

THE WESTERN WAY

The Official Publication of the Western Music Association

New!

The
Mailbag

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2017
AWARDS FOR
EXCELLENCE
RECIPIENTS

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CROSSHAIRS

Ray Odom
Walked with
Legends

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2017 ENTERTAINER
OF THE YEAR

Kristyn Harris



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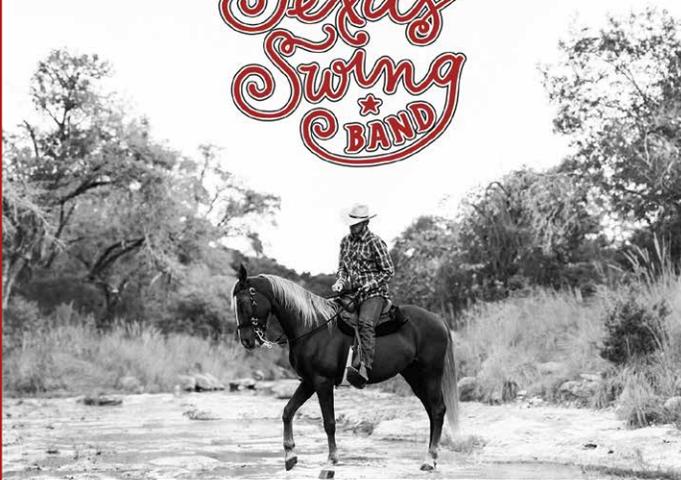
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Pictured: Design by Chris Kirby from a 1989 Arthur Rothstein photograph
for *MASTERS*, a CD of poetry by Larry McWhorter, Sunny Hancock,
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From The President...



Marvin O'Dell
WMA President

“And the winner is...”

Those are words that everyone likes to hear. Whether it's a raffle drawing or as a guest on *The Price is Right* or during an awards show. Having just finished with the Western Music Association's annual awards show, I got to thinking that the odds of winning a WMA award are pretty much against everyone.

Of course, someone wins in each category every year; but I wonder if performers ever consider what their chances really are. When it comes time to consider award winners, there can be as many as 100 possibilities in some categories. Voting and committees then go to work to whittle that down to eventually five nominees. And ONLY ONE of those can be the winner in each category.

It's conceivable that a very good performer, poet, songwriter, etc., could work at his craft for 50 years and never win an award. There are many reasons for this: timing, being great but not necessarily the best in some years, having to go up against someone who simply had an exceptional year (which relates to timing), membership votes simply weren't enough, etc. Whatever the reason, however, no one should feel defeated if they don't win an award. Face it: the odds are against you!

Think about this: George Jones never won a CMA Entertainer of the Year award. Nor has Crystal Gayle or Tammy Wynette. Or Waylon Jennings. Or Buck Owens. In fact, Buck Owens has never even won a Male Vocalist award. Nor has Hank Williams, Jr. Suzy Bogguss nor Wynonna Judd have ever won a CMA Female Vocalist award. Loretta Lynn has never won a CMA Album of the Year award. And neither has Alan Jackson. And I think we would all agree that each of these performers have been or are superstars in their genre.

Each year after the WMA Awards Show, I receive an e-mail or two from folks who wonder why they didn't win or weren't nominated for an award. The letters are never written with a tone of bitterness but with a genuine desire to understand the process. I try to tell them the same thing every year: only one can win. And it's not that you or your product weren't great – but there's only room for one winner.

So, let me encourage the non-winners if I can. If you have worked hard to put out quality performances and a quality album, be proud of it. If you've written some songs that folks like to hear, find contentment in that. Don't be discouraged if you haven't won an award. Be gracious and complimentary toward those who have won. They have beaten the odds somehow.

I think it's best to lower one's expectations when it comes to award-winning. With low expectations, you won't be disappointed if you don't win, and you'll feel ecstatic and surprised if you do. But don't forget: the odds are against you!

Marvin O'Dell
President, WMA



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Kristyn Harris, WMA 2017 Entertainer of the Year, has taken Western music beyond the US borders with multiple tours in Europe. At heart, she is a cowgirl true to her roots.

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

Editor's Insight



Theresa O'Dell

TIMES HAVE CHANGED

A black silhouette of a cowboy riding a horse, positioned behind the word 'CHANGED' in the title.

From boiling coffee in a pot over an open campfire, to coffee dripping through a “pod” from the countertop brewing system...

From taking months to travel across prairies and forging swollen rivers in a prairie schooner, to soaring across continents and crossing oceans high above the earth in a long metal tube...

From spending each waking hour hunting wild game and plowing fields behind mules to eek out survival, to clicking a few buttons online to order groceries and all manner of sustenance delivered to the door...

From waiting for months for a letter from the East to arrive by Pony Express, to staying connected or viewing immediate happenings on a phone, tablet or computer...

From spending long, dusty hours in the saddle for a round-up then spending danger-ridden months moving those cattle to market, to flying low in a helicopter rounding up strays and heading them into waiting trucks to load them in fast-moving train cattle cars...

...one thing is certain, times have changed!

We have just entered a New Year. As individuals, we know what we have planned for this year, but we also know there will be some changes. As an organization (WMA), we look forward to some changes and we plan for the unexpected ones. We have new faces and voices on the Board; we look forward to another great Convention in November; we know that last year we lost some of our music and poetry friends and may lose more this year; we know change is a certainty.

With change comes new ideas for your craft and hopefully new venues in which to perform it. There will be new creative writing and composing. There will be new recognition for your work. Change can be so good; it can be invigorating. In all the change and forward thinking, however, it is also good to remember where you have come from and what brought you to the point in your career where you are today. Build on it – don't forget it.

As an organization, we, too, can look forward to change, but in so doing let us also remember where we came from and those who paved the road to bring us to today AND tomorrow. The past was golden and the future is bright!



From The Executive Director...



Marsha Short
Executive Director

It only takes a village to raise a child but it takes a thriving metropolis to put on the WMA Convention! Volunteers came from all over the country to help make this year's Convention move forward without any glitches.

David Veal, our long-time coordinator of the CD Mercantile, couldn't be with us this year, but Theresa O'Dell and her group of volunteers stepped up to the challenge and it ran like clockwork. Special thanks to Diana Raven and Kathy Musgrave for going the extra mile.

Jean Prescott and Lu Middleton (and most of Lu's sisters and her grandson) had the Consignment Shop buzzing with activity. And this isn't just a once-a-year activity for Jean – she spends all year looking for stores that are going out of business so she can buy up their display racks.

What would we do without Randy Fowler and Ed Hughes who sit at the registration desk for hours handing out packets, selling tickets and answering questions? I hope that everyone got to see them in their "natural habitat" during the Awards Pre-Show on Saturday night. Along with Jerry Hall, they put on a heck of a show!

And speaking of the Awards Show, when Belinda Gail and Bob Lorbeer, who've been in charge of the show for the past several years, were stranded in Louisiana, Jean Prescott, Diana Raven and a multitude of other volunteers stepped up to keep it running smoothly. We were especially pleased to have Richard Berry, then Mayor of Albuquerque, join the house band for the evening and present the Entertainer of the Year Award.

Thank you, also, to

- Rex Allen, Jr, not only for being with us for his "last concert" but for being there for us. He's the Chairman of the WMA Advisory Board and takes that job to heart. With his counsel and advice, WMA is moving forward into the world.
- The WMA Board of Directors who worked so hard running errands and being there when something needed to be done.
- Syd Masters for not just the great job on sound but for your beautiful rendition of "God Bless the USA" during the Veterans Appreciation Breakfast.
- All of the vendors who supported the Convention...they may not have had huge sales, but said they had a good time and will be back next year.
- And last, but certainly not least, Rick Huff and Mary Ryland who stored and then brought to the hotel all of the stage sets and decorations that add so much to the ambience. Special thanks to Mary for sponsoring the ads in local newspapers and magazines to help us attract the local crowd.

On a personal note, I'd like to thank Bill Barwick for all the years he came to the WMA Convention and entertained us with his music and sense of humor. It was an honor to have him with us so briefly this year but I know his spirit will be with us every year. We miss you!

And now on to the 2018 Convention, November 7-11 at the Hotel Albuquerque. We're already planning a Swing Dance Workshop on Wednesday afternoon so you can learn some fancy moves to show off during the Swing Dance Spectacular that night. If you have ideas about other things you'd like to see happen, call or email me and we'll get it on the wish list!



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- Autry National Center – Los Angeles, CA
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- Doss Heritage & Culture Center – Weatherford, TX
- OutWest Boutique & Cultural Center – Newhall, CA
- Lone Pine Film History Museum – Lone Pine, CA
- Booth Western Art Museum – Cartersville, GA
- Friends of Marty Robbins Museum - Willcox, AZ
- The Rex Allen Museum - Willcox, AZ
- WMA Chapters at Local Gatherings and Festivals across the country
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The Western Way is the official magazine of the Western Music Association, a non-profit 501(c)3 Corporation, and is supported through paid advertising.

2017 WMA Convention in Review

by Theresa O'Dell

Convention photos provided by Jack Hummel and Lee Peters. Used by permission.

Well, it's a wrap! The 2017 WMA Convention in Albuquerque, NM is an event of the past. It can truly be written up as "successful." If you missed it, you missed a great five days of music, poetry, laughter, tears and camaraderie. This year, more than others in the past, there seemed to be a spirit of pulling together to get it all done. There were 400 members registered plus approximately 250 local residents graced the halls during the week. More people appeared to arrive early in the week and stay to turn out the lights at the Survivor's Dinner on Sunday night. There is so much happening at each Convention, you simply don't want to miss a moment!

Let's take a walk through the events that took place in Old Town Albuquerque at the historic Hotel Albuquerque in November.

Always a highlight of the Convention are the evening events. Things got "swinging" on Wednesday night at the Swing Dance that featured two bands, The Swing Sisters and Three Trails West. Rumor has it next year there is even going to be a "Learn to Dance" workshop on Wednesday afternoon for those of us who feel we have two left feet! Look for me there!



2017 WMA Convention in Review

On Thursday night, the house was packed for the Crisis Fund Dinner. This fundraising event has become an exciting, meaningful part of each Convention. The entertainment featured Rex Allen, Jr.'s farewell concert performance. What a privilege for the WMA to be the setting for this momentous part of Rex's music career. It was outstanding; yes, there were some tears at the end. Rex is an iconic figure at and a great supporter of the WMA. Rex donated this appearance as his way to give back to his WMA colleagues in need. And, it was a success – more than \$10,000 was raised for the Crisis Fund. Thank you, Rex, and to all who were so generous. And it is not too late to give – send your donation to WMA or call the Coppell office to donate by phone.



Well, no one was disappointed with the Friday Night Opry this year! How fun to enjoy such talent of those who crossed the stage. There were singers, poets, youth performers – an all-around perfect evening of entertainment. We were introduced to some new talent and we were entertained by the seasoned performers as well.



2017 WMA Convention in Review

The Awards Show was excellent! It seemed that in each category the finalist nominees were all deserving! Congratulations to the winners, of course, but also to those who made the top five in each category. Any one of these

talented performers could have won; in fact, each one is a winner! More and more talent is rising to the top; more performers are honing their craft and it is truly beginning to show. Congratulations all.



