

# THE WESTERN WAY

The Official Publication of the Western Music Association



Joe Kosel



Marty Kosel



John Kosel

## THE HIGH COUNTRY COWBOYS

*Crosshairs*

Rick Huff's  
**WESTERN AIR**  
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Rhode Island Red  
**WEIGHS IN**  
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**Chisholm Trail**  
**150<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
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In This Issue  
**2017 Awards of Excellence Nomination Ballot**



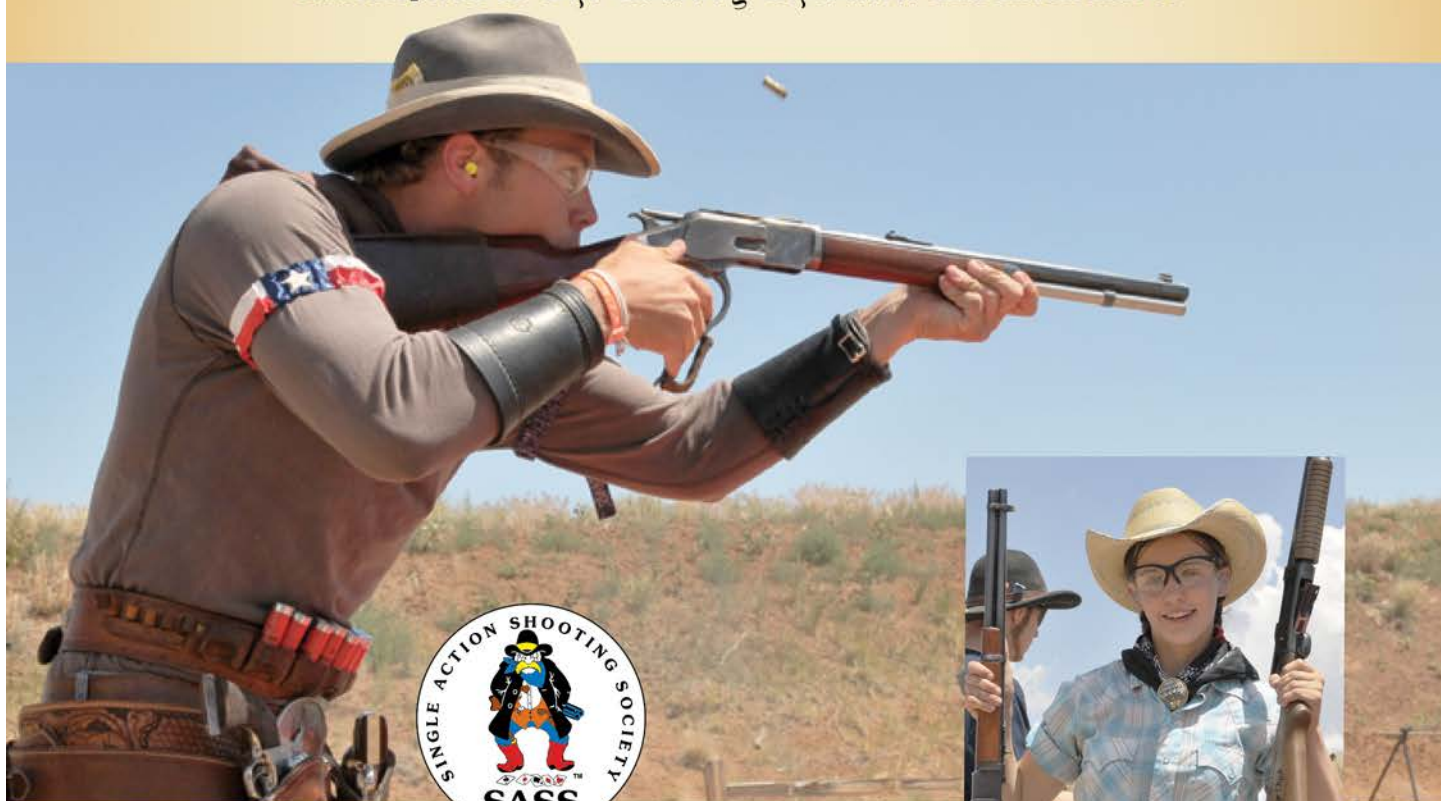
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# From The President...



**Marvin O'Dell**  
WMA President

The most common question I'm asked when I attempt to encourage western music artists to join the Western Music Association is: what does the WMA do for me?

Before answering that question, maybe it's best to state what the WMA does NOT do for member artists. The WMA does not book artists into venues. The organization does not promote individual artists or attempt to help anyone become a star. Like any non-profit organization, the WMA does not work for its members. The members of non-profitable, charitable organizations band and work together to

advance the mission of the organization they have elected to join. In short, the mission of the WMA is to "encourage and support the preservation, performance, and composition of historic traditional and contemporary music and poetry of The West." In other words, the mission is to advance western music and poetry in the eyes and ears of a listening public. We band together to accomplish that mission. The more who join and work toward this purpose, the more the music is advanced and preserved. However, with that said, does the WMA do anything for its members? Well, yes it does. Here, in no particular order, are some of things the WMA Board of Directors came up with at our last board meeting – things the WMA does for YOU, the member.

1. At the annual convention of the WMA, you are provided an atmosphere in which you can compare your work with that of other performers. This gives you an opportunity to learn and get better at what you do, thus improving your chances of being asked to perform shows.
2. Through the WMA and the annual convention, you have networking opportunities that can help you understand better where you might have opportunities to perform. We all can learn from one another.
3. The annual convention and the WMA magazine, *The Western Way*, helps you expand your fan base. Many fans will hear you for the first time when you perform at the annual convention or learn about you when they pick up the magazine.
4. The annual convention provides you an opportunity to sell your music to a large audience.
5. The annual convention provides workshops that may be very helpful to you as a professional or amateur musician.
6. There is also the opportunity to encourage, lift up, and even mentor to a degree young people who have taken an interest in western music. If they are willing to learn, we should be willing to advise and teach. Each year they attend the convention, they grow as musicians.
7. The biggest thing the annual convention does for its members is provide you a week to give back. It's the one week each year when we come together to give to the music we love and, thus, grow our fan base. Remember: without fans, we have no performances
8. The annual convention also gives you the opportunity to interact with the DJ's who play your music. It's your chance to know those who are doing everything they can to promote you.
9. The organization provides you the possibility of being awarded for your excellence. This can be used to promote your work. Even nominations are very promotional – even if you don't win an award.

*Continued on page 9*



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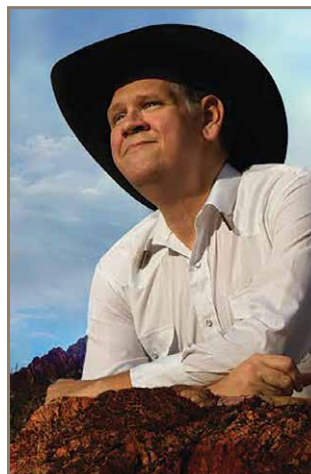
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In just two years since joining the WMA, these Montana cowboys who started out performing regionally are now letting their songs be heard everywhere in the tradition of the Sons of the Pioneers.

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*Content and opinions expressed in articles and reviews published in the Western Way are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the view of the WMA or the Western Way.*

## Editor's Insight



Theresa O'Dell

# Whether the weather...

As I sit at the computer, drinking coffee and looking out the window at the pouring rain here in the AZ desert, my mind wandered at the rather unusual, crazy even, weather and cooler temperatures we have experienced this winter. Days have run together without sunshine! This is Arizona; this is the desert; this is winter! It's been a little disconcerting. (Now mind you, I am NOT complaining! We need the rain for sure...but if it would just spread out a little and allowed the parched earth time to absorb it, well, that would be nice.)

I have read emails and Facebook posts over the past weeks and I'm aware that AZ is not the only place getting "winter." Rain, snow, blizzards and even some tornadoes and other inclement weather conditions have swept the country. It is enough to make the average human want to join the bears and hibernate for several months. But, that isn't the case when it comes to the determined Western music and poetry performers! There is nothing average about them!

I love reading reports and viewing the pictures from festivals and gatherings and events that have taken place just from January to this writing. Events have been held from Canada to California, from Montana to New Mexico, from Colorado to Kansas, from the Eastern seaboard to the South. The WMA Chapters are busier and more active than ever. They are working hard to provide new venues for Western performers and to introduce new folks to the Western Music Association. The Chapter memberships are growing and the word is spreading.

Great work to the Chapter officers and members! The Organization has never been more vibrant and alive than it is right now and much of that is due to your hard work. With any luck, by the time you are reading this issue, you can look out your window and see snow melting, fields turning green, and spring flowers beginning to bloom. You can put away your boots and snowplows. You can anticipate driving to your next gig under sunny skies and warm temperatures.

Whether the weather...the folks dedicated to their Western craft and culture are spreading the word!



## From The Executive Director...



**Marsha Short**  
Executive Director

SPRING!! What a wonderful time of year! Trees are budding, flowers are pushing their way up through the weeds (which never seem to die out) and the birds are everywhere. Spring at our house means it's time to put away the flannel sheets, steam clean the carpets and make sure our "tornado closet" has plenty of batteries, water and chocolate.

Spring is also the time to start planning for the Annual

WMA Convention. By now, performers should have received the performer applications. We have the beginnings of a great program put together to include workshops, the Wednesday Night Swing Spectacular, Friday Night Opry and a special Veterans' Day Breakfast on Saturday. We're especially excited to announce that this year's Crisis Fund Dinner entertainment will feature Rex Allen, Jr. in a special encore performance of his Farewell Tour.

And it's time to think about who you would like to nominate for awards. This year, the Nominations Ballot is included in this issue of *The Western Way* (it will be in the Summer issue, also) and it will be on the Website. All nominations are due in the WMA office by September 10. The final ballot will be sent to all voting members by September 15. Award recipients are determined through a professional assessment by committees and/or popular vote of the membership. You don't have to nominate in every category nor do you have to return a Nominations Ballot to vote in the final round.

The window for Traditional Album, Cowboy/Western Swing Album and Song of the Year is March 1, 2016 through September 1, 2017. NEXT YEAR the window will be September 1, 2017 through September 1, 2018.

The WMA Awards of Excellence are a time to honor those WMA members who have excelled this past year. Can anyone be nominated? Yes. Does everyone get to win an award or even make it to the final five? Of course not. Do the same people get nominated year after year? Probably. Those are the people who are on the road working at their craft. But have you noticed our younger members moving up into these nominations...and winning?

Watch the WMA Website for updates on the Convention program and start making your plans now to be there! Questions or suggestions? You can always email me at [marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:marsha@westernmusic.org).



[www.WesternMusic.org](http://www.WesternMusic.org)

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Multiple copies are placed in strategic locations throughout the US and distributed internationally through our broad global membership outreach. As a quarterly publication with a dynamic online digital presence, your ad continues to work for you into the future. The Western Way readership is "mobile and on the go" ... shouldn't they know your business is where they are going to be?

#### Example of Distribution Outlets:

- Arizona Folklore Preserve – Sierra Vista, AZ
- Autry National Center – Los Angeles, CA
- Prairie Rose Chuckwagon - Benton, KS
- Doss Heritage & Culture Center – Weatherford, TX
- OutWest Boutique & Cultural Center – Newhall, CA
- Lone Pine Film History Museum – Lone Pine, CA
- Booth Western Art Museum – Cartersville, GA
- Friends of Marty Robbins Museum - Willcox, AZ
- The Rex Allen Museum - Willcox, AZ
- WMA Chapters at Local Gatherings and Festivals across the country
- [www.westernmusic.org](http://www.westernmusic.org) – 365 days a year!

*The Western Way is the official magazine of the Western Music Association, a non-profit 501(c)3 Corporation, and is supported through paid advertising.*





# *Penned by Lantern Light*

This column will spotlight members of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter of the Western Music Association. It will highlight an invited poet guest with possible short biographical information of his/her works. If a member of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter and if interested in submitting one piece of original work for publication, please contact the Western Wordsmiths chapter president.

---

## CLIFF

by Susie Knight

The moon shines through his window.  
He greets the mornin's sounds.  
He lights a flame beneath the pot  
'n' throws in coffee grounds.

He's old 'n' stiff in places  
That ache each morn the same.  
His lower back, his knees, 'n' hips;  
Arthritis staked its claim.

He sets his jaw this mornin'  
'n' pours a cup o' joe,  
Then takes some time to reminisce  
'bout days from long ago.

The ranch he used to manage,  
Not far from Valentine,  
Was 60,000 acres  
By 1969.

Top hand 'n' overseer,  
He led the ranch's crew.  
Most times, he managed twenty men  
To delegate them through

The February calvin's,  
The brandin's late in May,  
The fences fixed all summer  
Clear through till weanin' day.

And, oh, the saddle horses  
He rode each held a prize  
There in his golden mem'ries  
Secured behind his eyes.

But few will ever grasp it,  
The life he's lived 'n' known.  
The calves he's pulled from heifers;  
Cesareans he'd sewn.

The hope of life each springtime  
That wars against the curse  
Of certain death from coyotes,  
The cold, 'n' somethin' worse...

...the older cows that weaken.  
They'd just lay down 'n' die.  
As labor'd overtake 'em,  
He kept a watchful eye

'n' did his all to save 'em  
To satisfy the Boss.  
Kept cattle profits in the black,  
Preventin' any loss.

He earned his compensation  
For forty years or so,  
'til one day in the winter when  
He learned he'd been let go!

See...

...the Boss had died a-sudden.  
The ranch was gettin' sold.  
New corporation owners felt that  
He was too dang old

To run the ranch the kinda way  
(On paper) they saw fit.  
Dazed 'n' numb, he headed west  
To mend his soul that split.

He settled west of Denver,  
Near foothills out o' town.  
A place where he could view the sky  
From sunup till sundown.

Then, he perused the papers  
To find a job or two.  
But, workin' in Home Depot or  
McDonald's wouldn't do!



Persistent in his searchin',  
Stayin' focused and on track,  
He found a dandy full-time job  
Where he'd remain horseback.

It's at a little stable  
In a thousand acre park.  
He wrangles dudes on horseback rides  
From dawn until it's dark.

He doesn't pay attention;  
Their antics don't disturb  
As hoofbeats meld with heartbeats  
In percussive, low reverb.

With one eye on his riders  
And one eye in The Past,

He's found a way to reminisce  
The Life that didn't last.

He never would 'o guessed that  
His path would go this way...  
Guidin' trail ridin'  
For city folks at play.

He knows they're on vacation;  
They're "cowpokes" for a while.  
They have no clue who's guidin' them  
Behind that wrinkled smile.

He'd never brag 'n' tell 'em.  
(That ain't the Cowboy Way.)  
He's horseback still, 'n' will remain.  
The cowman...Cliff Andre.



#### SUSIE KNIGHT:

How does a Chicago born-n-raised gal become a cowgirl singer/songwriter and poet? It all began when she was 3 years old and sat upon a pony. Susie Knight was officially destined to live for, follow, and honor the western way of life. Her parents were classically trained professional singers, so it was only natural for her to be on stage, singing, dancing, and acting. And yes, even in Chicago's rural-area suburbs, she owned and showed AQHA horses in western competitions for 30 years. Much of her writing is based on her life on her family's ranch in South Dakota where she worked in the 1980's. Fast forward to 2005--Susie moved to Steamboat Springs, Colorado where she worked as a wrangler/ranch hand. She

married Dave Knight in 2010 and with his support, Susie pursued her lifelong dream to travel to cowboy gatherings to share her original songs and poems. Within two years, she received invitations to perform in western events all over the West. Nominations and awards began rolling in. Looking back, Susie Knight is a believer that when you follow your heart, your dreams will come true.

### From The President...

*Continued from page 4*

10. The WMA magazine, *The Western Way*, provides for you a place to have your albums expertly and insightfully reviewed.
11. The most valid western music chart in existence is found in *The Western Way*. It may not be perfect, but it is based on airplay, and provides for you another promotional tool if your album places high on the chart due to the amount of airplay it is receiving.
12. You may submit articles for *The Western Way*. If the article is approved, you may find your thoughts and viewpoints published in the magazine. You may even appear in a feature article.
13. For the "In the Spotlight" column, you may submit personal items about yourself, your family, and your work. This is not free advertising, but it does keep your fans updated and it keeps your name before readers of the magazine.
14. The WMA Web site gives you a free mini-site of your own that you may personally use to promote your music.
15. Possibly the biggest benefit of being a WMA member is your eligibility for help from the Cowboy Crisis Fund should you face an overwhelming financial situation in your life. Each case is reviewed by a private committee to make sure it fits the criteria for help from the fund. If it does, help will come to you as quickly as possible. If this was the only benefit available to WMA members, it would be enough to encourage you to be a member.

There's only one problem with writing all this for our magazine: the magazine goes primarily to those who are already members. Therefore, if we expect non-members to read this, we'll have to pass it around. Place complimentary copies on your merchandise table at gigs for your fans. Contact Marsha Short for extra copies of the magazine to give to your friends and fans whom you think should join the WMA!

Marvin O'Dell  
President, WMA



# FROM the TRAIL

2017 marks the 150th anniversary of The Chisholm Trail, perhaps the most famous of the cattle drive routes from Texas through Oklahoma to the railheads of Kansas. "Celebrate the Chisholm Trail in 2017," on the web at <http://www.chisholmtrail150.org>, is a promotional group whose lead partners are the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, Duncan, OK; Enid Convention and Visitors Bureau/The Cherokee Strip Heritage Center, Enid, OK; and the Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK. Events celebrating the trail began in 2016 and will continue through 2017.

One such event, the second annual "Campfires, Cattle and Cowboys Gathering/A Cowboy Poetry Festival"



*Cowboys, Cattle and Campfire Gathering, Duncan, OK. Photo courtesy Toni Hopper, Chisholm Trail Heritage Center.*

that gave the crowd a great show of some two hours of cowboy poetry and music from predominantly WMA performers. Temperatures in the upper 40's didn't keep the audience from being warmed up by the likes of Jim Garling, Danny Carl Williams, Nolan King, Francine Roark Robison, Donnie Poindexter, Curtis Krigbaum, Robert Beene, Ron Secoy, and George Rhodes.

