

THE WESTERN WAY

The Official Publication of the International Western Music Association



*Hot Club
of Cowntown*

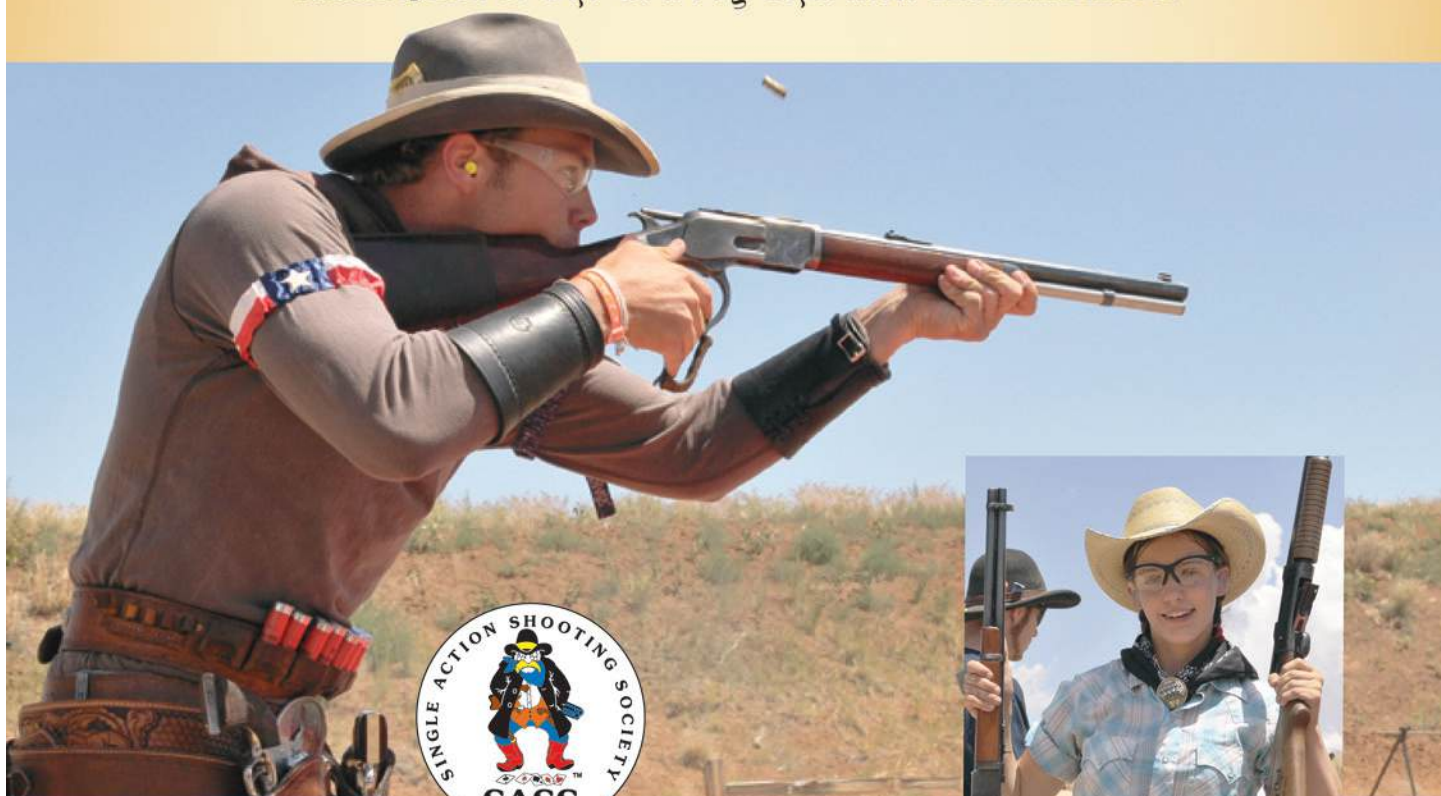
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From The President...



MARVIN O'DELL
IWMA President

HAVE YOU EVER EVEN HEARD OF...?

The Great Recession Orchestra recorded an album a few years ago titled *Have You Ever Even Heard of Milton Brown?*, a recording, of course, celebrating the music of the great western swing group Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies. I was thinking about that title the other day, and I got to wondering how many folks living today have ever even heard of Roy Rogers or Gene Autry or, let's say, Smith Ballew. Hardly anyone under the age of 50 has ever heard of them unless they were educated about them by a father or grandfather.

Now, of course, I've heard of them because I grew up in the era of the singing cowboys. I am a grandfather. But neither my 52-year-old son nor my 31-year-old grandson know who they are. Not because I haven't tried to tell them; it's just that they have no interest. If I told them one day, they forgot everything I said the next. And it makes me wonder how many of today's western music performers will be remembered 50 years from now.

So, that is why I went to the trouble and expense, with the help of Dan McCorison, to record again after 18 years. When it comes to western music, about all we can leave behind for folks to remember us by is our recordings. Why do we know the music of the Overstake Sisters or Carl Sprague or Powder River Jack Lee or Jules Allen? Because they were recorded.

Awhile back, I got to looking through my book of songs I had written. Although I would never claim to be a prolific songwriter, like, say, Darrell Arnold or Jim Jones, I had almost a hundred songs sitting there on pages in my book (which was covered in coffee stains from when Theresa spilled a cup of coffee on it one day). And the thought struck me: "These songs are only words on a page; they will never live as songs unless they are performed or recorded." Well, since I don't perform, I wanted to see some of them at least get recorded.

I have no way of even selling my new album, so I didn't order a lot of them. I knew I would be giving most of them away. In fact, I have only sold one – and I think that's just because Patty Clayton felt sorry for me. (I would have actually paid her to take one, but don't tell her that.) But I just

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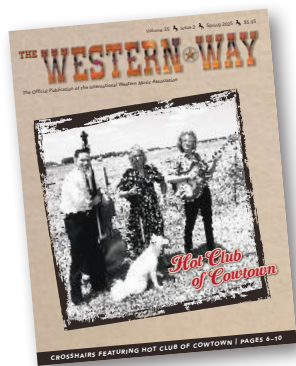
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ON THE COVER...

Captivating, hi-energy, talented, entertaining are just a few of the adjectives that describe the Hot Club of Cowtown. Jake Erwin on bass, Elana James on fiddle, Whit Smith on guitar make up this group that has been performing across the country and internationally for more than 30 years. This photo was taken while touring through Mexia, TX. A faithful fan and traveling companion is Lupa, Elana's dog pictured with them.
Photo courtesy Bret Bingham.



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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 IWMA or *The Western Way*.

Editor's Insight



Theresa O'Dell
Editor

"You must discipline yourself to live within the boundaries of today."

~ Sarah Young

DISCIPLINE

As I thought about a relevant message for our readers, I looked around at life and this word came to mind, for various reasons.

Discipline. I know what the word means to me, but being a word person, I decided to look to others for a definition. Oddly enough, though said in different ways from different sources, the synthesized meaning seemed to be: **"Training that develops self-control"** (noun)

I'm not going to tell anyone how to practice discipline. However, from my perspective, I simply want to share where I see some examples where discipline must be practiced for a best possible outcome.

Child Rearing: Being far removed from this stage of life, I am now enjoying the grand- and great-grandmother stages where I am on the outside looking in. Our adorable first great-grand just turned 2 years. Should he grow up undisciplined, without boundaries and lacking in self-control, his life will be miserable and so will those who surround him. For now, he is mild-mannered and gentle-spirited, but we know that can change. It will be the serious task of his parents to implement the training needed for this young life to learn self-control. They will need to determine how best to enforce this training.

Exercising: Now I know something about this. After a recent visit with my doctor, I was reminded that I have to exercise my physical body just to keep him from asking the question on each visit, "So, Theresa, are you exercising?" "Well, yes," I say, "I go to the fitness center three times a week." "Good start," he replies. It certainly leads me to believe that he is expecting more. For me to add more exercise into my week, I'm going to have to discipline myself to ration my time more efficiently to allow for more gym-time. I obviously need to "exercise" a little more self-control.

Editorializing: I'm often troubled by the authoritative editorializing that is prevalent today on a variety of topics. There is a wide spectrum of opinions on an equally wide number of issues and quite a few who share thoughts, ideas, and judgements as a final authority when in fact no earthly being is omniscient. I ask, is there no room for expression with civility? Is there no room for remaining vigilant and involved without destroying the foundation of friendships? Is there no need to practice self-control in our dialogue? Is there no room for less vehemence while waiting for truth to prevail? It eventually will; lies have short legs.

Perfecting the Craft: Ah, now this is where the rubber meets the road (as my dad would say). "I want to be the best songwriter, singer, poet, producer, writer, or author. I want the award. I want the recognition." Whether a gymnast or an architect, a professional musician or a politician, an editor or a financier, an event planner or a fashion designer, there is a shared commonality. *Discipline.* To be successful, there must be self-control. At some point, to be at the top of your game in whatever your field, you have learned to be in control of YOU. You have studied the hardest, practiced the most, researched the best sources, sought out a mentor, and persisted through multiple failures. You have disciplined your mind, emotions and body for success.

Recently I read, "You must discipline yourself to live within the boundaries of today." (Sarah Young) I like it! It may prove to be a healthier and more successful way to live.

Theresa

From The Executive Director...



Marsha Short
Executive Director

Can it be Spring?
February started out warm,
then we had a week of
snow, then a week in the
80's, then another week of
snow/ice/sleet. Now March
looks like maybe Winter
has gone away...unless it
snows next week. My poor
irises are so confused!

But if it really is Spring, then it must be time to get ready for the IWMA Convention (November 12-16)! Nomination forms for the 2025 IWMA Awards of Excellence and Performer Applications have all been sent out and are available on our website (www.iwesternmusic.org). The information on the 2025 Songwriting Contest is in this issue of *The Western Way*. Contact me (marsha@westernmusic.org) if you would like any of these things emailed or snail mailed to you. If you want to be a bigger part of the Convention, we have a lot of volunteer opportunities available. Without volunteers, we can't make this happen every year.

Lots of other exciting things will be happening at this year's Convention including a bluegrass showcase and a Thursday night concert with Hot Club of Cowtown. Plus, we'll have the great Wednesday night swing dance with Syd Masters & The Swing Riders, the Friday Night Opry, the Saturday Night Awards Show and the Sunday morning Gospel Concert. Start taking naps now so you can stay up all night for the jams! You can make your hotel reservations now, too. There's a link on the website or you can call the hotel's reservation department at 866-505-7829 and refer to our code 2511IWMAG. The hotel sold out quickly last year!

We've lost some real IWMA treasures so far this year: Joe Hannah, Al Krtil, Ronnie Cook, and Marilyn Tuttle. Take a moment to reach out to someone you're thinking about. Don't put it off. Let people know what they mean to you before it's too late.

Marsha



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

In the CROSSHAIRS



Whit Smith, Elana James and Jake Erwin of Hot Club of Cowtown.
Photo by Brett Bingham

"We love big festivals and prestigious gigs and have more on the books. But I think the best shows are those that bring the most joy to those who are there. Those shows are often more intimate."

Hot Club of Cowtown

By Tom Swearingen

Where to start when writing about Austin-based multi award-winning hot jazz and western swing band Hot Club of Cowtown? How about 1994 when guitarist Whit Smith responded to an ad in Greenwich Village's arts and culture newspaper *The Village Voice* placed by violinist Elana James seeking band mates? Or how about sixty years earlier in 1934 when "The King of Western Swing" Bob Wills formed the Texas Playboys while on the other side of the globe, guitarist Django Reinhardt and violinist Stéphane Grappelli formed the Quintette du Hot Club de France in Paris?

Either would work, but let me take you to Prairie Village, Kansas where four-year-old Elana began studying Suzuki violin with support and encouragement from her mother, a professional violinist who played in the Kansas City Symphony and father, who was creative director and founder of a Kansas City advertising agency. Elana reflects, "I'm an exact result of the two of them combined. They are still very much present with me."

James grew up riding her horse, April, and playing violin before leaving for New York City at 17. In 1992 she graduated cum laude from Barnard College, Columbia University with a degree in Comparative Religion while studying violin and viola at the Manhattan School of Music. "I wanted to go



Home Ranch, Clark, CO 1991 or 1993

to New York to play music,” says Elana. “But by the summer before my junior or senior year I was sick of doing chamber music camps in the Northeast that my violin and viola professors organized.” Having gone to Wyoming and Colorado dude ranches as a kid and loving that so much, she had a momentous realization as she sweat playing her viola in her Massachusetts dorm room. “I could be getting paid to ride horses in the mountains right now.” So, she applied to a dude ranch in northern Colorado. “The guy who hired me was Ken Jones. He became one of the most influential people in my life. He was a huge fan and close friend of Riders In The Sky. Ken had a cowboy band at the ranch, so I joined his band and worked as a wrangler when I was 20 and worked off and on there over three summers. That was very formative for me because I loved playing in his cowboy band. It felt so natural to me. That’s how things got started. Once you find something you love you can’t undo it.” Asked if she still gets the opportunity to ride, Elana says, “I love the horse and mule side of western music, so I’ve had kind of a shadow career wrangling, cooking, guiding, and packing over the years. I love to play in the backcountry and will work for an outfitter again this summer.”

Returning to New York in 1994 after a summer wrangling stint, she began an editorial internship at *Harper’s Magazine*. Not even two weeks later she was missing her cowboy fiddling ways so much she put a little ad in *The Village Voice* hoping to find a working band to play with. Elana recalls, “Whit was one that responded. I went to his apartment, and we just sat down and started playing fiddle tunes and I immediately thought ‘this is it.’ I didn’t even notice he didn’t have a band. So, we put a band together and kept learning tunes throughout that internship and



Promo photo for Continental Stomp, 2000

then I started a job as managing editor of the magazine *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*. I was in that place for not even a year and all I really cared about was going to Whit’s and drinking coffee and playing and singing fiddle and cowboy tunes.” Quitting the magazine, she went back and forth from wrangling in Colorado to New York to play with Whit for a while. In time they each left New York and moved to San Diego in 1997 and started a band with no purpose other than to play. “It seemed like we played constantly. Eventually we went outside, and people started tipping us to the point of starting to be able to support ourselves.”



With the Riders In The Sky at the Opry, 2000

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IN THE CROSSHAIRS

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On stage with Bob Dylan, 2005

Although Whit had played guitar since he was very young with folk influence from his musician parents and played throughout the '70s and '80s in a series of rock bands, it was his day job at New York's Tower Records that led to his discovery of western swing. The Connecticut native asked a record distributor for some roots artists he should listen to. Thankfully, the record rep had good taste which very quickly got Whit to Bob Wills. He fell in love with the energy of western swing, which blended perfectly with his passion for Django Reinhardt's distinctive "gypsy jazz" style.

Hot Club of Cowtown has mainly had three bass players over the years. Jake Erwin, whose slap-bass technique and love of both rockabilly and western swing helped further expand the group's sound joined in 2000 and is the player most people associate with the band. Retiring in 2020 he still plays with the band often as does Beau Sample, who grew up in San Antonio, and Austinite Josh Hoag, formerly of Asleep at the Wheel.

The band has played notable festivals and concerts throughout the world, including Lincoln Center, the Cambridge Folk Festival, the Glastonbury Festival, Fuji Rock Festival, the grand opening of the Country Music Hall of Fame, The Barns at Wolf Trap, Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, and has traveled to numerous countries as ambassadors for the U.S. State Department (including being the first American band to tour Azerbaijan.)



With Willie, Summer tour 2004

Three decades of touring both on its own and with artists including the Avett Brothers, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, Dan Hicks, Bryan Ferry, Roxy Music, Squirrel Nut Zippers, the Mavericks, and others provides a lot of memories. Among the highlights was being on tour in England in 2004 when they got a call that Bob Dylan wanted them to be the opener for his upcoming tour with Willie Nelson. "I thought to myself, I don't know what else is going to happen, but I know we're going to have something like 28 shows and 27 minutes on stage every day. But once we started that tour, they all could not have been nicer. The first night we were playing backstage doing some Bob Wills tunes like *Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone* and Willie sidles over and started singing it with us. He said, 'You ought to play that for your encore.' I was like, well, we're the opening act so I don't really think we'll get an encore. Willie responded with a little smile, 'Well you will tonight.'" Sure enough, Elana recalls, "We closed, and he just strode out on stage, and it was like 1964 when the Beatles came out to screaming insanity. He sang that



Southwest Montana, Cub Creek, 2018

song with us, and we did that every night for the rest of the tour. He orchestrated our encore in the most selfless sweetest way. You don't need to know anything else about Willie Nelson." Bob Dylan asked Elana to sit in with his band every night about halfway through that tour. "He and Willie both, even though they've had so many hits themselves, their origins are in a lot of the stuff we still play so I think both enjoyed having us there because we were this scrappy throwback to things that had maybe first inspired them to some degree. Bob liked that. He liked improvisation. He liked twin parts. He was putting his new band together the following year for his tour with Merle Haggard and invited me to join his band, which I did. What an amazing experience to be blessed by people like that and see how they do things. I love role models. I love mentors. They were major mentors to me...as were fiddle players Johnny Gimble and Frankie McWhorter. It's a sacred opportunity to be present and absorb it."