The Cowboy Way
Group of the Year



Rex Allen, Jr.
Male Performer of the Year



Kristyn Harris
Entertainer of the Year



Mikki Daniel
Female Performer of the Year



Hailey Sandoz
Instrumentalist of the Year

Congratulations to Award Recipients

MUSIC

- 2017 Traditional Western Album of the Year
Cowboy - The High Country Cowboys
- 2017 Song of the Year
Call of the Canyon - Dick Goodman
- 2017 Songwriter of the Year
Jean Prescott
- 2017 Liz Masterson Crescendo Award
David Sawyer
- 2017 Radio DJ/Radio Program of the Year
Judy James - Cowboy Jubilee & Western Heritage Radio - Weatherford, TX
- 2017 Cowboy Swing Album of the Year
Wild Blue Yonder - Western Flyers
Not Pictured
- 2017 Pure Cowboy Song of the Year
Frigid, High and Lonesome - Matt Robertson
Not Pictured

POETRY

- 2017 Male Poet of the Year
Floyd Beard
- 2017 Female Poet of the Year
Teresa Burleson
- 2017 Cowboy Poetry CD of the Year
The Calf Book - Teresa Burleson
- 2017 Cowboy Poetry Book of the Year
Ladies, Horses & Cowboys - Sam DeLeeuw
- 2017 Georgie Sicking Award
Marleen Bussma - Market Day

HARMONY AND YODELING

- 2017 Male Yodeler of the Year
Marty Kosel
- 2017 Female Yodeler of the Year
Catherine Thompson
- 2017 Youth Harmony Duo of the Year
Kacey & Jenna Thunborg
- 2017 Youth Harmony Duo of the Year – 1st Runner Up
Abby Payne & Caroline Grace Wiseman -
A Bar C Cowgirl Friends
- 2017 Open Group Harmony of the Year
The Hanson Family
- 2017 Open Group Harmony of the Year – 1st Runner Up
Miss Devon & The Outlaw
- 2017 Marilyn Tuttle Best of the Best Harmony Award
Notable Exceptions

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

- 2017 President's Award
Old Chisholm Trail - K.R. Wood
- 2017 Bill Wiley Award
Luana Middleton
- 2017 Pioneer Trail Award
Hal Spencer
- 2017 Curly Musgrave Silver Buckle Award
Devon Dawson

2017 WMA Convention in Review



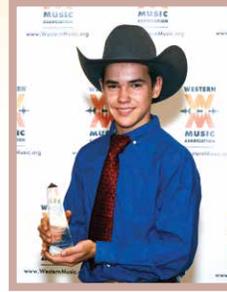
Cowboy
The High Country Cowboys
Traditional Western Album of the Year



Call of the Canyon
Dick Goodman
Song of the Year



Jean Prescott
Songwriter of the Year



David Sawyer
Liz Masterson
Crescendo Award



Judy James
Radio DJ/Radio Program
of the Year



Floyd Beard
Male Poet of the Year



Teresa Burselson
Female Poet of the Year
Cowboy Poetry CD of the Year



Sam DeLeeuw
Ladies, Horses & Cowboys
Cowboy Poetry Book
of the Year



Marleen Bussma
Market Day
Georgie Sicking Award



Marty Kosel
Male Yodeler of the Year



Notable Exceptions
Marilyn Tuttle Best of the
Best Harmony Award



Catherine Thompson
Female Yodeler of the Year



Kacey & Jenna Thunborg
Youth Harmony Duo
of the Year



Abby Payne & Caroline
Grace Wiseman
Youth Harmony Duo of the Year-1st Runner Up



The Hanson Family
Open Group Harmony
of the Year



Miss Devon & The Outlaw
Open Group Harmony
of the Year-1st Runner Up



K.R. Wood
Old Chisholm Trail
President's Award



Luana Middleton
Bill Wiley Award



Hal Spencer
Pioneer Trail Award
(Pictured: Julie Spencer)



Devon Dawson
Curly Musgrave Silver
Buckle Award

2017 WMA Convention in Review

But there was so much more to the Convention than the evening shows. The days were filled with a lot of activity. The various Workshops were amazing and the CD Mercantile

and the WMA Consignment Shop were bustling. The halls were filled with Vendors. There was something for everyone.



Sometimes you just need to be refreshed! The daily Showcases were just the spot to make that happen. The ballroom stage was kept busy each day with quality music and poetry to entertain and amaze the listener. It is always fun to hear new talent or to see who has teamed together with

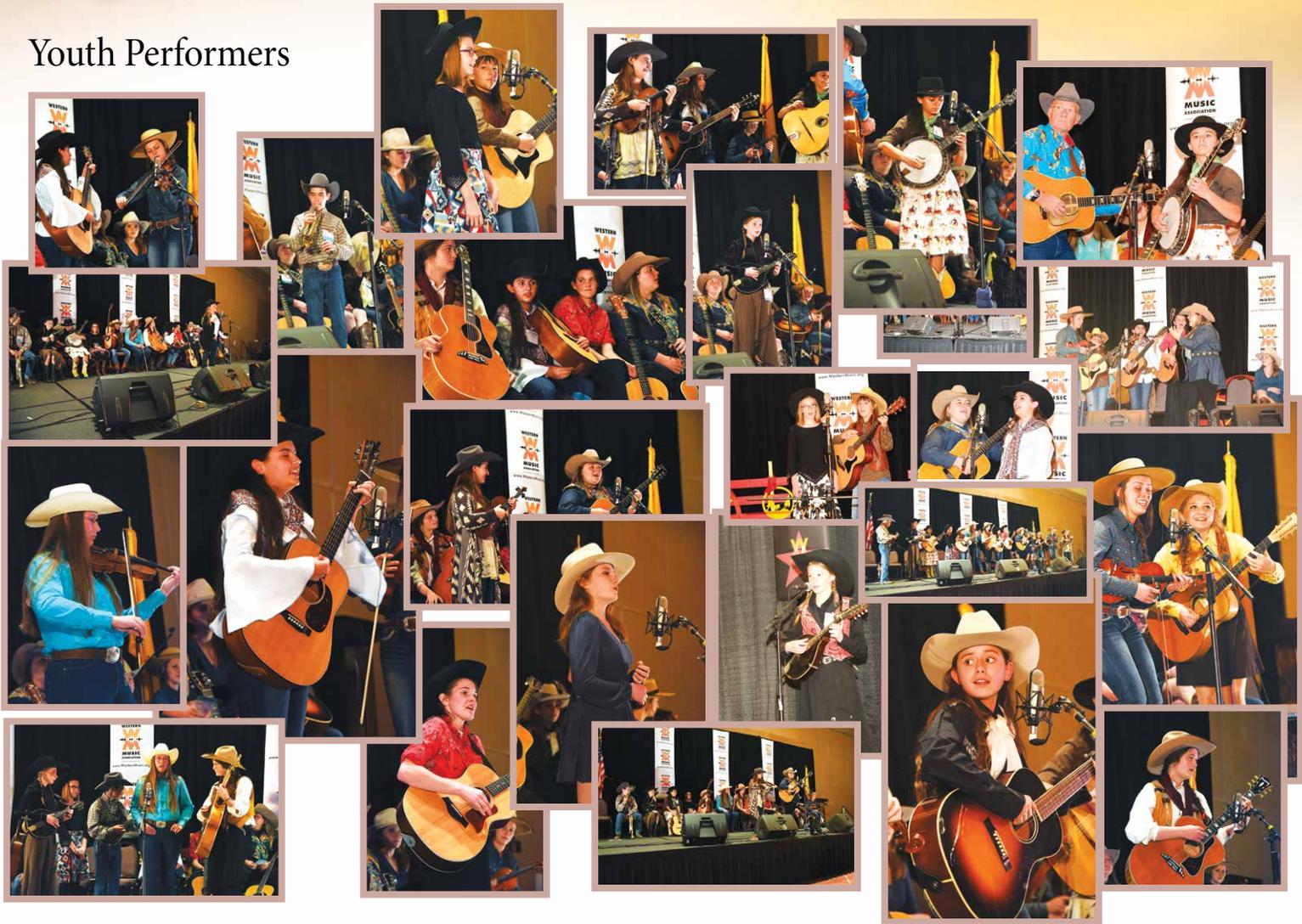
their counterparts to provide 25 minutes of music, poetry or a combination of both. A special treat for the audience as evidenced by a full ballroom, was the Youth Showcase on Saturday. The future of the music is in very good hands.

On Stage



2017 WMA Convention in Review

Youth Performers



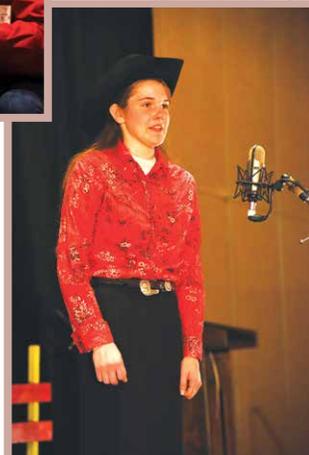
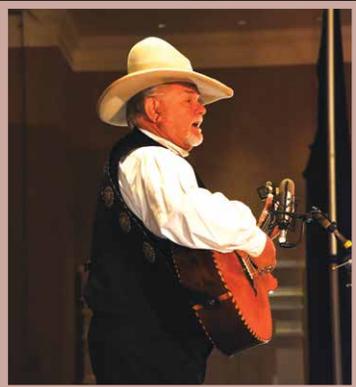
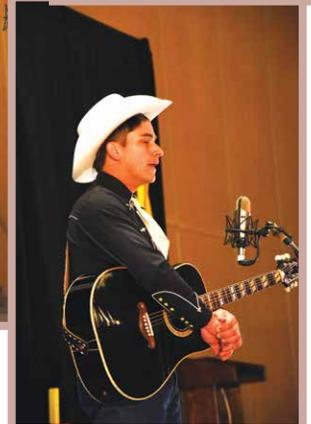
World Tour Showcase



2017 WMA Convention in Review

And what about those Contests? The Harmony Contest revealed some exceptional professionalism and sounds that thrilled the audience. The Yodeling Contest caused the

audience to smile, laugh, clap and be amazed! Each year both of these opportunities seem to bring out the best and sometimes hidden talents of performers young and old.



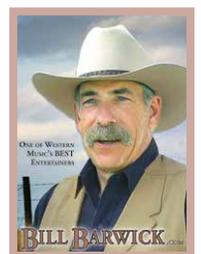
2017 WMA Convention in Review

The halls of Hotel Albuquerque are probably much quieter now, but that certainly wasn't the case in November while the performers and fans of Western music and poetry filled them.

From mid-morning to late night jams, music and laughter could be heard. Let me leave you with a few of the sights filling the hallways...



Well, the 2017 WMA Convention is in the books. More than that, it is in our hearts. We lost "one of our own," Bill Barwick, during the Convention on Friday. Sadness and a sense of great loss permeated the crowd as word spread. But, in the very spirit of the life that Bill epitomized, the Convention went on with zest and excitement. The Convention was dedicated to his memory, and we were ever mindful of Bill's presence by the empty boots that set at center stage. He got to be a part of the event for only a short while, but I believe he would have loved knowing the "show went on"; he was remembered then and will be for years to come. Happy Trails, ol' pard.





Penned by Lantern Light

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

Floyd Beard is the 2017 WMA Male Poet of the Year and winner of the Poetry Contest. This is his winning work.

The Carlsbad by Floyd Beard

Intro for your background and edification: The prospectors headed westward, In search of the mother lode. They endured the broiling sun and soaking rains. JB Stetson saw their plight, So he invented for them a lid. The first style was known as the Boss of the Plains. Though the miners took right to it, The Cowboy also saw its worth. But they rolled the brim and creased the dome a tad. Then they proudly wore their Stetsons, The former Boss of the Plains. For the new crease was know as the Carlsbad. Many, many decades later Hollywood made a film, Lonesome Dove, and it created quite a fuss. In it a cowboy proudly wore his Stetson. So now the crease called Carlsbad Is known by everybody as The Gus.

*It had hung there in the corner
T'was its place for 50 year,
On the old tarnished coat rack by the door.
Inch wide ribbon made of satin
Once did proudly wrap the sphere,
Though sweat stains bleached its glory long before.*

*But each stain holds a story
Memories the felt holds tight,
Of a life with a cowboy it could tell.
There were times it filled with laughter,
There were times as dark as night.
Each memory, every stain, it knew them well.*

*It could recall in days of young
When it proudly rode the range.
T'was a crown upon a young cowboy free.
On the wind they rode together.
And to some it might sound strange,
But a cowboy's hat is all it wished to be.*

*Now the grease and stains hold stories
Of the rim rocks that they rode,
Of rains as thunderstorms discharged their lights.
Grand horses beneath the leather;
Freezing rides on nights it snowed;
Every trial, all their rituals and rites.*

*Of the time it turned a cow,
Slapped her fully in the face.
Broke her challenge and sent'er on her way.
The times it caught rainwater.
Times it urged a faster pace.
Times it twirled when he was sociable 'n gay.*

*It was with him as a young mvan,
Bold and strong their wanderlust.
The grasslands and the mountains wore their track.
It rode with him every outing
Through each whelm and sun baked gust,
As their circles took them out then brought 'em back.*

*Yes, and how he loved the horses;
Beauty, strength, astounding power.
With fervor he looked forward to their ride.
Rocky trail or through a tempest
Nor did matter time nor hour,
His accomplishment that hat he wore with pride.*

*Now his hands are scarred and bugged
And arthritis call them home.
His bones recall each bad wreck with a sigh.
And the hat is bent and dusty
With salt stains that ring the dome,
A tribute to the miles that have gone by.*

*Yes, it is a JB Stetson
With a crease of Carlsbad,
The old satin band now frayed with fuzz.
It still hangs there in the corner.
It belonged to my granddad.
I pray I might be half the man he was.
F E Beard. 8-2-17*



FLOYD BEARD

Floyd Beard and his wife Valerie are ranchers in the canyons of Southeastern Colorado near Kim, Colorado. Floyd writes down his experiences and observations while in the saddle working cattle, turning these thoughts into stories and songs. Floyd has been writing for over 30 years and has been presenting Cowboy Poetry from the Mexico border to Stony Plains, Alberta, Canada. Floyd's stories are inter-woven with his western code of high ethics and integrity and are richly sprinkled with humor. His philosophy is simple: "Life is a journey not a destination, and is best viewed from atop a good horse." Floyd was honored to be named the Western Music Association's 2016 & 2017 Male Poet of the Year. His poem, "Ain't a Hermit,"

won the Spur Award for the 2016 Best Western Poem by the Western Writers of America. www.floydbeardcowboy.com

FROM the TRAIL

THE WMA WESTERN WEAR CONSIGNMENT BOUTIQUE

**FROM THE MILD WEST TO THE WILD WEST
WE DRESS THE BEST OF THE WEST**



By Jean Prescott

What an exciting time was had in the WMA Western Consignment Shop, and what a great way to finish out 2017! I first must thank the fantastic volunteers who helped make it all happen. All of the great positive comments on the consignment shop were because of their hard work. And, on behalf of myself and the best team of volunteers ever, thank you to everyone who brought western stage outfits and accessories to consign. To all shoppers who found the perfect outfits in the Consignment Shop, thank you for your business!