Cowboy poet and author Ron Secoy provided the impetus for the event series. Working with the center's director, Stacy Cramer Moore, and her staff, especially photographer and publicist Toni Hopper, Ron helped to bring the 2015 gathering to fruition. Headliners singer/songwriter Luke Reed, cowboy singer/guitarist Steve Ribnikar and cowboy poets Jay Snider and Ron Secoy plus Donnie Poindexter, Danny Carl Williams and



*George Rhodes  
Photo courtesy Ron Secoy.*

## Chisholm Trail 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*By Robert Case and Donnie Poindexter*

Francine Roark Robison rounded out the inaugural show. That event garnered two awards that year from the Oklahoma Travel Industry Association: Oklahoma Redbud Merit Awards for "Outstanding Attraction" and "Outstanding New Event."



*Jim Garling and Susanne Woolley  
Photo courtesy Ron Secoy.*

Coming up at the center in Duncan, OK on April 8, 2017 is the Chisholm Trail Celebration Dinner from 5 p.m. until 10 p.m. featuring an evening of entertainment and Chisholm Trail nostalgia. The Chisholm Trail Heritage Center is located at 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway Duncan, OK 73533. For a full listing of dozens of Chisholm Trail 150th Anniversary events in Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas in 2017, go on the web to: <http://www.chisholmtrail150.org/events/> or email [info@onthechisholmtrail.com](mailto:info@onthechisholmtrail.com)



*L to R\_Nolan King, Ron Secoy, Donnie Poindexter  
Photo courtesy Ron Secoy.*

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# In the CROSSHAIRS

## The High Country Cowboys



L to R: Marty, Joe and John Kosel

**The Western Way:** We're visiting today with the High Country Cowboys, a western singing trio from Montana. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule, guys, to talk to us. Let me introduce you guys to our readers. You are three brothers from Montana – John, Marty, and Joe Kosel. And you have a special affinity for the music of the Sons of the Pioneers, right?

**High Country Cowboys:** (in unison) Right!

**TWW:** How did guys from your generation get interested in music that was recorded and popular long before any of you were born?

**John:** We were home schooled, so we were influenced by what our parents - especially dad - listened to. We grew up on Roy Rogers movies and other B-westerns; the Sons of the Pioneers was always the highlight for us!

**TWW:** Did it happen to strike you one day that your voices were very similar to those of the Pioneers?

**John:** We could hear it in Marty's voice early on, but it took a long time for us to develop the sound we get now!

**TWW:** Who works out your harmonies and who will sing lead? Is it just a team effort?

**HCC:** Yes– team effort.

**TWW:** Do you listen closely to the recordings of the Sons of the Pioneers and try your best to duplicate their harmonies?

**John:** Yes. When we were first getting started, we studied

them hard! That was back in 2006. At that time, I was singing lead, Joe was low, and Marty was high! After a year or two, we weren't happy with that stack, so we put Joe on lead, and me on low. Marty was so good at the high parts, we left him there. After a year or so of that, we still weren't getting the Pioneer Sound we wanted. It was then that we realized Marty's voice was developing a Bob Nolan/Tommy Doss sound. He also has a very strong voice, so lead is where he really belonged! Joe also has a powerful voice, but it was so deep in pitch that Marty and I had a hard time blending with him. So we put him on high harmony! (chuckle) That seems weird, but it really gave us a much more mellow blend. It also gave us the Pioneer Sound we'd been looking for! Now when we learn a new song, our parts come natural to us.

**TWW:** Are you opposed to doing some original recordings that might be pitched to you by other writers? Or do you just want to stick mainly with the traditional cowboy and western songs?

**John:** Oh, no! If its good music and we like it, we'll learn it! We know close to 220 songs at this point!



At the rodeo

**TWW:** So – who's married and who is not?

**Joe:** I'm married with a little boy and a beautiful wife, Rosemary.

**Marty:** I just got married in February.

**John:** I'm still a little too young to be married. (laughs)

# WESTERN EVENTS CALENDAR\*

## 2017

### Cowboy Way Festival

May 5-6 – Gene Autry, Oklahoma

### South Texas Cowboy Gathering

May 5-6 – Seguin, Texas

### Grand Encampment Cowboy Gathering

July 13-16 – Encampment, Wyoming

### Arizona Cowboy Poets Gathering

August 10-12 – Prescott, Arizona

### Montana Cowboy Poetry Gathering

August 17-20 – Lewiston, Montana

### Stony Plain Cowboy Festival

August 18-20 – Stony Plain, Alberta, CAN

### Abilene Trails, Rails & Tales

September 2-3 – Abilene, Kansas

### San Angelo Cowboy Gathering

September 8-9 – San Angelo, Texas

### National Cowboy Symposium

September 8-10 – Lubbock, Texas

### Lost N Lava Cowboy Gathering

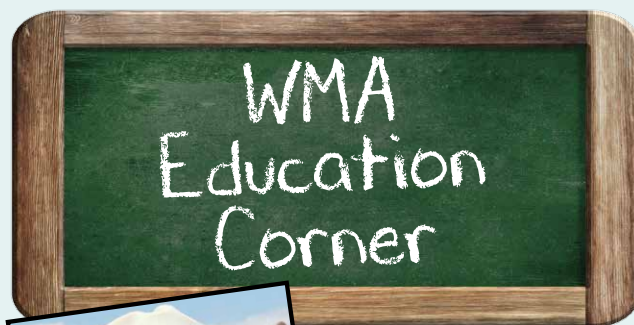
September 14-17 – Shoshone, Idaho

### Badger Clark Cowboy Poetry & Music Gathering

September 22-23 – Hot Springs, South Dakota

### WMA Annual Convention

November 8-12 - Albuquerque, New Mexico 



*By Judy James*

Have you arrived at an elementary school to do a program, are shown the performance area, unload your materials, and prepare to begin the show. Then the students come in and the teachers leave. This scenario was described to me and I have been asked how to control this setting.

My first thoughts were to follow the teachers out of the room, but that wouldn't be the wisest decision. Your main objective is to give parameters. Tell them how you want them to respond. If you ask a question, do you want them to raise their hand or shout out the answer? (Be careful with the second option.) Another choice is to tell the class or assembly to nod their head – up and down for yes, or sideways for no. This seems a little strange but they will respond if you stick with it and model the response you desire. (This works well for Kindergarten through 4th grade or so.) If you tell the students how you want them to respond to you and are asking a question, only call on those who are answering in the manner you specified.

The more they are challenged and praised, the better they will respond.

Also, do you take Western Music Association materials with you and talk about our organization? Marsha Short can supply you with what you need.

Good luck and continue performing for those younger audiences! They ARE our future.

Keeping Our Western Heritage ALIVE!

Judy James

[judy@judyjames.com](mailto:judy@judyjames.com) 

*Judy James is an award-winning educator who retired after 30 years in the classroom. She has been touring her education programs in public schools, home school organizations, and other educational organizations since 1994. She is also a singer/song writer/guitarist/author/radio DJ. Email [judy@judyjames.com](mailto:judy@judyjames.com). Address: PO Box 953, Weatherford, TX 76086*





# Chapter Update

## ARIZONA CHAPTER

**President: Yvonne Mayer**

**Steidl-mayer@msn.com**

Arizona Chapter members participated in many events at the 25th annual Cochise Cowboy Poetry and Music Gathering held in Sierra Vista February 3-5. We hosted an information table in the mercantile area. St. Ann's Chapel at Bob Fee's home was the venue for



Barry Ward with John (Buck) and Linda Ryberg. Photo courtesy Yvonne Mayer

Barry Ward's concert on Feb 17. On Feb 19, our monthly chapter meeting was held at the Beatitudes Assisted Living complex in Glendale. We had an excellent turnout, with nine acts taking part in the jam session, and



Performers at the Beatitudes. Photo courtesy Theresa O'Dell

a most appreciative audience. The Western Music Night Benefit continues at Monterey Court in Tucson, with 43 Miles North performing in January and Buck Helton in February. Western Music Night is held the last Wednesday of every month as a fund raiser for the chapter. The Tucson Rodeo, La Fiesta de los Vaqueros, has been held in Tucson



Red Hot Rhythm Rustlers at the Beatitudes. Photo courtesy Theresa O'Dell

every year since 1925. The chapter entered a wagon in the Rodeo Parade. Decorating the wagon was supervised by Yvonne Mayer and Gene Crandall, with a pick-up crew of young cowboys and cowgirls supplied by Bell Livestock Co. Singing performers during the parade included Buck Helton and Mae Camp. Women of the West by Today's Women of the West was presented at



Wagon in Tucson Rodeo Parade. Photo courtesy Yvonne Mayer

Monterey Court, Tucson on March 2nd. Participating cowgirl songsters include Sherry walker, Janice Deardorff, Carol Markstrom and Nancy Elliott. Tucson Festival of Books was held on the University of Arizona campus March 11-12. 43 Miles North performed in a 45-minute slot on March 11th. The Arizona Chapter joined with Old Tucson (Studios) to hold the Western Music Festival at Old Tucson on April 1-2. Performances were held on three stages, with seven acts scheduled. On April 5th, Dennis and Carilyn Knill hosted Jim Jones and Doug Figgs at a house concert.

## CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

**President: Jack Hummel**

**westmusc@ix.netcom.com**

Hello to you all. We have kicked off 2017 with a bang with exciting events and a

robust plan. Join us in welcoming our newest Board members, Bob Thomas and Cheryl Dellepiane, who will serve as Members at Large for this coming year. We appreciate their help and look forward to their fresh ideas. February kicked off the Out West Concert Series with a dazzling performance by the Hanson Family. We have greatly enjoyed seeing them at the Annual Convention and have been hoping to get this award-winning trio to appear here. Our wish was granted when they delivered a wonderful performance. Next on OutWest Concert list was An Evening with Walden Dahl on March 24. You can catch all of the programs at [www.sctvoutwest.com](http://www.sctvoutwest.com) We write regularly about our monthly Showcase Series at the Autry Museum of the American West in Burbank, California. We are blessed to have such a venue and our performers have practiced and worked diligently to earn a continuing place in the Autry's schedule. January's Showcase was heavily attended, even on a slow day for the Museum. This past performance drew 18 performers and filled the chairs! One new performer, Ashly Holland, joined us all the way from Montana. The Showcase is scheduled for the 3rd Sunday of every month from 12noon to 3pm. Please join us if you can! Like most chapters, we have a goal to pull more interest with the younger audiences. Our efforts have focused on targeted promotion to schools and churches, and we are excited to have two new youth members. John Bergstrom concentrated on that goal and has been asked again to perform and present for the library's "Brown Bag Lunch" sessions at Sierra Vista Junior High School. John received great reviews last year for his work, which opened more doors. In Northern California, Cisco Jim Aceves has used similar approaches. If your chapter would like to share success stories and ideas, or if you have questions about youth outreach, please contact us. We appreciate any and all input. All the best to you all!

*Continued on page 14*

# Chapter Update

Continued from page 13

## COLORADO CHAPTER

**President: Susie Knight**

**lassothecowgirl@yahoo.com**

This year, four Showcases are booked to encourage our Performing Members with opportunities for them to shine on stage and get acquainted with each other's talents, enlighten the general public that Western Music and Cowboy Poetry exists, and ultimately, to grow the WMA and the WMA-CO Chapter.

- WMA-CO Showcase—Lewis-Arriola - 4/15/17, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., Lewis-Arriola Community Center, Cortez
- WMA-CO Showcase—Denver/Colorado Classic Horse Show - 4/29/17, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., National Western Events Center
- WMA-CO Showcase—Florissant—8/5/17, 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., Florissant Grange
- WMA-CO—Cortez - 9/16/17, time TBD, held in conjunction with Chili Cook-off @ The Cortez Cultural Center

The 2017 Pikes Peak Cowboy Gathering is being planned. Co-Chairpersons, Tom & Donna Hatton, are working behind the scenes to plan the event this fall. Vic Anderson (Estes Park, CO) has been appointed the WMA-CO Youth Coordinator. Vic is brainstorming ideas to encourage young musicians, singers, and actors to become polished performers as they learn to perform western music and cowboy poetry. Our new Facebook Page is called: WMA-CO Branded Western. This page can be viewed by the public, but only our chapter members can post on the page. So, Members, please start posting your promo and share your updates. Let the rest of the Facebook world know all about you and your talent! The Top Hand Award will be awarded this year



Valerie Beard

to the WMA-CO member (performing or supporting member) with the most points accrued for supporting our chapter. The award is

a custom-made trophy buckle. The 2015 winner was Valerie Beard. The



Donna Hatton

2016 winner was Tom & Donna Hatton. (Donna says Tom polishes it, and she wears it every day!

## EAST COAST CHAPTER

**President: Aspen Black**

**aspen@aspenblackcowgirl.com**

Planning continues to progress on both new chapter-sponsored events. The first will be held in Villa Rica, GA on May 15, 2017. It will be in the format of a one-day festival, including old west gun fighters, western-themed children's activities, and, of course, live performances of western music and cowboy poetry throughout the day. Kerry Grombacher is producing the event, on behalf of the WMAECC, in conjunction with the Pine Mountain Gold Museum, the Villa Rica Public Library, and the town of Villa Rica. Our second chapter-sponsored event will be on July 15, 2017 in Cumberland, MD. Although not held on the exact date, it offers tribute to the National Day of the Cowboy, with WMAECC members will presenting an evening concert of western music and poetry. Ticket prices include admission to the show and coffee/desserts. Tom Hawk and Aspen Black are co-producing this event.

## KANSAS CHAPTER

**President: Orin Friesen**

**orin@rbanjoranch.com**

The first WMA-Kansas Chapter meeting of 2017 was held on January 15 at the Prairie Rose Chuckwagon. Prior to the meeting, cowboy professor and author, Dr. Jim Hoy, spoke at our "Lunch & Learn." Jim told the story of Frank Maynard, of Towanda, Kansas, who is generally credited as being the composer of the "Cowboy's Lament," a song that eventually became famous as the "Streets of Laredo." Jim also brought along copies of his book, Cowboy's Lament, which tells the life story of Frank Maynard and his famous song. Members of the Kansas chapter are gearing up for a big year in celebration

of the 150th Anniversary of the Chisholm Trail. Events are planned all throughout 2017 and WMA members will be involved in many of the events, both individually and collectively. This year's annual Symphony in the Flint Hills will take on the Chisholm Trail theme, with WMA Hall of Fame member, Michael Martin Murphey, headlining the event and performing with the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra. Another large Chisholm Trail event will take place in Abilene, Kansas, the original trail head of the famous cattle trail. The festival will take place September 1-3, and will feature performances by many of the Kansas Chapter members. Other CT150 celebrations which will involve WMA members include those in Caldwell, Kansas, Ellsworth, Kansas, and at the Prairie Rose Western Days Festival near Benton, Kansas. In January, there were several, sold-out premiere showings of the new Lone Chimney Films production, Home on the Range, which stars Hollywood actors, Buck Taylor, Rance Howard, Darby Hinton, Mathew Greer, and Kay Epperson, along with cowboy singers Michael Martin Murphey and Skip Gorman. The soundtrack album also has performances by WMA Hall of Fame members, Michael Martin Murphey, Rex Allen Jr., Riders in the Sky, and the Sons of the Pioneers. Kansas Chapter members on the soundtrack include Barry Ward, Diamond W Wranglers, and the Prairie Rose Rangers. Since "Home on the Range" is the Kansas State Song, Governor Sam Brownback suggested that all members of the Kansas House and Senate should see the film. So, on January 30, to celebrate Kansas Statehood Day (Jan. 29,) Home on the Range was shown, three times, in the Kansas State Capital for the legislators and the governor to view. Prior to the third showing, Michael Martin Murphey opened the Senate sessions by singing "Home on the Range."

## NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

**President: James Michael**

**Mhosea@zianet.com**

Since our last update, the WMA-New Mexico Chapter (WMA-NM) has brought a fine finish to 2016 and made a grand start on 2017. The final concert for 2016 was our annual Christmas Concert. It was held December 8 at a new



## Chapter Update

*Continued from page 14*

venue for us on the New Mexico State Fair Grounds. The venue is called the



*Christmas Concert Photo courtesy Anne Carpenter*

African American Performing Arts Center. The concert featured the Flying J Wranglers from Ruidoso. The Flying J put on a great show and everyone in attendance had a terrific evening. As a matter of fact, we are already making plans for the 2017 Christmas Concert. The Summer Concert Series last year at the Rio Bravo Brewing Company (RBBC) was such a success that we decided to initiate a Winter Concert Series as well. The first winter concert took place January 21 at the RBBC and featured The Tumbleweeds who provided a fine evening of Western swing tunes for a very appreciative audience. The second concert in the Winter Concert Series took place February 18 and featured two outstanding New Mexico Chapter



*Markstrom Photo courtesy Anne Carpenter*

members, Carol Markstrom and Jim Jones who put on an excellent show that evening. The Summer Concert Series for 2017 will begin May 20 at the RBBC and will feature the fabulous Syd Masters and the Swing Riders.

If you plan to be in Albuquerque that evening, please be sure to stop by for some outstanding Western entertainment and some of the finest brew in Albuquerque. The City of Albuquerque has once again asked WMA-NM to produce the Western Youth Day Concert on the Plaza in Old Town. The 2017 edition will be the fourth for

this event and will take place on July 16. As of this writing, the line-up for the show is still being put together but as always, we are anticipating a first-rate show featuring some of the best young talent in the WMA. In addition, the chapter continues to host open mic sessions at The Blue Grasshopper in Rio Rancho (near Albuquerque) every first and third Monday of each month. These open mic events are a lot of fun and the



*Performers at the Blue Grasshopper*

pizza is great, so please stop by The Blue Grasshopper if you are in town. As part of our effort to increase awareness of Western music, cowboy poetry and the WMA, we will be participating in more events around the State this year. The first of those events will be Rawhide Days in Tucumcari on May 5-6. We will have a booth at this event and Mikki Daniel (WMA-NM member and WMA Female Performer of the Year) will be performing, so come on out to Tucumcari and enjoy the show. Details concerning all our events can be found on our Web site, [westernmusicnm.com](http://westernmusicnm.com) or on the WMA-New Mexico Facebook page.

### OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

**President: Donnie Poindexter**  
**[cowboydp51@gmail.com](mailto:cowboydp51@gmail.com)**

At the Oklahoma Chapter's Annual Meeting at the Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum outside Ardmore, OK, a new slate of officers for 2017 was elected. National



*President, Donnie Poindexter. Photo courtesy Cynthia Marchessault Photography*

Director Marsha Short drove up from Texas to attend. New chapter president is Donnie Poindexter, vice-president is Ron Secoy, secretary is Robert Maxwell Case, and treasurer is

Francine Roark Robison. Nine members of our chapter participated in the second annual "Campfires, Cattle and Cowboys Gathering" at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center in Duncan, OK. Headliner RJ Vandygriff welcomed Jim Garling, Danny Carl Williams, Nolan King, Francine Roark Robison, Donnie Poindexter, Curtis Krigbaum, Robert Beene, Ron Secoy, and George Rhodes for a chilly but heartwarming evening of cowboy poetry and music. A Little Farther West released their second album, "Mountain Storm," in January. Francine Roark Robison performed in Ft. Worth, TX for "Campfire Tales" at the Ft. Worth Stock Show in January. The Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum presented The Sawyer Family featuring Leah and David Sawyer in concert in February and The Hanson Family in concert in March. We congratulate our own Jeanne Cahill, of Call Of The West, named 2016 Instrumentalist of the Year at the WMA Awards of Excellence in Albuquerque. Our Oklahoma chapter has joined with the Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum to present "Cowboy Way Fest 2017," May 5-7. Museum Director Leslei Fisher has announced the festival's featured music and poetry acts will include Sons Of The Pioneers, Rex Allen, Jr., Les Gilliam, Jody Miller, Ain't Misbehavin' Swing Band, Miss Devon and the Outlaw, Kristyn Harris, Susie Knight, Call Of The West, Steeldust, A Little Farther West, and more. A celebration of all things western, the event also will include celebrities (James Drury of "The Virginian"), vendors, chuck wagon chow, and an Oklahoma chapter Showcase. For more information, please go on the Web to: [geneautryokmuseum.org](http://geneautryokmuseum.org).

### TEXAS CHAPTER

**President: TBD**  
**[Marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:Marsha@westernmusic.org)**

The first meeting of the new Texas chapter was held on March 19. Details from that newly formed chapter were not available yet but will be coming soon!

### YOUTH CHAPTER

**Coordinator: Jane Leche**  
**[rangerjane@rocketmail.com](mailto:rangerjane@rocketmail.com)**

The WMA Youth Chapter is excited to announce new Chapter Officers! Mikah Johnson from McKinney, TX



### Tommy Allsup (1931 – 2017)



Tommy Allsup, the guitarist who avoided the Buddy Holly plane crash by losing a coin flip, died Jan. 11, 2017, according to multiple news sources. He was 85 years. He died at a hospital in Springfield, Missouri, of complications from a hernia operation, said his son, Austin.

The musician was in Buddy Holly's backing band when he lost a coin toss to Ritchie Valens for a seat on the private plane that crashed in Iowa in 1959. Buddy Holly, Valens, and the Big Bopper, aka J.P. Richardson, died in the accident in what is now called the Day the Music Died. He became friends with Buddy Holly in 1958 and played guitar in the studio on a few Holly songs including "It's So Easy." According to Allsup, Holly couldn't play the solo in that song, so he asked Allsup to join his band on the Winter Dance Party tour. To avoid a long winter bus trip to the next stop after a show in Iowa, Holly chartered a private plane. That is when Allsup and rising star Ritchie Valens flipped a coin for a seat on the bus.

"Tommy Allsup was one of western swing and rockabilly music's finest," said Neil R. Portnow, president of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. "The Oklahoma native and was admired by his peers and fans alike (and) heralded by Paul McCartney as one of the finest guitar players in the world."

Allsup was born Nov. 24, 1931, in Oklahoma and was an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation. He told the Tulsa News that when he was 16, he would hitchhike to Cain's Ballroom in Tulsa to watch early rock 'n' roll shows. "I was six foot tall, and back then they didn't even have IDs." "If you were big enough to stand up to the bar, you could get you a beer." He started to perform at the club and became a working musician. - See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/ns/tommy-allsup-obituary/183608102#sthash.WVm3VVda.dpuf>

"He asked me four or five times could he fly in my place," Allsup remembered of Valens in a 2007 interview. "For some reason, I pulled a half dollar out of my pocket and flipped it. He said 'heads,' and it came up heads."

"So I went out to the station wagon and told Buddy. I said, 'I'm not going. Me and Ritchie flipped a coin. He's going in my place.' Buddy, said 'cool.'" The plane crashed shortly after takeoff. Allsup said he thought about the accident, and thanked God, every day of his life. Austin Allsup, his son, a musician who appeared on "The Voice," said his father took losing the coin toss as "a blessing" and that he was humbled to be connected to "such a monumental moment in music history."

Austin Allsup said Valens' sister had contacted him after his father's death to offer her condolences. "I told her in my message back, now my dad and Ritchie can finally finish the tour they started 58 years ago," he told ABC News. Allsup played with such greats as Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard, and Roy Orbison, and won multiple Grammy awards.

### Richard John Bush, Jr. (1953 – 2017)

*(Submitted by Miss Devon Dawson)*



Richard John Bush Jr., 63, of Wichita Falls passed away Friday, January 6, 2017. A graveside service with military honors was held January 20, 2017 at Fort Sill National Cemetery in Elgin, Oklahoma. Rick was born on October 20, 1953 in Royal Oak, Michigan to Richard and Shirley (Weber) Bush. He proudly served his country in the United States Air Force. He spent many years as

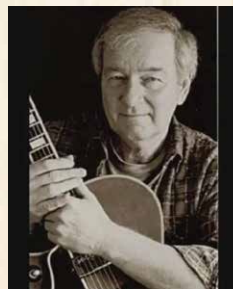
an electronics technician, and he was also a professional musician, playing with groups like the Texas Trail Hands and the Retro Rockets. He was a Member of the Western Music Association, and American Legion Post #202. The family suggests that memorials be made in Rick's name to American Legion Post #202, 1101 E. Scott Ave, Wichita Falls, TX 76301.

I was honored to stand beside "Red River Rick" for over six years in THE TEXAS TRAILHANDS, having met him through Allan Chapman, who recruited him to complete our group with lead guitar and tenor harmony vocals. I delighted in the stellar lead arrangements created by Rick. He had a great knack for delivering clever puns, and also was a master at hearing matching melodic phrases in very dissimilar songs.

I was fond of my fellow Trailhand, and admired him - he had a brilliant mind and a kind heart. I'm SO glad that we produced one CD with Rick as a member, and I know that he was very proud of the ensemble work we did from 2005 to 2012. Rick was the proud, stunned and surprised recipient of a beautiful custom-made acoustic guitar, several years back, presented to him by Eddy Harrison. I will never forget the look on Rick's face.... I miss you, Rick - God Speed, mi Amigo, and I look forward to pickin' with you in a jam session where the party never ends and Our Lord is diggin' it.

### Paul Denton (1931 – 2016)

*(A tribute from Paul's niece, Renee Butts)*



On October 24th, 2016, Paul Denton, a resident of Brenham, Texas, left this earth, leaving a wonderful legacy of music for us to enjoy forever. Born on September 1, 1931, he enjoyed 85 productive years producing inventive and creative arrangements and musical productions.

Paul was a proud father of six children, a grandfather, a brother, son, husband and friend to so many.

He was, by trade, an engineer, but by his passion, he was a stunningly talented master musician, arranger, producer, artist and songwriter. Paul's musical accomplishments are well known in this community. Those that knew him well, know that humility was among his finest qualities. He never



touted his own creations, preferring to focus on the craft itself, letting the end result stand, in excellence, on its own merit. When listening to him play, one was always aware they were in the presence of greatness.

Paul's accomplishments are so many, but one that is notable is his invention of a patented Tremolo for Gibson Guitars, which stayed in production for over 40 years. Additionally, he was a former member of the folk group, The Pozo Seco Singers, along with singer Don Williams.

In the later years he embraced western music more and more, and, along with four very talented family members, formed The New Pioneers, an homage to the original Sons of the Pioneers, but with their own original flair and arrangements. The group produced several CDs with success, and they traveled all over the country performing for grateful audiences longing to hear their favorite kind of music.

He left us a huge library of music to enjoy for many years to come; he was creating new compositions right up until the very end; but more importantly, he left a loving family and many wonderful friends who are better by simply knowing him. Paul will be forever missed by those of us who knew and loved him. Rest in Peace, sweet Paul--it's been an honor!

*The following are some thoughts about Paul as shared by his good friend, Peggy Malone:* Paul was in my Denver-based Band, called 'The Ridgerunners' back in the 70's. We were always booked! As Renee said, he was humble, but pure genius in his musicianship!! He loved my big Guild F50 Guitar. And, when he embraced it, magic took place with his style of picking! He worked with my husband Billy, as a Civil Engineer in Denver, and later in Fruita and Portland, Oregon. Billy said Paul was also a master engineer, and ever so easy to work with.

I truly could go on and on, as memories flood my mind. We recorded many songs at his studio, which are still heard on my 'Pickin' Memories' CD. With life comes changes. We learn to roll with them as we grow older. But in our hearts, our dear friends like Paul (Butts) Denton, will forever be in our hearts.

### Esther Dollarhide (1950 - 2017)

*(Adapted from a Tribute written by her son, Ron)*



Esther Dollarhide was born on October 12, 1950 to James and Ellen Stevenson in San Pedro, CA. She had an older brother, Robert Stevenson, and a twin sister, Cindy. Esther graduated from San Pedro High School in 1968 and met Richard Dollarhide that same year. She and Richard married on June 20, 1970. She remained by his side and endured the life of a law enforcement officer's wife

for the next 47 years. Her eyes would always light up and a smile would appear on her face anytime my dad (Richard) was mentioned. The Dollarhides were blessed with two children, Ron Dollarhide, born in 1974 and Brenda (Dollarhide) Feldman born in 1977.

Our Mom is survived by her husband (our dad) Richard, one son, Ron and one daughter, Brenda. She leaves three grandsons

– Kevin Dollarhide, Austin Street, and Ty Street. She loved her family very much. She also leaves numerous other family members and friends. Last November, while battling cancer, she insisted that I go shopping with her (on Black Friday, no less) to buy Christmas gifts for the grandsons. She was always putting others before herself.

Esther held a variety of jobs which included positions with the Riverside County District Attorney Family Support Division in Blythe, CA. She was also a tax professional with H&R Block and a legal secretary. In 2001 after moving to Tombstone, AZ, Mom became a real estate agent. She loved working with people and became entrenched in the small community. She became a board director for the Tombstone Music Festival and later became the second President of that organization. During this time she worked with the local schools to bring western concerts and entertainment to the attention of local kids. Mom was also a member of the Wild Bunch and Hells Belles, groups performing reenactments at the OK Corral. While watching one of her performances, someone in the audience called out "Lesson Learned! Never mess with a little lady carrying a shot gun." I thought to myself, "Buddy, if you only knew!"

Mom's most important job and title was "Mom." It didn't pay the bills, but she was truly the backbone of our family. She was always there while dad worked shift work and weekends. She was involved in our school functions and other activities. She even made me attend one of my sister's dance recitals! She became a Girl Scout den leader when no one else would do it so my sister could be a Brownie. She was the disciplinarian, too. When I got big enough to think she couldn't tell me what to do anymore, she calmly said "That's fine. Wait until your dad gets home." Well, I waited and soon found out that "What Mom says, goes!"

Our Mom was a real fighter with a great sense of humor. During her last few days she was smiling and still trying to put others first. The last day my wife, Nea, and I spoke to Mom, I witnessed Mom telling Nea that she had "her (Mom's) permission to punch, kick or whatever was necessary to keep me in line!" During the conversation, Mom was shaking her fist at me with a smile on her lips. Mom kept her sense of humor to the end.

Esther Dollarhide loved Western music and musicians. She will be missed by so many whose lives she touched through her encouragement and support. She will be sorely missed.

### Maurice R. Horrigan, Jr. (2017)

Maurice R. Horrigan Jr., long-time WMA supporting member from Quincy, Massachusetts, passed away on January 6, 2017, after a long battle with cancer. He is the son of the late Maurice and Mary (Walker) Horrigan.

Maurice attended St. John the Baptist Grammar school in Quincy. Maurice was the first graduating class of Archbishop Williams High School and attended Boston College, Portia and Suffolk Law Schools. For many years he was an assistant Clerk of Magistrate at Quincy District Court. Maurice was a lifetime resident of Quincy. He was a long-time member of the Quincy Lions Club and the Quincy Knights of Columbus. He traveled and skied all over the world and was a fan of Western music and a longtime supporter of the Western Music Association.

*Continued on page 38*



# WRAPPIN' IT UP

## WESTERN SLOPE COWBOY GATHERING Grand Junction, Colorado

*by Peggy Malone  
Photos used by permission*

Less than one month away, us locals found out that the Grand Junction Poetry Gathering had been canceled. Terry Nash, Nona Kelley Carver, and myself jumped in and said "No Way will we let this wonderful Gathering bite the dust!!!" So, we set out to save it and 'Renamed it'.. The WESTERN SLOPE COWBOY GATHERING (Cowboy Poetry and Music)



*The finale at WSG*

With great gratitude, Peter Booth, that runs the Museums Of Western Colorado, jumped in and gave approval to save this event, and told us we could still have it at the same location. We formed a sincere committee of folks, far and near, that have been outstanding. We all hustled to get sponsors, and donations for door prizes. It really blew us away, at how quickly folks agreed "The Show Must Go On!!!"

The lineup of performers, that took a cut in pay, just to help us out, was heartwarming... In alphabetical order:

Al Albrethsen, Jerry 'Brooksie' Brooks, Nona Kelley Carver. The Great Western Heritage Show, Randy Huston, Susie Knight, Slim McWilliams, Peggy Malone, Jen-eve Rose Mitchell,



*Museum Volunteers at WSG*



*Performers at WSG*

best turnout ever!!! So much so, that we have added daytime sessions to the Friday and Saturday schedule along with the night shows.

Sandy Reay set up a marvelous Website, which you may go to and check out this year's Gathering November 3-4, 2017, [WESTERNSLOPECOWBOYGATHERING.com](http://WESTERNSLOPECOWBOYGATHERING.com)

Sometimes we all felt like 'The Little Engine That Could'...as we took on this task. But, we are so happy that we all pulled together to save our Western Heritage, and our newly named "Western Slope Cowboy Gathering!"



*Young Participants at the Gathering*



*Western Slope Audience*



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



*Did you know that singing cowboy George Houston, known in his most successful films as The Lone Rider, collapsed and died of a heart attack on a Hollywood street at the age of only 48?*



HAPPY TRAILS CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

## Proudly Presents the Legendary RED RYDER SADDLE

Tickets \$10 Ea. or 11 For \$100

The drawing will be held  
Saturday, May 20, 2017

Legendary comic book cowboy Red Ryder was a fictional American hero to millions of boys and girls for almost three decades. He was created by noted cowboy artist Fred Harman and his marketing partner, Stephen Slesinger. Red Ryder first appeared in print on Sunday, November 6, 1938, eventually appearing in more than 750 newspapers with more than 14 million readers, in 10 languages.

Slesinger soon embarked on an aggressive marketing campaign of merchandising and licensing with an endless array of comic books, Big Little Books, novels, radio programs, rodeos, powwows, and numerous licensed products including the legendary Daisy Red Ryder BB gun, the longest continuous license agreement in history.

It was inevitable that Red Ryder would make it to Hollywood, first appearing in 1940 in the classic 12 chapter serial The Adventures of Red Ryder, starring Don "Red" Barry in the title role with Tommy Cook as his juvenile Indian sidekick, Little Beaver. This was followed by 23 Red Ryder feature films from Republic Pictures beginning in 1944 through 1947. Cowboy actor Wild Bill Elliott starred in the first 16 films followed by Allan "Rocky" Lane. Child actor Bobby Blake appeared in all 23 films as Little Beaver.

Wild Bill Elliott as Red Ryder rode a magnificent black stallion named Thunder. Elliott used a very unique saddle in these exciting productions. When Allan "Rocky" Lane took over the role of Ryder, he used the same horse and a similar saddle. After the Red Ryder series ended, Lane kept the black horse and changed his name to Black Jack and continued to use the same horse and saddle in his long-running series of B-westerns at Republic. Lorne Greene as Ben Cartwright on Bonanza used a similar saddle on his big buckskin gelding.

This magnificent saddle was made by Master Saddlemaker Ed Mathieus of Oak Brand Leather especially for Ronnie Aycoth of North Carolina. Ronnie is almost an exact double for Wild Bill Elliott and appeared at film festivals and other events across the country for many years honoring the memory of "Wild Bill."

This saddle is beautifully hand-carved and two-toned with a 16" seat, double rigging, and leather covered stirrups. It has eight unique sterling silver flowers on the corners just like the original saddles and it comes complete with a bridle, bit, reins, breast collar and saddle blanket. You don't need to own a horse to enjoy this fantastic saddle because it comes with its own horse, a custom deluxe saddle stand made by Master wood worker Terry Kirk, just for this saddle.

This is an eye-catching outfit that anyone would be proud to own. It is a museum quality cowboy collectible and one of the greatest conversation pieces you could display in your home! Tickets are only \$10 each or 11 tickets for \$100. The drawing will be held on Saturday night, May 20, 2017. YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE PRESENT TO WIN! Order your tickets today! Discover, MasterCard, and VISA accepted. Phone toll free (855) 788-4440.



## JAZZ COWBOYS



Cartoon by Igor. Used by permission.

# FORMER TEACHER AND WESTERN ARTIST USES HISTORY, STORIES TO WRITE ORIGINAL MUSIC

By Christina Cox

Reprinted by permission. The Santa Clarita Valley SIGNAL, December 27, 2016

Seven years ago, John Bergstrom officially traded his life in the classroom for a life on the stage where he could perform and write Western music full-time. The retired social studies professor and former vice-principal uses his own background in history and passion for music to create one-of-a-kind songs based in narratives and facts.

"There are just these neat stories and interesting people in the current west nowadays and in the old west in the early-1800s," Bergstrom said. "Every story is a potential song."

The Valencia resident does something with music every day, whether it is writing or practicing, in order

ago, when he first learned how to read sheet music and play multiple instruments.

**Interest in music:** Raised in a family of musicians, Bergstrom began playing music at 4 years old.

"I started doing music as soon as my parents could get me to do it," he said. When he was a child, Bergstrom would play church music and traditional Swedish music before he joined school orchestras in junior high and high school, learning to play piano, bass and guitar along the way. "When I was a little kid I played piano. Then when I was in elementary school they started me playing bass," he said. "I've always had music in my life." He dabbled in folk music and bluegrass music for several years, all while starting and continuing his teaching career, before he attended a 2001 New West concert which started him on the "road to cowboy music."

"When I moved out here to Santa Clarita there was a little blurb in the paper saying a band called 'New West' would be performing at the little amphitheater there in Stevenson Ranch," he said. "That just struck me." After attending a show by cowboy entertainer Dave Stamey, Bergstrom knew he could combine his two passions into one. "A lot of what he did and still does is historically-based and that just fit naturally into what I do because I taught history for most of my teaching career," he said.