"We like the early pre-WW II swing that has a different kind of feel. We stay within the palette of the '20s, '30s, '40s in what we cover and in the songs we write. I think some people don't even realize that's what they like about our band. We don't bring in any folk chords, and try to avoid modern chord sounds. There's a kind of misunderstanding about what western swing is. We hear, 'I love that good old Hank Williams western swing music.' I'm not saying Hank Williams doesn't swing but western swing is Hugh and Karl Farr, the Light Crust Dough Boys, Cliff Bruner. Virtuoso, scrappy fiddle-driven Texas and Oklahoma bands, and of course Bob Wills. Hardly anyone plays this style that much anymore but it's incredible. In our band one minute we're playing a Hot Club de France Stéphane Grappelli standard and then turn around and play Sally

Goodin. A lot of people don't know those two things don't go together...but why wouldn't they go together? It's violin, guitar, and upright bass playing swinging rhythm."

According to Elana some of the subtleties of western swing are not immediately obvious. "It's only when you really start to dig into say the Wills band in the 1940s and transcribe solos and hear what's going on in the rhythm section do you discover the mind-blowing sophistication that's going on under the cowboy hat."

While Hot Club of Cowtown has been recognized with several accolades and awards over the years, including Ameripolitan Music Awards Western Swing Group of the Year for the band, and Western Swing



Larry's Country Diner with Jimmy Capps, and Whit and Elana



Elko, NV at NCPG with Quebe Sisters, Kristyn Harris, and Hot Club of Cowtown bandmates (2022)

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IN THE CROSSHAIRS

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Rock Creek Pack Station, Bishop, CA 2020.
Photo by Kent Reeves

Female of the Year for Elana, one of their earliest was the 2002 Western Music Association Crescendo Award. That award, now named for the late Liz Masterson, recognizes outstanding emerging artists. Elana's first introduction to the WMA (now IWMA) was in 1993 when she was wrangling and playing in Ken Jones's Home Ranch Band. Ken was a WMA member, and she went to the annual convention held in Tucson at that time to play with him. She recalls that was the year Riders In The Sky were inducted into the Hall of Fame. She also recalls not previously having been around such a concentration of talented western musicians. "And then over a few years going from being a newbie in my mom jeans hanging around the edges to playing professionally was cool."

In addition to their live performances, the band has recorded a string of critically acclaimed albums, with the latest, *Limelight*, a mixture of Django Reinhardt and cowboy tunes like *A Hundred and Sixty Acres* and others off Marty Robbins' *Gunfighter Ballads and Trail Songs* released early 2025.

So, what's on the horizon for the band? "We love big festivals and prestigious gigs and have more on the



Bob Wills Day, Turkey, TX 2024



Elana & Mom, December 2024

books. But I think the best shows are those that bring the most joy to those who are there. Those shows are often more intimate. For example, we played a wedding a few weeks ago and people danced all night. People were so joyful and animated. Those opportunities often bring us the most joy too. I realize, having lost my parents recently, that at the end of the day no one leaves with anything. The only thing that is left is the energy you shared and had with other people." 🐾

Tom Swearingen is an Oregon cowboy poet often inspired by his own experiences and observations from the saddle. 2022 and 2019 IWMA Male Poet of the Year, Tom brings his stories to life with rhythm and rhyme and a style that makes him a popular performer. Tom's book *Reflection* was named 2020 IWMA Cowboy Poetry Book of the Year. For more on Tom visit oregoncowboypoet.com.

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

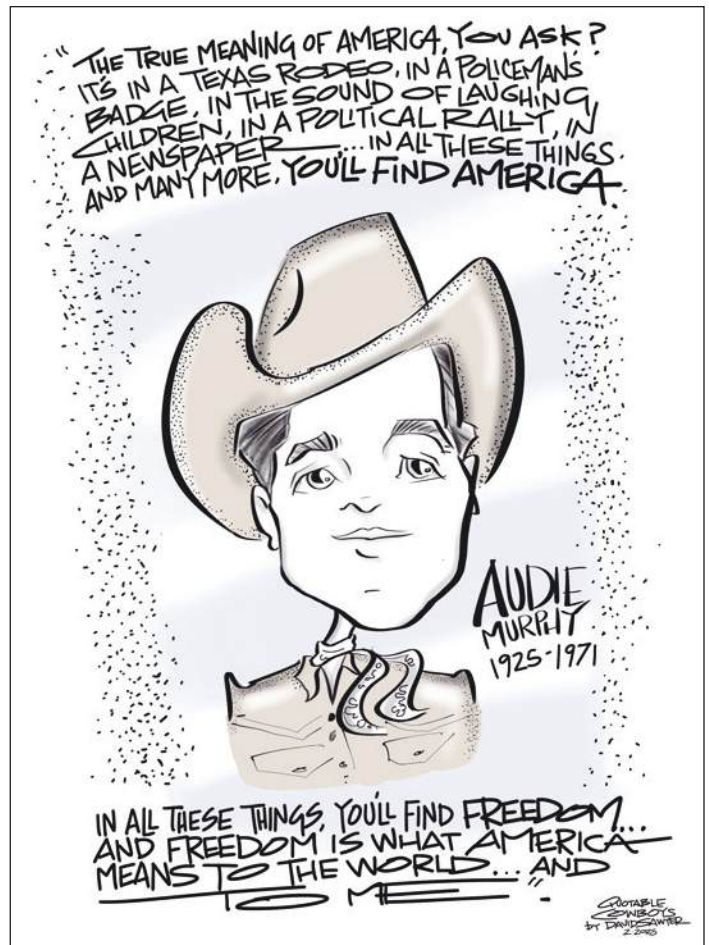
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felt that the words in my book, in order to become songs, would have to be saved as recordings.

I know it's expensive to record and to do it right. *(I spoke with a friend once who had recorded two very poorly recorded albums. He had spent almost \$5000 to record two albums that, when purchased, would be very disappointing to those who bought them. I wish he had saved his money until he could have added some more to it and then invested the money in a producer and good sound engineer and then released an album folks would actually enjoy listening to.)* So, yeah, I know recording is expensive. But for the sake of the songs, they need to be put out there in some fashion.

These same things also apply to poetry. If your book or folder of unpublished poems is just going to be tossed out by your grandkids when you're gone, your work will never become living poems. Just as it is important for songs to be recorded, your poetry needs to be recorded or go in a published book, even if you have to self-publish it and give it away. Otherwise, folks might one day ask, "Have you ever even heard of...?"

MARVIN O'DELL
President IWMA



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Coffee AND CONVERSATION BY PETER BRUCE



My wife says, “I never listen to her,” or something like that. That joke is an indicator of the challenges contained within any given listening situation. We, as individuals, are constantly faced with decisions concerning what kind of music, news and entertainment to consume. As a lifelong radio announcer and music presenter, it’s been my job to persuade the listenership to stay with me as I share songs and spoken word. My enthusiasm for the music I love, I like to believe, is infectious. Yet, that’s not always the case. Tastes differ, attention drifts, people tune out. As part of my career, I became an interviewer. That’s where I was challenged to slow down and truly listen. To zip my lip and digest what the person across from me was trying to convey. And to come up with an intelligent reply to indicate that I truly ‘get it’. In days gone by, radio and television were the main sources for our information and entertainment needs. Nowadays, in this technology-driven world, our attention gets splintered in so many different directions. Back to the original idea: How to get heard in a loud, busy world? One facet of that is patience and not rushing to the next soundbite, or video, or post. Listening is an art and there are lots of ways to improve our way of doing it.

It’s an interactive process, but it’s often sabotaged by the technological advancements in our modern civilization. In order to connect with one another, the process should be an attempt to truly understand (in both music and speech); as opposed to simply hearing. Whether it’s in a business setting or within a relationship, communication is essential. “Listen to understand” should be the mantra. We often unwittingly sabotage our groups and organizations by being too verbose, or by dominating the conversation. Let’s turn it around and try to be compassionate listeners. As we participate in contemporary culture, our aim should be to slow it down, take the time and engage our audiences, friends and associates. Empathy is crucial to getting along in this politically fractured world. And music is a wonderful way to soothe our souls. It’s also a great way to share emotions and ideas. The IWMA is blessed with a wealth of folks who are talented at conveying life experiences through poetry and song. So whether it’s listening to someone you don’t agree with, or just enjoying a new song you’ve never heard before, acknowledge that maybe there’s room for improvement. And that listening better, or listening to understand is a goal worthy of our attention. 🐾

PETER BRUCE is an announcer, producer, engineer and emcee with 40 years of experience in broadcasting, music and radio. In addition to his love of music, Peter is an avid outdoorsman. Favored activities include hunting, cycling, swimming, hiking and exploring the great American Southwest.

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STORIES AND TALL TALES

BY VIC ANDERSON

HAYING WITH HORSES

I was blessed to have been born when ranchers were turning from horse drawn equipment to mechanized machines. I sat behind a set of hames on the back of a mare, part of a gray team pulling the cable to lift an overshot stacker at about 3 yrs old. I started driving a scatter rake, for a few hours each afternoon, behind a bombproof team of horses at about 5. Then we started haying with tractors and I began driving a Ford tractor.

Pops put up hundreds of tons of loose hay by contract for a local rancher. He had a hundred teams of horses, some spares and a few saddle horses available. He had two crews stacking hay, which included four or five mowers, and dump rakes, two horse powered bull rakes, a motorized buck rake for each crew, plus one or two men on each stack, a full time cook and helper, somewhere around sixteen or so in the crew.

Before haying started Pops and his friend Al ran the herd in and drove each team a time or two, then turned them over to the teamsters. For the first week or so, one or the other would

be horse back in the hayfield in case of a runaway. They rode alongside the runaway team, yelling and flapping their hat against the head of the horse nearest to them, or if they could, pull the halter rope off a hame and get the horses circling until they stopped.

As the season progressed the teams got worked down and an outrider wasn't needed. A cousin, who also helped in the kitchen, rode out in the morning with the teams to be available for the same thing until the teamsters waved at her indicating it was okay to go help in the kitchen.

She rode out to tell the crew when it was time to come in for dinner or supper. She got a little bored as the season went along. One day as she rode back to the cookhouse, she kicked her horse into a run and jumped over the rocked in well.

Pops gave her all kinds of "heck". The next year there was a roof over the well.

RIDE EASY PARD.....Vic

VIC ANDERSON of Estes Park, CO, is a Singer/Songwriter, 3-time IWMA champion yodeler, virtuoso melodic whistler, poet, author, columnist and voice over narrator. As Vice-president of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter of the IWMA, Vic has long been an advocate for writing short stories as another way of presenting tales of the West.

In The Spotlight...

by Marvin O'Dell

...Multi award-winning singer, songwriter, and musician **John Lowell** released a single of his song "Snow on The Wine Glass" in January. Besides being an IWMA Award Winner, John also received the Governor's Arts Award from the state of Montana. The award honors outstanding citizens and organizations in Montana whose achievements in the arts, or on behalf of the arts, benefit all Montanans. Awardees must demonstrate achievement and artistic excellence, dedication to the state of Montana, ongoing contributions to the cultural community, and a worthiness of recognition. Also, John's song "Times Are Getting Harder Every Day" recently won second place in the Hazel Dickens songwriting contest this year.

...**Jon Chandler** and **Ernie Martinez** are resuming the Denver-area monthly concert series, *America's Soul Live*. The pandemic ended the series after a 16-year run at Arvada, CO's Olde Town Pickin' Parlor. According to Chandler, "ASL hosted many of the country's finest country, western, and folk musicians and singers, and I've been asked dozens and perhaps hundreds of times when the show will be back; I finally have an answer. The Foothills Event Venue in Lakewood, CO has stepped up and is perfect for resuming the series. Many of the best acoustic entertainers on the planet will be stopping by to share their music and stories, and I'll post a list of upcoming shows and guests on www.jonchandler.com." Held on the third Tuesday of each month, the first show will be in March with Colorado's **Dakota Blonde** joining Jon and "picker in chief" Ernie. A preliminary show in January with **3 Trails West** was a hit!

... **Merna Lewis** made her Grand Ole Opry debut in November, performing with Opry Member and Country Music super-star, **Terri Clark**! She had this to say about the experience: "This was a magical night for me! My mother and husband were there to support me, and that's something very precious to me. I was super excited because, not only did I get to open the set with the first song being a fiddle intro, I also got to open the whole Opry show that night, curtains and all! As soon as those curtains went up and I saw the crowd, I got really emotional, realizing just how special this moment was and that I never want to forget it or take it for granted."

...Keep an eye out for a new single from **Aspen Black** titled "As Cowboy as They Come"; the song features **Merna Lewis** of **Gone With the West** on fiddle and is recorded with engineer/producer, Drew Middleton, who brought us Aspen's *Born to be a Cowgirl* album.

...The first two 2025 singles for **Joel White** and **Randy Palmer** have been mixed and mastered by **Merel Bregante**. Meanwhile, **Sarah Pierce** and **Andi Renfree** have put the finishing touches on Sarah's next release. Merel writes: "Those two ladies...this is amazing."

...**R.J. Vandygriff** will be portraying the Marshal in an upcoming film to be released in March. The working title of the movie is *Deeds Of War*. The film is being shot in south Texas.

...**The Arizona Wildflowers** are very excited to be recording their very first Western Swing album this spring. They plan to have it released by early summer.

...**Dave Munsick** has been wrapped up this cold winter inside his Sonoran Desert blanket in Southern Arizona. He's had fun playing fiddle for his boys on some high level stages this winter as well as had a chance to play some of his *Songteller* shows for the public. He's also been working on his second book of essays and writing a few songs.

...Being hired to play Dolly Parton's "best friend" for a stage play produced by Dolly herself would be quite an achievement. Well, that's exactly what Beth Malone has been called upon to do in July. Beth is the daughter of IWMA member and performer **Peggy Malone**. Beth will be in Nashville for four months straight for rehearsals and the premier of the play through July and August of this year. In 2026, the show will go to Broadway!

...Cowboy poet and singer, **TJ Casey** had a shoulder replaced recently, so he has been "kinda like in a limbo"; however, he is working on a new album and, also, on a new poetry book and poetry CD.

...Dan Crow and Karla Steen, **Crow & Karla**, performed at the Geronimo Event Center in Rodeo, NM, in February. They will be performing for Cowboy Days at the Farm and Ranch Museum in Las Cruces, NM, in March. A highlight last year was being part of the line-up for a Kinky Friedman Memorial Concert.

...**Jean Prescott** will be a judge for the youth West Texas Ranch Rodeo's Got Talent National Anthem Competition April 6th in Amarillo, TX, - one of three judges, we will select ten of the contestants, grades 3-12. Those will be invited to perform at the youth concert during the rodeo performances the following weekend, April 11 & 12. The top three will each sing the national anthem at one of the three rodeo performances. Only 60 contestants will be accepted. A link is on the Jean Prescott Music Facebook page or you can go to www.wtranchrodeo.com.

...The 2025 Mt. Hood Jazz Festival has invited cowboy poet **Tom Swearingen** and the quartet Cowboy Jazz to perform for this year's event. This follows the release of their collaborative album *Folkways*.

...Bass player and sound tech, John Pumphrey of the **Mountain Saddle Band**, recently moved back to his home state of Mississippi. For the time being it will be just Steve Harrington and Dick Flood performing the old classics, some new old works, and even some new original collaborations.

...**Bobby Marquez** is kicking off his Honky Tonk Rodeo Tour in 2025. Also, Bobby will be hosting his 11th annual Country with Heart benefit for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital with an all-star lineup to be announced soon, scheduled during CMA Fest week on Saturday, June 7th, at The Nashville Nightlife Dinner Theatre. New this year, Bobby will be hosting his own songwriter showcases with fellow Nashville hit songwriters, appropriately named the Tales and Toe-Tappers Songwriters Series. On top of all this, Bobby will host the first Cowboy Christmas theatre show in Branson, MO in November and December at The Sun Theatre.

...**Joel White** has released a new single titled "Rancher's Prayer." Watch for his new album, *Roads & Barbwire*, recorded and produced by **Merel Bregante**, to be released in May.

