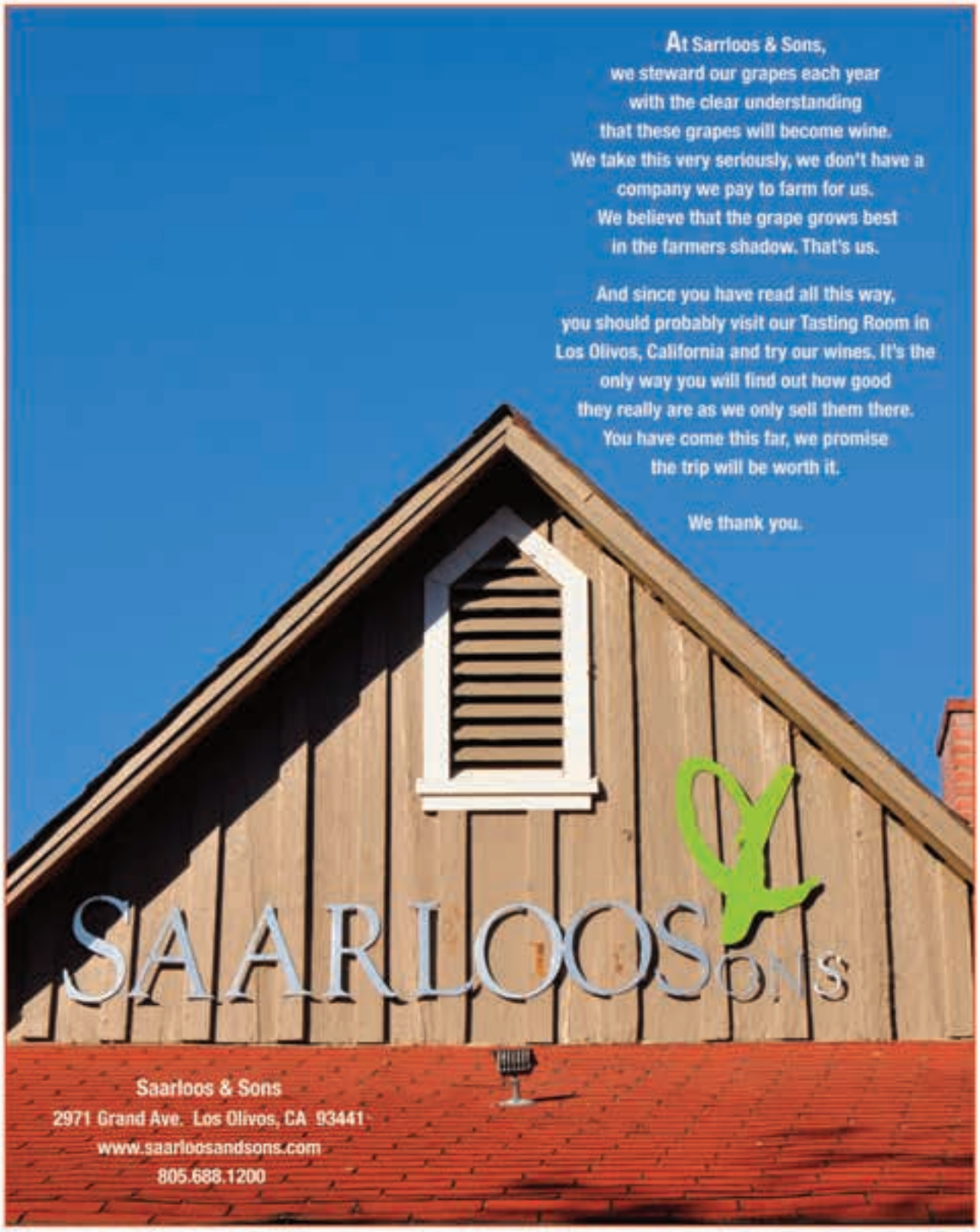
Now Amy has found a home at the Spider Ranch. She and Gail are partners, sharing all the work, whether it's branding calves, fixing fence, or digging out a muddy spring. During the spring and fall works, they camp for days on end, instead of trotting the seven miles back and forth to headquarters every day.