**Song-writing inspiration:** Over the years, Bergstrom has created five CDs with approximately 40 original pieces of music, most of which are based in history. For many of his songs, Bergstrom seeks out stories of the Old West or of the Santa Clarita Valley to be the focal point of his lyrics. He has written songs about the St. Francis Dam Disaster, Old West bandit Tiburcio Vasquez, stagecoach driver Charlie Parkhurst, among others. "The history of the Santa Clarita Valley is very much the history of the Old West and the history of the Movie West with the Hart Mansion and Hart Park," Bergstrom said. "There's neat history here."

Several of his songs have come from audience feedback or friends' suggestions. His song "Charlie Parkhurst," about a woman named Charlotte who hid her identity to be a stagecoach driver in California, spurred from a friend's recommendation to look into the history of the character.

"I've gotten four or five songs that way, where people have come up and given me a suggestion for a song,"



Courtesy of John Bergstrom

to hone his skills. "You got to do something to get better every day, to maintain your skills," he said. "You got to work at it every day because if you're not getting better then you're getting worse."

With nominations for Best Western Performer, Best Album and Best Song by the Academy of Western Artists for 2016, his constant efforts have not gone unnoticed. And this dedication and love of music began many years





*Western State of Mind” members John Bergstrom, John Nelson and Gency Brown at the Saugus Train Station. Courtesy of John Bergstrom.*

Bergstrom said. “I can’t guarantee to write the song, but it often gives me motivation to find something.”

Bergstrom also hunts for songs while he is on vacation with his wife. While in Oregon, the couple visited the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center which sparked Bergstrom’s inspiration to write a song about the western end of the Oregon Trail. “I go hunting for songs when my wife and I travel,” he said. “It’s interesting because usually I find something and that gets my creative juices going too.”

Bergstrom also aims to create songs that teach the audience something new, like that popular filming locations for Old West movies along the 14 and 118 Freeways (CA) were also once popular locations for actual Old West bandits to hide. “I wrote a song about Tiburcio Vasquez [a California bandit] and when I introduce the song I usually tell the audience, ‘I don’t know if you realize, but you live in bandit country,’” he said. “I’m still teaching school sort of.”

**Performing throughout Santa Clarita Valley:** During the year, Bergstrom performs at locations throughout New Mexico, Utah, Arizona and California. He also makes a point to perform on most Sundays at Athena’s Restaurant on Soledad and the first and third Wednesday of the month at El Trocadero Steak House on Main and

Market. Bergstrom has played for private parties, festivals and events, but his favorite performances are what he calls “house concerts” where the audience can sit and take in the lyrics of his music. “I like playing for smaller groups because the stories of my songs need to be listened to,” he said. “It’s that connection. It’s a neat thing to have people close and nodding their heads up and down; they’re in it with you.”

Another one of his cherished events is performing at a Christmas party for Michael Hoefflin Foundation, which helps fund pediatric cancer research and support families. “It’s just a nice thing to see all these people to show up for these people and families,” he said. Bergstrom said there are certain organizations that he makes a point to be available for because of what they do and who they are. “When there’s a community organization that is doing good work and needs music, I try to do what I can to work with them,” he said.

**Western culture and community support:** Bergstrom agrees with his fellow Western singer Buffalo Bryan Marr that Santa Clarita is a hub for western music and cowboy poetry. “There are some neat people supporting western history and culture here,” he said. “There are a lot of people in the Santa Clarita Valley that appreciate western music more than say in Hollywood or downtown LA.”



*John Bergstrom Courtesy John Bergstrom*

Bergstrom noted that he is grateful for the community support of western culture so he can continue to do what he loves most: performing. “I think that that is pretty common,” Bergstrom said. “Performers want to perform.”

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*The Writer: CHRISTINA COX Christina Cox is a multimedia journalist covering education, community and breaking news in the Santa Clarita Valley. She joined The Signal as a staff writer in August 2016.*





# TUNE YOURSELF

## Physical Therapy for Singers

Samantha Meyer Gallegos

When you think about exercises for musicians, you think about guitarists who need to keep their hands in top condition or fiddle players who may end up having back problems due to positioning. But what about those who sing? Do singers and other vocal performers need exercises beyond those that warm up their vocal cords?

It may not seem like it, but body-centered exercise and even physical therapy can help you keep your voice in top shape and may help you become a stronger singer. One study even found that physical therapy and other body-centered exercises can contribute to improved alignment, posture and core strength, all of which create a smoother, more dynamic voice with an extended pitch range.

Unless you are trying to address a specific problem with physical therapy, however, many exercises that can help singers are less concrete or are instead physical activities. These exercises assist in strengthening your core or help you increase your breath control and capacity.

### 1. Strengthen Your Core

Any exercise that helps strengthen your core will help with your breath control. These include sit-ups, push-ups, planks, fitness classes and yoga. It is important to note, however, that your aim is not to acquire a six pack, but to tone your stomach muscles, so you have more strength to guide and release air and manipulate your diaphragm. Too-taut stomach muscles will inhibit optimum air flow.

### 2. Pay Attention to Posture

You may have heard this over and over again, especially if you take voice lessons—remember your posture! However, are you practicing the correct posture? Yes, you still want to stand tall, as though an invisible string were holding you up through the top of your head, to use an old maxim. However, today's physical therapists are moving away from the idea that you should hold your shoulders back and thrust your chest forward, a stance that can actually lead to back pain. Instead, the idea is to have a neutral spine with your shoulders neither held back nor hunched forward. Use your lower abs to bring your pelvis forward, tuck your tailbone slightly, loosen your knees and lean slightly forward so that the weight on your feet is mostly distributed evenly with a bit more on the balls of your feet. Many of us hunch, lock our knees and lean back without noticing it, which leads to back and knee pain as well as poor airflow and support.

### 3. Practice the Hissing Exercise

This exercise helps tone your diaphragm and core while

increasing your lung capacity. Standing correctly, take a deep, correct breath, then release your breath in a steady hiss for at least a slow 12 count or until your breath is gone. Once that becomes easy, move to a staccato hiss, punctuating quarter notes with pulses from your diaphragm, then 8th notes, triplets, and end with 16th notes, moving on as each becomes easy.

### 4. Pay Attention to Throat and Jaw Tension

Throat and jaw tension, as well as tension in your shoulders and tongue, can impact your ability to achieve proper placement, which could, in turn, wreak havoc on both your voice and your air flow. It can also dry out your throat and vocal folds, narrow your airway and create irritation in your throat.

Tension is often chronic, and the best way to counteract throat tension is to “establish a regular, relaxed breathing pattern.” It may seem too simplistic, but combating tension when you are not singing, learning to relax through methods such as meditation, yoga, and deep breathing exercises can help you relax when you sing and ease the tension that affects your voice.

### 5. Expand the Range of Motion in Your Rib Cage

Another problem you may encounter is not being able to expand your rib cage enough to take a truly effective breath. Dancers and singers are taught to stand with an elevated rib cage, and many of us hold in our stomachs for aesthetic reasons, but this can stifle a correct, full breath. Here are two simple exercises you can use to help expand the range of motion of your rib cage:

- Lie back against a foam roller placed just under your shoulder blades, arms stretched above your head, knees bent and feet flat on the floor to provide stability. Stay in this position as long as is comfortable.
- Lie on top of a stability ball on your stomach, legs stretched in back of you and arms in front of you, palms on the floor to keep you stable. Stay in this position as long as is comfortable.

You will begin to feel your rib cage and back relax and stretch, which will, in turn, allow for greater expansion.

The above activities can help promote greater breath control and capacity, which can do wonders for your voice in multiple ways. I even use them myself! I am a writer, however, not a doctor, and as always, it is best to consult a professional before starting any exercise routine or to consult with a doctor for any specific problems. With practice and patience, however, you can protect and expand your air and propel your voice to new heights!

<sup>2</sup> Claudia Friedlander. “Musings on Mechanics: Breathing Between the Lines.” *Classical Singer*. December 14, 2014, 16-18.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 • <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 17

*Special thanks to Annette Minnich of Minnich Music, professional opera singer and professional voice and piano teacher in Albuquerque, New Mexico.*





by Buck Helton

## Rose of Alabamy

Howdy Pards!

Once again it's time to dig into that pile of tailings and find some long overlooked Golden Nuggets.

This time out our subject is an old Minstrel tune dating from 1846, The Rose of Alabamy. The lyrics are written by a Silas S. Steele, no attribution of the melody is given. It was originally intended to be sung by white performers in blackface, and the published lyrics were written phonetically to mimic southern black dialect. I've changed them closer to Standard English for this article. The original sheet music is available from the Levy collection at Johns Hopkins University and may be downloaded at no charge. It was first published in Boston, MA. By George P. Reed as sung by A.F. Winnemore & his band of Serenaders and was intended for Northern audiences, but like other Minstrel tunes made its way South and West and was adopted regionally. It was popular and spread rapidly. I've also found publications in the same year from New York, NY. and Philadelphia, PA.

Mr. Steele did something quite similar in theme in his piece Kate of Carolina as well. Prior to its revival in the 1976 Clint Eastwood film The Outlaw Josey Wales, the greatest

impact of the song was in inspiring Stephen F. Foster to pen his classic *Oh Susannah!* in 1848. This was the first song ever to sell 100,000 copies of sheet music and convinced Mr. Foster to become America's first professional songwriter. The tobacco flower *Alt. Nicotina* has a wonderfully sweet fragrance and is still used widely in the art of perfumery. The songwriter compares the woman in the tune to the sweetness of this blossom.

Josey Wales, filmed at Old Tucson studios (where your author is the resident Singing Cowboy & Western Music historian) introduced the tune to an entirely new generation, and it has been recorded many times since then. It also remains popular amongst players of Civil War music as a song of the Confederacy. As there are 9 published verses, I might suggest using the verse, verse, chorus form to prevent it from running overly long. When we perform a snippet of it in the Silver Screen show at Old Tucson, we use only the first, fifth and ninth verses with the chorus sung after the first and fifth.

The song is obviously a product of its time, and even when written was intended as a parody of Plantation life. It is important that we remember all of history and thus, it is presented for your consideration.



Tobacco Flower  
Public Domain

*Away from Mississippi's vale,  
With my ol' hat there for a sail,  
I crossed upon a cotton bale,  
To Rose of Alabamy.*

*Cho: Oh brown Rosie,  
Rose of Alabamy.  
A sweet tobacco posey  
Is my Rose of Alabamy.  
A sweet tobacco posey  
Is my Rose of Alabamy.*

*I landed on the far sand bank,  
I sat upon the hollow plank,  
And there I made the banjo twank,  
For Rose of Alabamy.*

*Oh, arter d'rectly bye and bye,  
The moon rose white as Rosie's eye,  
Den like a young coon out so sly,  
Stole Rose of Alabamy.*

*I said sit down just where you please.  
Upon my lap she took her ease.  
"It's good to go upon the knees,"  
Said Rose of Alabamy.*

*The river rose; the cricket sang,  
The lightnin' bug did flash his wing,  
Den like a rope my arms I fling,  
'Round Rose of Alabamy.*

*We hugged how long I cannot tell.  
My Rosie seemed to like it well.*

*My banjo in the river fell.  
Oh Rose of Alabamy.*

*Like alligator after prey,  
I jump in but it float away,  
And all the while it seem to say,  
"Oh Rose of Alabamy."*

*Now every night come rain or shower,  
I hunt that banjo for an hour;  
And see my sweet tobacco flower,  
Oh Rose of Alabamy.*

*Oh fare thee well you belles of Spain,  
And fare thee well to Liza Jane,  
Your charms will all be put to shame,  
By Rose of Alabamy*

*That's about it for this trip pards, but we'll be back with more next time out. I want to thank those of you who have written and emailed and let me know that you are enjoying the column, your feedback and suggestions are always welcome. Please send them to Buck@buckhelton.com. 'til next time, Happy Trails!*





HCC just havin' fun

**TWW:** And is one of you considered the leader of the group – or do you just work together to get done what needs to be done?

**John:** There isn't really a leader, but as manager, I make a lot of the decisions and bookings. Everyone has an equal say when it comes to more serious decisions.

**TWW:** If there's a disagreement, who usually wins out?

**John:** (Chuckles) It comes out pretty even I think! That's the best thing about an odd number of people in a band. We often have to put somethings up to a vote. Also, we were taught growing up to get along, and we all know it's an important factor of group survival!



HCC on stage at St. John's

**TWW:** Who's the first one to pick up the tab at a restaurant?

**John:** (Laughs) That's what a business account is for!

**TWW:** On a more serious note, who are some of your influences besides the Sons of the Pioneers?

**Marty:** Eddy Arnold, Jim Reeves...

**Joe:** Marty Robbins, whom I think was greatly influenced by the Pioneers.

**John:** Of course, Riders in the Sky and the Sons of the San Joaquin to name more than a few.

**TWW:** Now, each of you does something besides music in which you excel. Who's the saddle maker, who's the guitar maker and luthier, and who is the painter artist?

**John:** Marty is the saddle maker, Joe is the luthier, and I'm the oil painter/western artist.

**TWW:** Do you consider those things hobbies or part of your work?

**Marty:** My saddle making is business and actually supports a younger sister as well.

**Joe:** My guitar-making and John's painting would be considered more or less hobbies.



HCC with Hal Spencer

**TWW:** You guys have a new album coming out soon. Tell us about that.

**John:** This will be our first Studio production ever! We've done several other albums but all from home. The song tracks will be a combination of favorites that we do on stage, as well as a couple of originals written by Marty! The album will be titled "Cowboy", and we traveled all the way down to Arizona to record it.

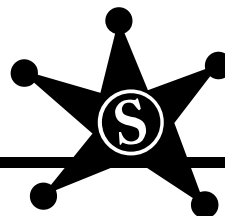
**TWW:** What's been the most fun event in which you've taken part with your western music?

**John:** Not sure! There's been a lot of fun ones! Playing at the Alberta Bair Theater in Billings, Montana was definitely a blast for us! It's one of Montana's biggest theaters.



On Stage at St. John's





***Western Music** is most often acoustic in its core instrumentation. Its lyrics are typically about the lives, loves, lore, locales, legends and legacy of the old and new West, its peoples or Cowboying worldwide.*

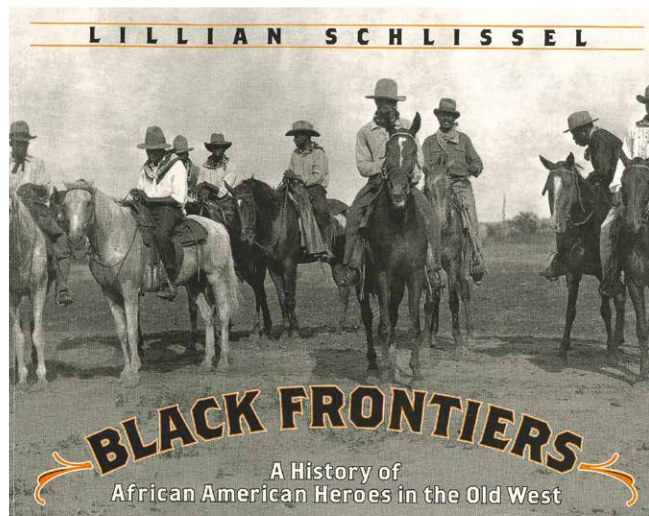
Tips? Comments? Ideas for the column, send to: Rick Huff, P.O. Box 8442, Albuquerque, NM 87198-8442 or [bestofthewestswcp.com](mailto:bestofthewestswcp.com)

Jack Hannah brought it to the attention of our previously tight Western Music world. In his song “Cowboy” (written for The Sons Of The San Joaquin), he let us know the surprising statistic that easily a third of the cowboys who rode as part of the long classic cattle drives north “were sure-enough black”...and then he proceeded to name names!!

For this past winter’s *Western Way*, I devoted the Western Air column to a book I had rediscovered concerning Indian Cowboys and Cattle Ranching. Apparently I got away with it, so I decided to go two for two. The African American participation in our Western expansion is a bit better known, but there’s more to explore. Back in 1995, a book designed for kids age 8 to 12 was already doing so. Released on their Aladdin Paperbacks imprint and billed by publishers Simon & Shuster as a “notable children’s trade book in the field of Social Studies,” author Lillian Schlissel’s “Black Frontiers” (subtitled “A History of African American Heroes In the Old West”) introduced not only Black cowboys in life and literature, but also Black businessmen (and women), adventurers and explorers, lawmen and others. Gun wielding, fist fightin’ “Stagecoach Mary” Fields is profiled. So is Ned Huddleston (alias Isom Dart, alias The Black Fox)! And Bill Pickett. And Nat Love. And Black “Indians” who found safe haven among the Ute, Sioux, Chippewa, Kiowa, Comanche and Sauk tribes among others. And, of course, the Buffalo Soldiers. Without those valiant men handling the dangerous missions of guarding coaches and supply wagons, stringing the first telegraph wire, helping to bring law and order and more, the history of the West would read far differently. But what’s my point in bringing attention to this and the previously mentioned book from more than twenty years ago?

As pictured in it, the author of “Black Frontiers” is a bespectacled, high-tea-looking, very non-Black lady from Brooklyn!! Lillian Schlissel does mention in her notes that the West is (or was) alive in New York City, where the Black World Championship Rodeo had been held every year at the 369th Armory at 143rd Street and Lennox Avenue. So her connection to her subject was somewhat more local! She had an interest, she researched it and shed new light...and relevance...on the subject. And do note she was playing to a “new” audience as well. That’s where we come to the crux of it.

Like the Indian Cowboy and Black histories, there are parts and parcels of the West that need to be revealed, embraced and celebrated if we are to be true and not just dress-up. It’s the only way we can ever hope to make Western meaningful or valuable to a SmartPhone, meme and social media mad world. If there is treasure to be brought forth, it’s in the real life of what we sing and recite. It’s in (perhaps) devoting part of the time we spend rhapsodizing about Coosie’s biscuits and beans to exploring other verdant pastures. The Western genre, and the public at large, will be the richer for it. 🐾



**TWW:** *Is there anything you would like to say to aspiring young western singers and musicians about this music you guys have grown to love?*

**John:** Yes! Of course, this is mostly opinion, but I think folks, especially song writers, need to study traditional western music a little more. I feel that the majority of contemporary music is sounding less and less like western music.