...Some years ago, **Claudia Nygaard** recorded demos at a studio called "Sound Emporium." The legendary studio has recorded albums by everyone from Allison Krauss to Randy Travis and Ringo Starr, so she was very comfortable to begin recording her new album *To Race the Wind* there. On February 14th, she entered the studio with some equally legendary musicians that have been on her bucket list for years, and the basic tracks were all recorded. Claudia will record the vocals and overdubs in March, and plans are for an album release in early summer.

...**Almeda Bradshaw** is performing her WOMEN IN COUNTRY MUSIC programs in Billings, MT. The production is a five-part series she developed while a member of the Humanities Montana Speakers Bureau. A special highlight was performing *The Importance of Her Voice: Song in the Lives of Mountain Women* in Walden's Ridge, TN, where the main character of the show lived. After that, Almeda and Merritt celebrated her 70th birthday in Nashville.

...The New Year has been good for **Mark Munzert**. Along with performing at eight Active Adult Centers, he had a great time performing at the Cochise Cowboy Poetry & Music Gathering in Sierra Vista, AZ along with **Joni Harms**, **Jean Prescott**, and **Kristyn Harris**. Also, Mark has a book underway for release in early summer.

...Geary Parsons and J. Michael Mullins, aka **The Timberline Cowboys** are releasing a new single titled "Watercolor Skies". They will also headline The Cowboy Concert on the Mountain to raise funds for the Durango Cowboy Gathering school's program. The guys are currently back in the studio recording album number four.

...IWMA members **Tom & Carla Swearingen** celebrated their 47th wedding anniversary recently with a Rhine River cruise.

...**Marvin & Theresa O'Dell** just celebrated their 59th wedding anniversary in February. 🐾

-YOUTH OUTREACH-



The Future

By Dennis Russell

As the 34th annual Colorado Cowboy Gathering got off to an official start, Beverly and I spent a few days in January visiting the 4th and 5th graders in some of the schools that are part of the gathering's outreach program. Mary Nelson (CCG) has put together an extensive program that sends many of the Cowboy singers and poets out to local schools to share the stories of western lifestyle, past and present. Students are eager to learn the history and hear the tales of the sometimes serious and the sometimes silly American Cowboy life. And yes, some did not know we still ride horses and have cows.

The Gatherings that have the outreach programs share a special gift with their communities. Some, like the Arizona Cowboy Gathering have poetry competitions where the finalists of each age group present their poems on stage at the Gathering. It is heart-warming to see the auditoriums filled with the youth and their families and friends. Some have gone on to be poets and players. Some have even joined the IWMA.

Last year the Western Slopes Gathering sent Floyd and Valerie Beard, along with Beverly and me, to Monument High School in Fruita. What fun that was. By the time we were finished a student had drawn sketches of all four of us (featured in the title above) and others had read some rhyming lines that they had jotted down right then and there.

One thing I learned about the cowboy way
Was do what has to be done
You have to find the cattle and battle the cold
Don't hit the hay... until the day is done

- Leo T., student

The cowboys told me to do what has to be done
to always finish what you start,
talk less, say more, and take pride in your work.
They touched my heart
they reminded me of fun and getting your hands dirty
that you didn't have to be perfect

- Olivia T., student

Kendallvue Elementary in Littleton created a family-friendly cowboy poetry section in the Library with a collection of books, including '4 Aces and a Queen', poetry CD's, and a few Western Way magazines. A few of the students have since written and sent poems that I will include in this article. The students' "take-aways" were amazing... say what you mean and mean what you say, keep your word, finish what you start, take pride in your work, thank God each day for this life, and always be kind, just to mention a few.

Just a few years ago, Kathy Moss and I visited a 5th grade class in a local charter school and they later surprised us with a bound book of cowboy poetry they had written after we were there. I accompanied Lindy Simmons in a southern Colorado school in a very successful 'writing cowboy poetry' class.

Often, schools will gather all the students in the Gym or let you work with one or two classes at a time in the Library. Small group settings give you a chance to answer questions of interest or curiosity, although, you might have to limit how many.

Whether you are part of a gathering or performing locally on your own, most school districts are glad to hear from you and welcome the lessons you bring to the students. Please contact me with questions or suggestions.

drnpoet@gmail.com

"I never thought you
could turn a poem
into a song!
thank you so much
for the inspiration!..."
-Lexi R

*What a privilege it is to share the songs,
poems, and stories of this western life we live...*

DENNIS RUSSELL

Beverly and Dennis Russell

The Western World Tour



by Rick Huff

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 bestofthewest@swcp.com

It's a simple fact of life. As we age, sad occasions of friends' and acquaintances' passing will increase in frequency. Some may view it as part of the Great Numbers Game which, scientifically, it is. Over the past year I lost my earliest friend, the one I met when he was a year and a half and I was a year old. Then in rapid succession personal hits for me included the wonderfully erasable founder of the AWA Bobby Newton, longtime eastern ambassador DJ for Western Al Krtil, Dick Goodman (with whom I nominated Hi Busse for the IWMA Hall Of Fame) and our dear friend and performance coach for many Marilyn Tuttle (who nominated me from the convention floor to join the WMA board). Also for me, there was Ollie Reed.

Perusers of The Western Way will likely remember Ollie from his "Reed's Reading" book review columns. During the IWMA meet in Albuquerque, Ollie once again represented the Western Writers of America at their table as he'd done for nearly two decades, being his usual affable self. On the final Sunday of the event Ollie, Mary Ryland and I sat down to a lunch Ollie felt he owed me. We were joined by renowned Cowboy Poet Francine Roark Robinson. Months ago for his Western Music column in the WWA Roundup magazine he was seeking to cover CDs containing the Spur Award-nominated songs and didn't have one of the albums. I sought it out and got it to him, since I regularly slipped him CDs after I had reviewed them for my own column. The lunch was the perfect one, full of laughter, memories and fun, the one you might design if you knew it would be the last one you would have with someone. Two days later, Mary and I were confronted by a front page article in the Albuquerque Journal declaring their star features reporter Ollie Reed, Jr. was found dead in his Corrales home.

Over the years my lady Mary never failed to read Ollie's columns and comment on what a fine writer he was. Frankly I can't swear she has ever read me, but I get it! Ollie richly deserved her praise, and that of the many who have been moved by his thoughts. Some spoke of it at his service. All concurred he had a special ability to find the heart of his subjects. Not only would you know who was appearing or

what event was being held, but you'd get a sense of what would be accomplished by that appearance or how we would be bettered by that event. And, through his skill at depiction, his many historical profiles ushered us squarely into the action.

At our lunch, we learned Ollie had submitted his farewell column for the December issue of The Roundup (entitled "So Long It's Been Great To Review Y'all"). Wanting to move on to other vistas, he had turned over those reviewing chores to the imminently qualified musician and writer Jim Jones. Ollie said he had "mentioned" Mary and me in his piece. Wow! It took reading him there to learn he considered us and our Western Music production efforts to have been his guides into contemporary Western Music and Ian Tyson, in particular! I'd just assumed he had always been a pretty knowledgeable devotee, but that effect resulted from those efforts to get to the core of his subjects. Over the years he made salient, spot-on observations about Western Music, its lineage and legacy and, importantly, its potential. In that ironic final column, Ollie wrote "Western Music is a living and evolving genre and not something stuck in those Roy Rogers and Gene Autry movies I watched on black and white TV when I was a kid." (He was in Mississippi watching while I saw them in New Mexico).

Some years back Ollie recognized the "authorship" involved in creating our best Western songs. He helped champion the creation of the music categories acknowledged with Spur Awards each year by the Western Writers Association. Ollie intended to begin writing a series of columns on various classic Western offerings he felt needed to be revisited due to their relevance. Western films and novels, certainly, but almost surely some music would have been a part of his explorations. I made sure his intentions were known when I addressed the attendees at his funeral in the hope that someone among the writers there, hopefully blessed with Ollie's gift of sensitivity, might take up the challenge. I offer them here with the same thought in mind. He would never endorse it being said of him, but it is a simple fact. Ollie Reed, Jr. was a pretty special dude.

Benditos senderos, mi amigo..... 🐾



Chapter Update

BLACK HILLS & BEYOND CHAPTER

President: Brad Exton

ramblinrangers@yahoo.com

By the time this is in print, we may start seeing the first signs of spring up here in the north country. Regardless of the weather, many of our members have been busy performing, and will continue to do so during the summer. Paul Larson and a few friends have put together what they hope to be an annual cowboy gathering at the Dahl Center in Rapid City, SD. The first event was on February 15, called Cowboy Culture South Dakota Style featured Paul, Bodhi Linde, Yvonne Hollenbeck, and several non IWMA members. They entertained over 200 audience members. The Dahl is interested in providing the venue again next year and the group is working on establishing a 501.c3 status. John Lowell is continuing to spread his excellent songwriting and musicianship in the U.S. and overseas. He played at the Alpine, TX gathering in February and then traveled to Fredricksburg, TX to play and record. He'll be busy teaching songwriting and guitar this summer, along with a tour in England during August and a European tour in the fall. Rik "Yonder" Goodell went south to Arizona where he has been working on two new books that he hopes to have published later this summer. One will feature some of his excellent poems and the other will be a collection of his short stories. Rik will also be hosting the second annual Flathead

Cowboy Gathering in July. This year's event promises to be bigger and better than last year's. Pegie Douglas and her all-woman group, Gumbo Lilies are busy playing around the Black Hills, including venues such as Chute Roosters in Hill City, SD. Every member of the band is an inductee of the Legends of Dakota Country Music Hall of Fame. WOW! Dean Bruce has had a quiet winter but expects to return to action by attending and performing at the gatherings in Valentine NE, Medora ND, and Lewistown, MT. The Ramblin' Rangers spent their 11th winter in southern New Mexico, playing several shows a week at various venues in NM and AZ. After leaving at the end of March, they traveled to Texas where they performed at the Waxahatchie Cowboy Gathering, and house concerts at Jean and Gary Prescott's and in Pleasanton, TX before heading north to perform in Valentine, NE and Chugwater, WY. Hearts of the Hills (Pegie Douglas and Sherl Cederburg) have been busy performing at several events sponsored by the South Dakota Humanities Council. Locations include Rapid City Library, Tri-State Museum in Belle Fourche, Black Hills Stock Show, Custer Senior Center in Custer, and Matthews Opera House in Spearfish, SD. The BH&B Chapter is working on several showcases for 2025 in states such as SD, NE, WY and MT. Stay tuned for information on those events. On a sad note, the Chapter lost two wonderful friends recently; "Slim" McNaught, Cowboy poet extraordinaire and leather worker, and Bob Lantis, cowboy, trail ride boss, storyteller and poet. We'll miss both of them and what they brought to western culture.

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

President: Scott Tonelson

Scott.tonelson@gmail.com

California Chapter is rehearsing for our "Songs from the Saddle" show at the Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival at the Main Theater Sunday, April 13, 2025, with special guest Larry Wilder. We are performing at Vasquez Rocks State Park on April 27, 2025, and at the Empty Saddle Equestrian Club, in Rolling Hills Estates on June 7. More shows are planned for Orange County and Northern California. President ScottT performed a benefit show with Jerry Hall (California Chapter member and IWMA Exec Vice Pres) and Trick Shot. The show was "Our Hero's Dreams", to Help Save Lives and Give Our Heroes The Hope and Support They Deserve.

COLORADO CHAPTER

President: Geary Parsons

gearyparsons@outlook.com

The new year is here, and the Colorado Chapter is thriving! As we approach spring, weather patterns have been quite the contrast—while the southwest part of Colorado saw little snow, the northern region was hit hard. But just like spring brings



3 Trails West

Continued on page 26

Penned by Lantern Light

This column will spotlight members of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter of the International 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.



When the Day's Work's Finally Over

by Scott Wiswell

*When the day's work's finally over after toiling in the sun
When a cold drink and gentle breeze is the reward for being done
When the hay is stacked and in the barn or the cattle in the pen
When it's time to glean the fellowship that's shared among the men
When a sunburn and a stiff back are the medals that are worn
When there's blood left on the Wranglers that are dirty, stained and torn
When callouses and blisters are the pay stub for the day
When it's time to take the saddle off and brush your sweaty bay
When a sunset beckons nighttime and supper back at home
When you gaze across the carpet of the cut and baled brome
When a stock tank's as refreshing as a city swimming pool
When you ponder all the lessons that were learned in hard-knock school
When the dust begins to settle and you've given your last grunt
When the locust buzzes in the trees and the nighthawk starts its hunt
When the horse is fed and turned out and chores are finally done
When you've surrendered to exhaustion but know that you have won
When you head for home with windows down along the gravel road
When you pull out from the sale barn dropping off a trailer load
When you shuffle to the shower then dinner with loved ones
When the day's works finally over after toiling in the sun*



SCOTT WISWELL is a native Kansan. He grew up riding horses, working cattle and doing chores. He lives outside of Valley Center, Kansas and has always enjoyed the western lifestyle. Scott is a retired police detective after serving 33 years with the Wichita Police Department. He won the Kansas Cowboy Poetry Contest in 2019 & 2022 (Serious Category) and has written three cowboy poetry books: *When The Stars Sang*, *Hoot Tales*, and *A Cowpuncher's Christmas*, which was published in 2024 and has been nominated by the IWMA for Cowboy Poetry Book of the Year.

BLACK COWBOYS GETTING THEIR DUE AT MUSEUMS

A LITTLE BIT *of* HISTORY

By Johnny D. Boggs

Mike Buford was walking in Rosenberg, Texas, when a storefront sign caught his attention.

THE BLACK COWBOY MUSEUM

"I'd never even heard of Black cowboys," he says inside the small museum that's roughly a 35-minute drive southwest from Houston. "The only Black cowboys I knew were when Sammy Davis Jr. played on *The Rifleman* TV series. And those Black exploitation movies that Jim Brown and Fred Williamson made" in the 1970s.

Inside, Buford met Larry Callies, who founded the museum in 2017 and gave Buford such a history lesson that Buford became an assistant.

The museum has grown, and was scheduled to get even bigger with a grant coming and groundbreaking scheduled for a new museum about 12 miles away at Bates Allen Park in Kendleton, Texas, before funding was put on hold.

That hasn't stopped Callies, but not much has ever stopped Callies. He started out singing country music – he wanted to follow in Charley Pride's footsteps – but a nerve issue ended his musical career before he could record his first album, and he still speaks hoarsely. Instead of sulking, Callies turned to something that had interested him since childhood: Black cowboys.

He remembered the stories he heard from his Uncle Willie, who was born in 1919 and had plenty of cowboy tales to share. Callies followed in his uncle's boots, and in 1971 became the second Black cowboy to make the Texas high school rodeo state finals.

Callies opened the museum – two rooms in a borrowed storefront – with some saddles and pictures in June 2017. That September, the museum moved to its current location of about

900 square feet. He started the Black Cowboy Hall of Fame to honor the greats – the fourth annual induction ceremony is scheduled for April 26 at the Rosenberg Civic Center – and The Black Cowboy Hall of Fame Museum, which opened in 2023, adjoins The Black Cowboy Museum.

"We want people to know what the Black cowboy has done in making this country great," Buford says.

Buford and Callies aren't alone.

The Witte Museum in San Antonio brought back its *Black Cowboys: An American Story*



Nat Love,
circa 1907



Black cowboys at the Negro State Fair in Bonham, Texas, in 1913.

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/
TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

exhibition, which debuted in November 2021, June 15, 2024 – April 6, 2025 (it was originally scheduled to end February 9). It moves to the Autry Museum of the American West in Los Angeles June 14, 2025 – January 4, 2026. After that, it's scheduled to go Michigan's Kalamazoo Valley Museum.

The exhibit was curated by Ron Davis II, the Witte's curator of American history, and Bruce Shackelford, the museum's Texas history curator.

Philip Jones and Everett L. Durham deserve credit, of course, for chronicling the history of Black cowboys in their groundbreaking 1965 nonfiction book *The Negro Cowboys*. People started paying more attention to Black cowboys like Bill Pickett, credited with inventing "bulldogging," Nat Love, whose exaggerated autobiography created the myth of Deadwood Dick; George McJunkin, who discovered prehistoric bison, tools and ceramics near Folsom, New Mexico; and Bose Ikard, a top hand for cattleman Charles Goodnight and immortalized as Deets in Larry McMurtry's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Lonesome Dove*.

But 60 years of additional research has unearthed new scholarship. The history of Black cowboys is still being written.

Davis continues his research. He points out that while Jones and Durham said Blacks comprised one-quarter of the cowboys taking part in the trail drives to shipping points in Kansas, etc., "that did not include ranches. A larger number had to work on ranches. Maybe one-third were of Black or Mexican lineage."