I am excited to tell you that in 2018 we will have a bit more room, including two dressing rooms and some nice upgrades in other areas, also. Since we had such a great response from consigners this year we realize that the fine western clothing, jewelry, boots and hats are the best selling items. Therefore, the name has been changed to the **WMA Western Wear Consignment Boutique**. We will only take western clothing, jewelry, boots, hats and accessories. However, if someone would like to volunteer to run a booth of western consignment items for the WMA, I suggest you visit with Marsha about it.

If you would like to volunteer in the consignment boutique, we would like to have four to six more people to help. This will give us two teams, one working in the mornings and the other in the afternoons, giving everyone an opportunity to go to some the showcases and workshops. We are also looking for a few good men (4-6) with tools to load and deliver the racks to the hotel early Wednesday morning and help set them up. Then, on Sunday afternoon we need those good men again to help tear down, load up and deliver the racks, etc., back to storage. Please let Marsha know if you would like to volunteer. We would love for you to join our team and get in on all the fun!

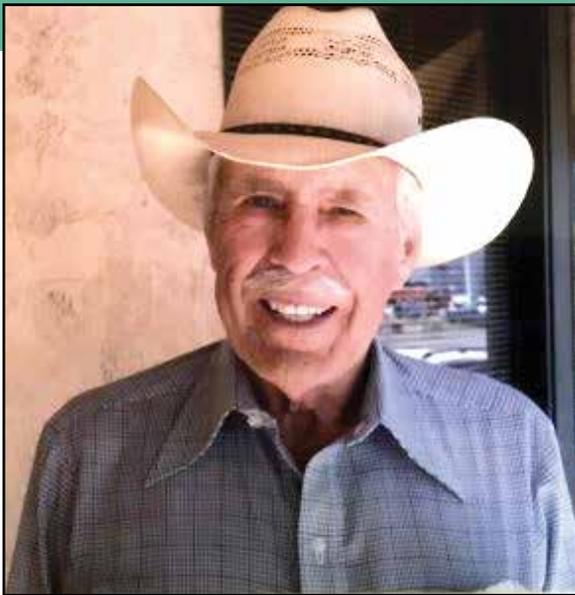
I am happy to say that the sales from the Ed Stabler Estate benefiting the WMA Youth Scholarship Fund brought in close to \$1000.00! Thank you to the Stabler family for carrying out Ed's wishes to donate the items to the WMA. We will have a few more things from the estate in 2018.

As most of you know the WMA receives 10% of all of the consignment boutique sales and the consignor receives the other 90%. This is a win-win situation for everyone since most of us are always looking for quality stage clothes at a reasonable price. With that said, I suggest you begin examining your closet a few months before the 2018 WMA Convention and Awards and bring your gently worn western stage outfits and accessories to the **WMA Western Wear Consignment Boutique**. Until then, safe travels to all as you take cowboy and western music and poetry to the world. 🐾

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In the **CROSSHAIRS**

Ray Odom, The Man Who Walked Among the Legends



Ray Odom

When Western Music Association member Ray Odom left Coleman, Texas, in 1951 to take a job with a radio station in Phoenix, Arizona, he had no way of knowing what an interesting future lay before him.

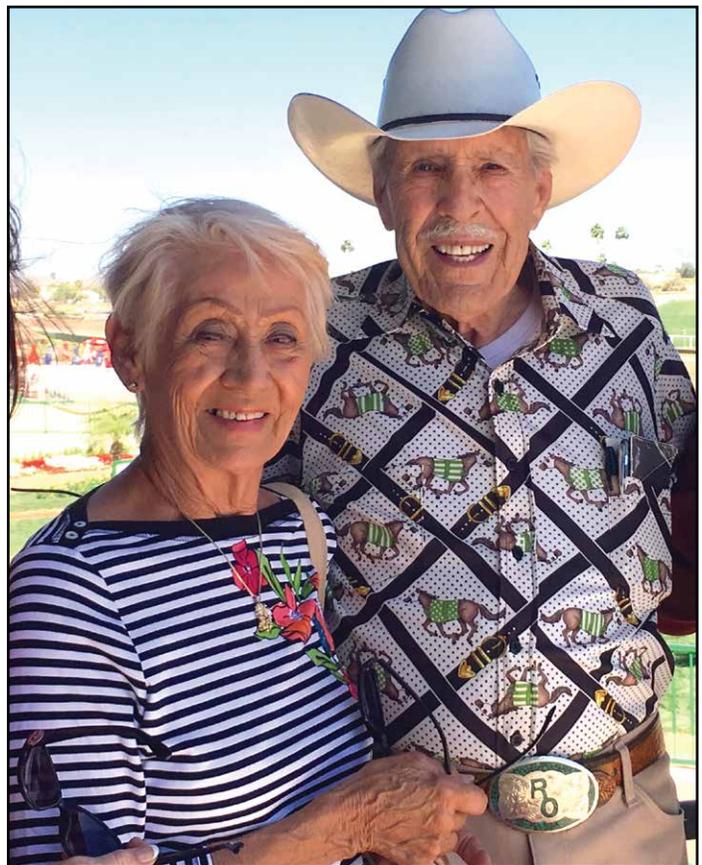
Now, some 66 years later, he still marvels at the people he has gotten to know and become close friends with through the years. People with names like Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley, Ray Price, Freddie Hart, Charley Pride, Jim Reeves, Patsy Cline, Red Foley and others. And also some pretty well-known folks from the western film industry. People like Gene Autry, Tex Ritter, Rex Allen, Johnny Western, Sheb Wooley, and Clint Eastwood.

I recently visited with Ray and his lovely wife of 62 years, Dolly, in their Sun City, Arizona, home on a rare overcast desert day. In a home decorated beautifully for Christmas, we sat and enjoyed memories together – mostly Ray's memories, of course. I was especially interested in his personal time with the western movie and singing stars whom he had rubbed shoulders with over the years.

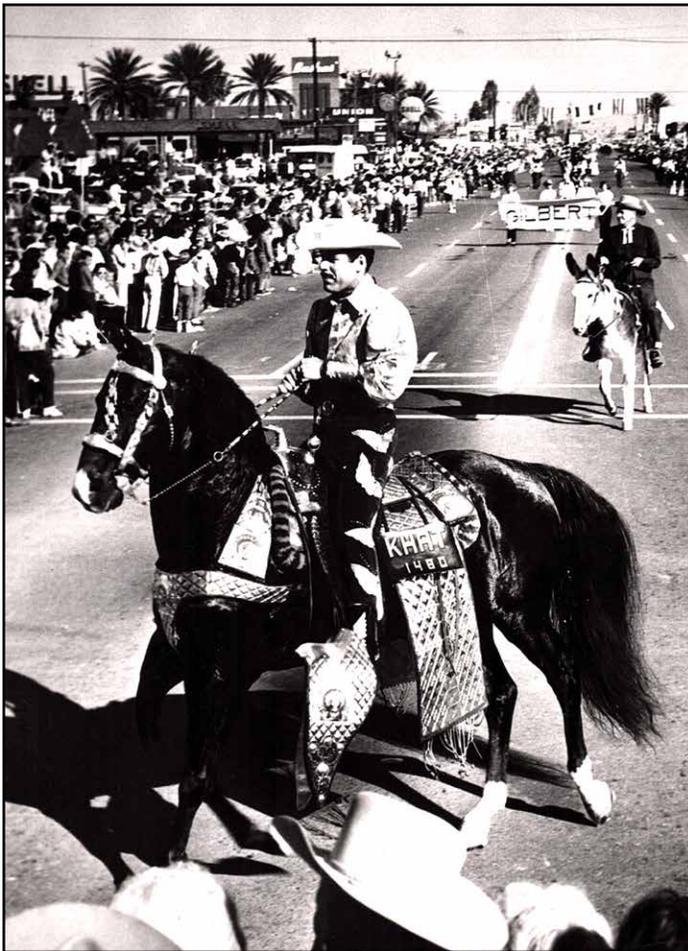
It didn't take much prompting to get Ray to begin relating his experiences. I just had to say a name, and he had a story. Gene Autry? "Gene and I were on the Country Music Association Board of Directors together for a long time. And we were the only two dressed like cowboys, with western clothes. Gene and I were always together. One time we were debating over whether we wanted to spend \$50,000 for talent in order to make a presentation to the New York Executive Club to try to get more country music artists into movies and shows, etc. During a break, I said, 'Gene, I think things went real well this morning,' and he said, 'Yeah, I did,

too, except I didn't like the fact that we had to debate so long over spending \$50,000. At lunch today, I just spent two million dollars on a business deal.' I said, 'Gene, the difference is: that's YOUR money; we're talking about spending association money.' With a wave of his hand, he said 'Oh, I know, I know.'"

When asked about Gene having a Midas touch, Ray said, "Oh, he did. I told him once, 'Gene, I just saw on television yesterday that you are now a billionaire.' And with a gesture of dismissal with his hand, he said, 'Oh, I don't know. I guess somewhere around there.' I told him once, 'Gene, everything you've gotten into has turned to gold.' He said, 'Yeah, things have worked out pretty good for me.' And I said, 'You've got cattle ranches, huge ranches loaded with your own cattle; you've got television stations, radio stations, and it's incredible the amount of money you've made.' He said, 'Yeah, but you know, Ray, I'm not very smart. When I got into businesses I didn't know much about, I just hired the best people I could find, and then I left them alone.' I said, 'Well, that's the greatest thing you could have done.' He invited me to come to his home anytime I came to California; he said it was a standing invitation. Lee Hazlewood, who wrote 'These Boots are Made for



Dolly and Ray Odom



Ray on his horse Black Magic

Walking' for Nancy Sinatra, told me Gene wouldn't have said that if he didn't mean it."

Unfortunately, Ray, who has been recognized with every possible award as a radio personality, including a Living Legend award from the Academy of Western Artists just last year, told me that he never got to visit Gene at his Southern California home.

Gene Autry was not the only silver screen cowboy actor with which Ray Odom became good friends. He also harbored a close relationship with the man who sang the great theme song for the film *High Noon*, Tex Ritter.

"Tex was a lot of fun," Ray remembered. "One time Gene gave us (Ray, Tex, and country music star Red Foley) tickets to a California Angels baseball game. Best seats in the stadium. And it was right on the aisle. I and my wife Dolly were seated on the aisle, and directly behind Dolly was Red Foley. Tex Ritter was right behind me. So, Red suddenly says, 'Man, I've got to go to the snack bar and get me some coffee.' So, he goes and comes back with a giant soda cup, and he kept saying, 'Man, this is the hottest coffee. I can't even sip it, it's so hot. I've scorched my tongue I don't know how many times.' And he was standing right behind me and right next to Tex. But the cup was empty; it didn't have anything in it. But he dropped it right into Tex's lap. And Tex goes, 'WHOOAAA', and came right up out of his seat. He

thought this boiling hot coffee was spilled all over his crotch. And we were all on the floor laughing. Except Tex – he didn't think it was very funny!" (See picture of young Tex and Ray on Page 3, Contents.)

After a good laugh, Ray went on remembering Tex Ritter. "I saw him in Abilene, Texas, when he brought his horse on stage with him. And he pooped on the stage—not Tex, the horse. The audience went wild."

Ray was Grand Marshal of the Rose Bowl Parade for nine consecutive years. He rode a beautiful black stallion named Black Magic. This great horse was often borrowed by cowboy movie star Rex Allen. "Rex Allen was a great guy, and I thought he was one of the finest singers of everybody. He had a great voice. He used to borrow Black Magic from me. He'd call me from back in the mid-west someplace and say, 'Ray, they want me to do a thing out at the fairgrounds and I hate to bring Koko all the way out there just for one show. Can I ask you to bring Black Magic out there for me?' And I'd say, 'You know, all you have to do is ask, Rex. I'd be delighted to do it.' I did it for Gene Autry, too, one time."

As the afternoon began to look more like it might rain, I hurriedly asked Ray if there were any more memories he could share about any of the movie cowboys. He brought up the guy who played Frank Miller in *High Noon* and who also played the role of Pete Nolan in the TV series *Rawhide*: Sheb Wooley. "I brought Sheb Wooley to Phoenix several times for shows. The song "Flying Purple People Eater" made him a rich guy. I was holding a show in Tucson when they were filming *Rawhide* near there once. And I had guest stars now and then, and I asked Sheb one night to do a song. Well, we couldn't get him off the stage. Those guys, once they get on stage, they don't want to get off. So Dolly and I just went out and sat with Clint Eastwood and visited with him for an hour while Sheb was on the stage."