Amy has found that when she's trailing cows, her mind goes into creative mode, and at night back in camp, she writes feverishly by head lamp, tearing out pages and pages of longhand copy from yellow pads to stuff in her cantle bag. Back home she rewrites and transfers it into her computer. Already she has finished two novels – fiction is her latest passion.

She tells the story about branding a bunch of big calves last fall, ones that had escaped the spring branding. "We finished and turned everything back together. We had some calf fries on the branding pot, and each of us had one warm beer apiece left, so we sat down in the branding pen and ate our calf fries and drank our beer and watched the calves mother up. It wasn't a big crew on a huge outfit. They weren't even our cows, but we both knew we were exactly where we wanted to be. This is our rightful place."

Amy Hale Auker's book *Rightful Place* is available at www.amyhaleauker.com.
Kathy McCraine is a rancher and writer from Prescott, Arizona.

The grape grows best in the farmer's shadow.



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Saarloos & Sons. 2013

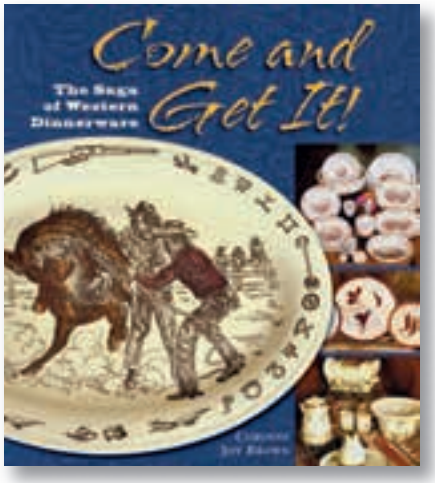
RANCH LIVING WITH THEA MARX

photo by Carrie Ballantyne

It's springtime in the Rockies and what a beautiful time of re-generation! The snow is melting and baby calves are testing their legs. Soon, wildflowers will be growing grandly in green meadows with the sun high overhead. What a wonderful world we live in! Happy Spring!

Reins of His Heart

A sixth generation Texan, Tom Morgan's pieces capture precious moments in life in bronze. *Reins of His Heart* speaks volumes to the little girl in me that loved her daddy dearly. As a woman looking back, I knew I had the reins of his heart. I have no doubt Tom accomplished his goal with this piece, "...to create character, life and a meaningful moment." www.tommorganart.com



Come and Get It!!

The dinner bell tolling over the prairie to call hands to the ranch house for meals is not just in story books, it really happened. The gatherings were lively and the food was plenty. The history of dinnerware inspired by the history and characters of such western fare has been recorded in Corrine Joy Brown's wonderful book about what the west was eaten off of at these glorious meals. Whether it is vintage or contemporary, you will learn how these great pieces came to be. Come and Get It! The Saga of Western Dinnerware. www.corrinebrown.com

Dreamweaver

Colorful. Full of Beautiful Things. Inspiring. Crow's Nest Trading Company's catalog is a western aficianados dream. It's the one, when you pull it out of the mailbox, you ooh and aaah a the cover and by the time you are inside, you've just dog eared four pages. It gets carried around while entire ensembles are contemplated and shown to neighbors for their opinions of the gorgeous artwork. Like anything beautifully western? Fashion, Furnishings, Art? www.crowsnesttrading.com 800-900-8558

An Apron for Him?

Does he grill, cook gourmet, make a divine breakfast? Then he needs a distinguished apron just like him. Elizabeth Scokin is a fashion insider from Nashville who created her line of Haute Hostess Aprons when the world needed a little jazzing up in the kitchen. Beyond the ruffles and glitz that she creates for the ladies, she's created the Haute Host line for gentlemen. These aprons are handsome on him whether he is in slacks or Wrangler's and boots. www.elizabethscokinproductions.com 615-337-1619

The Best Dog Bed Ever

Does he snuggle with you at night? Take over the covers? Snore in your ear? Then get him his own bed... the dog that is. From John Yungner in Cody, Wyoming this pint sized rustic Aspen dog bed is made just like yours and is the hottest craze... and why not, it get's him off the floor unto a pillow of his or your choosing and keeps him from stealing your warm covers. Custom made for each special dog in your life. 307-250-4590 Beartooth Log Works on Facebook.