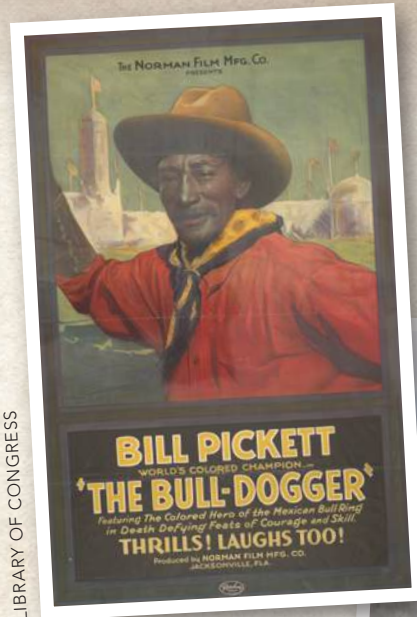
The Witte's exhibit introduces visitors to many other Black cowboys of past and present. And, yes, music lovers, the great Herb Jeffries, who died at age 100 in 2014, is included.

In the late 1930s, Jeffries was cast in low-budget singing-cowboy movies such as *Harlem on the Prairie* and *The Bronze Buckaroo*. Jeffries was inducted into the Western Performers Hall of Fame at Oklahoma City's National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in 2004. His jazzy baritone and wit remained sharp when he performed a concert at the weekend reception.

Oh, yeah. Davis also points out that Jack Thorp, who wrote *Songs of the Cowboys* (1908), got the idea to write that book after hearing Black cowboys singing songs in New Mexico. 🐾

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

CAROL M. HIGHSMITH ARCHIVE/
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Poster for Bill Pickett's 1921 silent five-reel film *The Bull-Dogger*, which showed acts from the 101 Ranch's Wild West exhibition. Only fragments of the film are thought to remain.



Artist Lisa Perry's statue honoring Bill Pickett in the Stockyards District of Fort Worth, Texas.

JOHNNY D. BOGGS



Some of the displays at the Black Cowboy Museum.



JOHNNY D. BOGGS, a native of South Carolina and former newspaper journalist, is a Western novelist/historian, film scholar, photographer and sometimes lyricist who lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has won a record nine Spur Awards from Western Writers of America for his fiction and writes for several magazines. His website is www.JohnnyDBoggs.com.

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WESTERN EVENTS CALENDAR

2025

JUAB COWBOY POETRY & MUSIC GATHERING

April 25 – April 26 | Nephi, UT

GENOA WESTERN HERITAGE DAYS

May 2 – 4 | Genoa, NV

DUSTY VAQUERO DAYS

May 30 – 31 | Gillette, WY

WORLD YODEL DAY

August 8

37TH ARIZONA COWBOY POETS GATHERING

August 7 – 9 | Prescott, AZ

DURANGO COWBOY GATHERING

October 2 – 5 | Durango, CO

IWMA 2025 CONVENTION

November 12 – 16 | Albuquerque, NM

HAVE AN UPCOMING EVENT?

Send details to

marsha@westernmusic.org to be
included in the Western Events Calendar

IWMA 2025 SONGWRITING CONTEST!

IF THERE'S A SONG IN YOUR HEART, now's the time to get it down on paper, record it, and send it in for the Annual IWMA Songwriting Contest. Anyone can enter, anyone can win!

RULES & REWARDS FOR THE SONGWRITING CONTEST

1. There is only one category this year: Cowboy/Western Song
2. Fee is \$25 a song or three (3) songs for \$50.
3. There can be more than one songwriter for a song, the prize to be divided between them as they see fit.
4. A lyric sheet must be provided for each song.
5. Judges will be music business professionals.
6. Grand prize will be \$1,000. Grand prize winner will get to perform their song on the IWMA Awards Show in a featured slot where the \$1,000 prize will be presented.
7. Second Place prize is \$200 and an opportunity to perform their song on 2025 Friday Night Opry. The prize will be presented during the Saturday night Awards Show.
8. Third Place prize is \$100. The prize will be presented during the Saturday night Awards Show.
9. Contest dates are **May 1-July 31**. Entries must be received during this window but not later than July 31.
10. Winner will be notified ahead of time but will not receive his/her award until the Convention in Albuquerque.
11. Songs must not have been previously recorded and released.
12. Songs must fall lyrically into the cowboy/western genre. *Song may be written to fit any musical style – rock 'n' roll, folk, Celtic, easy listening, etc. – but must speak to the life, work, nature, history, landscape, romance, etc., of life in the west past or present or to life lived in the West outside the city.*
13. Songs must be submitted by mp3 or on CD disc ONLY. CDs will NOT be returned to the sender. *Songs do not have to be recorded in a professional studio. Song may be simply performed and recorded with a home device.* Send submissions to marsha@westernmusic.org or mail to IWMA – P. O. Box 648 – Coppell, TX 75019.
14. Songs must be submitted with no more than two (2) instruments. *Judges will be considering lyrics and melodies, not performance of the song.*
15. Each entrant must be submitted with the full name(s) of each songwriter.

QUESTIONS: Contact marsha@westernmusic.org or call IWMA at 505-563-0673

SONGWRITING CONTEST 2025 ENTRY FORM

Name _____

Phone Number () _____ Email _____

Song Title(s) _____

Payment Information ☐ Check/Money Order enclosed ☐ Credit Card ☐ Visa
☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Name on Credit Card _____

Billing Address _____

MARILYN MYERS TUTTLE (1925 – 2025)



Marilyn Tuttle, age 99 (born in California on Sept. 3, 1925), passed away in her sleep, at her home, on January 11th, 2025. Marilyn had had a long, successful career singing jazz, Western and country music, performing first as a member of a trio with Stan Kenton's

band in 1944. In 1946, she appeared as a member of a musical trio, The Tailor Maids, in Eddie Dean's Western film, *Down Missouri Way*. For the rest of her life, she was invited to sing wherever she went, but she usually declined, politely pointing out that she was a harmony singer, not a soloist! But her beautiful voice made a huge difference in musical presentations!

Wesley Tuttle (Marilyn's husband) had two chart records for the Capitol label in 1946, and he invited Marilyn to join his band on tour to promote his "hits." Wesley said he stole Marilyn from the Earl Carroll Theater "and never let her loose after that!" Following their marriage in 1947, Marilyn and Wesley joined their friends Johnny Bond, Tex Ritter, Joe & Rose Lee Maphis, Merle Travis and many other legendary stars on the long-running *Town Hall Party* tv show. The show was broadcast "live" to a huge Southern California audience in the early days of television. Marilyn replaced Mary Ford when Mary left Jimmy Wakely's *Sunshine Girls* trio to work with Les Paul, and she also appeared on a subsequent Jimmy Wakely tv show (Wesley had worked with Wakely on Gene Autry's weekly radio show and as a musician in a number of Western films starring Wakely, Tex Ritter, Charles Starrett and Russell "Lucky" Hayden).

In 1953, RCA Victor recorded the legendary Western singer-composer Bob Nolan as a solo artist (Nolan had been one of the founders of the Sons of the Pioneers). To accompany him, Marilyn joined her friends Lou Dinning and Rose Lee Maphis to form the back-up trio for that session.

When Wesley left show business to become a minister, Marilyn opened a Christian book store in San Fernando. Decades later, when the International Western Music Assn. (IWMA) was formed, the Tuttles were invited to attend an annual convention in Tucson. The Association's purpose was/is to preserve and promote Western music, and as pioneers of Western music, the Tuttles were welcomed and revered from the start. Wesley passed away in 2003, but Marilyn had made so many dear friends who shared

her musical interests and were in awe of her talent, she continued to participate in Western music events until the end. She was especially appreciated as a mentor of young people who were interested in harmony, and she could be found at the conventions in New Mexico and venues in California, often until late at night, helping youngsters learn the finer points of harmony singing. She was the driving force behind the Association's harmony competition, an active member of the Advisory Board, and the Board of Directors created an award in her honor: The Marilyn Tuttle Award for Harmony. In 2007, the Association awarded Marilyn the prestigious Pioneer Trails Award for her major contributions to the Western music genre and to the Association. She is survived by her children, Matthew and Wesley, Jr., and leaves behind a loving extended family and many, many loving friends.

RONALD L. COOK (1954 – 2025)



Ronald Lewis Cook was born October 24, 1954, and passed away on February 13, 2025, at his home in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

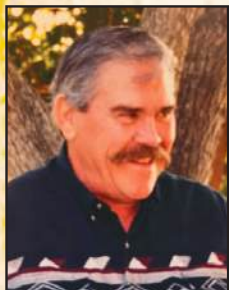
Ronnie was the happiest when he was playing music. He started playing at the age of four, and professionally at the age of 12 with the Rocky

Mountain Jamboree on KLAQ Radio in Denver with his brothers, Gary and Donnie, and sister Patty. He played with the Barleen Country Music Dinner Theater and the IWMA Hall of Fame Members Flying W Chuckwagon. He has played all over the country, including Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. He is the three-time Colorado State Flat Pick Guitar champion and placed in the top five at National, twice.

Ronnie was proud to be offered the title of Lifetime Honorary El Paso County Deputy Sheriff, and Honorary Commander of the 731 Air Lift Squadron at Peterson Air Force Base. The flag that was flown in Iraq is under his name.

Ronnie leaves behind his wife, Elaine; stepchildren, Sandra, Tammy, Edgar, and Richard; grandchildren, Chelsea, Dustin, Colten, and Danielle; great grandchildren, T.J. and Gwen; two brothers, Gary and Donnie; one sister, Patty; aunt, Joyce; three nieces, five nephews, and multiple cousins. He is preceded in death by his father, William Cook, and mother, Ardith Sexton Cook.

JOSEPH (JOE) HANNAH (1932 – 2024)



Joseph (Joe) Edward Hannah was born in Missouri on February 1, 1932 to Lon M. Hannah and Melba K. Williams Hannah and passed away on December 26, 2024 in Visalia, CA.

Joe attended Visalia Union High School (a proud Pioneer!) where he was a three-year letterman in both baseball and football. Joe was honored to receive All American recognition in football as a fullback, where he was nicknamed “Joltin’ Joe”. Joe was offered football scholarships from USC, UCLA, and Cal Berkeley but chose professional baseball where he was an outstanding catcher. On graduation night in 1951, Joe signed a minor league contract with the Chicago Cubs organization.

After spending a year in the minor leagues, Joe was drafted into the U.S. Army where he was stationed in Fort Ord during the Korean War and proudly served his country that he loved.

Joe met Kay Kindy in High School where they spent time together with friends in the High School group at 1st Presbyterian Church in Ivanhoe. This friendship blossomed into love and Joe and Kay were married on February 7, 1953. Joe and Kay were happily married for 51 years until Kay’s passing in 2004. They shared many adventures together, including raising five children and serving their church and community.

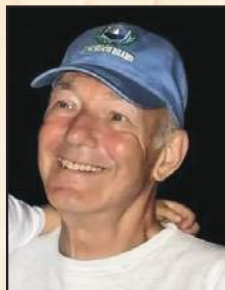
After being Honorably Discharged from the Army, Joe resumed his baseball career with Kay at his side. In total, Joe spent 13 years in professional baseball, enjoying a very successful career in AAA.

Joe had a lifelong love of music, and in 1987 with the encouragement of his son Lonnie, the Sons of the San Joaquin was formed. The group consisted of Joe, his brother Jack, and Lonnie. They have been credited with “rich durability of the traditional Western music they present, as well as the outstanding original cowboy songs” and being reminiscent of the Sons of the Pioneers. Roy Rogers called them “the only singing group who I feel sound like the original Sons of the Pioneers”. They have over a dozen albums, including a gospel album and a greatest hits album. They were inducted into the Western Music Association Hall of Fame in 2006.

Joe had a heart for the Lord and a compassion to serve his God and passed down this legacy to his family. Joe will be remembered for his kindness, generosity and of course, his great big laugh.

Joe was preceded in death by his father Lon, mother Melba, brothers Robert (Bob) and Jack, first wife Kay, son James (Jimmy) and second wife Carol.

ALOIS R. “AL” KRTL (1939-2025)



Alois R. “Al” Krtl, age 86, of Ship Bottom, NJ, passed away on Thursday, January 9, 2025 in Little Egg Harbor, NJ. Al was born in Manhattan and was raised and lived in his beloved Bronx for 60 years. He worked for Chase Manhattan Bank for 40 years

before retiring in the mid-90s. Al and his wife Frances moved to Ship Bottom in 1998. After moving to Ship Bottom, Al built a second career with The Sandpaper of LBI as Distribution Manager. Al was a proud US Air Force veteran who served in Korea. He was a parishioner of St. Francis of Assisi Church, where he volunteered as an usher at Sunday masses and as a coordinator for the annual Festival of the Sea. Al was a founding member of the International Western Music Association and a volunteer DJ at various non-profit radio stations for over 50 years, playing and promoting traditional music of the American West.

In the early days of the Association, Al helped IWMA artists like Liz Masterson and Sean Blackburn book tours of the NY-NJ area. And following each annual convention, Al was invited to appear on Larry Hopper’s weekly “Down Home Frolic” radio show on WFDU-FM, from Teaneck in Northern NJ, to share the new music he had collected at the convention with a large audience in the Northeastern US.

As a long-time fan of yodeling, Al especially enjoyed the music of Elton Britt, Rosalie Allen, Riders In The Sky and Janet McBride, and he promoted their work on his monthly radio show in South Jersey (a collaborative effort with his long-time friend Herb Sudzin), along with the recordings of many other members of the IWMA. Early on, Al became good friends with Patsy Montana. Following her death in 1996, he hosted a dinner for her family and friends at the Cowgirl Hall of Fame restaurant in Manhattan.

Al also wrote numerous articles for various professional wrestling magazines about the history and “Golden Age” of professional wrestling. He was a lifelong avid NY Yankees fan and baseball devotee. He is survived by his wife of 60 years Frances, his daughter Catherine Krtl and his grandson Brendan Jackson. In lieu of flowers, the family requested that contributions in Al’s memory be made to either the Wounded Warrior Project or the International Western Music Association (iwesternmusic.org).

Chapter Update

Continued from page 18



Lindy Simmons and the Timberline Cowboys



Jon Chandler and Ernie Martinez

new growth, our chapter continues to expand, with an abundance of talent and dedicated members. Despite a snowstorm, the Colorado Cowboy Gathering went on as planned, featuring performances by 3 Trails West, Jon Chandler, and Ernie Martinez. Looking ahead, the Timberline Cowboys, along with Lindy Simmons, will be hosting a fundraiser in April for the Durango Cowboy Gathering. This exciting event, titled Cowboy Concert in the Mountains, promises to be a great success. Last fall, Patty Clayton hit the road for five weeks, traveling through New Mexico and Arizona ahead of the IWMA convention in Albuquerque. Along the way, she performed in Socorro, NM, with Neil Haverstick and Mariah Carter and joined Reese Janca and Doug Figgs on their IWMA award-winning radio show, *Keepers of the West*. She also made appearances at a few farmers' markets. You can



Patty Clayton



Steve Jones

follow her upcoming adventures at pattyclayton.com. Meanwhile, Steve Jones was honored with an invitation from John Pumphrey of the Saddle Mountain Band to perform at Christmas at Empire Ranch on December 14. Exciting times lie ahead for the Colorado Chapter—stay tuned for more updates!

COLUMBIA CHAPTER

President: Tom Swearingen
tomswearingen@gmail.com

With members spread over our Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and British Columbia area (we also boast several members from other



Venessa Carpenter and Waddie Mitchell backstage at Elko. Note her Columbia Chapter Youth Cowboy Poetry winner's buckle!

states and provinces...all are welcome!) it's not often that we're able to gather in person. But when we do...we sure have fun. In June we will again host an open mic in conjunction with the Crooked River Roundup PRCA Rodeo. That will take place at the Bowman Museum in Prineville, OR. Planning is also underway to hold our annual meeting and concert at the museum in the fall. And we're looking for other regional opportunities for chapter events. In the meantime, individual performing members are out and about. One that we are particularly proud of is Venessa Carpenter, a previous winner in our Columbia Chapter Youth Cowboy Poetry Contest. This year Venessa was an invited performer to the 40th National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, NV as a recipient of the Buck Ramsey Scholarship. Speaking of our poetry contest... entries are being taken now through September 1 for our 5th annual. Open to 3-12 grade students in OR, WA, ID, BC we award grade winners with custom trophy buckles, and cash. Please share the opportunity. Details and online entry are at iwmacolumbia.org/youth-poetry-contest.