**TWW:** *Do you ever get upset with one another during practice sessions? And if so, how do you deal with it?*

**John:** Oh, a little sometimes, but nothing too serious - yet! (smiles) We're usually pretty quick to spot a bad mood.

That's when we decide to hold practice off until tomorrow! (Everyone chuckles)

**TWW:** *Thanks, guys, for revealing some of the personality of the High Country Cowboys to our readers. You're very good at what you do, and your performances are very high quality. We encourage all our readers to get out and hear you guys if you appear anywhere near them. And thanks for agreeing to our interview.*

**Marty:** Hey, Thank you for the opportunity!

**Joe:** Yes, we appreciate it.

**John:** Also we really appreciate what you and everyone in the Association is doing for Western Music! Please keep it up!







## BUFFHAM'S BUFFOONERY

by Les Buffham



### Chris's Biscuits


A friend of mine who I will not name but whose initials are Chris Isaacs is a good camp cook and used to do a lot of cookin' in high country hunting camps.

A friend of his decided that he should embrace some of the more modern appliances, to wit, a little homemade stove that he had built. If it worked out he figured to get a patent on it and start sellin' them. Get rich in a hurry. Chris was agreeable to try it out for the feller. He took it along on a hunting adventure with some of his compadres high in the White Mountains of Arizona. They would do the huntin' and he would do the cookin'. He set 'er up the first evening, stoked her up with some good dry Gambel Oak, mixed up his biscuits and shoved them in the oven on that little stove.

The boys were settin' around waiting on supper and tellin' each other lies about the big one that got away. The stew was ready and so were the beans. They were now just waiting on the bread. Chris waited for the usually prescribed time and slid the biscuits out to have a look at them. They were mighty pale so he slid 'em back in and threw a couple more sticks of wood in the firebox. After while he ventured

another look. They hadn't changed much. By now the boys were getting' pretty hungry and began to direct their conversation more to him and his biscuits in the way of a few snide comments about his cookin'. Like a lot of camp cooks you don't want to ride too hard, Chris is somewhat inclined in that direction. After another look at those biscuits he pulled 'em out and set 'em on the ground and declared that anyone could try them and no guarantees. They looked them over but there were no takers. One of the fellers, Walter, drug out a box of crackers to fill the gap.

While they were silently consuming their biscuit-less supper, one of them noticed a trade rat approaching that pan of biscuits with something in its mouth. It dropped the object in the pan, grabbed a biscuit and scampered away. Close inspection revealed that what he dropped was a dry horse apple. They were all sort of marveling at that when the rat returned. It still had the biscuit in its mouth. It dropped it in the pan, picked up the horse apple and made its retreat.


The boys all had a big laff and teased old Chris about it about as much as they dared. He went back to his Dutch oven and it is doubtful he ever endorsed his friend's modern cook stove. 

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# In The Spotlight...

by Marvin O'Dell

...In January, there were several sold-out premiere showings of the Lone Chimney Films production *Home on the Range*, starring Hollywood actors Buck Taylor, Rance Howard, Darby Hinton, Mathew Greer, and Kay Epperson along with cowboy singers **Michael Martin Murphey** and **Skip Gorman**. The soundtrack album has performances by Murphey along with **Rex Allen Jr.**, **Riders in the Sky**, and **The Sons of the Pioneers**. WMA Kansas Chapter members on the soundtrack include **Barry Ward**, **Diamond W Wranglers**, and the **Prairie Rose Rangers**. Other artists include the **Cherokee Maidens**, the rock band **Kansas**, and the bluegrass group **Hot Rize** among others. Since "Home on the Range" is the Kansas State Song, Governor Sam Brownback suggested that all members of the Kansas House and Senate view the film. So in January, to celebrate Kansas Statehood Day (January 29), *Home on the Range* was shown three times in the Kansas State Capital for the legislators and the governor to view. Prior to the third showing, Michael Martin Murphey opened the Senate sessions by singing the title song.

...*The Cowboy Way*, the first album from...ahem...**The Cowboy Way**, has been awarded the Western Heritage Wrangler Award for Best Traditional Western Album of the Year by The National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum. The museum's Western Heritage Awards "was established in 1961 as the pinnacle commemoration of the American West by honoring the legacy of men and women for their works in literature, music, film, and television."

...**Allen Kirkham** is in the studio working on a traditional western album to be titled *Sunrise on The Prairie*. The project is to be released in the spring. Allen was recently selected by the Custer Arts Council to manage the Western Stage at the annual Southern Hills Music and Arts Festival 2017 in August in Custer, SD.

...**Jon Chandler** and **Ernie Martinez** performed in April at Don Ygnacio del Valle's estancia at the [Rancho Camulos National Historic Landmark](#) in **Piru, CA**, the site that inspired the novel *Ramona*. All proceeds went to the nonprofit museum's mission of historical preservation and education.

...Three poems from the pen of **Aspen Black** – "I Think I'll Ride," "Invisibility" and "Lusk" from her CD *Invisibility* - are 2017 finalists in the Just Plain Folks Music Awards "Spoken Word" category. She is also currently recording a new poetry CD and a new music CD.

Canadian western recording artist **Ryan Fritz** received the prestigious Wrangler Award in April for Best Original Western

Composition. His winning song, "Keeper of the West," is also the title cut from Ryan's latest album. The award is presented by the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

...**Janet McBride** has donated her very extensive collection of **Patsy Montana** memorabilia to the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville, TN. Many of the items came to Janet from Patsy Montana's family and the president of the Patsy Montana Fan Club. Janet sent five large boxes of memorabilia to the museum. Patsy was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1996.

...**Rick Pickren** is finishing up an album of western folk music entitled *Pale Moon on the Prairie*. Songs include Rick's originals as well as a few classics. Also, Rick's recording of "Iowa, My Iowa" was featured in the season premiere of *The Good Wife*. As an actor, he is featured in a February episode of *Chicago Fire*.

...At the 4th Annual Ameripolitan Music Awards in Austin, TX, **Kristyn Harris** was named the 2017 Western Swing Female Artist of the Year. She has also recorded as a guest vocalist with an Italian swing band on an album to be released throughout Italy. Also, Kristyn's small cattle herd that she started up last year, the Diamond K, has sold its first set of calves for profit.

...**Gary Allegretto** is in the process of recording a new album of all-original material. It should be out later this year.

...Watch for a new CD and a new book of poems from **Sam DeLeeuw** this spring. The CD is titled *Cowboy Season*, and the book will be titled *Ladies, Cowboys & Horses*.

...Canadian singer **Bernadette Ducharme** is working on her next western music CD which will be coming out sometime in June. It will feature 8-10 collaborated songs with poet/songwriter **Mag Mawhinney**, as well as others.

...In celebration of the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Cowboy Poetry Week (April 16-22, 2017), CowboyPoetry.com will release *Masters*, a CD of poetry by **Larry McWhorter**, **Sunny Hancock**, **J.B. Allen**, **Ray Owens**, and additional classic poets introduced by **Jay Snider**. This year's poster is by **Tyler Crow**, the newest and youngest member of Cowboy Artists of America.

...Due to Tate Publishing Co. being reprimanded for conducting bad business practices concerning authors and artists, the new book from **Brenda Libby**, *On the Outskirts of CRAZY*, is now



available *only* from Brenda. On a brighter note, Brenda's new book, *Old Crow*, is nearly completed and will be self-published by the author. Purchasing info is on her Website.

...**The Western Flyers** (Joey McKenzie, Katie Glassman, Gavin Kelso) took home the award for Best Western Swing Band at the Ameripolitan Awards and later in the month, played to a standing room only audience at The Library of Congress' Packard Theater. Their debut album "Wild Blue Yonder" was Number 1 on the FAR charts for two months in a row and Number 1 western swing album on *The Western Way* magazine charts.

...Two songs from the group **Prairie Moon** were nominated for a Song of the Year award by the Academy of Western Artist: for "Pokey" and "Singing My Way Down the Tucson Trail," with the latter being a Top Five finalist. The **band** also received a nomination for Best Duo/Group of the year.

...CR Ranch wear, a Texas-based company specializing in high quality horse show shirts specifically made with cow horse and cutting horse exhibitors in mind, is a new sponsor of **Juni Fisher**. Juni will be making special appearances in the sponsor's booth at National Reined Cow Horse Association events modeling her favorite shirts and singing some original songs. She even named one of the newest designs, "Trimmed in Tartan," which features tartan plaid trim on a sharp looking Italian cotton oxford shirt.

...In February, **SaddleStrings** released their new album *Songs from the Saddle Shop*. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> album released by the Hooper, UT, group.

..."Aspen Gold," written by Colorado singer/songwriter **Sonja Oliver**, was the theme song for the City of Cripple Creek's Big Aspen Happening Festival last fall. A recording of the song was used in radio and Internet spots throughout central and southern Colorado. Guitarist **Jimmy Lee Robbins** and entertainer **Susie Knight** accompanied Sonja in a live performance on the main festival stage.

...**Donnie Poindexter**, of the group **Steeldust**, is working on his first solo project. He plans to release the album in May.

...**Hot Texas Swing Band** is happy to announce two new band members: Ileana Nina on fiddle and Wes Starr (formerly with Asleep at the Wheel, Jimmy Vaughan, Delbert McClinton and many others) on drums. Check out the band's full summer schedule at [www.HotTexasSwingBand.com](http://www.HotTexasSwingBand.com).

...**The Bob Marshall Band** brought western music to the Inauguration Party for the 45th President of the United States. A Michigan Republican Party Event, the party had video feeds to and from the big Washington DC gala events. Bob also acted as emcee for the event.

...**Susie Knight** competed in the annual Buffalo Bill Birthday Bash Contest in Denver in February. The annual event, produced by WMA members Ralph & Barb Melfi of White Fox Productions, draws contestants from all over the country. Susie won 1st Place in the Old West Female Division for her presentation as Goldie Griffith, a lady trick rider and bronco rider who performed in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and numerous others in the early 1900's.

...*In the Valley Below*, the latest album from **Greg Hager**, has now been translated into Japanese. Greg will perform in an all-expenses-paid tour of Japan (March 16-April 9) to spotlight the album. To date, there are 25+ concerts lined up as well as media interviews and engagements at several schools.

...**Maria McArthur** took first place in her age group in both the Safford (AZ) and Tucson (AZ) fiddle contests in February. She also accompanied other fiddlers on guitar.


...**Buck Helton** has released a new project. Titled *Western & Swing*, the 17 songs are a mixture of traditional cowboy songs, old-time country, and western swing tunes. The album is available for digital download from his Website <http://www.Buckhelton.com>.

...**Peggy Malone** has been taking her half-Chihuahua/half-Pomeranian rescue dog Ralph into nursing homes with her while performing. Ralph is a big hit with the residents, and one of the homes is insisting she bring him with her each time she visits.

...**Allen and Jill Kirkham** are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter, Andrea, to Air Force officer, Josh Williams. Allen, a worship pastor in Custer, SD, married the couple. Josh will soon be deployed to the Middle East.

...Oregon poet **Tom Swearingen** reports that he and his wife, Carla, are thrilled with the recent engagement of their son to a woman they love. They also happily report that their daughter and son-in law are expecting what will be Tom and Carla's first grandchild. Tom is a regular guest on Portland radio station KBOO FM's weekly "Swing 'n' Country Show."

...**Marty Davis** and his wife, Kate, have been blessed with a beautiful new grandson! Their son, Bret, and wife, Amy, welcomed Dominic Twist Davis on February 11th.

...Rhonda Whiting of **Sisters of the Silver Sage** is back in the hospital for more biopsies on her throat cancer. **The trach tube (for breathing) has been removed and she is starting to swallow again**, but the stomach tube is still there for feeding. **Janet and Donna** are continuing as a duet until niece Nikki Edwards is ready to take the lead singer position. Prayers and positive thoughts for Rhonda are appreciated. 

# WHY DID THE CHICKEN CROSS THE ROAD....?

*Submitted by Rhode Island Red*

3 Trails West – “He was searching for really obscure chicken songs.”

Rex Allen, Jr. – “To promote my new song, ‘Ride, Chicken, Ride’.”

Eli Barsi – “Up here chickens don’t cross the road – they stay in the warm chicken house.”

Bill Barwick – “It was just stupid – and you can’t fix stupid.”

Belinda Gail – “I don’t care – let him go – I only have eyes for Robert.”

The Broken Chair Band – “Our broken chair fell on him; he took off and we haven’t seen him since.”

Joe Brown – “In the Air Force, we call that ‘going over the hill’.”

Les Buffham – “Reminds me of when ol’ Skeets McFerber and me was entered into the Great Chicken Roundup back in ‘82 – just below the Kinney Rim there. That’s the year ol’ Skeets lost his thumb. He had just throwed a big ol’ loop around this big ol’ rooster when...well, I’ll put it in rhyme, and you can put it to music – how’s that?”

Jeannie Cahill – “I don’t know, but I’m available to accompany him.”

Jerome Campbell – “Because he was finger pluckin’ good.”

Allan Chapman – “Don’t y’all have anything better to talk about? Why don’t you talk about whether to spell my name ‘Alan’, ‘Allen’, or Allyn’ – NONE OF WHICH ARE CORRECT!”

Patty Clayton – “He thought it was the road to Hawaii.”

Mikki Daniel – “To get to Texas where there are no chickens – Remember the Alamo!”

Devon Dawson – “Have you ever seen Jesse eat chicken?”

The Outlaw Jesse Del – “I love fried chicken – which road was it?”

Bob Fee – “Did he jaywalk? That’s a violation of the law. Statute #3209A, part c, states....”

Doug Figgs – “He didn’t like that last set of chicken shoes I put on him.”

Juni Fisher – “To meet with the mule and the horse to write a song about me.”

Earl Gleason – “It’s all in a song I wrote which is on this CD. I can let you have three CD’s for the price of four right now.”

Kerry Grombacher – “He’s headin’ for the nearest Sands Motel.”

Jerry Hall – “That’s good for 90 days in the coop if he didn’t use the crosswalk.”

R.W. Hampton – “To get a haircut like mine.”

Daniel Hanson – “I have no opinion – I’m outnumbered, two to one.”

Kristyn Harris – “To join the Chicken Town Opry.”

Eddy Harrison – “He went to get the money to buy one of my guitars.”

Buck Helton – “Reminds me of that ol’ song ‘Get Along, Little Chickens.’”

High Country Cowboys – “To escape a July snowstorm in Montana.”

Horse Crazy Cowgirl Band – “He’s just a chicken who knows his way home.”

Tom Hiatt – “If you want an answer from me, the question is going to have to be a whole lot more cowboy.”

Brenn Hill – “I don’t think the younger generation really thinks about things like that.”

Rick Huff – “To attend a multi-cultural chicken event.”

Randy Huston – “That BLM guy, Marvin, was after him.”

Judy James – “In Texas, we’re more concerned about why the COWS crossed the road? And was the chicken pushing any of our brands? It wouldn’t be the first time we hung a chicken down here.”

Susie Knight – “OH, MY GOSH! Did he REALLY cross the road?! He didn’t get run over, did he? Is he o.k.? I hope he’s alright. OH, MY GOSH!”

Jim Jones – “All of that will be in Book Four – order yours now.”

Allen & Jill Kirkham – “We don’t know, but he’s always welcome at our bed and breakfast – especially for dinner.”

KG & the Ranger – “He’s looking for a couple of hens whose names start with a ‘K’ and a ‘G’ for his new group ‘KG & the Chicken.’”

Robert Lorbeer – “He was running from Belinda’s chicken casserole.”

Peggy Malone – “So I’d be the shortest one left in town.”

Bob Marshall – “Sounds to me like one of those chickens that run far away.”

Mary Kaye – “To perform with the Kaye Chickens.”

Syd Masters – “He went to learn how to sing ‘(Ghost) Chickens in the Sky’ while gargling.”

Janet McBride – “To take chicken-yodeling lessons.”

Audrey McLaughlin – “All I know is he was way out of time.”

Jon Messenger – “Don’t ask me to try to herd chickens – I’m having enough trouble with the cats.”

*Continued on page 38*





O.J. Sikes

# O.J. Sikes Reviews



## A Musical Note From OJ...

Many thanks to all performers who sent their CDs to The British Archive of Country Music. If you didn't but are willing to do so, let me know and I'll send you the address. Your (and their) efforts will go a long way toward spreading Western music around the world. And you may pick up a few fans in the process!

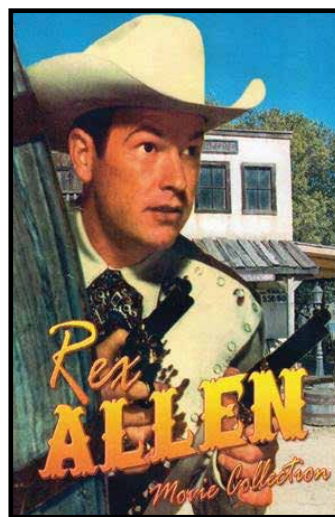
In the last issue, I mentioned having fun watching old B-Western movies on TV, and how nice it has been to see those beautifully re-mastered **Gene Autry** films broadcast each weekend on the Westerns Channel. Since then, the Channel's schedule has become less dependable, as far as Gene's films go, but fortunately, we have a fallback, i.e. DVDs!

Until recently, I thought I had a pretty good collection of **Rex Allen's** films, even though one or two were missing and several others were not in such great shape. But the other day I came across an ad for a complete set of Rex Allen's movies on DVD, issued by The Nostalgia Merchant. I remembered that Rex's friend, **Snuff Garrett**, started that company years ago. Early on, he bought the rights to a lot of Republic Studios movies and transferred them first to tape, and then DVD. I knew Snuff appreciated quality, so I ordered the set of 10 DVDs containing all of Rex Allen's 19 films plus two episodes from his TV show, *Frontier Doctor*, and I thought I'd tell you what I found.

I must admit that I've been spoiled by the amazing video quality of the Autry DVDs available via Autry.com and of the **Jimmy Wakely** DVDs issued by WarnerArchive.com. Sure enough, a couple of the Allen films, e.g. *Redwood Forest Trail* (1950), were not in great shape, but the rest were quite good. Rex's personal favorite, *The Rodeo King and the Senorita* ('51), is in beautiful shape. And I was especially glad to find a good copy Rex's first film, *Arizona Cowboy* (1950). That film, and a number of his other early films, opens with a song he composed, "The Arizona Cowboy (Too Lee Roll Um)." In some instances, he sings it, and in others,

an orchestra plays it over the opening credits. And later, after Republic experimented with other themes, he came back to sing it again in *Shadows of Tombstone*, in 1953.