Vivid Elegance

Whew! What a beauty! Transcendent is its name.

It is a spectacular *Australian* boulder opal impossible to ignore. The brilliant stone is flanked by 3 sets of diamond marcasite stations, complete with emerald baguettes in 18K gold & sterling silver and don't forget the graduated faceted emerald rondelles that complete the necklace. $4775 One of a kind. www.elleschroeder.com, 408-995-2598

Montana Snowball Cookies

Believe it or Not?! Snow can even fall on the fourth of July in Wyoming and Montana... Why wait... make your own!

½ pound unsalted butter
½ cup sifted powder sugar
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
2 ¼ cups all purpose flower
¼ tsp salt
¼ cup finely chopped pecans
½ cup powdered sugar for dusting
Yields 3 doz cookies

Preheat oven to 400 degrees, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add vanilla, flour, salt, and pecans, mix until a loose dough ball forms, roll into one inch balls, and place on baking sheet about 2 inches apart. Bake for 10-12 minutes, remove from oven and immediately roll hot cookies in powdered sugar to coat. Let cookies cool and roll in powdered sugar again.

Technicolor Cowboy: Artist Lyndon Gaither Interprets the West with Vivid Strokes

Lyndon Gaither

"I have found that the people in the western community are hard working, down to earth people who care about others, their animals and their country. I enjoy being a part of that culture," says artist Lyndon Gaither of Texas.

Once upon a time this popular western artist worked in the worlds of advertising, theme park development and museum exhibit design using his art abilities to develop creative colorful ideas for the public. In the last six years he has turned his attention to solely creating original pieces of art and licensed western products for the giftware industry.

In his colorful art you see the joy with which he paints. It explodes from the vivid acrylic color and layers of texture that make his work unmistakably, Lyndon Gaither.

His subject matter comes from the things he loves, mostly iconic Western images of Cowboy Americana. "I love to paint animals and tools of the cowboy lifestyle. I translate emotions and feelings into color as I communicate my individual interpretation of each subject," says Lyndon of his work.

At trade shows you will frequently see a crowd of people gathered watching him paint in vivid strokes, Lyndon engaging each in conversation as he works his magic on canvas. Frequently youngsters return after watching him with their own images they've drawn, inspired by the man of many colors. "That is pretty powerful stuff," Lyndon admits.

Not only is Lyndon a part of the western culture, he gives back in a big way. Each year he gifts work to organizations such as the Careity Foundation, the Texas Stampede Rodeo, Learning Horse and ManeGait Therapeutic Horsemanship. All organizations that are equine or western related who work to give hope to individuals in need. His images grace covers of catalogs, electrify walls as posters and sell at auction to raise funds.

Lyndon paints images that have great meaning, not only to him, but historically to the West. One, the Mustang, captures the spirit of the horse that the United States Congress recognized in 1971 as "living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West, which continue to contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people." Another painting, the Appaloosa, is a dedication to the colorful horse of the Nez Perce Indians. These quiet, versatile horses are distinguished by their spotted coats and are a result of the tribe's selective breeding.

Being what Lyndon considers a "small part" of the Western way of life is what he likes best. His fascination with the Western lifestyle started as a young boy growing up in the Panhandle of Texas where he learned to appreciate the land and the animals and continues today as he paints its iconic elements in Technicolor. "I still, to this day, get goose bumps when I see the American Flag being presented in the arena by a rider on horseback at the start of a rodeo," Lyndon says with emotion.

Once a westerner, always a westerner.

A Western Moment

Pancho Villa's Last Saddle

photo courtesy High Noon Western Americana, Los Angeles

The legendary Pancho Villa – infamous renegade, revolutionary and hero of the Mexican people – was assassinated almost 100 years ago in Hidalgo del Parral, Mexico, a short distance from his hacienda after a short but highly contentious and ultimately celebrated life. A life immortalized numerous times in print, on the silver screen, in museums and institutions around the world and a name honored on street signs and plazas throughout the Americas. What remained of this complex and mysterious man are the facts and folklore – and his magnificent silver-threaded saddle that just sold this past January at the *High Noon Western Americana* auction held each year in Mesa, Arizona. And what did this little slice of western history cost the lucky bidder? $737,500.00 – over twice the estimated value. The West lives.