KANSAS CHAPTER

President: Martha Farrell
marthasfarrell@gmail.com

Hello friends – we want to pay special tribute to Sharon Chesmore, who retired as an IWMA Kansas officer at the end of 2024. Sharon and her husband Chester have been the best ambassadors for IWMA we could have. Indeed, they received IWMA's Bill Wiley award in 2012. Health issues have slowed Sharon down, but she sends her greetings to all. The Kansas chapter thanks her profusely for being our incredibly diligent Secretary for about 14 years! And welcome to Jim Mathis, who has kindly



Brazos Valley Boys

agreed to take on the position of Secretary. He joins our President Martha Farrell, Vice-President Roger Eilts, and Treasurer Annie Wilson as 2025 officers. As a result of Marsha Short's great commercial in Albuquerque we have purchased three IWMA pop-up banners to highlight our chapter as we move around the state. They premiered at EquiFest of Kansas in March, which is a gathering of about 15,000

horse enthusiasts. Our members Ron Wilson and Mary Powell performed cowboy poetry there and had an information table. Congratulations to Morey Sullivan, leader of the Brazos Valley Boys, who carry on the legacy of Hank Thompson's western swing. They've been hard at work on a new CD entitled "Turn Us Loose and Let Us Swing", to be released in April.



Sharon Chesmore steps down as KS chapter secretary after about 14 years of unprecedented, faithful service.

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER
President: Judith Anderson
judianderson@comcast.net

The New Mexico chapter started 2025 with the moving of our live Song and Poetry Corral to the Third Monday of each month and the location to the Best Western Rio Grande Hotel. We had quite a nice turnout for our January evening of Music. We had nine performers including Buffalo Bill and Dr Jo and Kerry Grombacher. Everyone enjoyed the music and the food. Our Song and Poetry Corral is open to members and nonmembers. In March we will be hosting an Afternoon Tea at The Vineyard Clubhouse as a fund raiser. We will have traditional Tea Party food and specialty teas presented by Lotus Tree Herbal. Her teas are handcrafted and organic. Watch for this tea vendor at the

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"THANKS TO THE IWMA FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE BILL WILEY AWARD. WHAT A SURPRISE AS I HAVE NEVER EXPECTED ANY RECOGNITION FOR PROMOTING WESTERN MUSIC & COWBOY POETRY."

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ARTIST CONTACT:
 Mike Rutherford
Mike@rdiinc.us





Chapter Update

Continued from page 27

2025 IWMA Convention! Our meetings for 2025 will now be held on the fourth Sunday of the month at 2pm at the Vineyard Clubhouse. The chapter voted to have an acoustic song and poetry jam after our meetings. If you are travelling through Albuquerque, please stop by!

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

President: Robert Maxwell Case
robert@robertmaxwellcase.com

Our 2025 executive board is president Robert Maxwell Case, vice-president Leigh Ann Matthews, and secretary-treasurer Robert Beene. Leigh Ann and Scott Matthews performed at the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame in Muskogee on February 13. Bob Wills' Texas Playboys under the direction of Jason Roberts appeared at the Cain's Ballroom in Tulsa on March 8 & 9. Michael Martin Murphey was



Bob Wills' Texas Playboys



Michael Martin Murphey



Jake Hooker

featured at the legendary Church Studio Legacy Concert series in Tulsa on March 26 & 27. Leigh Ann and Scott Matthews also will appear at Carlton Landing's PorchFest May 3 on Lake Eufaula. Cowboy Jim Garling will again perform at the annual Chuckwagon Festival at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City on May 24 & 25. Jay Hooker & the Outsiders will be returning for the Ben Johnson Days at the Pawhuska Fairgrounds on Fathers' Day weekend June 14.

TENNESSEE CHAPTER

President: Mary Kaye Holt
Marykayeholt@yahoo.com

Greetings everyone and Happy Spring to Ya'll! Lots happened with the Tennessee Chapter this past winter. We had our elections earlier this year and we are honored to introduce the officers of the International Western Music Association-Tennessee Chapter for 2025-2028: President Mary Kaye Holt; Vice President Tecia McKenna Hedden (returning for a second term.); Secretary Aspen Black; Treasurer Diana Raven. Looking forward to a great year ahead for the Tennessee Chapter. Phoebe White performed a full concert accompanied by Ruth McLain on upright bass in Big Rapids, Michigan for the Festival of the Arts concert series in January. The packed house enjoyed western music from both of Phoebe's albums, and more. The audience was amazing, giving Phoebe & Ruth an extended standing ovation. Thank you, Big Rapids! The Gone With The West gals have been woodshedding this winter and have been in the studio recording new music. They are preparing for a single release later this Spring. Go girls! The lovely Aspen Black has a new single, "As Cowboy as They

Continued on page 30

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FROM the TRAIL

APPLYING FOR LODGERS TAX GRANT FUNDING

By David Nidel, MS

At our recent IWMA convention there was a grant writing workshop. While grants for supporting non-profit endeavors can take a lot of time and focus to follow through for a chance at funding your chapter, Lodgers Tax Grants can be a less meticulous ordeal that may better serve supporting special individual events. Events that may become annual celebrations in the communities where your chapter has a presence is a great selling point. Examples of these events can be National Day of the Cowboy, Western Heritage Days, Cowboy Poetry Gathering, a concert bill at the County or State Fair, Youth Concerts, Rodeo Entertainment, Winter Holiday Show, Western Fashion Expo, and more. Events that include sale of room nights at local hotels and motels will often take priority in consideration of funding. Once the chapter commits to producing the event, give at least 6 months of planning time to consider applying for Lodgers Tax Funds.

Lodgers tax funding often runs cyclical and requires more advance planning. Lodgers Tax Boards are quasi government entities that are established by counties and municipalities to collect tax revenue from guests staying in hotels, resorts, motels, air b&bs, and even campgrounds such as KOAs. Then, the Lodgers Tax Board can meet to distribute these funds for marketing and advertising, local attractions, community events, museums, infrastructure, and other purposes to support attracting people to patronize the services for lodging, dining, retail, medical, education, programs for children, and government offered to local residents and visitors alike.

Getting to know your Lodgers Tax Boards in your communities, counties, and state is key. This is going to take some work but the pay-off can be very rewarding. Members of Lodgers Tax Boards often are representatives of business, associations, and government agencies that work together. Research who the people are that the members of these Lodgers Tax Boards, when they meet, and identify what events are supported. Information on Lodgers Tax Boards may be obtained from your local chamber of commerce, convention and visitors bureau, or state department of tourism.

In New Mexico, there is always a State Tourism Day designated during the State Legislature. This has been a great opportunity to meet community representatives that are the decision makers and introduce yourself, IWMA chapter, and the events and programs your chapter is committed to bring forth. By taking advantage of this opportunity, we were not only able to find interest in our 20th Anniversary of National Day of the Cowboy event but discovered the great reception from offering Western music and cowboy poetry to their community.

New Mexico hosts a Governor's Conference on Tourism in May. Your state may also host one. These are great opportunities to meet not only representatives from Lodgers Tax Boards from across the state, but also meet leaders in these communities that are interested in hiring entertainers for events from your chapter.

When the New Mexico chapter was planning their 2024 National Day of the Cowboy event, we had agreed to use one of Sandoval County's venues. The contract required us to hire their choice of security for up to \$500.00. The county officials

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DAVID NIDEL is past president of the New Mexico Chapter. He is also a charter member, past president, board member, and current senior advisor for the New Mexico Route 66 Association. David earned his BS in Hotel Administration from UNLV and just received his MS in Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management from New Mexico State University. In addition to a career in the Hospitality Industry, David also works in high tech consulting and project management. An active musician in percussion, David has performed with groups from many genres of music including Bagpipes & Drums, Rock, Jazz, Big Band Jazz, Country, Blues, and Gospel to name a few. He has been recorded on four albums, 1 Indie Rock, 1 Gospel, and 2 Western Swing.

Chapter Update

Continued from page 28



Phoebe White and Ruth McLain



TN Chapter officers for 2025

Come" it will be released sometime in the Spring. Gone With The West's own Barefoot Fiddler, Merna Lewis, appears on this awesome recording fiddling away. Birdie Nichols hosted a fun filled night of music at the infamous "Debbie Champion's writers in the round" at the Commodore Grill in Nashville TN. Members of the IWMA Youth Chapter were among her guests. It is such a joy to see our youth carrying on the music, culture, and beauty of our American West! Go Birdie, we are so proud of all you're doing. Our members have been very busy writing, recording, touring and getting ready for the Summer touring season! It's already shaping up to be a spectacular year! New events and gatherings are in the works. Please visit our website and FB page to keep up with our happenings! See y'all down the trail! Saddle up!

TEXAS CHAPTER

President: Cary Wiseman
Wisemanranch71@gmail.com

Hope everyone has had a great start to 2025!! Once again I want to thank everyone who came out and performed at the Piney Woods Cowboy Gathering and everyone who came out to support. We are looking into putting on some more events and will send out more information when we have more details, so be on the lookout for upcoming events from the Texas Chapter. I also want to remind everyone to go take a look at the Y Bar J Youth Western Music and Poetry Camp Facebook page for more information about a great camp that takes place in Weatherford, Texas!! God Bless and Happy Trails!

WESTERN WORDSMITHS CHAPTER

President: Ron Wilson
ron@ronscowboypoetry.com

Western Wordsmiths were pleased to host our first-ever chapter member zoom on February 10, 2025. We

appreciate all those who could participate. Special thanks to IWMA President Marvin O'Dell for speaking to our group about the history and current activities of IWMA and the valuable contributions of cowboy poetry to western culture and entertainment. The WW chapter officer team has distributed a 2025 program of work which includes goals for the upcoming year. These include ongoing activities (such as the Penned by Lantern Light submissions and the poetry contest at annual convention in Albuquerque) plus new ideas such as creation of a formal chapter operations handbook, quarterly zooms with the members, improved web presence, additional poetry submissions from other IWMA chapters, targeted support for youth poets, education about the Western Cattle Trail, creating a listing of cowboy poetry events, and more. Western Wordsmiths VP Tom Hawk has developed an events listing, chapter handbook

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marsha@westernmusic.org
505.563.0673
iwesternmusic.org

FROM THE TRAIL

Continued from page 29

told us that Lodgers Tax Funds of the city may be applied to cover the cost of the security. When we contacted the Director of the Lodgers Tax Board for the Town of Bernalillo, New Mexico, she sent me an application form. Security, Marketing & Promotion were on the list that could apply for our event. We requested up to \$500.00 for Security and up to \$2,000.00 for Marketing and Promotion. We attended a meeting to explain our event and how it could be an annual event to serve all age groups in the community. Not only did they grant my request for the \$2,500.00, but they also allowed that money left over from the Security expenses could be transferred for use for Marketing and Promotion. The Town of Bernalillo Lodgers Tax Board was so impressed with the success of our event and the positive impression that was left on the community that they would like to help support it in 2025. The best news of all is that we did not have to pay this money back!

Lodgers Tax Grant Funding requires advance planning and can fund your chapter's events. There is so much additional detail I can provide. Contact me to answer any questions to help you get started. david.nidel@gmail.com 🐾

Chapter Update

draft, and Western trail info, so we are saddled up and well on the trail to achieving these goals. Congrats to these Wordsmiths members who were winners at the 2024 IWMA convention: Floyd Beard, poetry contest (again); Male Poet of the Year Mark Munzert; and Female Poet of the Year Miska Paget (who reports that it is foaling time). Micki Fuhrman reports that she wrote the cover story for the February edition of *Roundup* magazine (the Western Writers of America's trade publication). The article examines artificial intelligence, as it pertains to writers and other creators, and the efforts of professional organizations to protect rights to their members' works. Under her pen name of Vonn McKee, she recently published short stories in *Through Western Storms* (Lohman Hills Press) and *Western Stories By Today's Top Writers* (Silverado Press). Her next album, as yet untitled, will be released later this year. The new Wordsmiths officers were honored at a reception at the Lazy T Ranch near Manhattan, Kansas in December. The incoming officer team would especially like to thank outgoing chapter President Mark

Munzert and outgoing Vice President Vic Anderson for their outstanding service and their excellent contributions to western writing, storytelling, and cowboy poetry.

YOUTH CHAPTER

Belinda Gail
belindagail@protonmail.com
LeeLee Robert
lee@leeleemusic.com
Marsha Short
marsha@westernmusic.org

There are now 33 youth members in our Chapter plus six supporting adult members! We had a great Zoom workshop on March 18 with Syd Masters on "Working With Your Soundman." Syd gave the group a lot of helpful suggestions on how they could help sound their very best. Everyone is looking forward to another great year getting ready for this year's Convention. We'll have a day of workshops and mentoring as well as performances throughout the week and a special IWMA Youth Chapter Showcase on Saturday afternoon. All chapters are encouraged to reach out to young performers and fans in their area to include Youth members in their programming and leadership. They are the future of IWMA! 🐾



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judyjames908@gmail.com
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Required: Album cost, S&H cost, Address, Phone Number | **Questions?** You can email O.J. at ojisikes@gmail.com

Is Traditional Cowboy Music Western?

Although my memory “ain’t what it used to be,” I think my very first 78rpm record was by folk singer, Burl Ives. In fact, I had several of his first recordings (on the Columbia label) back in the early 1940s, e.g. “Blue-Tail Fly,” “Leather-winged Bat,” “Cowboy’s Lament” and “Tam Pierce.” The songs were folk songs, and they included a couple of cowboy songs. At the time (at about 4 or 5 years of age), I didn’t distinguish between them. My first “cowboy” record wasn’t really a Western song. It (“Green Grow the Lilacs”) was more of a folk song (with a long history), but it was performed by Tex Ritter, a singing cowboy who didn’t record it until 1945 (for the Capitol label), although it had been associated with Tex since before he moved from New York to Hollywood in the 1930s.

With that as background for my personal perspective, in an effort to preserve history, before the advent of the CD, record companies started to issue field recordings and other rustic-sounding recordings of “folk-songs” performed by working cowboys. These singers were not experienced musicians but they liked to sing and they remembered lyrics that had been handed down

over time, around campfires and on the trail. Unfortunately, these cowhands were not always very musical, i.e. their “sounds” were not so easy on the ear – my ear, anyway. But they were important because they were a part of a genre’s history.

Recently, while looking for ideas for a theme for my weekly radio show, it occurred to me that some of the genre’s most popular artists had recorded more polished versions of the traditional songs, making them more palatable to today’s listeners. So I built a full show around those recordings, and since it exceeded my expectations, I thought I might share a little of it here. But first, a little more background.

Most of the traditional songs lent themselves to solo or unison singing. Harmony came later, especially with the Sons of the Pioneers, but the Pioneers were not alone. When Lloyd Perryman joined the Sons of the Pioneers in 1936, a number of other cowboy groups were performing professionally throughout the West, especially in California where radio audiences were receptive to music about their surroundings and history. Professional performers

could sing in harmony, but when Perryman joined the Pioneers he brought his knowledge of stacked harmony, an approach to harmony that was not widely known. It changed the “sound” of the Pioneers, setting them apart from the other groups that performed Western music at the time. And when applied to the compositions of Bob Nolan and Tim & Glenn Spencer, it elevated their status in the eyes of the audiences that were growing with the spread of “live” radio, transcriptions and, of course, the singing cowboy movies.

Traditionally, working cowboys sang about life on the trail or parents (or girlfriends) they had left behind for the “cowboy life” or about work-related issues like branding, dangerous storms, stampedes, etc. I’m not the best person to ask about definitions, but I’d say that those topics, applied as they were to specific Western settings, could be called Western songs. But as it turned out, that definition was expanded by composers like Nolan, both Spencers and Stan Jones, among others. In addition to many of the topics sung about by traditional working cowboys, these newer composers added an appreciation

of Western surroundings, beautiful sunsets and sunrises, lonely nights under the Western stars, long trails (some traversed on horseback and others by covered wagons), rivers that could be shallow or dangerous, mountain peaks and ranges, expansive prairies, Western wildlife, stampeding cattle, bandits and so forth – all about Western life, taking it beyond, while not excluding, what the boys had sung about in the 1800s. This expansion of content, and more polished presentation, resulted in songs being picked up and spread to new audiences by well-known singers and musical groups from other genres, e.g. Bing Crosby, Glenn Miller and Marty Robbins, helping establish Western music as an important part of Americana that broad audiences could enjoy.

That's how Western music evolved, but for the purposes of my show, I needed to focus on the old songs, especially those that were composed before the movies and phonograph came along. When I put my show together, and listened to the new treatment of those old songs, the music knocked me out! Listening to the old songs performed with new arrangements, it dawned on me that contemporary artists in this century and the last, have played a major role in preserving these relics of our musical history. They not only brought these songs out of obscurity; they presented them in a way that speaks to contemporary audiences effectively, about "the West that was" – and in many respects, still is! If you're interested, the show can be heard in the station's archives if you go to the KKRN.org website, find "Western Music Time" in the Saturday column and look for Show #609. If you have any trouble finding it, send me an e-mail and I'll see if I can help.