Rex worked with a number of sidekicks over the years, including **Gordon Jones**, **Roscoe Ates**, **Carl "Alfalfa" Switzer**, **Fuzzy Knight** and **Buddy Ebsen**. In the mid-50's, Ebsen had a major role as **Davy Crockett's** sidekick in the **Walt Disney** film that became a national sensation. Later, he had the lead roles in two TV series, *Barnaby Jones* and *The Beverly Hillbillies*. By the time I started watching Rex at our local theater, his sidekick was **Slim Pickens**, who went on to become a big star long after the B-Western era was over. Rex got along well with all of them but said he considered Slim his best friend.



Another friend, fiddler **Wade Ray**, accompanied him on some occasions, and the **Republic Rhythm Riders** worked in several of Rex's films in 1952-53. If you've seen these films, you may have recognized **George Bamby** and **Darol Rice** in the group.

Rex Allen starred in the last singing cowboy film, *Phantom Stallion*, in 1954. Music was becoming less prominent in Westerns by

*Continued on page 32*

### To submit your CD for review, send to:

O.J. Sikes, 327 Westview Avenue,  
Leonia, NJ 07605-1811

Required: Album cost, S&H cost, Address, Phone  
Number

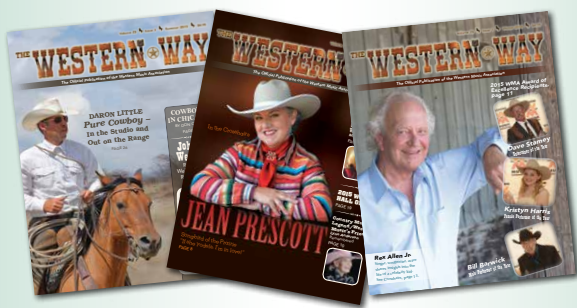
Questions? You can email O.J. at [osikes@nj.rr.com](mailto:osikes@nj.rr.com)

then and I've even heard it said that there was no music in that film, but that's not accurate. In it, Rex sings a brief version of "Born to the Saddle," a beautiful song composed by **Eddie Cherkose**. Sadly, Rex didn't record it, nor did he record many of the other songs he sang on screen, but he did record several of them a few years later on two of his albums, *Mister Cowboy* and *Rex Allen Sings Boney-kneed, Hairy-legged Cowboy Songs*.

When I started this piece, I didn't intend to write a review of the DVD set. But since many of us met Rex Allen and saw him perform in concert over the first decade of the WMA, I thought there might be a few film fans among our readers who would be interested in learning a little about his movies and how they can be obtained. If so, you might try NostalgiaMerchant.biz. I've heard that this set is the most popular Western film collection on the site!



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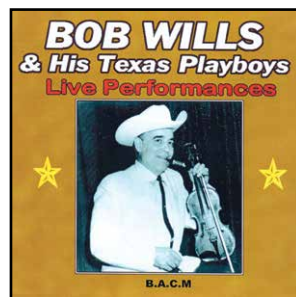
Questions? Email Marsha, [marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:marsha@westernmusic.org)

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## LIVE PERFORMANCES

### Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys

B.A.C.M. CD D 550



I'm not usually a big fan of "live" recorded performances because typically, the sound is not as good as it is on commercial discs. Sometimes they were recorded on inadequate equipment placed in front of a radio speaker, so some of the fidelity was lost, and you probably remember the static you heard when listening

to broadcasts coming from faraway locations. But there are some instances when strict audio quality standards have to be put aside. The historical value of the tracks on this new CD outweighs any audio imperfections. And, actually, the audio in this instance isn't all that bad!

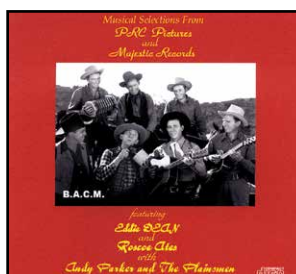
Imagine yourself sitting in the living room by the family radio, listening to your favorite Western swing band in a "live" performance. Before the first song is finished, you'll forget you're listening to a CD. It will take you back to that earlier time, when legendary players like Herb ("Herbie") Remington and Bobby Koefer on steel and Johnny Gimble on fiddle were key figures in the Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys band.

In "live" broadcasts, each performance is unique; often there's a spontaneity you don't always find on studio recordings, so these recordings capture special moments in musical history. And these moments, from 1948-51, some of which feature band members who did not record with Wills commercially, are really special. Western swing fans and musicians will treasure them. Fascinating, detailed notes by music historian Kevin Coffey. Contact VenerableMusic.com, phone (678) 232- 0268.

## MUSICAL SELECTIONS FROM PRC PICTURES AND MAJESTIC RECORDS

### Eddie Dean, Andy Parker & The Plainsmen

BACM CD D 547



Several Eddie Dean CDs have been available for a number of years, but this is the first time a collection of Eddie's work with Andy Parker & the Plainsmen has been issued. In fact, many of us thought the commercial tracks The Plainsmen recorded with Dean for the Majestic label in 1947 had simply disappeared!

So this CD fills a big gap in the Eddie Dean and Plainsmen libraries. Western film fans remember that Eddie Dean worked with Andy Parker & the Plainsmen in many of Dean's films for PRC Pictures.

The idea for the project came from Andy Parker's son Joe, who managed to locate and restore soundtrack music



from the seven Dean films the Plainsmen sang in, plus one in which the Plainsmen were on screen but some of the music was actually performed by The Sunshine Boys. The film music presented here is wonderful, but there wasn't enough of it available to fill a CD (BACM's practice is to put over an hour of music on each of their releases). When noted music historian Kevin Coffey found the eight "lost" commercial Eddie Dean and The Plainsmen recordings from 1947, Joe Parker's idea became a dream project!

Among the selections are my favorite versions of "Roseanne of San Jose," "On the Banks of the Sunny San Juan" and "Black Hills." Joaquin Murphey's steel guitar work on "I'm a Kansas Man" is terrific, and there are numerous other gems as well. Tracks have been beautifully restored and the album is a real gem overall, one that should be in every Western music library. Contact VenerableMusic.com or phone (678) 232- 0268.

## GONE WITH THE WEST

**Johnny Marvin**

BACM CCD D 549



In the 1920's and 30's, Johnny Marvin was one of the most important figures in Gene Autry's career. With his brother Frankie, Johnny befriended young Gene and shepherded him through the maze of New York's recording studios in the dead of winter in 1927. The

Marvins were established in show business and had the contacts that helped Gene launch his recording career. Eventually, they followed him to Hollywood, where Frankie appeared in most of Gene's movies and as the steel guitarist on almost all his recordings. Johnny excelled at songwriting, and, often with Fred Rose, composed a large number of songs for Gene Autry to record and to sing in his movies.

Johnny had been a famous vaudeville singer and he continued to sing into the late 30's and early 1940's. Twenty-eight of his 1939-40 MacGregor and Decca recordings are featured on this new BACM release, and many of the titles are songs Johnny wrote for Gene Autry. In the 30's, Gene's singing style evolved from that of a Jimmie Rodgers sound-alike to a more mellow one. Noted historian Kevin Coffey names the smoother sounding Marvin as Gene's mentor, a likely model for Gene's later "sound." So you'll find the songs he performs on this CD more listenable than their 1920's music.

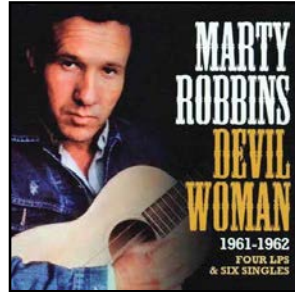
The tracks on this disc, including "As Long as I Have My Horse," "Dude Ranch Cowhands," "Blue Montana Skies" and "I'm Gonna Roundup My Blues" are the last recordings Marvin made. Too old for active duty during the war, Marvin died in 1943 when he contracted dengue fever while entertaining the troops in the South Pacific. In addition to having some well-known titles, there are several enjoyable tunes that might merit resurrection by current artists! Contact VenerableMusic.com, phone (678) 232- 0268.

The WESTERN WAY

## DEVIL WOMAN 1961-62, FOUR LPS & SIX SINGLES

**Marty Robbins**

Jasmine JASMCD 3652/3



The timing of this 2017 release was surely a coincidence, but it was a very pleasant one. Just after the *Western Way's* cover story (Winter 2017) on Cowboy Joe Babcock, in which he talks about his work with Marty Robbins, here comes a 2 CD (59 track) set of music that includes six of Joe's compositions!

It's an unusual set, in that it illustrates Marty's versatility, including not only the title song, which Joe sings on, among others, from the country field. There are six fine Western tunes, e.g. "Abilene Rose," Joe's "Dusty Winds" & "Ghost Train," "The Bend in the River," etc., but there is a large selection of popular ballads from the 40's and 50's that Marty really nails! They include a lightly swinging rendition of "It Had to be You" (a song that goes back to 1924) and "September in the Rain," and 50's teen ballads like "Unchained Melody." The four LPs on the discs are Just a Little Sentimental (Joe wrote the title track for this one), Marty After Midnight (which was aptly referred to as Marty's jazz album), Portrait of Marty and Devil Woman. Remaining tracks were issued as 45rpm singles.

The liner notes seem to be a bit critical of the LPs because of their departure from the standard fare being issued at the time (1961-62). To be sure, most of the songs weren't smash hits for Marty, but most LP tracks rarely were! Today, looking back, this set helps illustrate Marty's remarkable range of talent. The man could sing practically anything and, frankly, the way he handles most of the ballads here knocks me out. His reputation on upbeat tunes speaks for itself.

I noticed that the liner notes refer to Babcock as Marty's piano player. Joe often played piano on the road, singing with the trio on Western songs, but I believe Bill Pursell (who was the pianist on Marty's TV show, later) played on the Just a Little Sentimental and Marty After Midnight LPs. Whoever it is, he does a great job! Widely available!

## GARAGE SONGS X - THIS IS THE LAST COWBOY SONG

**Rex Allen, Jr.**

BPR Records 2016



Rex Allen, Jr. has recorded over 40 albums during his remarkable career. He feels that this CD is one of his three best! Sadly, he says it's to be his last; he's retiring at the end of 2017.

A lot of work (and heart) went into this project. It's a concept album, and it opens with the

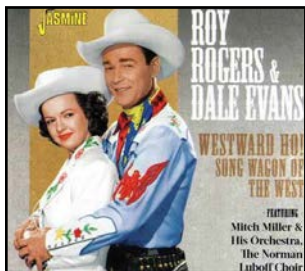
*Continued on page 34*

song Rex's dad used as the title song for his first movie at Republic Pictures. On it, Rex is backed by a chorus of family members. It's likely to "goose-bump you," as Casey Anderson used to say. But then comes the song Rex chose to release as the "single" from this project, "Call of the Canyon." It was written by Dick Goodman of the Wagonmasters and the Reinsmen, and it's a masterpiece. It's followed by "The Albino (Pink Eyed) Stallion," a song I'd never paid much attention to until I heard this new version. Rex's dad recorded it for Decca in 1955 and, as a boy, Rex loved to sing along with his dad's recording of it. It's clear that it's one of his favorites. A high point in the album!

Rex sings a duet with his brother Curtis on another of his favorite Western songs, "Kin to the Wind," as the album follows the trail of Western music as it has evolved over the decades since Rex's career began. "Doolin-Dalton," "Everything that Glitters is Not Gold," "We Robbed Trains" (composed by Eddie Raven) and Juni Fisher's "Listen," document that evolution, and "This is My Last Cowboy Song" wraps up the album. Eleven tracks. Highly recommended! Available from CDBaby.com and iTunes, accessible from his Web site, RexAllenJr.com, but also be sure to watch the B-Western video clips on his site!

## WESTWARD HO! SONG WAGON OF THE WEST *Roy Rogers and Dale Evans*

Jasmine JASMCD 3682/3



In 1954, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans began recording a number of tracks for the Golden Records label. In case you missed that era, Golden records were 78's, 45's, EP's and LP's made of yellow vinyl, especially for children. Few copies survived the rough treatment from little hands, but the Jasmine label

found pristine masters of some of those recordings and they are included on this 2 CD collection of 61 tracks. The first 16 tracks are from a Golden LP titled Song Wagon, followed by a number of Golden and RCA Victor "singles" and at least a couple of radio air checks, "River of No Return" and "Old Man River," that sound good enough to be commercial recordings.

Most of the rest of the tracks are from earlier RCA Victor "singles." Some, like Roy's "Pecos Bill" and "Along the Navajo Trail," with the Sons of the Pioneers, are readily available elsewhere. Others, like the Golden releases of Roy's "Chuck Wagon Song" and "Cowboys Never Cry," and Dale's beautiful RCA Victor recordings of "Hazy Mountain" and "Snow on the Mountain," may be harder to find. Their duet on Tim Spencer's composition, "Circuit Ridin' Preacher," is another much sought-after rarity. Roy's early radio theme, "Smiles are Made Out of the Sunshine," is included, as are their recording of "Happy Trails" with the Whippoorwills and 11 inspirational songs.

Roy and Dale are accompanied on the Golden sides by Mitch Miller, the Sandpipers and The Ranch Hands. Presumably, the Ranch Hands are the same men (Rex Dennis and Buddy Dooley) who were accompanying Ken Curtis on his radio and TV shows around that time. In the credits for some tracks, there's a mention of The Rough Riders. Actually, that reference should be to the Roy Rogers Riders (Buddy Dooley, Darol Rice, George Bamby, Jimmy Bryant and Michael Barton). Highly recommended and widely available.

## MORE SONGS OF THE PLAINS, VOL 2 *The Ranch Boys*

B.A.C.M. CD D 536



The trio of Ken Carson, Raymond Courtney (aka Joe "Curley" Bradley) and Jack Ross met in the 1930s when they worked with the Beverly Hill Billies in California. The Ranch Boys trio lasted for seven years, working for a time on the very popular Tom Mix radio series, which helped them establish a

national reputation and fan base, but the trio dissolved in 1941 when Curley Bradley was offered a job in the role of Tom Mix on the radio. The following year, Ken Carson joined the Sons of the Pioneers, but re-issues of their recordings kept the work of the Ranch Boys before the public long after the group broke up.

Their work with Gene Autry in his 1939 film, "In Old Monterey," resulted in a large following among members of the Gene Autry fan club. In the film, the trio sings "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" in 3/4 time. They had recorded "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" for Decca in Chicago on Sept. 7, 1934, one month after the Sons of the Pioneers recorded their initial version for Decca in August, 1934, in Los Angeles, but Decca released the Ranch Boys' record first, on Oct. 9th, so it became the first commercial release of that Western classic.

They had a smooth vocal blend, accompanied by Bradley's acoustic guitar. Six of their Decca recordings are featured on this second BACM release, as are 11 Thesaurus transcriptions and 11 air checks from their 1930's "Pinto Pete & his Ranch Boys" radio show. One of the most interesting things about this disc is that each member of the group can be heard singing solos, and they are identified in the track list. Earlier CD releases featured only one unidentified soloist. You'll hear versions of classics composed by Vincent & Howard, Curly Fletcher, Carson J. Robison, Fleming Allan, etc. A nice addition to any Western library. Contact VenerableMusic.com or phone (678) 232- 0268.







## RICK HUFF'S BEST OF THE WEST REVIEWS

To submit items for review, send to: Rick Huff, P.O. Box 8442, Albuquerque, NM 87198-8442. Include: Album cost, S&H cost, Address, Phone Number. We also recommend you furnish a land source (Address or PO Box) as well as Online sources for obtaining product.

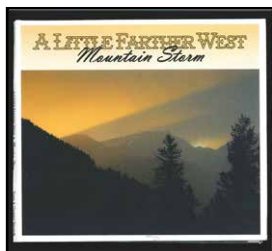
*Submitting a CD or Book for review does not guarantee that it will be reviewed or that a review will be published.*

Finalized CD or book cover art must accompany the work and be unsigned.

### CORRECTION

*In my review of the Broken Chair Band's CD "Second Chances" [Western Way, Winter 2017,] apparently I moved the Carter family's central Arizona ranch a little farther south in the state than it should have been. I mentioned "the land of chicken scratch music" (thinking just southern Arizona) and was informed it doesn't cross the Tohono o'dham borders. At one point, I referred to a musician maybe getting "his own key." I meant "door" not "tuning," an attempt at levity that likely shouldn't have been attempted. And finally, one new point - the Safford recording studio they have returned to has again managed to make them sound like a weekend bar band. In person, they don't.*

### A LITTLE FARTHER WEST "Mountain Storm"



The duo A Little Farther West is made up of Robert Maxwell Case (guitar & vocals) and Susie Case

(organ). The effect is designed to commemorate the "Big West Guitar" sound of Jorgen Ingman, Al Caiola and their kin from the sixties. So the reverb is laid on heavy!

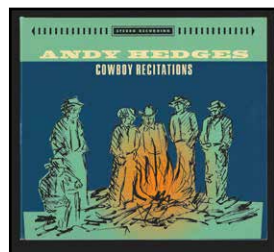
The guitar instrumental "Apache" (a hit for the aforementioned Jorgen Ingman and later a decent one with vocal added for Sonny James) features Case doing vocal arrow whistles as opposed to Ingman's string finger drags, but the tribute is achieved. The collection's other two instrumentals are "Ridin' The Wind" which I think was a Bellamy Brothers song (?) and "Rhapsodie Sangre de Cristo" from Marty Stuart. The CD's title track is a Michael Martin Murphey & son Ryan Murphey song from a

number of years back.

Case offers his rangy, reverbed vocals on such as Barry Ward's "(Someday) I'm Gonna Ride," "The Wayward Wind," "South Of The Border" and "Four Strong Winds." The one Case original here is "Leave Out Across The Border," which is suggestively reminiscent of "Cross The Border At Waco." Twelve tracks total.

CD: \$12 (US) ppd (outside US \$15 ppd) from Town & Country Records, PO Box 4, Slick, OK or download thru iTunes, spotify, amazonMP3, GooglePlay

### ANDY HEDGES "Cowboy Recitations"



encountered him.