Time, as it usually does, wound down too fast, though the rain never came. Ray is good friends with Johnny Western, so I asked him before wrapping up our time together if he knew any stories that would embarrass Johnny, who I'm sure reads *The Western Way*. Unfortunately, he said he didn't. (*Editor's note: You dodged a bullet, Johnny.*)

"One more story," Ray said as I was leaving. "Marty Robbins was a local boy, so I spoke with him many times. One time he told me, 'Ray, don't ever put me on stage again after Little Jimmy Dickens. That's like having to follow a kid's act or an animal act. There's no way to top it.'" That brought another round of laughter from the both of us.

Ray and his wife, Dolly, are still very active people. Their two grown children – son Ray, Jr. and daughter Doreen – complain that they can't ever catch them at home or get them to answer their cell phone. At 91 years of age, (I can't reveal her age – that wouldn't be the cowboy way!) they awaken early every morning to get to the race track by 6 a.m. where they both train and work with race horses. And if you're willing to listen, stop by and visit with them someday if you can find them at home. Stories? Ray's got a million of 'em – and he loves to tell 'em. 🐾

WESTERN EVENTS CALENDAR*

2018

*Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo
January 12-February 3 – Fort Worth, Texas*

*Colorado Cowboy Poetry Gathering
January 19-21 – Golden, Colorado*

*National Cowboy Poetry Gathering
January 29-February 3 – Elko, Nevada*

*The Cochise Cowboy Poetry & Music Gathering
February 2-4 – Sierra Vista, Arizona*

*Spirit of the West Cowboy Gathering
February 16-18 – Ellensburg, Washington*

*32nd Annual Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering
March 2-3 – Alpine, Texas*

*Columbia River Cowboy Gathering & Music Festival
April 13-15 – Kennewick, Washington*

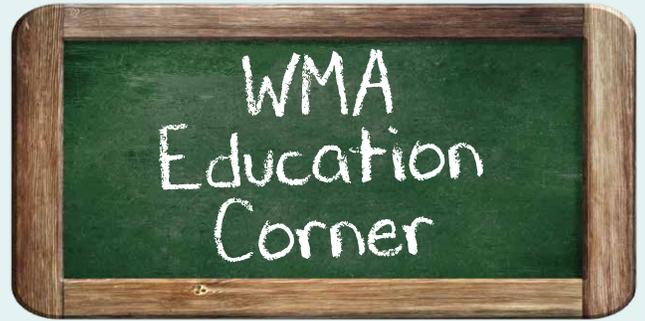
*The Cowboy Way MayFest
May 4-6 – Gene Autry, Oklahoma*

*Arizona Cowboy Poets Gathering
August 9-11 – Prescott, Arizona*

*National Cowboy Symposium
September 7-9, 2018 – Lubbock, Texas -
30th Anniversary Celebration*

*San Angelo Cowboy Gathering
September 7-8 – San Angelo, Texas*

*WMA Annual Convention
November 7-11 – Albuquerque, New Mexico*



By Judy James

Another Western Music Association Convention is in the books, and in many ways, this was one of the very best! If you didn't get to hear the Youth Chapter Showcase, or individual youth showcases, or hear the youth perform on the Award show, or missed the jam sessions in which many of the youth participated, you missed a major part of the convention. These young performers are outstanding! There are many reasons for this –

1. Parents, who make sure their child/children attend WMA and take advantage of the opportunities it affords,
2. Seasoned WMA performers, who take the time to nurture and spend time with them,
3. Performance Camps, that are available for learning and improving their craft.

One comment that I heard more than once was "We don't have any youth in our area that want to perform." My answer is that you haven't found them yet. I encourage you to talk to local private teachers, area youth leaders, church leaders, and school leaders. Then, plan a time to give your area a Youth Performance Camp. Flyers will be sent out soon regarding the WMA Youth Performance Camp with Judy James and Jeanne Cahill. If you would like to donate to the scholarship fund that makes it possible for many to attend, the information is on the Website under the youth tab.

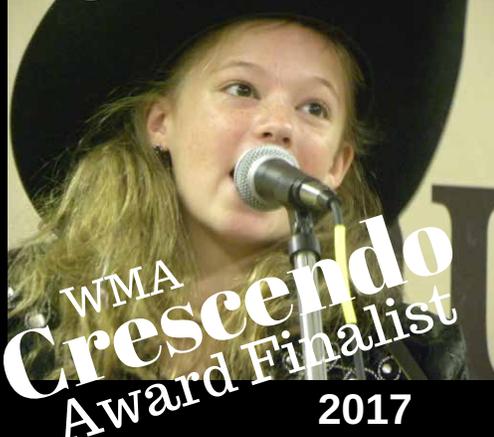
Remember: YOU, TOO, CAN HOST A ONE AND ONE-HALF DAY WORKSHOP IN YOUR AREA. ASK US HOW!



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

**T
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Alice Black



Thank You, WMA!

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Dave Pearlman: Johnny Rivers, The Long Ryders, REO Speedwagon
Chip Dolan: Kris Kristofferson, Kinky Friedman

BOB MARSHALL
SCREEN DOOR

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CHARLES GOODNIGHT CO-FOUNDER OF THE GOODNIGHT-LOVING TRAIL AND INVENTOR OF THE CHUCKWAGON

I WISH I COULD FIND WORDS TO EXPRESS THE TRUENESS THE BRAVERY, THE HARDHOOD, THE SENSE OF HONOR THE LOYALTY TO THEIR TRUST AND TO EACH OTHER OF THE OLD TRAIL HANDS.

By David Sawyer

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

Become a PATRON MEMBER today!

COWBOYS, IT'S TIME TO TAKE A STAND!

By Christopher Zimmerman

From the Sierra Vista Herald. Reprinted by permission.



Cowboys are part of the bedrock of American culture. I mean, if it weren't for those generations of unwashed, gun-toting, hombres on horseback chasing cattle all over the West, we wouldn't have McDonald's hamburgers today. Every other country in the world has cowboy envy, even if they refuse to admit it. Just check out the number of foreign tourists in Tombstone on any weekend.

Unfortunately, some people are embarrassed by our cowboy past and would like western heritage to ride off on the horse it came in on, something called the Vegan Mafia is trying to eliminate beef from the American pallet altogether and replace it with an animal-free gelatin called Geltor. Yum. No doubt, cowboy statues will soon be joining Civil War statues in secret government warehouses.

It's getting tougher and tougher for a cowboy to make a living in this country, and they may soon join coal miners as an endangered species. Why, it's getting to the point where you can't even ride your horse home from the saloon without getting arrested. Just ask Donna Byrne from Lakeland, Florida, who was arrested last week for drunk riding.

Byrne was minding her own business when she was pulled over by Polk County sheriff deputies for being drunk on a horse. The deputies said she had a blood alcohol level of 0.161 and was staggering. I assume they meant she was staggering after they made her get off the horse.

Apparently, the sheriff deputies didn't know anything about responsible cowboy behavior. If a cowboy has a little to much to drink at the saloon while washing all that trail dust from his throat, the smart thing for him to do is to stay away from automobiles and get on his horse. The horse likely knows the way home and, assuming the horse isn't drunk, there shouldn't be a problem. Now, if the deputies had said Byrne's horse was staggering, then they might have a case.

However, riding under the influence is just one way you can get into trouble with a horse. There are all kinds of laws in place across America that make being a cowboy an occupation that can get you arrested. Here are just a few examples of anti-cowboy laws:

- In Prescott, Arizona, no one is permitted to ride their horse up the stairs of the county courthouse.
- In Little Rock, Arkansas, it is unlawful to walk one's cow down Main Street after 1:00PM on Sunday.
- In Cripple Creek, Colorado, it is illegal to bring your horse or pack mule above the ground floor of any building.
- In Marshalltown, Iowa, horses are forbidden to eat fire hydrants.
- In Pennsylvania, it is contrary to Pennsylvania law to discharge a gun, cannon, revolver, or other explosive weapons at a wedding.
- In South Carolina, horses may not be kept in bathtubs.
- In South Dakota, no horses are allowed into Fountain Inn unless they are wearing pants.
- In Culpepper, Virginia, no one may wash a mule on the sidewalk.
- In Tennessee, it is illegal to lasso a fish from a horse.

It is time to take a stand for Western heritage, America. The West wasn't tamed by Prius-driving pajama boys herding animal-free gelatin globs across the prairies. The West was tamed by big-hatted, beef-eating, whiskey-drinking, gun-toting men and women on horseback chasing cows. Be a rebel. Walk your cow down Main Street after 1:00PM on Sunday, wash your mule on the sidewalk and lasso a fish or two from horseback. Yeehaw!

Christopher Zimmerman is a stable manager from Whetstone who masquerades as a humor writer when not recovering from riding accidents. He may be reached at zimmermc@powerc.net.

Chapter Update



Arizona Chapter

President: Yvonne Mayer
Steidl-mayer@msn.com

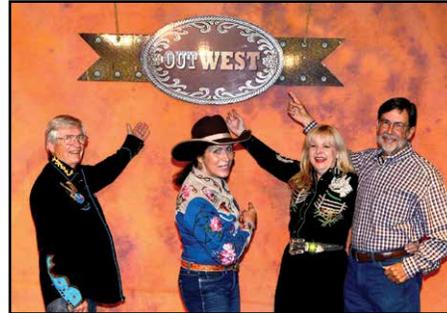
Chapter member Buck Helton has sustained a broken clavicle in a recent motor vehicle accident. Buck is the resident "cowboy singer" at Old Tucson Studios and volunteers for a weekly performance at the Veterans Hospital in Tucson. We wish Buck a speedy recovery. Western Music Night has resumed in Tucson at a new location. Traditional western music can be enjoyed on the third Friday of each month from 6-9 PM at Shooters Bar and Grill. The chapter will be presenting a workshop examining the differences between western and country music at the Glendale Folk Festival on February 23 and 24. The Chapter's January meeting will be held in Wickenburg.

California Chapter

President: Jack Hummel
westmusc@ix.netcom.com

A warm hello and wishes for a happy holiday season to everyone. The California Chapter is again pleased to report on several great events and to define changes that present exciting opportunities for the Chapter. During this last quarter, we continued our co-sponsorship of the OutWest Concert Series. We have been blessed with great talents coming our way through the hard work and special dedication of Jim and Bobbi Jean Bell. October brought much to celebrate and enjoy. Coming to us all the way from Montana, *An Evening with Almeda Bradshaw* provided us with an engagingly original performance and a visit with Almeda and her husband, Merritt. *But, that's not all!* This was the Bells' final OutWest Concert ever, and

the Chapter had a special event planned. At intermission, we celebrated Jim and Bobbi Jean's 8 years of organizing and hosting their series.



Last OutWest Concert

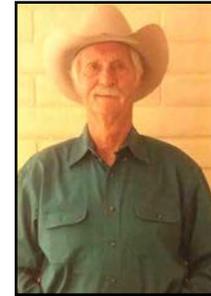
This ceremony was punctuated by John Bergstrom's original song, followed by Joe Herrington's poignant poem, inscribed on a commemorative plaque. The Bells and Outwest are relocating to Albuquerque, while the California Chapter will be organizing future concerts with SCTV in 2018. You can catch the special recognition and Almeda's fine performance at www.sctvoutwest.com But we have more to share; the Chapter will be hosting two additional concerts. We start the new year off with Dave Stamey in January, 2018. Then we will present Michael Fleming and New West (Michael Fleming, Raul Reynoso, David Jackson) in February. More information will follow.

Colorado Chapter

President: Susie Knight
lassothecowgirl@yahoo.com

It's been a busy year for our chapter. Our 4th and final WMA-CO Showcase of the 2017 season was held in Cortez, Colorado at the Cortez Cultural Center. Chapter Secretary and long-time member, James Michael, spearheaded this showcase which was outdoors and followed a Chili Cook-off at the CCC. The chili diners enjoyed the western songs and cowboy poetry presented by our members, Tim Krebs, Lynne Belle Lewis, Terry Nash, Mark Baker, James Michael, and Tom & Donna Hatton. Tim Krebs worked tirelessly the days and weeks prior to the venue, printing and hanging up promo signs,

inviting numerous guests, providing bottled water to the performers, and more. As most of you know, the more our members (whether performing or supporting members) participate and get involved with our Chapter's activities, they'll be rewarded at the end of the year. Tim Krebs rose to the top of the tallies to be awarded our chapter's 2017 TOP HAND AWARD. The



*2017 Top Hand Award -
Tim Krebs*

WMA-CO Officers for 2018 are as follows: President: Susie Knight, Vice President: Donna Hatton, Secretary: Sonja Oliver and Treasurer: Tom Hatton. Our Chapter's Historian is Barbara Richhart.

Barb asks for any photos, news clippings, and WMA-CO memorabilia to be sent to her. Our Chapter's Youth Coordinator is Vic Anderson. Any young musicians, singers, poets, and poets should contact Vic Anderson to learn more about being involved in Colorado Chapter's events. The 2018 Pikes Peak Cowboy Gathering is being coordinated by Tom and Donna Hatton again this year. Contact them to be involved on the planning committee which will include finding sponsors.