JOHNNY BOND, VOL. 2

"Johnny Bond, Dick Reinhart, Bert Dodson and the Red River Valley Boys"

BACMCDD731



You probably remember Johnny Bond from his appearances in B-Western movies with Tex Ritter

and Wesley Tuttle or from his work on the Town Hall Party or from his long association with Gene Autry on the radio. The latter probably explains how he came to make a couple of records with the Cass County Boys' tenor, Bert Dodson. You'll find two of those recordings in this collection.

For this new re-issue, the BACM label has collected 25 Johnny Bond tracks recorded for Columbia and Starday between 1947 and 1961. During this period, Johnny composed and recorded a number of novelty songs and several of those are included in this collection, e.g. "I'm Kickin' the Bucket Over You," which he sings as a duet with Bert Dodson (they called themselves "Hank & Frank" for this one), "Drowning My Sorrows" (1949) and "What's Been Going on While I've Been Gone?" (1948). And there are others as well.

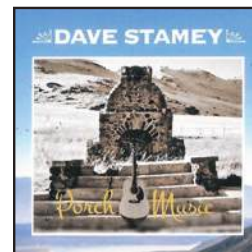
Johnny opens the collection with his version of Eddy Arnold's "A Heart Full of Love (for a Handful of Kisses)", followed by his 1961 Starday recording of "At Dawn I Die," the 1950 Columbia version of "Cherokee Waltz" with Johnny's Red River Valley Boys, the relatively rare 1947 recording of another of Bond's well-known compositions, "Cimarron (Roll On)" with Dick Reinhart (Columbia '47), "High Noon" (Starday '61) and several of Bond's best-known works, e.g. "I Wonder Where You Are Tonight" (Columbia '53) and "I'll Step Aside," which was a big hit for Ernest Tubb (Johnny recorded it for Columbia with his Red River Valley Boys in 1946).

With 25 tracks, there's a lot to enjoy, like "I Like My Chicken Fryin' Size," a song his friend Merle Travis composed. But my favorite track on this disc is probably Bond's 1951 Columbia recording of "In Old New Mexico." Historian Brian Golbey penned informative liner notes. You can find this new CD (and hear samples of the music) on the BACM website or wherever you shop for CDs.

DAVE STAMEY

"Porch Music"

HORSECAMP MUSIC 2024



It's been awhile since we heard from Hall of Fame member Dave Stamey, but now he's back in the

saddle with a CD titled Porch Music! It contains 14 new compositions, performed in his inimitable style. And they're sure to please his fans!

My favorite track on the disc is one I've heard him do on stage, to enthusiastic applause, so he's been warming up the audience for this recording for a couple of years. He's been working hard to get just the right collection of songs he hasn't recorded before, just for this project. And he considers it his best yet.

Not everyone will agree, but that's because they may already have their favorite album, or, if not just one CD, they'll have a collection of favorite songs from the large number of discs Dave's released over the years. You can be sure there are new titles here that will become audience favorites, right away. I'd predict "Too Many Crows," "I Hated that Truck," "The Rodeo Parade," "Wild Again" and...I guess I'd better stop. You can choose your own personal favorite, but I'll bet you can't choose just one.

You can order from Dave's website, www.DaveStamey.com. 🐾



Submit CDs (preferred) to Rick Huff, PO Box 8442, Albuquerque, NM, 87198-8442 or DOWNLOADS to bestofthewest@swcp.com. Submitting a CD for review does not guarantee that it will be reviewed or that a review will be published. Finalized CD cover art must accompany the work and be unsigned.

HAL CANNON

"Cowboy Sutra"



You say there's nothing new? You're not looking back far enough!

Folklorist and preserva-

tionist Hal Cannon is known for having co-founded "Elko." Not the town, but the famous annual Elko Cowboy Poetry Gathering and the town's Western Folklife Center. But over the years his roving spirit and curiosity have brought about additional fresh excursions into the Western cause and effect worldwide. "Cowboy Sutra" is a prime example, dedicated to three early Cowboy singers.

Using a Western Hemisphere harmonium for a drone and stringed Folk instruments instead of a sitar, a basically Eastern ethereal mounting is given to classic Cowboy material. Cannon's delivery is appropriately rustic. In some cases he has added new words and melodies. In one case he contributed an entirely new song, one of the CD picks "Frosted Horses." From the first eerie notes of "Long, Come Along" (another pick and the source for "Old Chisholm Trail"), this release grabs you. We seem to sense voices reaching out from the past. At first I thought "why only nine tracks?"

But I grew to believe more of them amassed might mute the effect. Other contributing players on various tracks include Deborah Robins (bass clarinet), John Neufeld (guitar), Devon Lèger (hurdy gurdy) and Greg Istock (piano). The result is a contemplative and moving marvel, and Hal's extended notes on each song found at www.halcannon.com are a don't-miss!

If you look closely at the cover art, you'll see Cannon's 'om' on the range cowboy hovers above the ground. He's elevated. The sensitive listener should be as well. Very highly recommended.

THE CURSE OF K.K. HAMMOND

"Walk With Me Through the Fire" (Single & Video)



from Blues, Mexican, British Isles broadsheets and more. If memory serves, this isn't British neo-Blues Rock singer/songwriter/slide guitarist K.K. Hammond's first use of Western

Western Music is an amalgam of influences, as most know. The earliest Cowboy songs drew

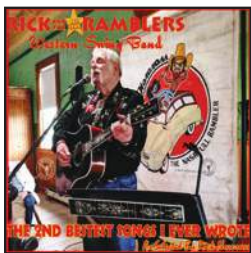
imagery in a video. But this time her lyrics also pitch you cowboyward. The investment of time, creativity and (need we say) capitol for the audio production and it's accompanying video is extraordinary. It's all to let her paint with a uniquely broad brush. Other "Curse" members are Blues musicians Ian Davidson (cello) and Kaspar "Berry" Rapkin (slide guitar) with trumpeter Lewis Taylor contributing effectively.

By genre Blues is Hammond's musical wheelhouse. But she shoots for the new moon beyond in this big Western-inspired release. Elements of Mariachi, Morricone and more come along for the ride. First, the song construction itself is very different. Its video is carved into "Chapters" (Scenes). A narrated full-color "Chapter One" melds into successive "chapters" of a silent movie, a Sepiatone trip into a Western ghost town of the past with the song accompanying.. Several riders arrive, only to be gunned down by a masked, Earp-like trio who are later revealed as Death riders. All have been seeking an "artifact." It's a blue (Blues?) guitar. In "Chapter Four," encircled by flames (maybe a visual nod to Johnny's Ring Of Fire?), the skeletal trio is found fiddling while loam burns.

It's an adventurous venture all around, very well-mounted and performed. Recommended for the open-minded.

RICK & THE ALLSTAR RAMBLERS WESTERN SWING BAND

"The 2nd Bestest Songs I Ever Wrote"



One suspects Rick Norcross didn't mean these songs are second stringers. Instead it's

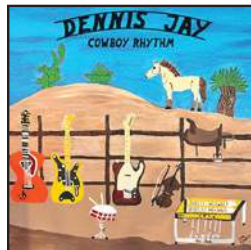
Part Two of his farewell, and he does mean it this time!

For many decades Rick & The Allstar Ramblers rolled far and sort-of wide in their bus The Mighty Pickle spreading the good (actually great) word with their brand of Western Swing. Mainly up, down and across the Eastern states but also through a tour in England folks have danced and danced and danced to the beat of their drum. Although the Ramblers are stilled now, through three finale CDs fans can continue to hear songs, some of which they themselves voted to include for posterity.

Many of Norcross' originals are what I've called "Vermont-centric." They are intended to celebrate his state and there's nothin' wrong with that!! Our picks among *his* picks for this nice collection include "Hardwick 1961" (freely adapted from "Take Me Back To Tulsa"), "Walking Around Money," "Here's Yer Hat What's Yer Hurry" (git if y'cain't do it Vermonter-style), the duet with Taryn Noelle "You're Gonna Get Hurt," one inspired by Bobby Troup's "Route 66" called "You're In Heaven" (on Route 7) and "I Don't Wanta Play With You Anymore." I guess that's why he's retiring. Kidding! It was a 2013 novelty showpiece for the (then) 10-year old vocalist Julia Shannon-Grillo.

Closing out a 61-year career of 'riding your guitar' in Western Swing, may happy trails be yours, Mr. Norcross! Eleven tracks, highly recommended.

DENNIS JAY *"Cowboy Rhythm"*



Deep voiced balladeer/songwriter Dennis Jay has always had a pretty original

presentation, particularly in his subject matter. This release, arguably his best to date, contains prime examples of it.

One of the collection's picks is a mysterious Swing song of the very kind described. "The Last Great Necessity" left me wondering exactly what that is. Or they are?? Better listen to it again. I trust I didn't just miss the point! Another pick called "Adios Moonlight" is also deceptively obtuse. Is it as simple as a cowboy saying goodnight to the day, or maybe it's a little more complex? And then there's the bilingual "Encantadora Magarita." Other picks include straightforward Western Swing creations such as title track "Cowboy Rhythm," "Lonesome By Any Other Name" and the frisky instrumental "Trail Ride." Country tracks are along for the ride, including "The Only Place" and "Our Secret Sealed With A Kiss."

This CD is very nicely produced and well performed. Jay benefits from the seasoned ear and watchful eye of the legendary Lloyd Maines. It's a team-up that hopefully will continue to expand creatively. Ten tracks, highly recommended. 🐾



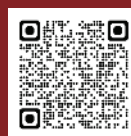
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REVIEWS: SINGLE RELEASES

Sampling The Singles

BY RICK HUFF



Canada's award-winning Indigenous singer/songwriter Trent Agecutay with his band **Uncle Trent & Friends** have released the Country single **Burn A Smudge**. The term refers to a re-purification and blessing ceremony to help its protagonist shuck trappings of the city (emphasis on "trap") and return to the land. The Indian Story is part of The Western Story and the concept is a classic Western idea.

"Grassroots singer-songwriter" Gary Hoffman & band perform as **Gary Jay & The Fire**. They ply their trade along the mid-Atlantic corridor as Gary has for nearly fifty years. Their Western Swinger **Riverview Tavern** is the (sort of) title track that fronts their album "Burning Down The Riverview Tavern." Twin fiddles and steel help to affirm theirs is the more positive meaning of "burning down."

Fruita, Colorado's fireball **Peggy Malone** has released a single from her 2024 CD. The chosen one is **Cowboy Charlie Glass**. It's based on a historical figure from local history. In fact Malone was inspired to write the song upon hearing a lecture on his mysterious death. Since he is interred next door to her house, she may have figured telling his story might grant her guaranteed peaceful sleep!

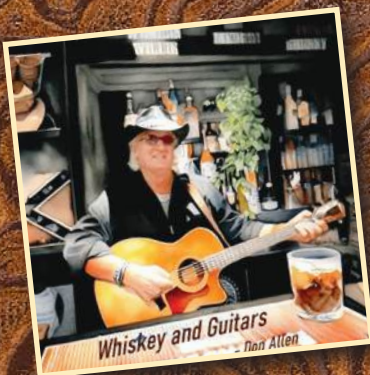


Wildly wailing guitars, thundering drums and fire-breathers?! If we haven't scared you off, check out **Cowboy Ride** from **Little Angry Tiger** on YouTube. It's the brainchild of singer-songwriter/multi-instrumentalist/voice actor and former ranch hand Kim Creagar. Lyrically "saddle," "pushin' cattle," "worn out boots," "trusty rope" and more are included, so you can bet "this cowboy's gonna ride!"

Montana balladeer **TJ Casey** arrived late for review with **I Didn't Know Santa Was A Cowboy**, but stash it away for next year! The delay might have been because Casey's Stetson-wearing Santa is being pulled by eight pack mules and a dapple gray, not flying reindeer. It's a frisky novelty that puts a Cowboy spin on a Saint Nick for whom you set out strong coffee, not milk. A giddyup and good night!

Intrepid Australian song plugger **Tex Owen** sent out a little saloon piano rag he calls **Spatium Bovis Pueri** with an advisory for DJs to use it any way they like. I figured the title would translate to "Space Filler." Wrong. It's "The Space Of The Boy's Ox." (??) There's some bull loose somewhere!! The promotional artwork with it leaves no doubt concerning the 60-second piece's Western aspirations.

From Gold Coast, Queensland comes the veteran Aussie Country singer **Don Allen** with a Phil Middlebrook-penned Honky Tonk Swinger called **Whiskey & Guitars**. One's a steel, in fact, along with its rockier cousins. There's also an accordion along for the romp. Now that its singer is free of a certain female entanglement, he can watch sports, stay out late and drink. How very original of him.



Pickers will tell you, as **Jerry Bogan** has on his single **This Old Guitar**, an emotional bond is formed with the stringed thing. "We've done some shows at some rodeos" is the lyric that leads the story here. I don't know if the cowboy's 'never sell your saddle' idea ever runs to git-fiddles, but Bogan "sold it once and hocked it twice." It's back with him for keeps now, but it might nip his fingers out of spite.

"If lovin' you was against the law I'd prob'ly be **Another Jesse James**," sings balladeer **Michael Sparger** in a fresh cover of the Curt Ryle song. Sparger's vocal tone is reminiscent of Waylon and the Jennings-style arrangement of the material suits it. Other lyrics equate the outlaw's exploits to the ardor of the singer's love for his lady. Well, son of a gun! We'll see if it shoots him up the charts!

The singer/host of the Arkansas Cowboy Radio Ride on KWMV 88.5 FM **Kevin "Tuck" Tuckfield** has reissued **Why He Rides**, from a 2009 CD. The song was co-written with his son Nathan. It's a fine mellow Country-styled work that proclaims "if you don't get on you'll never know...that's why he rides at the rodeo" and also says one needs to get back up, dust oneself off and try again. So they *are*!!

Depending on your concept of where "20 long miles outside of **Ghost Town Road**" puts you, the new **Ryan Bodine** release could be Western, or it could be "nowhere." It's The Sticks, safe to say. And it's also safe to say this is a fine, languid contemporary Country creation. That "Road" is actually the name of a nice little town, according to the lyrics. It would seem the founders didn't envision much growth..

Creamy voiced Aussie singer **Garry Carson-Jones** is lamenting his lack of courage around the love of his life [who doesn't know she's that] in the bluesy Western Swinger **Walk On By**. His body shakes and his tongue ties, so you know it's not the Bacharach/David song of the same name. But it's perfect fodder for Western Swing. If "bluesy" suggests being low, it's fitting this comes from "Down Under!"

Newcomer **Ray Fry** has issued **The Hustler**. With its Dallas location and pool-orientated "advice" that also applies to life, it stands at Western's doorway by subject (as did "The Gambler"). "Take time to chalk and aim" and "if you can't afford to lose don't even play the game" are some of the cautionary warnings given to the guy who just got the pants beat off him by the old hustler. That's "the breaks!"

From "Down Under" comes encouragement to fight mental illness! Western? Not. But the video **Darren Gillis** has chosen to illustrate the message of **Cuss The Black Dog** on YouTube is all carefully edited footage from a very early B&W John Wayne flick containing...you guessed it...a black dog (with light forepaws, but you get the idea). It's a different use of Western imagery, and it actually works.

The title track from an album we raved about in print has been released as a single! We covered **Snow On The Wineglass** from **John Lowell** for the Summer 2024 issue of The Western Way. It's a beautiful and emotional reflection on a mountain that is visible from its singer/songwriter's front porch. The memories of being on its slopes and the symbology of winter having come to it are offered masterfully.





Its Country Rock arrangement ain't anything you'll hear on an IWMA stage, but the lyrics and the pedigree of **He Ain't Just A Cowboy** from **Lissa Dee** arguably makes it Western all the way. She's drawn on personal experience from her ranching family's background to describe the work ethic and value system of its protagonist. I know. It ain't Roy & Gene. But not much *is* these days, my friend.

Western Swing is alive and well in **I'll Settle For Old Ireland!** In it **Jack Larry** alludes to all that swinging singing about "the Hills of Oklahoma," "the Black Hills of South Dakota," "the Yellow Rose of Texas" and other points West plus Tennessee, which would have been the western border at one point! Still he sings he'll "take the hills of Donegal." Of course we took "Doney Gal," didn't we?!!

Donegal's **Gerry Guthrie** Honky Tonk-swings it in **Bringing Home The Roses**. The humorous lyrics focus on a couple of barflies who each admit "the truth ain't done much for me before" and maybe "roses just might get me in the door"unless the locks have been changed or their ladies are allergic. The guys may be louses (lice?) but at least musically everybody will come out Swingin'!!

Rhyming with the title **Good Night Dallas**, Irish lass **Clodagh Tougher** sings she'll "shoot out the lights of that old Silver Palace." Tougher is the 2024 Cowboys & Heroes competition champ. It's an electronically generated Irish 'Tex O'Mex' take of the Claudine Clark song. Like it or not, the lyric places it at the doorway to the West and it's been rumored Dallas lies somewhere near there as well.