Since his teen years, Hedges has

In greater part, for this one the do-it-his-way Andy Hedges returns to the performance form through which we first

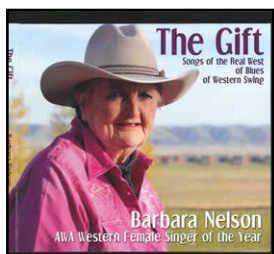
shown himself to be a masterful interpreter of cowboy poetry, and the tales here are exceptionally well-told (or "tails" in the case of S. Omar Barker's little-heard "Bruin Woo-in")! In fact you may wonder where many of these works have been hiding. For many I suspect most will be new discoveries from old hands like Barker, La Farge, Fletcher, Kiskadden, Clark, O'Malley, Joel Nelson, Buck Ramsey, Andy Wilkinson and Larry McWhorter (his contribution "The Red Cow" being familiar and much loved). There are unaccompanied vocal treatments of Curley Fletcher's "The Pot Wrassler" and D.J. O'Malley's "The D-2 Horse Wrangler." Dr. Guy Standard's unnerving piece "The Hatchett Man" about a stalker of the hobo jungle will haunt you as well.

A tiny technical point: the works seem to be laid out somewhat like a continuing conversation, but I wish they had been spaced a bit further apart. I found myself wanting a bit more time to consider the words and delivery I had heard. Thirteen tracks.

CD: Available thru [www.andy-hedges.com](http://www.andy-hedges.com)

## BARBARA NELSON

### "The Gift"



On Barbara Nelson's releases, generally part of the fun is to see what treatment she will give to some unlikely

candidates for Swinging. Would you have spotted the Swing potential in Ian Tyson's "The Gift?" Or John Phillips' "California Dreamin'?" Or Bill Withers' "You've Got A Friend?"

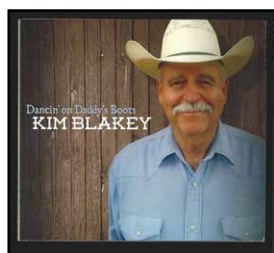
Once again on various tracks for this CD, her ninth, singer/guitarist Nelson has engaged the services of other good players. Geoffery Mays (guitar, who apparently also co-produced); Mark Schneider (bass and whistles); Henry Cooper (trumpet and slide guitar); Paul Biondi (saxophone, flute and clarinet) and David Burham (violin) definitely up the game. But the star of the CD (as always) is Nelson's remarkable voice... ageless, flexible and rich. She always shines on the jazzy pop standards (here including "Anytime," "Right Or Wrong" and "It's Only A Paper Moon"), but she's also included gussie-ups of "Buttons & Bows," "Everlasting Hills Of Oklahoma" and "Waltz Across Texas."

Nelson fans will immediately take to it, and anyone else won't be far behind! Fifteen tracks.

CD: Available thru [www.barbaranelsonmusic.com](http://www.barbaranelsonmusic.com) or contact her at 541-276-5372. Write her at 72521 Tutuilla Creek Rd., Pendleton, OR 97801.

## KIM BLAKEY

### "Dancin' On Daddy's Boots"



It's your basic cornstarch on the floor, boot-scootin' Texas Swing stepping to the micro-

phone, along with some ballads and some Texas-style social commentary, but all still dance-able!

Songwriter Kim Blakey has been turning 'em out for a goodly while now. For those who are attuned the particular Honky Tonk effect of these players' twin fiddles, it will be good 'n authentic. For others, the boys may seem to have not really tuned. Either way they certainly are riding the "lower half of the note," shall we say?

Blakey's elder statesman vocal styling is one you tend to hear frequently on Western & Texas Swing tracks, and has its roots firmly planted in the Tommy Duncan sound with Bob Wills' classic assemblage. His song "Third Side" struck me as particularly interesting due to its unusual modulations in key, and a different perspective on keeping up with the Joneses is found in "Keeping Up With Gomez."

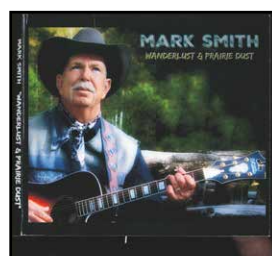
I'm choosing to take the high road and say it's about ignoring snootiness.

Thirteen tracks total.

CD: \$18 ppd through [www.i2irecords](http://www.i2irecords) or through [bugscreenman@yahoo.com](mailto:bugscreenman@yahoo.com) it's \$15 (!)

## MARK SMITH

### "Wanderlust & Prairie Dust"



On his debut CD, singer/songwriter Mark Smith obviously prefers to write saga songs set in the "West of

Olde." With complex story lines, he takes you on journeys from another time.

For its interesting perspective, a pick would have to be "Angel Of The Windmill." Smith's song "Nickel 44" is also here, a song covered some years ago by Jim Jones. Another Smith original that could get picked up by other artists is "The Three Things I Carry," with its hook-aware chorus. Jim Jones also produced the CD, and obviously spent

time and effort filling in solid multi-instrumental support (along with intelligent fiddle work from Amy Blackburn). Curiously what appears to be good vocal harmonizing on Jones' part is all but gone in some of the mixes.

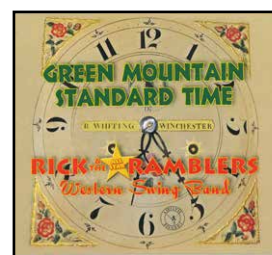
Smith's deep vocal timbre might be thought of as basically riding the Ernest Tubb bus with some of the unapologetic abandon of a Townes van Zandt or a John Prine. Fans of such a rustic effect in the voice seem to be more "understanding" of roughness in delivery, pitch issues and the like. In truth they will find moments to "understand" here.

Twelve tracks total.

CD: Available thru [www.mark-smithmusic.com](http://www.mark-smithmusic.com)

## RICK & THE ALL STAR RAMBLERS WESTERN SWING BAND

### "Green Mountain Standard Time"



In recent months we've had a number of Western Swing surprises come in to us from unexpected

sources. The last was from Chicago. Now this one has flown in from Vermont!

On their originals, the group has some of those slick Honky Tonk turns of phrase, such as "I've been lost in Austin, juiced in Houston." In "Don't Do Me Like That With Your Cowboy Hat" they provide an explanation for the brim curve, and it's not something the ladies cotton to! They have a congenially approachable neighborhood band sound to them, yet they can tear off a flashy one like the roaring fast "Texoma Bound." And they provided an enigma for investigation in doing Fred Rose's "Fly Trouble," a song I find to be almost a dead ringer for Merle Travis' "Smoke Smoke Smoke That Cigarette." I looked them up. Both songs are



from 1947. "Smoke..." was first recorded in March, "Fly..." in August. That doesn't prove anything, but it's definitely curious.

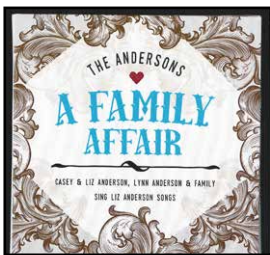
The unusual element of a church organ is present in their "I'm Gonna Take It With Me When I Go" (switched in the jacket notes with Track 11), showing they are their own bosses of their sound. That's refreshing in itself! Eleven tracks.

CD: Contact Airflyte Records, 216 Battery Street, Burlington, VT 05401 or check [www.rickandther-amblers.com](http://www.rickandther-amblers.com)



## THE ANDERSONS

### "A Family Affair"



Subtitled "Casey & Liz Anderson, Lynn Anderson & Family Sing Liz Anderson Songs," this tribute CD

was assembled at the direction of the ever-devoted Casey Anderson and granddaughter Lisa Sutton to honor and commemorate their dear departed ladies of song Liz and Lynn.

All of the featured works are songs of the prolific Liz Anderson. High points include three of Lynn's Western tracks from the past decade "Turn The Herd," "Virginia City" and the celebrated "I Rode In As A Stranger." Another CD pick would have to be "Bull Rider," not to be confused with the Rodney Crowell song, which features a commanding vocal by Lynn's son Gray Steam. He also appears on the earlier, under-appreciated creation "Sons Of The Guns," wherein the descendants of Old West legends tell their story (also heard on it are Jim Mundy & Casey himself). The collection ends with Liz & Dave Stamey's co-write "May The Trail Rise Up To Meet You," retaining Lynn's original vocal pieces, but adding Casey and Lynn's daughters Melissa Hemple and Lisa Sut-

ton. Even Casey's great-grandkids get a turn in the studio!

Casey's "Ballad Of The Pony Express" is here, used for the historic recreation ride along the original route. It's a sweet remembrance, with plenty to recommend it. Thirteen tracks.

CD: Available through [www.showboatrecords.com](http://www.showboatrecords.com)



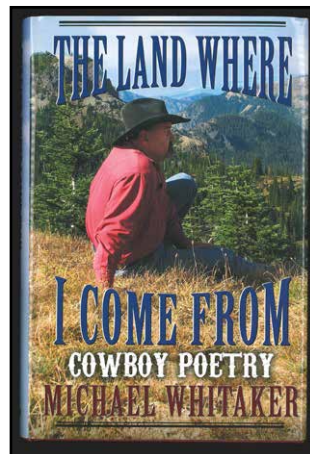
## MICHAEL WHITAKER

### "The Land Where I Come From"

#### Cowboy Poetry

#### Cowboy Tale Press

ISBN 978-1-63232-957-8



When I first experienced the act that called itself "Rockin HW," I remember thinking "these guys have something special goin' on!"

Sadly songwriter/poet Michael Whitaker left us in November of 2015. At the time (and for a couple of years prior) he had been working on his second collection of works, and his wife Patti, has pulled out all the stops to see that it got published in beautiful hardback.

Lavishly illustrated with full color photos, the idea here is to appreciate the words, but also to help them live on. A particularly interesting chapter (of the book's six) offers lyrics not put to melodies, with the highly cowboy invitation to grab a guitar and work up your own! Whitaker's works are of his homeland in the foothills of Mt. Rainier, the people he has encountered, family & friends, his memories of life ahorse and more. They have garnered praise from such as Dave Stamey and Waddie Mitchell...and who is about to argue with them??!

Whitaker's book is a gentle, free ranging lope that settles in as easy as a nice evening ride. 224 pages.

Book: \$20 + \$6.95 s/h check or money order from Patti Whitaker, 995 Central Road, Everson, WA 98247. Credit card: <http://square-up.com/store/windy-word> or as an ebook thru Amazon, Barnes&Noble & iTunes for \$9.99



## Western Music Association Web Site

You can now view The Western Way as well as the Festival and Events Calendar on our Web site! Visit often to keep up with what's going on in our Western Music family.

[www.westernmusic.org](http://www.westernmusic.org)

## Chapter Update

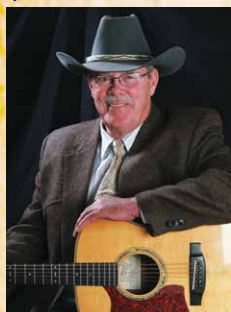
*Continued from page 15*

is the new Chapter President, Jenna Thunborg from Albuquerque, NM is Vice-President and Hailey Sandoz from Plano, TX as Secretary. This is a great step into the future of the Youth Chapter. Also, Youth Chapter members are reminded and encouraged to apply for the Young Performers Education Scholarship. Application details and other information can be found on the Youth Page of the WMA website - <http://www.westernmusic.org/youth-chapter> A big shout out to the Arizona Folklore Preserve for their recent and very generous donation to the Youth scholarship fund. Other donations to the Youth Chapter are also appreciated and as always, please keep our young performers in mind for upcoming Western Music and Cowboy Poetry festivals and workshops this summer. For more information on the WMA Youth Chapter, please contact Jane Leche, Youth Chapter Coordinator, at [rangerjane@rocketmail.com](mailto:rangerjane@rocketmail.com)



## In Memoriam

### EDWARD "ED" BOWNE STABLER (1942 – 2017)



"The Leavin of Texas" Ed was born in Macon, GA on July 26, 1942 to Robert "Doc" M. Stabler & Sarah "Sally" (Hamilton) Stabler. He passed on January 26, 2017 after a brief illness with pancreatitis following surgery at Methodist Hospital in San Antonio, TX.

Ed's rich history began in the Navy communications division; he had the fortune to be assigned to an open schooner in Hawaii. As he moved from service life to civilian life he chose to stay in the communication genera. However, he was a newscaster-weatherman, steam locomotive engineer, liquor store owner, Moffat County Colorado deputy, part time rancher/horse

owner/breeder/trainer but always came back to his passion for music performing arts. He, along with his wife Mary traveled to many Cowboy poetry gatherings and festivals. Ed was a member of the Western Music Association and a past member of the WMA Board of Directors. His passion for firearms was almost as great as his passion of and for music as he was a life member of the NRA.

It was amazing to watch Ed learn a new instrument, song or style of playing. From Old Country, Jazz, Slat Key, to Classical. For the past couple of years he spent every Thursday night at Back Beat Music Co. mentoring the youth as well as learning from them. He often played at the Chicken Farm art Center and for local nursing facilities and other functions.

He was preceded in death by his wife Mary and his parents. He leaves a son Daniel, daughter Janine (Rowdy) Stehle-Doehling, granddaughter Lindsey (Matthew) Stehle-Doehling and soon to be born great grandson Timber. To say he will be greatly missed is truly an understatement. 🐾

Continued from page 30

Jeneve Rose Mitchell – "To appear on Chicken idol?"

Andy Nelson – "He heard we were gonna start chicken-shoeing."

Theresa O'Dell – "He's looking for the latest edition of *The Western Way* – to see if he's on the cover."

Hailey Sandoz – "I'm just thrilled to get to play for him."

David Sawyer – "To get away from my sister."

Leah Sawyer – "To get away from my brother."

Marsha Short – "To attend a chicken convention; I'm not expected to organize it, I hope."

O.J. Sikes – "I saw that once in a Jimmy Wakeley film, but I can't remember why he did it."

Dave Stamey – "To pick up the Chicken of the Year award – the only one I haven't won."

Steve & Terri Taylor – "He's rushing to join our new group CHICKEN STAMPEDE!"

Trails & Rails – "Simple – because he chose a 'trail' and not a 'rail' – get it? A 'trail', not a 'rail'?"

Marilyn Tuttle – "Because we kicked him out of the harmony contest – you never heard such squawkin'."

R.J. Vandygriff – "To show that the chicken ain't dead yet."

Barry Ward – "Are we talking a live chicken or a ghost chicken?"

Washtub Jerry – "The question may not be 'Did the chicken cross the road', but rather 'Did the road pass under the chicken?' We have to ask, 'Did the chicken even exist? Does existence precede essence or vice-versa?' The answer is probably found in the tension between the Hegelian Absolute and man's existential estrangement. Hey - you're not just pulling my bass string, are you?"

Johnny Western – "To have some more 'Have Drumsticks, Will Travel' cards printed up."

Joyce Woodson – "I'll tell you in a song – what rhymes with 'chicken' besides 'lickin'?" 🐾

## THANK YOU!! Western Music Association PATRON\* MEMBERS

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\*The Patron Member group in the WMA is comprised of an elite group of people who pay \$100 annually for WMA membership. For their generosity, they get nothing more than general members and they expect nothing in return. They simply believe in the cause and the mission of WMA and go a little above in supporting it. They are unsung, behind the scene folks. We sincerely appreciate their support and take this time to say a public "Thank You!" for your unwavering support. You, too, can be a Patron Member with your \$100+ donation. Contact Marsha Short, [marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:marsha@westernmusic.org)



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**WESTERN MUSIC ASSOCIATION OKLAHOMA CHAPTER**

**Festival May 5, 6, 7, 2017**  
@ the Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum

Celebrating the Spirit of the Cowboy

**Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum presents the COWBOY WAY**  
A Convening of Everything Cowboy!

WMA OK Chapter  
Performers Showcase  
10am-2pm  
Saturday  
May 6

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<p><b>Friday May 5</b></p> <p><b>8PM Sons of the Pioneers</b> 6PM Ain't Misbehavin' A Little Farther West</p>	<p><b>Celebrities</b> James Drury Roberta Shore Gary Clarke Ken Farmer John Buttram &amp; MORE!</p>
<p><b>Saturday May 6</b></p> <p><b>8PM Les Gilliam &amp; Rex Allen, Jr.</b> 6PM Three Generations</p>	<p><b>Performers/Poets</b> Devon Dawson &amp; The Outlaw Francine Robison Steeldust Gary Pratt Call of the West Steve Mitchell Mike Shirley &amp; MORE!</p>
<p><b>Sunday May 7</b></p> <p><b>8AM Cowboy Church</b> 4PM Event Ends <i>All Indoors!</i></p>	<p><b>Vendors &amp; Grub</b> Memorabilia HandMade Western Clothing Toys Decor Native American CHUCK WAGON Baptist Church Ladies</p>

Register [www.GeneAutryOKMuseum.org](http://www.GeneAutryOKMuseum.org)  
Call 580.768.5559

Did you know that singing cowboy George Houston, known in his most successful films as *The Lone Rider*, used the name Tom Cameron in his films?

**Classified...**

Do you have an upright bass gathering dust that you would like to donate to the WMA Youth Chapter?

Contact Marsha at  
505-563-0673 or [marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:marsha@westernmusic.org).  
All donations are tax deductible.

**ALMEDA Bradshaw**  
*the* **HAPPY COWGIRL**  
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**COWGIRL POET**

Thank you, WMA, for nominating "HEAVENLY HERE WITH YOU" for 2016 SONG of the YEAR!!!