Columbia Chapter

President: Duane Nelson
Shortcutpoetry@hotmail.com

Greetings from the great Northwest!! The Columbia Chapter of the WESTERN MUSIC ASSOCIATION has, individually, been very busy this year, busy enough that it would take the entire magazine to list everyone's accomplishments. So we will just hit the "high notes." First, and foremost, at the WMA convention in Albuquerque, NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS (Jennifer Epps and Judy Coder) won the prestigious MARILYN TUTTLE BEST of the BEST HARMONY award!! Kudos to the ladies! And THE HANSON FAMILY

Chapter Update

Continued from page 23

won the OPEN GROUP HARMONY award. Hats off to the HANSONS!! Almeda Bradshaw (also of the Mon-Daks Chapter) had her song, "LARRY DEVER DID," nominated for SONG of the YEAR, and both Tom Swearingen and Duane Nelson were in the top five finalists for MALE COWBOY POET of the YEAR. Pretty good list!! On October 8, the chapter had their annual meeting at The Bingen Theater in Bingen, WA. In addition to a business meeting, there was also a showcase for a number of artists. Some of the performers were new to the Chapter and a few were old members that were welcomed back. These included Janet Bailey, Coyote Joe Sartin, Dave McClure, Lonnie Shurtleff, and Kathy Moss. Also performing (the Old Hands!) were Ned Bodie, Ted Hunt, Tim Jenkins, Lynn Kopelke, Lauralee Northcott, Barb Nelson, Panhandle Cowboys (JB Barber and Farmer Dave Fulf), Duane Nelson, and Notable Exceptions. Crowd size was a bit down from previous years due to some unseasonably great weather, but the crowd was really into the music and poetry, and many said it was the best Showcase we have had so far. At the Business meeting, the entire slate of Officers was voted back in, so you folks are stuck with us for another year! Prez; Duane Nelson, VicePrez; Tom Swearingen, Secretary: Judy Coder, Treasurer; Lynn Kopelke. The main thrust of the meeting was what to do with our monetary fund. It was decided to use the dollars to reach out to the youth of the Pacific Northwest to encourage younger folks interested in the WMA and Cowboy Poetry and Music. Well, that's about enough for now. We hope to see y'all down the trail!!!

East Coast Chapter

President: Aspen Black

aspen@aspenblackcowgirl.com

After a successful inaugural festival as a chapter in April, several WMAECC members teamed up again in July, to participate in the National Day of the Cowboy Festival held on the grounds

of the Booth Western Art Museum in Cartersville, GA. In August, Carol Markstrom, Aspen Black, and Alice Black were all CD of the Year recipients at the National Traditional Country Music Association Festival in IA. Cindy Smith and her stage partner "Fuzzy" (Robert Brooks) were awarded the Western Legends Award at the Roy Rogers Festival in OH. Tom Hawk finished recording a new CD and performed at a conference in CA. Kerry Grombacher made a four-month performance tour that made a full circle around the perimeter of the United States - from AZ, to the pacific northwest, below the Canadian border, down the eastern seaboard. Aspen and Alice Black also toured this summer, performing in nine central and mid-western states, and Carol Markstrom completed a second performance tour of Alaska! The WMAECC is working on planning our second annual chapter event at the Pine Mountain Gold Museum in Villa Rica, GA on April 14, 2018. Kerry Grombacher is producing this event again in conjunction with Wesley Berninger of the museum. As always, individual chapter members continue to receive awards and nominations for their



Alice Black

work and travel countless miles to take western music and poetry to audiences across the US. WMAECC members may not live close together, geographically, but support one another greatly and are making huge strides to bring western music and poetry to audiences across the country, old and new!

Kansas Chapter

President: Orin Friesen

orin@rbanjoranch.com

In 2018, the Kansas Chapter of the WMA will take charge of a mobile stage that was acquired and upgraded by Roger Ringer, former Vice President of the Kansas chapter. Roger Ringer, also an awarded life member of the WMA, has provided a valuable asset to the Kansas

Chapter for training young and new talent, presenting the chapter statewide by Western package shows, assisting membership drives, community charity shows, and entertaining under-served communities in Kansas. A great hurrah for the dedication, follow through and foresight of our own Roger Ringer. Thank You Roger! Songwriting classes and presentations will continue at WMA Kansas Chapter meetings in 2018. Again, the focus will be led by Chapter Vice President, Jim Farrell. Based on the NSAI style songwriting precepts of a "constructive only" attitude, Western Music is finding new talent, encouraging writers and preserving the genre by new bodies of work here in Kansas. Watch for the new music on new albums, on radio/podcasts and hopefully at the WMA Award festivities! The Kansas Chapter of the WMA has been cited as supporting The 150th Chisholm Trail Celebration and Festival in Abilene Kansas in an auspicious way. The festival, over the last 2 years, has exploded into a possible giant of Western Festivals in America and Canada. Led tirelessly by Michael Hooks of the Abilene Historical Society, Western Music has a surging new event in Abilene, Kansas. The Kansas Chapter Collaborative show, plus many individual member shows, were all a part of the backbone of the Western Music entertainment for 2016 and 2017. Red Steagall and The Bunkhouse Band, performing in 2016 and 2017, was joined in 2017 by Michael Martin Murphey and the Sons of the Pioneers. During the 3-day festival in 2017, over 30,000 tickets were sold. That's pretty well-done for the 2nd year in my humble opinion. Thanks Michael Hook for your tenacity and vision. We'll see ya in 2018! Due largely to the efforts of Kansas Cowboy Poet Lariat and WMA-KS member, Ron Wilson, the new Cowboy Up TV show is up and running. Produced by Wilson, the program, which features music and poetry by WMA-KS members, can be seen on the Cox cable channels all across Kansas.

Upper Michigan-NE Wisconsin Chapter

President: Tom Betts

hrambler@bayland.net

Our Yooper Chapter is starting a three-year plan. First year, to contact media outlets and let them know our mission.

The Yooper territory was the land of Longfellow's Legend of Hiawatha and the land of sky blue waters. Ernest Hemmingway wrote his famous novel of the Big Two Hearted River and Nick Adams the lead character. Year Two, the word will be out and new members will join. Year Three, we should be rolling along. We have already been contacted by the group Rusted Spurs. They are snowbirds and we look forward to working with them come spring when they return from Arizona. The WMA is a great organization. We thank Marsha Short for all the backing we will need to accomplish the WMA Mission.

Montana-Dakotas Chapter
President: Almeda Bradshaw
almedam2b@gmail.com

The MON-DAKS Chapter is now pretty much in winter hibernation mode, as far as scheduled chapter events go. We had a great two-day showcase during the NILE in Billings, MT, kicking off with a ribbon cutting ceremony welcoming the chapter into the Billings Chamber of Commerce. Everyone involved in the showcase considered the chapter's effort worthwhile, so chapter president, Almeda Bradshaw, will continue to spearhead this mid-October annual event with plans to expand it into a multi-day "Cowboy Code Gathering" with a strong focus on education and



NILE MDC Showcase Performers

working with Billings elementary schools to spread the music and mission of the WMA.

New Mexico Chapter
President: James Michael
mhosea@zianet.com

Since our last update, the WMA-New Mexico Chapter (WMA-NM) has been wrapping up things for 2017 and lining up things for 2018. Our hard-working

members presented a fine presence at the WMA Convention this year. Hopefully, those of you who were in Albuquerque for the 2017 convention were able to stop by the New Mexico Chapter table and visit with us for a few minutes. It's always a pleasure to see old friends and meet new ones during convention week. In addition, our liaisons to the City of Albuquerque (Betty Carter and Bernard Carr) did a first-rate job of lining up performance opportunities for WMA members during the convention at several of the businesses in Old Town. We hope you all had a great time at the convention this year and are looking forward to next year. By the time you read this, our fourth annual Western Music Christmas Concert will have taken place at the African American Performing Arts Center on the New Mexico State Fairgrounds in Albuquerque. The concert was held on December 7 and once again featured The Flying J Wranglers from Ruidoso, New Mexico. This was our last concert for 2017. We would like to take this opportunity to again thank our Concert Coordinator, Marion Rutherford for the incredible job he has done these past two years. In October, we elected an outstanding slate of chapter officers for 2018. We are pleased to announce that the WMA-NM officers for 2018 are President – Joe Brown, Vice-President – Mark Smith, Secretary – Joy Burns and Treasurer – Betty Carter. We believe that this fine group of officers will lead us to a banner year in 2018.

Oklahoma Chapter
President: Donnie Poindexter
cowboydp51@gmail.com

WMA Oklahoma Chapter members attending the annual convention in Albuquerque included chapter president Donnie Poindexter as well as performing members Daryl Knight, Bill Poindexter, Dawn Anita Plumlee, Francine Robison and supporting members Anthony and Tracy Kolodziej. Donnie Poindexter, Jim Poindexter and Bill Poindexter, performing as Steeldust, will once again be providing entertainment for the Old Fort Days Dandies annual benefit Chili Supper

and Auction at Kay Rogers Park in Fort Smith, Arkansas on January 13, 2018. The Oklahoma WMA Chapter has scheduled a Western Music Showcase on Saturday, March 24 at the famous Hen House Cafe in Okemah, OK. The Hen House has opened a beautiful western-themed auditorium. We are looking forward to the event at this venue centrally located in our state. Multiple WMA entertainers will perform, both singers and poets. Currently slated to appear are Robert Beene, Francine Roark Robinson, Roy Madden, Daryl Knight, Steeldust, A Little Farther West, Curtis Krigbaum, Danny Carl Williams, Ron Secoy, Scott and Leigh Ann Matthews, Jim Crouch, Mike and Doris Merritt. Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum director Leslei Fisher has announced the second annual Cowboy Way Festival to be held on the Museum grounds near Ardmore, OK the first weekend of May. Daytime entertainment will be presented by the WMA with the Texas chapter showcasing on Friday (4th) and our Oklahoma chapter showcasing on Saturday (5th). Western swing trio, Hot Club of Cowtown, performs at the Bartlesville, OK Community Center on February 2 and at the Vanguard Club in Tulsa, OK on March 24.

Texas Chapter
President: Johnie Terry
Wildwesttoys1@aol.com

After twenty years of being known as "Campfire Tales" at the Forst Worth Stock Show and Rodeo, the event will become the Texas Chapter's showcase event and will be known as "Music and Poetry of the West." The venue will be the same as in year's past and will be held January 22, 23 and 24. The chapter's second event will be held in Gene Autry, Oklahoma on May 4. It will be a joint venture with the Oklahoma WMA Chapter and will feature a full weekend of music and poetry and will include many western movie personalities including Clu Gulagar, James Drury, Ken Farmer, Gary Clarke and Roberta Shore. Friday's showcase will include Texas Chapter musicians and poets. Saturday's showcase will be presented by the WMA Oklahoma chapter.

Continued on page 30



TUNE YOURSELF

Exercises for the Upper Back

Samantha Meyer Gallegos

I don't know about you, but my back, especially my upper back, has been hurting quite a bit lately. Why? I've been maintaining unnatural positions for extended periods of time. That's what happens—poses friendly to playing our instruments might not be so friendly to our bodies. And not many types of pain affect your mood and quality of life more than the burning of upper back pain.

Thankfully, there are exercises out there to help!

Why Your Upper Back May Hurt

Each person is different, everyone moves differently, and so everyone experiences back pain differently. And according to The Ochsner Journal, Louisiana's Ochsner Clinic Foundation's publication, the treatment of back pain costs upwards of \$100 billion in the United States alone. That's a lot of pain.

Anything that "puts pressure on your back muscles or nerves," usually "minor strains, sprains and overuse," can cause back pain according to the University of Washington Medicine's Department of Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine. This includes repetitive motions, hunching, looking down a lot, and clenching your shoulders when you are feeling stressed. If you remember the previous "Tune Yourself" article about the importance of proper posture, muscles that aren't used appropriately become overstretched, overused, and overtight. The surrounding muscles overcompensate, which results in additional tingling, burning pain in your upper back, shoulders, and neck.

The Exercises

Unlike several of the previous articles in the "Tune Yourself" series, the following exercises for treating upper back pain are simple but still just as effective! The only extra piece of equipment you need is a tennis ball, and you'll need to find a flat wall and doorjamb.

1. Roll your shoulders backward and down several times. Imagine "pushing your shoulder blades down into your pockets."
2. Place one hand and forearm flat against a wall or doorjamb. If your right arm is against the wall, turn to your left. If your left arm is against the wall, turn

to your right. Turn 90 degrees or until you feel a deep stretch in your back and pectoral muscles (but not pain). You will feel more of a stretch in your pectoral muscles, but the goal is to get a stretch in both areas.

3. Lie on your back and clasp your hands together. Straighten your arms, lift them slowly over your head and down to your legs, then return to your starting position. Repeat the movement several times.
4. Remain laying down. Place your arms at your hips and turn your palms up. Bring your arms up to the sides of your head, then slowly back down to your hips. Think about making snow angels on your floor without the leg movements. Repeat several times.
5. Sit with your back flat against a wall. Place a tennis ball between your upper back and the wall. Move slowly, rolling the tennis ball along the wall until it hits a tender or tight spot and maintain just enough pressure to activate the tenderness (don't overdo it). Remain in that position for 30 seconds to a minute, then move on to the next spot. Think of it as a self-massage for the tight and sore points in your back, neck, and shoulders.