In 2025 the Irish version of "American Idol" will be featuring singer **Colin Owens**. Surely at least once he will perform his newest release **Should've Asked Her Faster**, doin' his best darn Western Swing thing. Originally a hit for Ty England, Ireland's Owens (with his particular kind of George Strait/Garth Brooks delivery) sells the song well, serving dancers' needs on at least two continents!

Even more from Ireland! Rising Country star **Stephen Bennett** has issued his take on an Irish Country dance favorite. **Little By Little** provides hints that the singer's relationship is going South by going West! Well, Western Swing. The Wills-style fiddle licks and steel are present and obviously provided by live musicians. Other players seem to have been electronically generated. Not "AI" at least.

From Ireland comes **Jack Keogh** and his uptempo swinging **Shannon From Dongannon**. To her he swears "I'll take your hand, I'll farm your land" But he's admired her since he saw her "plough the fields" and "milk the cows by hand" while "cuttin' grass all day long." She "gets a few hours kip" and it's "back to work the next day to compact it in the tip." Guess who's doin' all the work, me bucko!

In the grand tradition of 'wild and wooly and full of fleas' brags comes the rowdy **Bull Of A Man** from **Paddy & The Snakes**. You've read about the bullies in the old west who would stand at the end of the town street and bellow their Alpha-male qualifications to take over. Here's the Irish origin of it, replete with a roaring bull for punctuation. He's "a bear-horse-bull of a man!!" Who'd argue the point??

Sommerville, Texas singer-songwriter **Montana Lane** has chosen Honky Tonk Swing as the medium to convey his "first official" (a.k.a. serious debut) single **Living Simple**. Truck, hound dog, mac 'n' cheese and .38("to keep the bogey man away") are proofs he offers of his solid commitment to it. And he'll even keep the (Coors) Lite on for ya! The beat is Country but the fiddlin' is Swing, fer shore.

A bit of Western from the LGBTQ sector showed up from Norway in the person of singer/songwriter Baard Froyseth who performs as **Balfroy**. He sings "I thought I should ride a cowboy tonight, so I dared." Who was it in the standard Country world who sang about riding a cowboy? **Dirty Laundry** just takes it in a slightly different direction. Aimed at the world Country market, it's a brave move.

Fast rising singer/songwriter **Caleb Montgomery** fronts a band called "The Wild West Show." I hope he and Wylie Gustafsen won't stub toes over that one. His acoustic single **Speed Of Sound** tracks a career choice that might be spinning a bit out of his control. Check out the lyric "Broadway ain't for me, it ain't where I learned to sing about skies and what the cowboys do each day." Interesting!

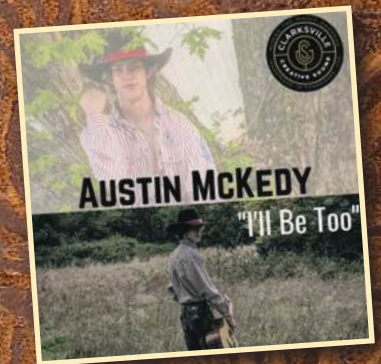
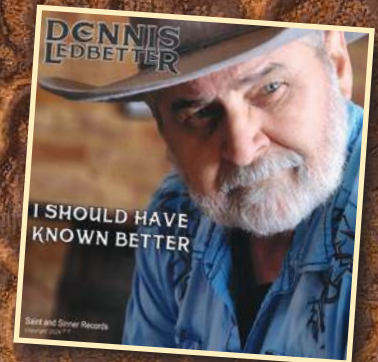
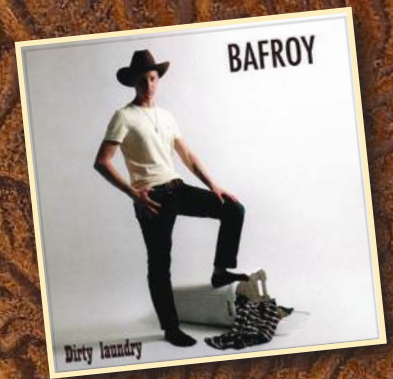
Gravel-voiced singer **Dennis Ledbetter** throws everything but the Cajun Country sink at the swinger **I Should Have Known Better**. In this case, of course, you 'should have known Ledbetter!' The twin fiddle effect is teamed with the squeezebox in a rowdy uptempo romp. It's a frisky one that will encourage the dancers to not only move to it but also holler out it's chorus along with the singers.

What would the Sampling The Singles section be without at least one from **Bob Marshall**??! It's a re-release of 2014's **Wildorado**, a smoothly rendered story of the faded prom queen finding Mr. Right Now, a down-on-his-luck bronc buster. It's a night both hope can be repeated somewhere down the trail. And maybe more. You never know what a Texas town with "wild" in its name might bring.

Straight up flat out Western Swing is on the serving tray from **Austin McKedy**. His newest single offers us the line "by the time you're out of my mind **I'll Be Too**." If that concept isn't drawn directly from the Western Swing songwriters' book of classic lyrical torment, I just don't know what! The spirits of the Wills boys are saying "yeeessss!" It's another highly danceable track from Clarksville.

On the distaff side **Mackynsie McKedy** is not to be outdone. Uptempo Honky Tonk Swing is the genre styling applied to **You're Always Talkin' In Your Sleep**. Steel and fiddle (not "twin") are both applied effectively to tell her swinging tale of woe. She knows you're tryin', darlin', but the other lady is in your mind and you keep giving out nightly reports on it. Try snoring, dude. She won't listen then.

Burleson, Texas artist **Todd Barrow** sings about the girl who's determined to get off the property (and 'get off' in general)) in the Honky Tonk Swinger **The Farm (Country Girl)**. "On the farm, she's restless, on the farm she's bored" and, strange as it seems for a Country song, "the city lights are callin'!" The story may be the familiar one, but ask the dancers if they care. Frisky, uptempo and fun! 🐾



CLASSIC PROFILES

SOUNDS FROM THE PAST

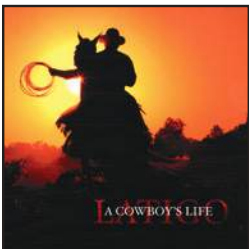
(Recordings From Our Great Western Treasury That Deserve a New Spin)

BY RICK HUFF

We're proud to say that more artists are creating and performing Western Music these days than at any time in its long, illustrious history. Its legacy includes others who have helped to fortify the trail that Western artists of today continue to ride. The work of these trailblazers should continue to be celebrated, heard and enjoyed.

LATIGO

"A Cowboy's Life"
(2008)



Here's one of those Western acoustic assemblages who make the best ambassadors

of what the IWMA hopes to put across to the public. This album is a perfect mix of originals from leader Ken Stevens with C. R. Wood and some of the very best songs from yesterday and yesteryear.

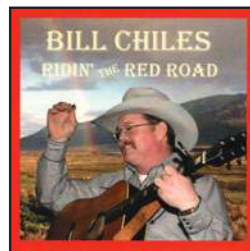
The Utah band Latigo found and beautifully renders Curley Musgraves' "The Boys of the Ol' Rockin' R," Brenn Hill's "Burnin' Hair" and Teri Taylor's "Colors (of the West)" and placed them beside Utah Phillips' "Goodnight Loving Trail," Roy Holcomb & Curley Syndergaard's "Cowboy Heroes" and Bob Nolan's "A Cowboy Has To Sing." Happily these 'cowboys' decided to sing as well!

Beside Mr. Stevens (vocals & acoustic guitar), on this release Latigo consisted of Kevin Paul (fiddle & mandolin) and Ben Ashby (bass guitar). Karen Ashby provided background vocals on some tracks and Chris McCormick handled some keyboard chores. Google "Latigo" these days and you find an Arizona "rez" band has adopted the orphaned name, but "A Cowboys Life" was a superior release that deserves resurrecting.



BILL CHILES

"Ridin' The Red Road"
(2005)



In Western Music as with other genres, there are plenty of fine singers who possess a trained

sound in their voices. There are far fewer performers who also manage to deliver a storytelling emotion along with that pretty sound they

make. This release proved one of them to be Idaho's Bill Chiles.

Interestingly Chiles named his album for a poem by Dave Tingey that does not appear in the collection itself. However it is printed on the tray card and serves as liner notes of a sort. The poem speaks of a culture supplanted by so-called "progress." The songs Chiles covers largely speak of life and love within the culture that moved in. Classics like Curley Fletcher's "Strawberry Roan," Robert Roden & Max Witt's "My Heart's Tonight In Texas," Jimmie Rodger's "Moon Light & Skies" and Jimmy Kennedy & Michael Carr's "South Of The Border" join newer works like R.W. Hampton's "My Maria," Don Edwards' adaptation to music of Badger Clark's "The Old Cow Man" and Frey Tempchin's "The Girl From Yesterday" in receiving Chiles' musically expressive treatment.

This album bears the phrases "support...Cowboy Poets and Musicians" and "give this music away to the youth." Bring this one out and give them and yourself a 'fresh listen!' 🐾



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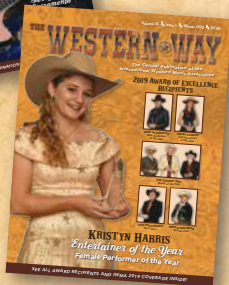
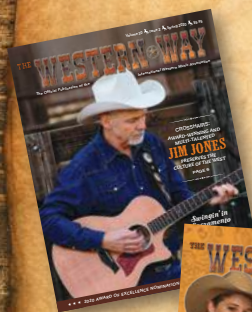


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THE WESTERN WAY

*Official Quarterly Publication of the
International Western Music Association*

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Book Nook Reviews & More

BY KAREN CAMPBELL



If you would like to have your western fiction, nonfiction or poetry book reviewed, send a copy to:
Karen Campbell, 1762 County Road 121, Gainesville, TX 76240. Submissions will not be returned.

Choosing Words Wisely

As someone who teaches writing classes, one of the issues students struggle with frequently is their diction, or word choice. Many beginning college writers believe that they will have more impressive sounding writing if they use longer or more sophisticated words. Frequently, they look these words up in the thesaurus and replace their everyday word choice with what they judge to be the more 'college' or 'smart' sounding word. I often correct them: "Use the words you have, not the words you wish you had."

When they follow this process, their sentences often end up hard to read, and they frequently misuse words as well. Once I had a student use a thesaurus to rephrase the relatively simple term "burnt offering" as "incinerated donations." Most would agree that sounds quite silly. It's just one humorous example of many, but it shows how misuse of the thesaurus and poor or forced word choice can confuse meaning. The point is to be understood using the words the writer often uses naturally and easily. Prioritize being understood over sounding smart (which usually just sounds arrogant instead). Good writing should always be easy to read and understand. Even more, good writing is unselfish because good writers write with the reader in mind.

Many writers of more creative pieces, like poetry and songs, make this same mistake in another sense. Instead of trying to 'sound smart,' they want to 'sound poetic' or 'sound pretty.' They often confuse their readers in the same way early college writers do when they attempt to 'sound poetic.'

Poetry and songs don't have to 'sound poetic'; they should focus on 'being poetic.' Readers and listeners

respond best to unique images and powerful symbols. Emotion is naturally poetic. And these feelings in an audience can be generated with relatively plain and straightforward language. Or, if different and unusual word choice is used, it's done sparingly and deliberately to make these words stand out as important.

What is a good example of cowboy writing that doesn't try to sound pretty or poetic and just is pretty and poetic through good word choice and careful use of emotional images?

Consider Charles Badger Clark's poem "A Bad Half Hour" where he uses fairly plain language talking about having a hard time getting to sleep. Multiple things disturb him: "no cactus in my blankets," the "night . . . big and lonesome," and Warblin' Jim singing "Annie Laurie." These words and images do not strive hard to be 'fancy' or 'pretty,' but they show how the cowboy in the poem is struggling to sleep and reliving the painful memories of a girl he left. His "throat feels sore," which lets us know he's choking back tears and missing his Annie. The most traditionally poetic lines are when he compares her 'brow like the snowdrift / and her eyes like quiet streams.' The poet has picked some slightly different comparisons (similes), and the words chosen are simple and immediately recognizable to his audience. He talks about her hands being 'trembly,' which lets us know that his Annie is also filled with emotion because he will leave her. At the end of the sad poem, he simply gets up and gets some coffee and goes to stop Jim singing (and one assumes to stop his pain and memories). Capturing a brief moment of powerful emotion and memory is the focus of the poem.

Everything is real, not overdone, not forced or fancy, pretty and simple images over complicated words and phrases. Readers will identify with real pain in the poem and the powerful emotion they understand or have felt themselves.

How can you write something that is naturally poetic and touching? Start by reading classic writing. Ask yourself as you read, how are their best images naturally poetic without trying to be poetic? How can

you write something real and touching with your everyday words as classic poets did? At the end of your questions you will get to the heart of what cowboy writing, music, and poetry should be, what all good writing is, what the best advice of any writer will always be. Good writing is always 'real' to readers. Write something real. It needs to feel authentic, not forced. So write something everyday, and write it using your everyday words. All good writing is ultimately for readers. Remember them as you choose your words.

ALLEN REEL

"Slingsers of the West," 2024, 76 pgs., \$22 and Soarin' in the Saddle, 2022, 101 pgs., \$19.95. Submit orders to allenreel@msn.com.

Both books of Allen Reel's poetry, *Slingsers of the West* and *Soarin' in the Saddle*, are soft bound and include a mix of photographs, artwork, prose, and poetry. *Soarin' in the Saddle* covers 14 different topics ranging from Cowboy Lingo to Movies and Rodeos and 42 separate pieces. *Slingsers of the West* does not have this categorical division and contains 22 separate selections. The blue and red cover artwork on *Soarin' in the Saddle* is particularly striking and contains an interesting range of photos of sculptures, books, and old cowboys alongside cartoons, flyers, word art and paintings in its pages. There is a

wide range of photos of horses and people and paintings in *Slingsers of the West*. The paper used in both is a sturdy matte cream that should hold up well to frequent use.

Reel's older work, *Soarin' in the Saddle*, would likely appeal to readers seeking to become more familiar with cowboy culture with its multiple brief informational essays interspersed with mostly lighthearted cowboy poems and attractive photos and illustrations. Many of the poems are traditional 4 line style stanza poems. However a couple creative limerick stanza style poems are also contained in this collection and a couple rare alternative forms like a creative graphic poem in "Trail of Tears" and the very well done free-form poem "The Buffalo Boys." Overall this is an attractive and engaging collection for 'new to the West' readers.

Reel's newer work, *Slingsers of the West*, is much more poetry focused, lacking most of the prose

informational pieces that the previous work contained. Most of the early poems in this collection are quatrains and fairly consistently metered; "For All the Old Horses" is particularly engaging. About halfway through more freeform poetry emerges including "Montana Speaks" and "Tangled Tree" stand out the most. Reel includes some older cowboy songs as well like "Git Along Lil Dogies" and "Goodbye Old Paint." The collection concludes with the single longer prose piece "The Answer Came Up Murder," a sort of personal memoir that leads into a narrative on a local murder that is interesting. A more familiar 'cowboy' audience may have a better experience with this collection than the previous one.

Overall, Reel produces engaging books of poetry and Western culture and art. He is worth the time to read and his noteworthy strength lies in his free-form verse. 🐾

KAREN GRACE BROWN CAMPBELL has been writing, reading, and performing primarily western and Christian poetry for over 25 years. She is also a wife and a mother of a wonderful little girl. She breeds horses and runs barrels as well as serving as an Associate Dean and English Professor at Grayson College and has taught at other colleges and universities. She has her PhD from Texas Tech and an MA from Baylor University in Literature, specifically medieval literature (cowboys and knights have a lot in common). You may contact Karen at CampbellK@grayson.edu.

Western Playlists – Reporters

Here are the DJs who submitted their playlists this quarter:

Joe Angel

KEOS
PO Box 1085
Del Valle, TX 78617
jangeldj@arhaven.com

Marshal Allen Bailey

"Trucker's Radio USA"
909 First St.
Windom, KS 67491
www.truckersradiousa.com

Bobbi Jean Bell

"OutWest Hour"
7819 Chaco Mesa Loop NW
Albuquerque NM 87114
818-384-4315
bobbijeanbell@gmail.com
KUPR 99.9 FM
Low Power Community Radio
www.KUPR.org
Placitas, New Mexico
Follow on Mixcloud:
www.mixcloud.com/
DJBobbijeanBell
Plays Western, Western Swing,
Cowboy Country, Poetry, and
whatever strikes her fancy!