Watch the sale of this historic saddle on YouTube:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tBFigi3lUY&feature=player_embedded

Our First Year

By William Reynolds

This issue, 2.1, marks the first anniversary of *Ranch & Reata*. What started out to be a half-digital, half-print presentation has evolved into full versions of both – at your request. Overwhelmingly, even with all the iPads, apps and digital devices out there, you, our readers, have spoken and you want to hold *Ranch & Reata* in your hands as well as read it on your iPad or Kindle Fire.

Given that we felt it proper to bring to print a number of stories that appeared in our only fully digital version from last year. So in this issue you are seeing some stories folks have requested from issue 1.2 to be included – and we are pleased to bring them to you. In addition, you may have noticed some new additions. To celebrate young people in the West – and beyond – we are including a story in each issue that features the goings on at the FFA. This organization (which used to be called Future Farmers of America) represents over 550,000 young people who are actively involved with farming and agriculture. These are some incredible young people and we are proud to be working with the FFA. These young folks are the future of not only the West, but of the rest of our country and they and their efforts deserve the ink. Another addition is a section called Ranch Living, written by Wyoming's own cowgirl lifestyle queen, Thea Marx. Thea is a published author and has been involved in the style of the West for years and she brings superb decorating and fashion skills to our mix. Another little addition will be our Of Note section that will focus on interesting new products and offerings unique to the West. It might be just a couple of pages or blossom into a feature length presentation depending upon what's out there.

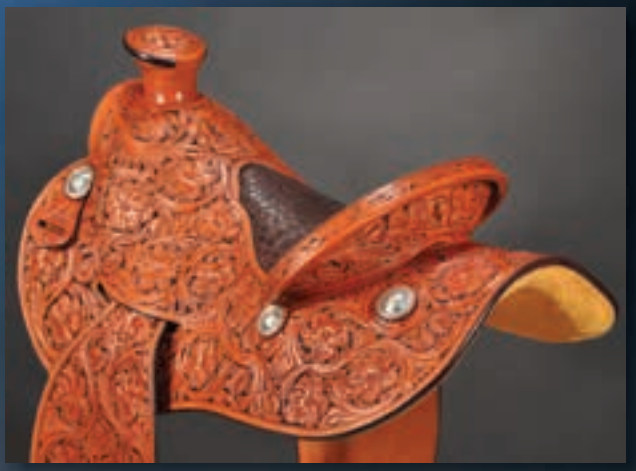
Music-wise, we have a number of things planned for 2012 that will involve lots of new music, live shows and concert offerings on Range Radio and at the new Ranch & Reata Roadhouse that will open this summer in Santa Ynez, California. More information on that in our next issue but suffice it to say we have some exciting events and treats coming your way – so stay tuned to our Facebook page for up to the minute information.

Thinking about this past year brings to mind the origins of why we all felt it appropriate to bring a new magazine to the West given the trials and transitions facing publishing today. To say it is a challenging environment would be a massive understatement. But what we found missing was a truly respectful, long-form, editorial based journal that gave credence to the actual (real) culture of the West and its people – the people who live in it, work at it or simply just love it – wherever they may be. There are many good magazines about the West available today that have been around for a long time and I enjoy them as much as anyone. What we wanted to do was bring to readers something that could really be read, not just looked at. That could be savored, not just flipped through. That treated the West as what it is, a true root-based American culture that translates easily to other cultures and places around the world, as it is a culture based on honest values and respect. Something the world, no matter where, could use a lot more of. And as we evolve with every issue, your emails, postings, and comments are telling us we are on the right track. With your help, as a subscriber to *Ranch & Reata* and a listener to Range Radio, we will stay at it.

Speaking of bringing something new into the world, we do have a very happy announcement this issue as our editor A.J. Mangum let us know he and his wife RJ welcomed their daughter Marlowe into the world on March 10 – all seven pounds, seven ounces of her. Welcome Marlowe, welcome cowgirl!

photo courtesy her Mom and Dad

Keith Seidel



By Hand and Heart

"RANAHAN"

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

Seidel's Saddlery

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