It is important to note that these exercises are not used to treat serious, acute, or chronic conditions such as bulging or herniated disks, bone spurs, or any other type of degenerative disease, which must be seen and treated by a doctor. UW's Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine writes that acute pain usually lasts for one to seven days, subacute pain lasts from seven days to seven weeks, and chronic pain lasts for more than three months. Pain can range from mild to severe and is constant, even when you sleep.

As always, many thanks must be given to Veronica Coffing COTA/L and Amy Martinez PT, DPT for their help and input in writing this article. Of course, we can't end this article without our standard disclaimer: the above exercises should not be taken as medical advice. Please consult your physician before beginning any exercise regimen. Never exercise to or past the point of pain, either. These exercises are supposed to help, not hurt!

Until next time!



Performer's Perspective

A Chance to Step Up

~By Leah Sawyer

Every time I get together with the WMA youth chapter, I am constantly reminded that we are the ones to carry on this music that is so close to all of our hearts. I've always heard this and I've always thought that I understood, but this year, I felt like we, as a youth chapter, had to step up in a way that we never had before and certainly in a way that I would not have expected.

As the program manager for the youth chapter, I had the privilege of coordinating the youth workshop (with a lot of help from my mom, Ms. Marsha and Ms. Jane. Without them there would be no workshop to speak of!). I was thrilled when over the summer, Jon Harnum, author of the books, "The Practice of Practice" and "Practice Like This" agreed to come speak to our youth chapter! I was ecstatic! I corresponded with him all summer and everything was a go until the Monday before the convention. I got an email with the subject line reading, "Delayed" and my heart stopped. Jon Harnum was on his way from Alaska and was going to spend some time with family before coming to the convention when his RV broke down and there was absolutely no way he could get to the convention in time to do our workshop! I was so happy that he was safe and would ultimately be able to repair his RV, but I was suddenly very unsure of what this workshop that I had worked so hard on would end up looking like.

I started shooting out emails faster than I ever had in my life, looking for some practice researcher to talk to the youth chapter, but as you would imagine, there aren't a whole lot of those around. I was about to settle for a different workshop topic when a fiddler and practice researcher, Nate Lee sent me his workshop outlines and handouts and told me that I needed to do the workshop myself. I was slightly terrified, but I saw in the midst of this enigma, an opportunity to step up to the challenge. An opportunity to begin carrying a part of this torch that so many of you have tirelessly carried for so long. So, I did the workshop, and although I was no Jon Harnum, my efforts bettered my knowledge, gave me more confidence in my abilities and humbled me all at the same time.

Friday morning, as I was standing in front of the bathroom mirror practicing my workshop, a text came from Jane Leche. The plan had been for her to lead a big portion of the youth activities but at the last minute she couldn't make it and it was up to Jenna, Hailey and myself to lead the entire youth meeting. I didn't know it at the time, but Bill Barwick was in the hospital dying and Ms. Jane had gone to be with him during his last few hours.

Our hearts broke when we heard the news. What an amazing person whose shoes seem impossible to fill. He will be forever missed. Despite the horrible circumstance, I watched the youth chapter step up as Bill Barwick was in the hospital and Jane Leche was there by his side. As Vice President of the youth chapter, I watched Jenna Thunborg step up and lead the group in a way that I hadn't seen from her before. I watched Hailey Sandoz, secretary

of the youth chapter, put people at ease and make everyone so comfortable, a skill she is so good at that I marvel. I saw Abby Payne agree to become the youth chapter media director when she saw that there was a spot that needed to be filled. I saw the youth chapter step up to the plate.

I could write forever about other amazing things I saw from the youth chapter this year. To try and summarize, Alice Black's instruments were stolen, yet she came through and entertained like a pro despite the emotionally and physically draining situation she was thrown into. When extreme sound issues occurred in the middle of Maria McCarthur's performance (who knew sound system feedback could seriously sound like falling tables and gunshots) I watched her handle the situation with a professionalism unsurpassed by many a seasoned performer. Catherine Thompson yodeled beautifully and won the youth yodeling contest the first time she ever entered! I could tell how hard Jenna and Kasey Thunborg work, especially after they took a well-deserved, first place in the youth harmony contest and Abby Payne and Caroline Grace entered their very first year at the convention and got runner up! My heart swelled with pride when my amazing brother, David Sawyer received the Crescendo award! Carrie Brown, a fantastic violinist stepped out of her comfort zone and fiddled so well! Belinda Gail's RV also broke down (what are the odds!) and she wasn't able to help with the youth chapter awards show song. Juni Fisher also had to leave before the Saturday night awards show and we as a group had to make sure logistics were taken care of for awards show night.

WMA, this year, your youth chapter stepped up to the plate. Incredible people invested in us even through the difficult situations. Three Trails West, Judy James, Marsha Short and my amazing mamma, Kathy Sawyer (just to name a few) we thank you!

Anytime youth is involved in something, you will often hear that the organization, the skill set or whatever the case may be is in good hands. Although this might be true, I feel like "looks like we're in good hands!" has become a little bit of a cliché term. I think sometimes more credit is due to the people who have invested in the younger generation. I want to thank all of you on behalf of the WMA youth chapter for entrusting us with your music. Thank you for giving us a chance to step up to the plate. Thank you for believing in us. Thank you for investing in us. I am honored to be a part of the incredible group of young people that I got to spend time with at the convention this year. Observing the attitude of teamwork and togetherness from the youth chapter that I did this year, I think that no matter how cliché, the "good hands" term might be true. But, I don't think "good" is quite the word. Western music is in a kind, hard-working, driven team of hands and I am honored to call myself part of that group. I promise to try to honor the traditions in this amazing genre of music and to build on what you all have entrusted us with to the best of my ability. On behalf of the WMA youth chapter, thank you for letting us be a part of your music.

In Memoriam

Bill Barwick - A Life Well Lived

By Corinne Joy Brown, Denver, CO



For more than three decades, music fans have enjoyed the gifts of a rare talent in the Western Music industry, the late Bill Barwick, of Denver, Colorado. Barwick left us all too soon for that endless frontier in the sky on November 10, 2017, after complications due to a stroke. He was in Albuquerque, New Mexico at the time, attending the 2017 WMA convention and doing what he loved

best, being with colleagues and friends, all devoted to keeping Western music alive.

Bill leaves behind a canon of treasured original songs and covers recorded on nine exceptional albums, celebrating a way of life he may not have lived personally, but understood better than many who did. Captivated by the Rockies and the life of the cowboy, Barwick embraced both, committing himself for over 30 years to the efforts of Colorado's legendary all-volunteer Alpine Rescue Team, as well to the State's wide-open spaces. Over his long career, he rode the Continental Divide with packer Tim Murphy, entertained the Roundup Riders of the Rockies in Colorado's high country, drove hundreds of miles to perform at Western music gatherings in rural locations throughout the West, and took the time to know and understand the people he sang about. He was in fact, a cowboy at heart.

Blessed with a voice as deep as a windswept canyon, and a true master of the acoustic guitar, Barwick won a Wrangler Award in 2013 for his CD *The Usual Suspects* in the category "Outstanding Traditional Western Music Album." The Wrangler awards, bestowed by the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum located in Oklahoma City, OK, are presented each year for outstanding achievement in the advancement of contemporary Western arts.

Bill also won the Academy of Western Artists 2005 Will Rogers Award for "Male Vocalist of the Year" and in 2006, Power Source Magazine named "There Ain't No Quit" its Number One Record.

Barwick's memorable voice had also been heard as the official television spokesperson for Encore's "Westerns"

channel for over a decade, as well as the voice of the talking buffalo head at Denver's international airport. Many may have heard him as the voiceover for the State of Wyoming's television commercials, sponsored by the State's tourism board, as well.

The Western Music Association recognized Barwick in 2009 and 2015 as the Male Performer of the Year and honored him with multiple nominations in numerous categories. Through Bill, we met many courageous citizens and felt the remarkable history and spirit of the West. We listened spellbound to stories of grit, tenacity and romance, as well as tall tales that put a smile on every face.

One of Bill's most important performances took place every year since 1990 as emcee, stage manager and performer at the beloved Walnut Valley Festival in Winfield, Kansas. To appreciative audiences, he graced their stages with wit, soul and the utmost professionalism. As emcee, he smoothly transitioned one performance to the next, a skill exceeded only by his musical genius when scheduled to perform as one of the West's most consummate interpreters.

Although born and raised back East, Barwick came West to work in radio in the eighties and never left. His first ensemble, Sons of the Tumbleweed, composed of Bill, Alec Childress, and Johnny Neil, can be heard on his earliest recordings. For many holiday seasons in Denver, the trio was booked by Denver's mega-airport, DIA, to greet and entertain travelers. In 1994, bass player Steve McCartney replaced Childress, and a lifelong friendship as well as musical bond was formed. The pair traveled to countless performances together, including the popular Colorado Cowboy Classic and the Arizona Cowboy Poetry Gathering, among many others. When not on the road, Barwick could be found each Saturday night at Denver's famed Buckhorn Exchange, a historic bar and restaurant established in 1893. Along with saddle pal, folk artist Roz Brown on autoharp, they regaled a packed house with songs and stories of the Old West for decades. If you loved Western music, there wasn't a better place to be in Denver on the weekends.

Bill Barwick is survived by his younger brother Ian Barwick, DDS, of Massachusetts and countless friends who wish he still had another mile to go. For those of us who knew him, the words of Ian Tyson ring true, "I'm a better man for just the knowin' of you." 

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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.

No, don't flip pages looking for it...you found it! The column has a new name. Since 2004, as "Western Air," it has covered Western Music broadcasters, personalities and issues of concern. But we feel "The Western World Tour" better describes the "tours" and even "detours" we take (and intend to take)!!

As far as the show of that name goes, we were most gratified at the reaction, particularly after hyping it in this column for a full year! Attendees seemed to feel it was a success and that revealing some of the legitimately "Western" music that comes from the rest of the world was very much worth doing. Let me extend my deepest appreciation to the artists who worked so hard to learn the songs and perform them: The High Country Cowboys, Michael & Donna Coy, Almeda Bradshaw, James Michael, Dan McCorison, The Cowboy Way...and a special thank you to Jim Jones (for handling two additional songs beyond the three he sang with the Cowboy Way)! And Dan McCorison, James Michael and Almeda Bradshaw, who also took on extra work late in the game when certain others failed to honor commitments to the project. I am so grateful for their talent and professionalism. I had planned something else for this inaugural column using the WWT name, but so many people have asked for a song list and info from the Western World Tour Show, we'll happily furnish it now.

To kick things off, from England came Clint Bradley's frisky "Riding After Midnight" as done by the High Country Cowboys. Next up, as discovered on a Cowboy Celtic CD, you heard the plaintive Scottish ballad "Drover Road To Amulree" with Donna & Michael Coy performing. German flowed next in "Es Hangt Pferdenhalfter an der Wand" (The Halter Hanging On The Wall), a creation of singer/producer Wolfgang "Ronny" Roloff, a translation of mine with Mariam Funke, sung bilingually by The Cowboy Way. Then Michael Coy returned to our stage for a song from Luxembourg's Claude Weber (a.k.a. Buffalo C. Wayne the European Texan!) "Geronimo Never Gave Up." Representing Italy and France, the High Country Cowboys served up the "Theme From 'Lucky Luke,'" followed by Yours Truly with Jim Jones and our whole talented audience singing along on a song from China's Kacek province I translated called "Mutong Ge" (Cowboy Song). Next we saluted our new Australian WMA Hall Of Fame inductee, the prolific Slim Dusty, with two of his best bush ballads "Plains Of Peppimenarti" sung by Dan McCorison and The Cowboy Way then rendered "Leave Him in The Long Yard" (and it's fortunate we did as oddly no sample of Slim Dusty's music was presented for his induction ceremony later that night)!! Then came James Michael with one called "A Real New Zealand Cowboy Song" written and first recorded by Rex & Noele Franklin. The High Country Cowboys next swung the Japanese song "My Cowboy Boots" from Tokyo entertainer/restaurant J.T. Kanehira and Almeda Bradshaw closed the first half with famed Hawaiian paniolo

balladeer Kindy Sproat's "Pu U' Huluhulu" (Hill With The Hair). An audio ran (that some missed) with excerpts of songs from Iceland, England, Germany, Turkey, Tuva and Australia. Then it was on to The Philippines with Dan McCorison singing my (and Heddy Long's) translation of Fred Panopio's "Anak Ni Markado" (Son/Child Of Markado), We swung across to Mexico for movie cowboy Antonio Aguilar's "El Cantador" (The Singer) with James Michael's bilingual performance of a translation of mine (with Noberta Fresquez). We honored the underserved cowboy culture of the American Indian (singer/actor/cartoonist Vincent Craig's "Coffee Chili" with Jim Jones, then Clarence Jojola & The Isleta Poorboys' "Indian Rodeo Cowboy" with the High Country Cowboys). And we revealed to our surprised audience the Florida Cracker culture (Dan McCorison gave us Benjamin deHart's "Cowhunter Dreams" and James Michael sang Frank Thomas' "Old Cracker Cowman"). A rousing original from The Cowboy Way about a Scotsman pledging "It's A Cowboy I Will Be" preceded the full cast joining them on Canadian legend Gary Fjellgaard's moving "Falcon and The Cowboy," which served as our finale. Good show!!!