**Skip Bessonette &
His Pard Lucky**

"Rogue Valley Bound Show"
2395 E. McAndrews Rd.
Medford, Oregon 97504
541-301-7649
www.earsradio.com
New Zealand Public Radio
KSHD, Shady Cove, OR
skipbessonette@gmail.com

Janice Brooks

"Bus of Real Country"
170 Jodon Ave.
Pleasant Gap, PA 16823
Busgaljb@gmail.com

Chuckaroo the Buckaroo

"Calling All Cowboys Radio"
88.9 FM, KPOV
High Desert Community Radio
www.kpov.org
kpov.od.streamguys.us/
calling_all_cowboys_new_56k.mp3
Email: 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

Roger & Leo Eilts

2821 W 75th Street
Prairie Village, KS 66208
"The Americana Road Show"
www.truckersradiousa.com
roger@thederrrieres.com
816-769-4041
leo@thederrrieres.com
913-226-3637
www.thederrieres.com

Doug Figgs

P. O. Box 3
Lemitar, NM 87823
505-440-0979
www.doufiggs.com
www.RioGrandeValleyRadio.com

Nancy Flagg

"Cowboy Tracks"
KDRT 95.7 FM live radio
and internet streaming (www.kdrt.org)
1623 Fifth Street
Davis, CA 95616
Email: CowboyTracks2@gmail.com
Website: Facebook.com/cowboytracks

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"
Big River FM (NZ) and others and
several other stations around the world
Paulhazellsworldofcountry@gmail.com
Telephone: +44 7775 545 902

Randy Hill

"Western Swing Time Radio Show"
5114 Balcones Woods Dr.
Suite 307-387, Austin, TX 78759
(Plays only western swing)
westernswingtime@gmail.com
www.westernswingtime.com

Allen & Jill Kirkham

"Circuit Rider Roundup" on
"American Cowboy Radio"
KJAG FM 107.7 Guthrie, TX
www.americancowboyradio.com
25353 S. Lightning Creek Road
Custer, SD 57730
(Plays Western Gospel music and
cowboy poetry)
Sunday 10:00 am & 7:00 pm (CST)
Monday 8:00 pm (CST)
KirkhamMusic@icloud.com
605-440-7338

Susie Knight

"The Western Way Hour"
28751 Doe Valley Dr., Conifer, CO 80433
303-495-4869
lassothecowgirl@yahoo.com
Follow on:
www.mixcloud.com/SusieKnight

Jarle Kvale

KEYA Public Radio
PO Box 190, Belcourt, ND 58316
jkkeya@utma.com

Eddy Leverett

c/o Campfire Productions
1623 Co. Rd. 820, Cullman, AL 35057
"Around the Campfire"
WKUL
www.wkul.com
kudzu cowboy@outlook.com

Butch and Christina Martin

"Whittler's Corner Show"
1410 Kubli Road, Grants Pass, OR 97527
Earsradio.com
KSKO Ashland, OR, www.KSKQ.org
The Dalles, OR, Y102
KKTU, 100.1, Douglas, WY
KSHD 93.4 Shady Cove, OR
KORV 93.5 Ladeview, OR
www.ButchMartinMusic.com
www.romancingthewest.org
541-218-2477

Hugh McLennan

McLennan Ranch
2520 Hyas Lake Rd.
Pinantan, BC, Canada V0E 3E1
mclennan_ranch@xplornet.com
www.hugh-mclennan.com

Marvin O'Dell

"Around the Campfire"
KKRN, Redding, CA
KZNQ, Santa Clarita, CA
tunein.com/radio/KZNQ-Q-
Country-1015-s264146/www.earsradio.com
meoteo@aol.com
10430 W. Loma Blanca Dr., Sun City, AZ 85351
805-551-4649

O.J. Sikes

681 Ellington Rd.
Ridgewood, NJ 07450
ojsikes@gmail.com
KKRN, Redding, CA
www.earsradio1.com

JJ Steele

"Cowboy Corral"
c/o JJ Steele
KLZR
103 South 2nd St.
Westcliffe, CO 81252

Kevin Tuckfield

PO Box 10217
Russellville, AR 72812
"Arkansas Cowboy Radio Ride"
KWMV 88.5 FM
Mountain View, AR
kevintuckfield@gmail.com
479-264-9281
www.clearoutwest.com

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.

International Western Music Association

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Become a PATRON MEMBER today!

Western Charts

Attention Musicians and Poets! 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 in this issue.

TOP 30 COWBOY / WESTERN ALBUMS

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. A Western Tale to Tell – Marvin O'Dell | 16. Nebraska – Cowboy Joe Babcock |
| 2. Confessions of a Ghost Town – Kacey & Jenna Thunborg | 17. Seekers – Carol Markstrom |
| 3. Blessed by the West – Sarah Pierce | 18. Gotta Move – The Hot Texas Swing Band |
| 4. Dust of Los Angeles – Ron Christopher | 19. A Little Western, A Little Swing – Carlos Washington |
| 5. Snow on the Wineglass – John Lowell | 20. Rough Stock – Ryan Fritz |
| 6. On the Trail With the Lonesome Pines – Hilary Gardner | 21. Bring on the Pain – Kevin Tuckfield |
| 7. Ghost Smoke – Jon Chandler | 22. Into the West – Birdie Nichols |
| 8. Light of the Moon – Lori Beth Brooke | 23. Storyteller: Tales of the West – Jim Jones |
| 9. Porch Songs – Dave Stamey | 24. Singing to Cows – Chris Guenther |
| 10. From the Saddle to Symphony Hall – Dave Alexander | 25. The Real West – Patty Clayton |
| 11. Phoebe White – Cowgirl's Delight | 26. I Love America – Ed Montana |
| 12. They Ride – Ed Meyer | 27. Once I Was a Cowboy – Joel White |
| 13. Trackin' On – The Russellers | 28. A Little Past Our Prime – Hugh McClennan |
| 14. A Little Bit Country – The Arizona Wildflowers | 29. Can't Catch the Outlaw – Bodhi Linde |
| 15. Big Medicine Moon – Tris Munsick | 30. Arizona Skies – The Mountain Saddle Band |

10 MOST PLAYED WESTERN SWING ALBUMS

1. Light of the Moon – Lori Beth Brooke
2. From the Saddle to Symphony Hall – Dave Alexander
3. Gotta Move – The Hot Texas Swing Band
4. A Little Western, A Little Swing – Carlos Washington
5. 12-6 Central – The Western Swing Authority
6. Blue Skies Ahead – The Western Flyers
7. Little Bit of Texas – Carlos Washington
8. A Place to Land – Kristyn Harris
9. Somewhere North of San Antone – Oklahoma Swing
10. Texas Trio – The Texas Trio

12 MOST PLAYED SONGS BY WESTERN MUSIC DJs

1. Cowgirl From Illinois – Doug Figgs
2. Saddle Off the Wall – Marvin O'Dell
3. Dust of Los Angeles – Ron Christopher
4. Confessions of a Ghost Town – Kacey & Jenna Thunborg
5. Why He Rides – Kevin Tuckfield
Put Some Western Back Into Country – Carlos Washington
7. A New Someday – Gone With the West
Winds of Texas – Marvin O'Dell
Blessed by the West – Sarah Pierce
10. We Raised Hay – The Arizona Wildflowers
The Highly Exalted – Lon Hannah
Wild Again – Dave Stamey
Nevada Skies – Phoebe White

12 MOST PLAYED COWBOY POETRY ALBUMS

1. Cowboyin' With God – Rik "Yonder" Goodell
2. The Last Sunset – K.C. LaCourse
3. Real Hands & Treasured Friends – Miska Paget
4. Born to Ponder – Sherl Cederburg
Wrangler of Rhymes, Vol. 3 – George Russell
Old West Memories – Rocky Sullivan
7. Wisdom in the Wind – Sherl Cederburg
8. Horse Tales and Cow Trails – Floyd Beard
9. No Better Life – Valerie Beard
Day Workin' – Mark Munzert
A Good Ride – Terry Nash
The Girl in the Yellow Checked Dress – Duane Nelson
Masters, Vol. – Various Artists

***A MISSING NUMBER IN THE LIST
REPRESENTS A TIE FOR THAT SPOT.**

IWMA LIFETIME MEMBERS

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Douglas B. Green
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Tex Hamel
Les Hamilton
RW Hampton
Lisa Hampton
Calvin Danner Hampton
Lon Hannah
Joni Harms
Eddy Harrison
Tom & Jane Hilderbrand
Randy A. Hoyt
Rick Huff
Voleta Hummel
Charles Jennings
Emma F. Kaenzig
Paul Kelly

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Kim, CO
Armstrong, BC Canada
Atascocita, TX
San Diego, CA
Goldendale, WA
Nashville, TN
Franklin, IN
Mesa, AZ
Saugus, CA
Brownsville, TN
Case Slick, OK
Case Slick, OK
Livingston, MT
Edwards, CA
Nashville, TN
Edgewater, CO
Conyngham, PA
Livermore, CA
Sierra Vista, AZ
Wickenburg, AZ
Corey Mesa, AZ
Hillsboro, OR
Van Horn, TX
Nashville, TN
Chatsworth, CA
Nolensville, TN
Sierra Vista, AZ
Scottsdale, AZ
Scottsdale, AZ
Junction, UT
Deming, NM
Deming, NM
Tucson, AZ
Wilton, CA
Valley, AZ
Moscow, ID
Walzenhausen Switzerland
Sun City West, AZ
Brentwood, TN
Mill Valley, CA
Porterville, CA
Tucson, AZ
Tucson, AZ
Dubois, WY
Amarillo, TX
Amarillo, TX
Amarillo, TX
Visalia, CA
Canby, OR
Las Cruces, NM
Little River, SC
Clifton, CO
Albuquerque, NM
Sierra Vista, AZ
Rockville, MD
Walzenhausen Switzerland
Santa Fe, NM

Karen L. Killion
Ray Kraft
Fred LaBour
Jane Leche
Paul Lohr
Clyde Lucas
Mike Mahaney
Michael P. McAleenan
Janet McBride
Steven "Mac" McCartney
Tracy McHenry
Gary McMahan
Al "Doc" Mehl
Tree Menane
Kathy Messenger
Jon Messenger
Joseph Miskulin
Michael Martin Murphey
Marvin O'Dell
Theresa O'Dell
Tom O'Malley
Darren Oliver
Sara Lou Oliver
Billy Pitts
Pamela Plaskitt
Rich Price
Jeff Pundt
Diana Raven
Herb Remington
Steven Rhodes
Victoria Rhodes
Don Richardson
Barbara Richhart
LeeLee Robert
Jessie D. Robertson
Patricia Robinson
Roy "Dusty" Rogers, Jr. Reeds
Cheryl Rogers-Barnett
Elizabeth Rukavina
Mike Rutherford
Lori Rutherford
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Ray Ryan
Mary M. Ryland
Suzanne Samelson
Rudolf P. Schai
O.J. Sikes
Lindy Simmons
Julie Spencer
Dave Stamey
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Red Steagall
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Harvey Walker
Carlos Washington
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Leonard Werner
Johnny Western
Norman Winter
Joyce Woodson

Forney, TX
Loomis, CA
Ashland City, TN
Westcliffe, CO
Nashville, TN
Sylmar, CA
Burbank, CA
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Rockwall, TX
Aurora, CO
Tucson, AZ
Laporte, CO
Turner Valley, AB Canada
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Sierra Vista, AZ
Sierra Vista, AZ
Kirtland, OH
Nashville, TN
Sun City, AZ
Sun City, AZ
Harvard, ID
Castle Rock, CO
Castle Rock, CO
Kansas City, MO
Waterloo, IA
Oakdale, CA
Lakeside, AZ
Lakewood, CO
Ruidoso, NM
Foosland, IL
Foosland, IL
Upland, CA
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Paradise Valley, AZ
Fort Worth, TX
Tucson, AZ
Spring, MO
Washington, UT
Arleta, CA
Sierra Vista, AZ
Sierra Vista, AZ
San Jose, CA
San Jose, CA
Albuquerque, NM
Thermopolis, WY
Bernhardzell Switzerland
Ridgewood, NJ
Mancos, CO
Pacific City, OR
Orange Cove, CA
Roswell, NM
Fort Worth, TX
Roy, UT
Roy, UT
El Cajon, CA
Merritt, NC
Oklahoma City, OK
Anaheim, CA
Youngsville, NM
Fort Davis, TX
Flemington, NJ
Mesa, AZ
Mills, WY
San Juan Capistrano, CA



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Professional Members receive *The Western Way*, have a listing on the IWMA website, and have one vote.

- ☐ Individual Professional Membership.....\$75
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(thru high school graduation)
- ☐ Individual Youth Membership.....\$25
(high school graduation thru 21)
- ☐ Patron Membership.....\$100
Includes sponsorship of the Patron Stage at Convention
- ☐ Business/Gathering Membership.....\$150
- ☐ Individual Life Membership.....\$1,000

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Supporting Members (fans and others) receive *The Western Way* and have one vote.

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- ☐ Individual Youth Membership.....\$15
(thru high school graduation)
- ☐ Individual Youth Membership.....\$25
(high school graduation thru 21)
- ☐ Family Membership (one vote per family).....\$75
- ☐ Patron Membership.....\$100
Includes sponsorship of the Patron Stage at Convention
- ☐ Individual Life Membership.....\$1,000

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- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arizona | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Hills & Beyond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California | <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Columbia | <input type="checkbox"/> East Coast |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kansas | <input type="checkbox"/> New Mexico |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oklahoma | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennessee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Texas | <input type="checkbox"/> Utah |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Wordsmiths | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth |
-
- ☐ Chapter Individual Membership (each chapter).....\$15
 - ☐ Chapter Family Membership (each chapter).....\$25

It's OK to include my information in the IWMA Membership Directory (printed annually and distributed during the IWMA Annual Meeting).

- | | | |
|--------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Address | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Phone Number | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Email | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Tell us a little about yourself (check all that apply):

- ☐ Singer ☐ Instrumentalist ☐ Songwriter ☐ Poet
☐ Storyteller ☐ Author ☐ Manager/Booking Agent
☐ Publisher ☐ Producer ☐ DJ/Radio Station
☐ Fan ☐ Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Province _____ ZIP/Postal Code _____

Country _____

Phone _____

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Total Due \$ _____

- ☐ Check enclosed (payable to IWMA)
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(American Express, MasterCard, Visa, Discover)

Card # _____

Expiration Date _____

Return application to:

IWMA
P. O. Box 648
Coppell, TX 75019

Who can we thank for referring you to IWMA?

For more details or questions

Email: marsha@westernmusic.org

Phone: 505-563-0673

Website: iwesternmusic.org

JOIN THE TEAM – PLANNING THE FUTURE

*The 2025 theme for IWMA is “**Planning the Future.**” Not planning FOR the future – plan THE future of our Organization. To do this, it will necessitate expanding our core team of volunteers in vital areas. It means we need the talents and dedication of more IWMA members. YOU can apprentice and work alongside the current leaders to help as the IWMA continues to grow.*

Areas of expertise needed and highlights of skill level and involvement:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – Someone to apprentice Executive Director to learn procedures and protocol - Requires organizational skills, experience in general corporate functions, dedication to the IWMA, and patience.

Sub-Positions Available:

- a. **Event Coordinator** – organizes and oversees annual convention; includes compiling Convention program and scheduling
- b. **Data Entry** – maintains membership lists and mailing database
- c. **Admin Assistant** – supports Executive Director with correspondence, electronic dissemination of information to board and membership as needed
- d. **Treasurer Assistant** – supports the Treasurer by providing information for financial reporting to the Board, members and IRS

WESTERN WAY MANAGING EDITOR – Someone to apprentice Managing Editor to learn procedures and protocol – Requires organizational skills, managing deadlines, experience in writing, copyediting, proofreading, working with designers, production and printing vendors, dedication to the IWMA, and patience.

Sub-Positions Available:

- a. **Editorial Assistant** – available to assist in all phases of each issue as needed, light copyediting
- b. **Proofreader** – assist Editor with content material and layout uniformity

SOCIAL MEDIA – Someone to maintain the Website and create/oversee a presence on all Social Media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.

- a. **Webmaster** – to administer and maintain the current Website, familiar with cpanel, php 8 and MySQL; monitor domain for security updates and renew/apply SSL certificates on the custom created site
- b. **Other social media** – person(s) willing to develop and maintain an online presence

GRAPHICS DESIGN – Someone skilled in magazine layout and design, ad layout, brochures and miscellaneous design projects who is knowledgeable in project prep for and interaction with professional printing vendors, working in online platforms.

The IWMA is looking for more members to volunteer, gain understanding of the underlying operation of your organization, and make a difference. We need you as we continue to grow and add to sustainability for the IWMA. For more information and Job Descriptions, contact marsha@westernmusic.org or 505-563-0673.



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