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WESTERN MUSIC ASSOCIATION AOA FOLK ALLIANCE AMERICANA



# Western Charts

## TOP 30 COWBOY / WESTERN ALBUMS

1. The Cowboy Way – The Cowboy Way
2. Somewhere There's Music – The Swing Sisters
3. Living the Western Dream – Joyce Woodson
4. Western Stories – Dave Stamey
5. A Cowboy Like Me – Doug Figgs
6. Cohorts and Collaborators – Various Artists
7. One More Ride – Sons of the San Joaquin
8. Second Chances – Broken Chair Band  
City of Dreams – Miss Devon & the Outlaw and Friends  
Linger Awhile – Liz Masterson
11. Welcome Home – Barry Ward
12. How You Heal – Brenn Hill
13. Live – Leah Sawyer
14. Ride a Wide Circle – Mary Kaye
15. A Family Affair: the Andersons – Various Artists
16. Keeping the West Alive – Ed Wahl
17. This Cowboy – R.W. Hampton
18. Lovers, Wives, and Mothers – Almeda Bradshaw
19. Western and Country – Dennis Jay
20. Cowboy to the Bone – R.J. Vandygriff
21. Mood Swings – Liz Masterson
22. Cowgirl Swing – Mikki Daniel
23. Too Hot to Handle – Red Hot Rhythm Rustlers
24. Down the Trail – Kristyn Harris
25. Keeper of the West – Ryan Fritz
26. Songs of...The High Country Cowboys – The High Country Cowboys
27. All I Need – Horse Crazy Cowgirl Band
28. Heaven – Jared Rogerson
29. Meadowlark – James Michael
30. Cowboys and Girls – Randy Huston & Hannah Huston

## TOP 10 WESTERN SWING ALBUMS

1. Ain't Dead Yet – Hot Texas Swing Band
2. Trail Jazz – Cowboy Joe Babcock
3. Susie Blue & the Lonesome Fellas – Susie Blue
4. Somewhere There's Music – The Swing Sisters
5. Kid Sister – The Time Jumpers  
Wild Blue Yonder – The Western Flyers
7. Green Mountain Standard Time – Rick & the All-Star Ramblers
8. Dime Stories, Vol. 2 – Carolyn Sills Combo
9. Paul Schlesinger & His Knights of Western Swing – Paul Schlesinger
10. Now Playing – The Western Swing Authority

## 10 MOST PLAYED SONGS BY WESTERN MUSIC DJS

1. The Land Where Cedars Grow – Dave Stamey
2. Los Ladrones – The Cowboy Way
3. Cowboy Swing – Leah Sawyer
4. Living the Western Dream – Joyce Woodson
5. Can't See Him From the Road – The Cowboy Way
6. Let Me Sell You a Dream – Dave Stamey
7. Salt River Valley – Liz Masterson  
A Poet With Something to Say – Dave Stamey  
Red River Valley – The Swing Sisters
10. Grit, Grace, and Balin' Twine – Mary Kaye

## 10 MOST PLAYED POETRY ALBUMS

1. Fillin' Tanks – Susie Knight
2. Cowboy Recitations – Andy Hedges
3. Short Grass Country – Floyd Beard
4. I Won – Andy Nelson
5. Baxter Black's NPR CDs – Baxter Black
6. December Stragglers – Terry Nash
7. Rhyme 'Em, Cowboy – Tom Swearingen
8. A Pocketful of Poetry – Carol Heuchan  
The Bar D Roundup, 2016 – Various Artists
10. The Bar D Roundup, 2014 – Various Artists

\*A missing number in the list represents a tie for that spot.

**Attention DJs!** Your contributions to *The Western Way* charts are welcomed. Please send your playlist, including the song and the CD on which it appears, to [meoteo@aol.com](mailto:meoteo@aol.com).

Various DJ friends have reported their playlists for the last quarter, thus helping us compile these charts reflecting which CDs are being played the most on their radio shows. You will find a listing of those reporting DJs on the following page.



# Western Playlists - Reporters

Here are the DJs who submitted their playlists this quarter:

WaynettaAusmus  
PO Box 294  
Tom Bean, TX 75489  
waynettawwr@yahoo.com  
www.WaynettaAusmus.com

Michael Babiarz  
KVMR Community Radio 89.5FM  
120 Bridge Street  
Nevada City, Ca 95959  
530-265-9073 • 916-233-6203  
www.kvmr.org  
back40radio@kvmr.org

Bobbi Jean Bell  
OutWest  
16654 Soledad Canyon Rd #148  
Santa Clarita, CA 91387  
"Campfire Café" w/host Gary Holt  
bobbijeanbell@gmail.com  
661-347-9700 or toll free 877-340-9378

Skip Bessonette & His Pard Lucky  
Rogue Valley Bound Show  
2395 E. McAndrews Rd.  
Medford, Oregon 97504  
541-301-7649  
www.earsradio.com  
skipbessonette@gmail.com

Peter Bruce  
Under Western Skies  
KAFF Country Legends FM 93.5/AM 930  
1117 W. Route 66  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
928-556-2650  
www.kafflegends.com  
peter.bruce@kaff.com

Chuckaroo the Buckaroo  
Calling All Cowboys Radio  
88.9 FM, KPOV High Desert  
Community Radio  
http://www.kpov.org  
http://kpov.od.streamguys.us/calling\_ all\_cowboys\_new\_56k.mp3  
e-mail: callingallcowboys@hotmail.com  
Station NFLY – No Fly Internet Radio/  
The Flying SL Ranch Radio Show  
radio.spalding-labs.com  
22470 Rickard Rd.  
Bend, OR 97702  
541-388-2537

KWC Ameriana Radio Station  
Miguel A. Diaz Gonzalez  
avenidagaltzaraborda nº47 2ºA  
20100 renteria  
Guipuzcoa  
España  
miguelbilly56@gmail.com

Mike Gross  
15 Nina's Way  
Manchester, CT 06040  
"Swingin' West"  
mike@swinginwest.com  
www.swinginwest.com  
(plays primarily western swing and more  
band-oriented western material.)

Greg Harness  
KRBX Radio Boise  
1020 W Main St #50  
Boise ID 83702  
greg@gregharness.com  
"Rambler's Retreat"  
Wednesday, 6-8am Mountain, 89.9 FM  
http://ramblersretreat.com  
http://radioboise.org

Steve Harrington  
PO Box 803  
Show Low, Az 85902  
(928) 242-3367  
steve47@gmail.com  
http://www.mountainsaddleband.com/old- west-chapel

Paul Hazell  
PH Records  
Royal Mail Building (PO Box 3)  
Brambleside  
Bellbrook Industrial Estate  
Uckfield  
East Sussex  
TN22 1XX  
United Kingdom  
"Paul Hazell's World Of Country"  
www.uckfieldfm.co.uk  
Uckfield FM (in the UK)  
paul.hazell@uckfieldfm.co.uk  
Telephone: +44 7775 545 902

Randy Hill  
Western Swing Time Radio Show  
KMUZ-FM  
P.O. Box 17264  
Salem, OR 97305  
(Plays only western swing)  
westernswingtime@gmail.com  
www.westernswingtime.com

Judy James  
Cowboy Jubilee with Judy James and  
Western Heritage Radio  
PO Box 953  
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judy@judyjames.com

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WF120DS  
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graham@grahamlees.co.uk

Eddy Leverett  
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*Continued on page 42*

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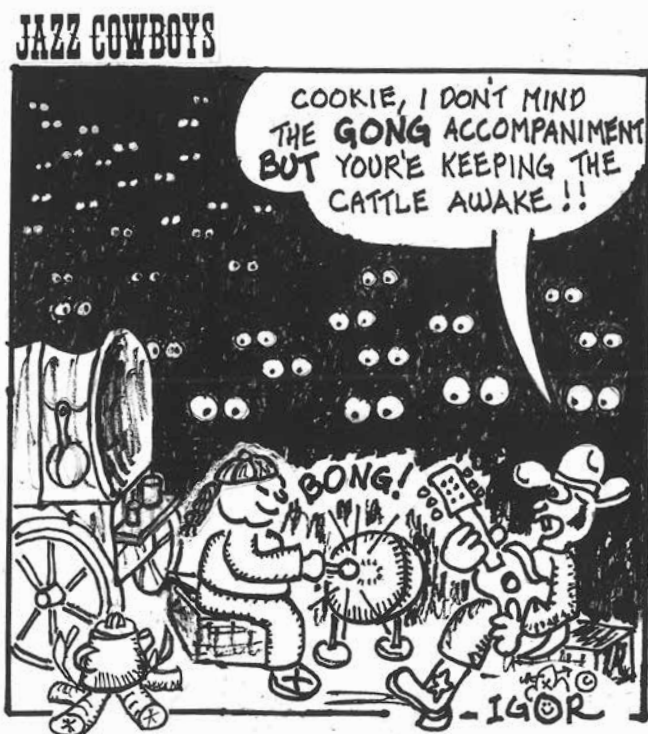
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*Did you know that singing cowboy George Houston, known in his most successful films as The Lone Rider, was the song of a Protestant minister who sang in his father's church choir?*



Cartoon by Igor. Used by permission.

## CLASSIFIED ADS:

**Do you have something to sell?**

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For more information, contact  
[marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:marsha@westernmusic.org)



# 2017 WMA Awards of Excellence Nominations

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR MUSIC AWARDS:

- CDs can be self-nominated. IF YOU ARE SELF-NOMINATING, please provide the following: A copy of the nominated CD must accompany the Western Album or Cowboy/Western Swing of the Year nomination, a copy of the CD containing a nominated song, or a CD containing only the nominated song must accompany the Song of the Year nomination. Song nomination CDs must be accompanied by either CD artwork, or a photo copy of the artwork, showing the release date.
- In the case of Western Album of the Year and Cowboy/Western Swing Album of the Year, majority of the music on the CD must be of Western content, lyrically or musically. Country Music content does not count as Western Music.
- CDs must have a copyright date and bar code.
- CDs and individual songs, if the nominated songs are not released on an eligible album, must be registered on the WMA CD Registry before the Nominations Committee can consider them (forms can be downloaded at [www.westernmusic.org/cd-registry](http://www.westernmusic.org/cd-registry))
- Non-WMA members may be nominated. If a CD released by a non-WMA member is eligible, or if a non-WMA member is nominated for a performance award, the nominee will be notified of the nomination and given the opportunity to join WMA. They can decide to become a member of WMA or decline the nomination and lose eligibility.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR POETRY AWARDS:

### COWBOY POETRY CD of THE YEAR

- 75% of the CD must be "poetry" with rhyme and meter, and must be original work written by the author of the CD. CDs must be produced by one author only.
- Background music is allowed, but points will not be added or subtracted unless the music distracts from (or overpowers) the spoken word.
- 25% of the CD can contain other material, including (a) music if written or co-written by the same author as named on the CD, (b) prose, (c) material written by someone other than the author as named on the CD, and (d) poetry spoken in the voice of someone other than the author of the CD, even if it is original work of the author of the CD.
- CDs must have a Bar Code and copyright date and must be registered with the WMA when released (online form on the WMA site)
- CD tracks must be listed on the jacket, along with length of each track.
- All CDs will have a "birth" date of January 1 of the copyright year. Eligibility is for that year, plus two subsequent years.
- Non-WMA authors may be nominated. They will be notified that they have been nominated and be given a chance to become a member to win the award. At that time, they can choose to become a member, or decline the nomination and lose eligibility.

### COWBOY POETRY BOOK of THE YEAR

*As the Western Wordsmiths are a subchapter of the Western Music Association, poetry is hereby defined as works containing rhyme and meter. Although the book's content may include short prose and free verse, the poetry alone will be judged in meeting criteria for eligibility. Anything that is not "poetry" as hereby described, including free verse, will be classified as "prose."*

- 50% of the book must be "poetry" with rhyme and meter and must be original work written by the author of the book.
- 50% of those poems (criteria #1) must be 20 lines or more in length.
- Books must have ISBN# and copyright date and must be registered with the WMA when released (online form on the WMA site)
- Credits for poems used as a "cover" and poems written by someone other than the author of the book (including anonymous works) must be given. Poems not written by the author of the book will be considered "prose" and will not qualify for the 50% eligibility criteria as described above.
- Books written by multiple authors are not eligible.
- All books will have a "birth" date of January 1 of the copyright year. Eligibility is for that year, plus two subsequent years.
- Non-WMA authors may be nominated. They will be notified that they have been nominated and be given a chance to become a member to win the award. At that time, they can choose to become a member or decline the nomination and lose eligibility.
- A reprint of a book published in a previous award year is not eligible.

Ballot may be mailed or emailed to:

**WMA Awards, PO Box 648, Coppel, TX 75019** or [info@westernmusic.org](mailto:info@westernmusic.org)

**Ballots must be postmarked or emailed by September 10, 2017 to be counted.**

# NOMINATIONS BALLOT

**WESTERN ALBUM of THE YEAR** (Release date: March 1, 2016 through September 1, 2017) Nominate up to three (3) albums. *Award for an outstanding recorded performance by an artist or artists released during the specified time period. The award recognizes the featured artist(s) and producer. It is a juried award.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**COWBOY SWING ALBUM of THE YEAR** (Release date: March 1, 2016 through September 1, 2017) Nominate up to three (3) albums. *This award is for an outstanding cowboy swing recorded performance which was either commercially released or showed significant chart action during the eligibility period. The award recognizes the featured artist(s) and the producer. It is a juried award.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**SONG of THE YEAR** (Release date: March 1, 2016 through September 1, 2017) Nominate up to three (3) songs. *Award for any song recorded within the last 18 months which was released or showed significant chart action within the eligibility period. Any song which has been nominated for this award in previous years or has been recorded in previous years is ineligible. The award recognizes the songwriter.*

Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Written by: \_\_\_\_\_ Performed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Written by: \_\_\_\_\_ Performed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Written by: \_\_\_\_\_ Performed by: \_\_\_\_\_

**PURE COWBOY SONG OF THE YEAR** (Release date: March 1, 2016 through September 1, 2017) Nominate up to three (3) songs. *This award goes to a song recorded within the eligibility period that speaks expressly and clearly to real, authentic working cowboy life, historic or current. The award goes to the songwriter(s).*

Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Written by: \_\_\_\_\_ Performed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Written by: \_\_\_\_\_ Performed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Written by: \_\_\_\_\_ Performed by: \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUMENTALIST of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) instrumentalists. *This award is for the instrumental artist who has shown an extraordinary mastery of his/her instrument(s) on recorded and/or in-person performance during the specified time period. The award recognizes the artist.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**MALE PERFORMER of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) male performers. *Award for the outstanding male vocalist based on recorded and in-person performance. The award recognizes the artist.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**FEMALE PERFORMER of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) female performers. *Award for the outstanding female vocalist based on recorded and in-person performance. The award recognizes the artist.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**DUO or GROUP OF THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) duos or groups. *Award for a group or duo who regularly performs together that has shown outstanding recorded and in-person performance vocally. The award recognizes the performing group or duo for their excellence.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_



**ENTERTAINER of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) entertainers. *This award is for the performing act who displayed the greatest competence in all aspects of the entertainment field. Consideration will be given to recorded and in-person performance, public acceptance, attitude, leadership, entertainment value of performances, and over-all contributions to the western music image. The award recognizes the entertainer or group.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**SONGWRITER of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) songwriters. *Award for outstanding songs written in the past year by a songwriter(s). Commercial release and number of songs recorded during the year are to be considered. The award recognizes the songwriter(s) and is a juried award.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**CRESCENDO AWARD** Nominate up to three (3) individuals or groups. *This award is for a group or individual, new to the national or international Western scene, having made considerable advances artistically and/or commercially during the eligibility period. The band or individual should be performing under its/his/her name on a regular basis and not have more than two previous finalist nominations for this award. The award recognizes the group or individual artist.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**RADIO DJ/RADIO PROGRAM of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) radio DJs/radio programs. *This award recognizes outstanding service to western music in the field of broadcasting. The recipient will be judged for contributions to the field western music, professionalism, work and involvement in the western music community, and promotion and fostering of the western music image.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**COWBOY POETRY CD of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) CDs

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**COWBOY POETRY BOOK of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) books.

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**MALE POET of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) male poets. *This award is for the person who exhibits the ability to write original Cowboy/Western poetry or verse, who writes or expresses himself with imaginative power and beauty of thought, language and form. He performs original work but may occasionally perform the work of others to live audiences who showing the ability to enable audiences to develop a deeper understanding and appreciate of the Western lifestyle and history (with accuracy) through his performance.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**FEMALE POET of THE YEAR** Nominate up to three (3) female poets. *This award is for the person who exhibits the ability to write original Cowboy/Western poetry or verse, who writes or expresses herself with imaginative power and beauty of thought, language and form. She performs original work but may occasionally perform the work of others to live audiences who showing the ability to enable audiences to develop a deeper understanding and appreciate of the Western lifestyle and history (with accuracy) through her performance.*

Nominee #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominee #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**BALLOTS MUST BE POSTMARKED OR E-MAILED BY SEPTEMBER 10, 2017 TO BE COUNTED**



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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



**WESTERNMUSIC.ORG**  
**505-563-0673**

### PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Music and/or entertainment business persons and performers. Professional members may have a listing on the WMA website. Choose your level of Professional Membership below:

- ☐ Individual Professional Membership ..... \$50
- ☐ Individual Youth Membership (21 and under) ..... \$10
- ☐ Small Music/Performing Group (2-3 members)\* ..... \$75
- ☐ Medium Music/Performing Group (4-6 members)\* ..... \$110
- ☐ Large Music/Performing Group (7+ members)\* ..... \$150
- ☐ Patron Membership ..... \$100
- ☐ Business Professional Membership ..... \$110
- ☐ Individual Professional Life Membership ..... \$600

### SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP


Not a Music or Media Professional but want to take part? Choose your level of supporting membership below:

- ☐ Individual Supporting Membership ..... \$40
- ☐ Individual Youth Membership (21 and under) ..... \$10
- ☐ Family Supporting Membership\* ..... \$65
- ☐ Patron Membership ..... \$100
- ☐ Business Supporting Membership ..... \$100
- ☐ Individual Supporting Life Membership ..... \$600
- ☐ Sponsor Supporting Membership ..... \$1,000

### CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

In addition to your Professional or Supporting Membership, you may also support your local chapter of WMA by adding a Chapter Membership. Check the chapter(s) you wish to join and add the related charge for each chapter.

- |                                     |  |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arizona    | <input type="checkbox"/> East Coast      | <input type="checkbox"/> Oklahoma |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California | <input type="checkbox"/> Kansas          | <input type="checkbox"/> Texas    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado   | <input type="checkbox"/> Montana/Dakotas | <input type="checkbox"/> Utah     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Columbia   | <input type="checkbox"/> New Mexico      | <input type="checkbox"/> Wyoming  |

- ☐ Western Wordsmiths Chapter (poets, authors, songwriters) 
- ☐ Chapter Membership (each) Individual ..... \$10
- ☐ Chapter Membership (each) Family\* ..... \$15
- ☐ Chapter Membership (each) Group\* ..... \$25

\*One member may vote

FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT **WESTERNMUSIC.ORG**

Please tell us about your involvement in Western Music. Check all that apply.

- |  |                                     |   |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performer/Musician    | <input type="checkbox"/> Songwriter | <input type="checkbox"/> Producer             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poet/Reciter          | <input type="checkbox"/> Author     | <input type="checkbox"/> Publisher            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manager/Booking Agent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fan        | <input type="checkbox"/> DeeJay/Radio Station |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____           |                                     |   |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP/Post. Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

It's OK to list my information in the printed WMA Membership Directory. \_\_\_\_\_ (Initials)

Address ☐ Yes ☐ No

Phone Number ☐ Yes ☐ No

Email ☐ Yes ☐ No

### Payment Information

Total Due \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Check Enclosed

Please make check payable (U.S. Dollars) & send to:

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### Questions?

Email [marsha@westernmusic.org](mailto:marsha@westernmusic.org) or call 505-563-0673.

Who may we thank for referring you to WMA?





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