Anyone who is interested further will appreciate knowing the show was recorded for archival purposes and will hopefully be posted at some future date, with guitar chords for the songs, for all to enjoy, download and (optimally) choose to learn. We urge our participating artists to retain the songs in their repertoires as positive proof there really is a big wide world of Western Music out there! And we further urge our membership to insist on the WMA's international promotion of Western Music. "Ours" and "theirs!" 🐾



Chapter Update

Continued from page 25

Utah Chapter

President: Brad Elmer

e-mail: hollowstar.ent@gmail.com

Elections are over but not the duration of the previous officers! We are in for another year and we are not opposed to that! Brad Elmer, as president, David Anderson as Vice-President, Sam DeLeew as secretary. Retained are Cindy Argyle, Facebook and Vern Hill, treasurer. The WMA Convention has also come and gone, but our representatives from Antelope Island State Park (Curator Clay Shelley and his wife Stephanie) experienced their first time going to Albuquerque. They expressed their excitement over meeting new people and answering questions about Antelope Island and the WMA co-sponsored Cowboy Legends Gathering held on the Island. "We now see what you were talking about, when the Chapter membership was urged to attend!" Clay and Stephanie were also put to work at the Convention as they tallied the score sheets for the Cowboy Poetry Competition! Our annual Christmas Party was a huge success with 36 in attendance. Village Inn provided the space and food for the evening and the Utah Chapter members provided music and poetry in keeping with the Christmas season. Santa gift bags donned the tables, filled with candy and nuts for each person present. The workers at Village Inn took membership forms and copies of the Western Way and expressed their delight at listening to our party! We have made some converts to cowboy poetry and cowboy music! Our sincere condolences have gone out to Anita Crane, at the loss of her wonderful husband, Bruce. Our WMA family sent cards, food and prayers of comfort to Neets. Music was played for her and her family, texts, emails and phone calls expressed the WMA's love for Neets. Neets lost her loved one and we all lost a good, good friend in Bruce. With 2018 just around the corner, we are making plans for a fun filled year.

One thing for sure, the Utah Chapter family is alive and well, and in full support of one another! 2018 should be another successful year for all of us!

Western Wordsmiths Chapter:

President: Geoff "Poppa Mac" Mackay

e-mail: poppamac@hotmail.com

The Western Wordsmiths Chapter is here to: "To produce, promote and preserve the Tales, Stories, and Poems of Western Culture in Written or oral form" You can tell the Holiday season is upon us. With this being my last official report it's gonna be a little bit personal. I hope everyone who was able to attend the Convention enjoyed their time and fellowship. Congratulations to all the nominees and winners. Just because the weather's getting colder doesn't mean our members are slowing down from attending, performing, and headlining at Cowboy Gatherings throughout the country. I just know our Chapter will be well represented in 2018 as well I'm looking forward to see the direction the new Executive Committee takes the Chapter in the upcoming year. Now the personal part. Thank you for your trust and support over the last two years, it's been my pleasure representing the Western Wordsmiths Chapter as president. To the rest of the Executive Committee thanks for the work. From my house to all of yours I wish everyone a Merry and Blessed Christmas and all the best in 2018.

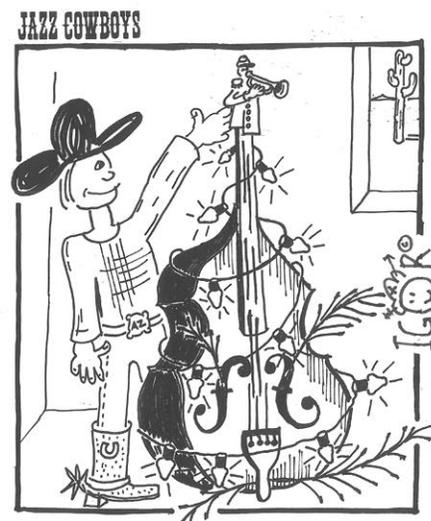
Youth Chapter

Chapter Coordinator: Jane Leche

wmayouthcoordinator@gmail.com

It was another stellar turnout of Youth Chapter (YC) members at the 2017 WMA Convention this year. There were new faces, returning attendees and lots of enthusiasm. The Youth Chapter also held its first official chapter meeting with Vice-President Jenna Thunborg presiding. At the meeting youth members eagerly shared their thoughts and ideas on the future of the Youth Chapter's purpose and roles, communications prospects and building a bigger fan base. YC member Abigail Payne recently joined the WMA Youth

Chapter Officers as the new Social Media Manager. Special recognition also goes to YC members Leah Sawyer for putting the entire youth program together at the convention this year and Hailey Sandoz for jumping in to help. YC members enjoyed many activities at the convention such as the YC Workshop, Youth Showcase, jam sessions and helping with the Awards night. A highlight for the Awards Show audience was the YC's rendition of Eddy Arnold's song Cowboy as the WMA honored his contribution to western music and induction into the Western Music Hall of Fame. Special thanks to all who so generously support the Youth Chapter – especially Eddy Harrison who created a special raffle opportunity by donating one of his beautiful custom-made guitars and the estate of the late Ed Stabler for giving his Western books, music and gear to the convention Consignment Store with all proceeds from both activities going to the Young Performers Education Scholarship Fund. Additional kudos to Stan and Alma Tussing for hosting the annual youth pizza party and to Marsha Short, Judy James, Kimberly Linker, and Kathy Sawyer for their invaluable assistance with the youth program this year. For more information on the WMA Youth Chapter, please contact Jane Leche, Youth Chapter Coordinator at: wmayouthcoordinator@gmail.com or go to: www.westernmusic.org/youth-chapter.





BUFFHAM'S BUFFOONERY

by Les Buffham



Trippin' With Grandpa (part two)

In last issue [Fall, 2017], I told the story how my friend Jim and his grandpa took a little day trip and on the return stopped for gas. Here's what happened on the rest of the way home.

After Jim filled up the truck and Grandpa's five gallon can with 'the cheap stuff,' they struck out for home. Grandpa didn't see too well without his glasses and he had left them home. I reckon he didn't want to wear them out. He only wore them when he was drivin' and he didn't do much of that any more, just to the post office and to get groceries.

About half way home they passed by one of those protected prairie dog towns that was on both sides of the road. It was early spring and those prairie dogs were goin' after the green stuff that always comes up early on the shoulders of the roads. They were runnin' back and forth across the road and Grandpa exclaimed, "Did you ever see so many cats? Betcha they ain't got many mice around here." Jim just looked at him kinda sideways and didn't say anything.

Later they were gettin' close to town where the highway ran along a little mesa. Grandpa was lookin'

down in the valley on the edge of town when he announced another great discovery. "Boy look at how close together them hay bales are down there! Them boys has got themselves a mighty fine crop. Might be even better if they would clear out some of them trees." Jim said he didn't have the heart to tell him what he thought were hay bales were headstones in the cemetery.

When they got to Grandpa's house Jim packed his can of gas out back and put it in the shed. Then he told the old feller once again, "Grandpa, why don't you come out and stay with us for awhile? We still have an extra bedroom and I know you like my wife's cookin'. We'd be glad to have you around."

Grandpa just shuffled off toward the door and muttered something like "Thanks, but I don't want to be no trouble." Jim just shook his head, got in the truck and headed home.

Why do you think Grandpa would turn down such a great offer that included good food? Perhaps it was because he couldn't see a great deal when it was right in front of him or maybe just because us old folks can be kinda stubborn sometimes, huh? 

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In The Spotlight...

by Marvin O'Dell

...On November 11, the two-time Grammy Award-winning western music group **Riders In The Sky** celebrated 40 years on the trail! "For the past 40 years, we have done our best to preserve a precious, beautiful, historic piece of the American musical mosaic," says Ranger Doug. "For the present, and for all the present moments over these 40 years, we have just tried to have great fun, entertaining ourselves while giving laughter, escape, joy, wonder, and a little bit of education, over the course of some 7,200 appearances." *The Western Way* congratulates the Riders for their diligence in staying true to the music that has traditionally informed and educated us all about the west.

... After spending over a week in Albuquerque at the WMA convention, **Jean Prescott** came home to have her truck stolen while grocery shopping. However, police found the vehicle two days later. There was no damage, but about \$700 worth of stuff in the truck was missing. The thieves were apprehended a few days later in Midland, TX.

...The 2017 National Senior Pro Rodeo Finals was recently held at Panquitch, Utah, where **Yvonne Hollenbeck's** husband, Glen, won both the Finals Average as well as the World Championship in the 68-and-over tie down calf roping.

...**Donnie Poindexter** released a new album in June titled *Cowboy Life*. The album contains four originals and eight of his favorite covers. It was produced by Donnie's son, Donnie A Poindexter.

...**Aspen Black** is recording a new poetry album called *Tales From the Road*; the new set of poems from Aspen is projected for release in early 2018.

...Singer/songwriter **Juni Fisher**, under the pen name J.A. Fisher, has signed a book publishing contract with a traditional publisher for a novel. The book will be available on the market in late 2018.

...**Peggy Malone** and **Terry Nash** will be hosting a monthly Western Music Cowboy Poetry Radio Show on RANCH RADIO 98.1 out of Grand Junction, CO in the spring. Also, Peggy's daughter Beth Malone is slated to play the angel in the upcoming stage show *Angels in America*, a part previously played by Meryl Streep.

...**Dolan Ellis** has released a new Christmas CD and book about *THE I-17 MYSTERY CHRISTMAS TREE*, which he has named "Scrubby." Someone has been sneaking out there and decorating this little cedar tree along I-17 in Arizona for over 30 years and nobody seems to know who it is. The book consists of photos of the tree, a short history of the tree, a poem that speaks to its deeper meaning, the lyrics to the song Dolan has written, and a CD of the song. Check it all out at www.dolanellis.net.

... **Barry Ward** has released two new albums. One is a Christmas CD titled *Northern Light*; the other is a western project titled **Coyotes and Cattle**. Also, **Victoria Ward** has released a sequel to her first book. This one is titled *Prune Pie, A Second Helping*. Check them out at www.BarryWardMusic.com.

...**Royal Wade Kimes** the Gentleman Outlaw, and Nighthorse Films are shooting *Bittersweet*, a western done in music and narration. Shooting on location in Arkansas and Oklahoma, the film will feature award-winning actor Don Gregory, World Champion bull rider Denny Flynn, and Leslee Martin, former Miss Oklahoma Rodeo Queen. Kimes gained permission to shoot in Judge Isaac Parker's Courthouse in Fort Smith, creating an authentic feel for the film.

...In January, **Almeda Bradshaw** recorded the song "Briskly Venture, Briskly Roam: The Ballad of Yellowstone Kelly", a song commissioned by the Billings (MT) Chamber of Commerce to commemorate Luther Sage (Yellowstone) Kelly, one of the most notable American veterans, scouts, and warriors of his time. The song will be marketed through the chamber as a tourist souvenir with funds going to the preservation of the Yellowstone Kelly interpretive site located in Swords Park in Billings.

...In January, **Doris Daley** and **Eli Barsi** released their first-ever collaboration CD, *Once Upon the West*. Featuring 21 tracks, Doris and Eli tell the story of the west as seen through the eyes of an Alberta western poet and a Saskatchewan singer-songwriter. Their web sites are: www.elibarsi.com and www.dorisdaley.com.

...The **Yampa Valley Boys** are no more. Steve Jones and John Fisher have decided to set the duo aside to pursue other interests. Steve has released a brand new solo project titled *Picasso*. The title cut is a song co-written with **Les Buffham**. Steve's web site is www.irishcoyotemusic.com.

...*Outside the Fence* is the title of the new western CD from **Ron Christopher**. The album was released in December containing two singles that were pre-released on CDBaby, "May You Always Find a Way to be a Cowboy" and "Dakota."

... **Leah Sawyer** took first place in the Red Steagall Cowboy Gathering fiddle contest in October.

...In December, **Marshal Pioneer Pepper** of the old west singing group Pioneer Pepper & The Sunset Pioneers released a new album titled *Old Hymns of the Cowboys*. This is his fifth CD project. Jack Sorenson, one of Leanin' Tree's best-selling Western greeting card artists, did the album cover art!

...**Carol Markstrom** appeared on Tucson's Morning Blend TV program (ABC Affiliate) to promote the Western Writers of America compilation CD titled *Pen & Ink, Voice and Strings: Echoes from the New Frontier*. She was interviewed about the CD and performed her song "Sky Rock" from the CD.

...In October, **Kristyn Harris** was awarded as the Pro Cowboy Country Artist's 2017 Entertainer of the Year and Female Vocalist of the Year, and she performed on the awards show which aired nationally on RFD-TV's The Cowboy Channel. Thanksgiving week saw Kristyn returning for her 3rd European tour with three concerts in France.

...**Marty Davis** has released a bit of a "different" CD. It's all classic country – songs from Conway Twitty, Lefty Frizzell, Hank Williams, George Jones, Merle Haggard, and Ray Price. The album was recorded and produced in Nashville. Marty assures us, however, that he is not giving up his western music.

...**Notable Exceptions** spent a week in the recording studio as part of their 5-month winter tour. Their new album, *Souvenir*, was officially released in January.

... The title cut from the **Richard Elloyan and Steve Wade** CD *Forty Miles of Famous* is featured in a new full-length documentary called *We Blew It*, a look at the influential movies, actors, and directors of the 70's. Richard and Steve have also released their new CD, *Up for Adoption*.

...**Jack Spurgin, Leah Sawyer, David Sawyer** and **Kathy Sawyer** (mom) all participated in the debut performance of *Celebrating Randy Travis* with **Dave Alexander**. The sold-out show, which raised money for the Randy Travis Foundation, featured **Randy Travis** on stage adding vocals to some of his most well-known songs. The audience cried and cheered as they encouraged Randy in his post-stroke progress towards greater health.

...**Jim and Bobbi Jean Bell** now call the Land of Enchantment home. A dream of a move to Albuquerque has been fulfilled for both their home and their OutWest online Western retail business. Next are plans for in-home "OutWest Live" events and the search for a new venue for their OutWest Shop. Bobbi Jean continues to co-host radio shows "Campfire Café" with Gary Holt and "The Writer's Block" with Jim Christina.

...In October, **Kerry Grombacher** performed at the 13th Annual Starburst Storytellers' Festival in Anderson, SC. The event was held at the Anderson Public Library and at schools in the locale. At four middle schools, Kerry performed a concert and presented workshops on storytelling and writing stories in song and prose. This was Kerry's second appearance at this prestigious event.

... After four years from songwriting to mastering, **Allen and Jill Kirkham** have released their new CD. The traditional western album is titled *Sunrise on the Prairie*.

...**Mikki Daniel** and **Doug Figs** released a duet album in December titled *Thinking of You*. Mikki is entering her final semester of college and hopes to graduate in May. She is also announcing that she is going to be an aunt once again - to a baby girl due in May.

...The Pro Cowboy Country Artist Association had its first awards show air on national television (Dish Network) into 18 million homes. The live taping by the RFD Channel took place in Fort Smith, AR and aired November 12. Check out nominees and winners on www.pccaa.pro. 

MAIL Bag

Send your "letters" via email to: wweditor1@gmail.com

Letter 1

I wanted to respond to the "From the President" column in *The Western Way* [Fall 2017] which I just read. With all due respect, and I truly mean that, I couldn't disagree more with what you said. You describe the WMA as a "charitable organization" and yet I found no mention of this on the organization's website or in the by-laws. It is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization, some of which could legitimately be described as "charitable organizations." However, the purpose of this organization, which is clearly stated, is "*The Western Music Association is an organization that encourages and supports the preservation, performance and composition of historic traditional and contemporary music and poetry of The West.*" In addition, it states "*The Western Music Association and its chapters foster the professional growth of individual performing members.*" I found it interesting that two pages after your column, the Editor's Insight column specifically described the WMA as "a 501c3 organization that has been in existence promoting the music and poetry of the American West..." How do you "promote the music of the American West" without promoting the music of your performers?? I belong to two other professional not-for-profit organizations, the Western Writers of America and Folk Alliance International, and I promise you, the first thing they say to you when you walk in the door is "what can we do for you?" They understand that the most powerful tool in their repertoire for promoting their brand is the material produced by their members...I hope you know that the fact that I disagree with the position you espoused in your column is not intended to be any kind of attack on you personally. I truly respect you and appreciate how hard you have worked over the years to make this organization better. Thanks, **Jim Jones, NM**

President's response: *Mr. Jones and I have personally discussed this matter since receiving his letter. I should have made myself clearer in my column. Although not all 501(c)3 organizations are defined by the federal government as "charitable" organizations, the WMA most*

certainly qualifies for its 501(c)3 non-profit status under charitable, educational, and literary specifications. And the WMA most certainly promotes the music of its performers. In fact, that's the whole point of our mission. What is not a part of our mission is to promote performers of that music. Each performer must take on the responsibility of promoting themselves and their work. The WMA helps them by promoting the music they are writing and performing. In fact, that's pretty much the answer to the question, "What does the WMA do for me?" However, the WMA cannot promote someone to success. That work must be done by the performing artists themselves.

Letter 2

I just read your words in the "From the President . . ." section of *The Western Way* [Fall 2017] . . . it was absolutely the best thing I've ever read about what the WMA should mean to its members. Thank you!!

Theresa Casey, AZ

Letter 3

To those in charge:

I enjoy your magazine. It's fun to read and I'd like to be an Assn. Patron* Member. I got exposed to Slim Dusty in Montana by Senator Conrad Burns in the 80's. He handed me a cassette and said, "You've got to hear this." I was so impressed by his writing, the lyrics. It was years later that I discovered the songs he was singing were Banjo Paterson's poems written at the turn of the 19th century. Aussie's knew, of course, because Banjo is a hero down there. But history gets fuzzy in the northern hemisphere. For instance, he rewrote Banjo's "Waltzing with Matilda" then claimed "coauthorship." Your article about Slim is complimentary, as it should be, but a tip for the Banjo, whose poetry was a big part of Slim's success, is due.

Thanks again for your magazine ... I'm a fan.

Baxter Black, Head Cowboy

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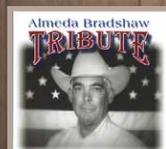
Artist Contact:

Mike Rutherford
mike@rdiinc.us

Arizona Folklore Preserve (AFP) is a non-profit organization where Arizona's songs, legends, poetry and myths are collected, presented for audiences of today, and preserved for the enrichment of future generations. Member of the Western Music Association.

Thank you!

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It was such an honor to receive the 2017 Male Poet of the Year award. Thank you for your support of Western Music and Poetry.



FLOYD BEARD, WESTERN MUSIC ASSOCIATION 2017 MALE POET OF THE YEAR

Floyd Beard, multiple award winning Cowboy Poet, released his most recent poetry CD, "Short Grass Country" in August of 2016.

Contact him at: Short Grass Studios,
P.O. Box 124, Kim, CO 81049 • febeard@yahoo.com
www.floydbeardcowboy.com or 719-740-1000.



O.J. Sikes

O.J. Sikes Reviews



A Musical Note From OJ...

Congrats to all the 2017 nominees and winners who were recognized at the WMA Convention in Albuquerque. It was especially nice to see that almost all of the winners were there to receive their awards! The convention was great fun, as usual, but there's never enough time to talk with all of the friends we see only once a year. Speaking of talking with friends, for those of us from the Northeast (this year, **Al Krtil** from NJ by way of the Bronx, **Joel Klein** from Brooklyn and I, from NJ - although I started out in NC), the question, "how come guys from NY/NJ have an interest in Western music?" always comes up. And it did again this time, so I think it deserves an answer that might also interest folks who wanted to ask but didn't.

There are historical reasons for our love of Western music. We watched cowboy movies as youngsters and listened to Western music on the radio as well, but there's more to the story, especially in the context of the NY/NJ area. The first Western movies ever made were filmed in the early 1900's near the Palisades in NJ, overlooking the Hudson River, just up the hill from my house! Back in those years, until the mid-1930s, folks travelled by ferry across the Hudson because there was no George Washington Bridge.

Ray Whitley got his start in music in NY the early 1930's, working with **Frank Luther**, among others, but made at least part of his living building the George Washington Bridge. Before the bridge was built, **Tex Ritter** enjoyed taking a break from his work in NY, travelling from Manhattan to the forests and fields of NJ to go horseback riding with friends. Tex had found work on Broadway in 1928, around the time **Gene Autry** was looking for a record contract in NY. By the time Tex first went to Hollywood in August of 1936, catching a flight from Newark, NJ, he had developed a following on NY radio, as in Broadway plays. While working on one of those plays, *Green Grow the Lilacs*, Tex became close friends with **Hank Worden** and **Everett Cheatham**. Worden became a popular character actor in Hollywood and Cheatham composed "Blood on the Saddle," one of Tex's most popular recordings.

Earlier, in 1925, **Carl T. Sprague** had recorded the first cowboy hit record, "When the Work's All Done This Fall." He recorded it in Camden, NJ! Also in the 20's, **Carson Jay Robison**, composer of "Little Green Valley," "Goin' Back to

Texas," "Carry Me Back to the Lone Prairie" and many others, landed a recording contract in NY and a job on NY radio as well.

Gene Autry's NY-based friends **Johnny & Frankie Marvin** convinced Gene to develop his own cowboy style rather than continuing to imitate the Singing Brakeman, **Jimmie Rodgers**, and we all know how that turned out. Although Gene went to Hollywood from WLS in Chicago, his first Western records, "Cowboy Yodel" and "Oh for the Wild & Woolly West," were made in NY. In 1932, **Patsy Montana** recorded four songs for RCA's Camden label in Camden, NJ, and she made the first recording of her signature song, "I Wanna Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," in NY in August, 1935.

In the early 1940's, a struggling young **Rex Allen** found a job on a radio station in Trenton, NJ, where he worked until he found a better job near Philadelphia singing in a very popular Summer park called Sleepy Hollow Ranch. From there, he moved to WLS and on to Hollywood after becoming a radio star in Chicago. But he got his start in radio in NJ.

I didn't grow up in the Northeast, but those who did in the 30's, 40's and 50's enjoyed a healthy exposure to Western music on radio, in movies and, as if that weren't enough, the Madison Square Garden Rodeo, with performers that included **Roy Rogers and the Sons of the Pioneers**. With that kind of history behind us, it's no wonder we feel a connection to Western music! Many stars made appearances in NY/NJ in the 50's and 60's, and in more recent years, we've welcomed performances in the NY/NJ area by **Riders in the Sky**, **Liz Masterson & Sean Blackburn**, **Don Edwards**, **Michael Martin Murphey**, **Sourdough Slim**, **R.W. Hampton** and **Ernie Sites**, and Carnegie Hall has hosted Western music concerts featuring "**Dusty**" **Rogers**, **Sons of the San Joaquin**, **The Flying W Wranglers** and **The Prairie Rose Wranglers**, so the tradition continues! 

To submit your CD for review, send to:

O.J. Sikes, 327 Westview Avenue,

Leonia, NJ 07605-1811

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

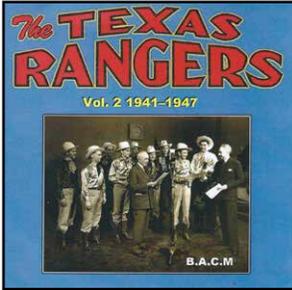
Questions? You can email O.J. at osikes@nj.rr.com

★ ★ ★

THE TEXAS RANGERS

Vol. 2 1941-1947

BACM CD D 577



The Texas Rangers were the first band to work with Gene Autry when he launched his Melody Ranch radio show, appearing on the first 21 episodes of that weekly program in the early 1940's. They also appeared in two of Gene Autry's films, Colorado Sunset in 1939

and The Last Roundup in 1947, and in 6 Johnny Mack Brown films.

They had a sound that today recalls many of those early movies, but they were different from all the rest. They used 4-part vocal harmony rather than 3-part Western harmony and they were based in a Kansas

radio station. Fiddler Gomer Cool, who had a productive musical career long after the group disbanded, made a much greater contribution to the group as a composer than he did as a fiddler, and lead singer Bob Crawford also penned some good music for the group. For the period covered by the recordings on this new disc, virtuoso guitarist Herb Kratoska was still with the group, but accordionist Paul Sells had left, staying with Carl Cotner's band on Autry's weekly Melody Ranch show in California, and later recording with Wesley Tuttle, etc.

The selections featured on this CD include traditional cowboy tunes, Western classics and some that the members of the group composed, so there's good variety and good audio quality as well. Well-known historian and co-author of an excellent book about The Texas Rangers, Kevin Coffey, wrote the liner notes which go into detail about the members of the group and their recordings. Contact VenerableMusic.com, phone (678) 232- 0268. 



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DUMB AND DUMBER

By Victoria L. Ward

An excerpt from her book, "Prune Pie and Other Moving Stories" Reprinted by permission.

Two hours from home. Just two more hours on the road of our two day trip from California. It was blue skies, sunshine, and clear roads on I-70 Eastbound heading towards Denver. Our cell phone rang and it was Gayle, our Publicist, who periodically checks on with us when we are on the road.

"Hey, where are you guys at?" she asks knowing that the night before we had stayed in Green River, UT at an RV Park since we were in our RV.

"Eastbound and down, good buddy," I mimicked a line from a Jerry Reed/ Burt Reynolds movie.

"Eastbound on I-70?!!!" She almost shrieks into the phone.

"Well yeah, duh?!" I respond in my best Dumb and Dumber impersonation (I don't take anything too seriously).

"Do you realize what you are driving into? And in a motorhome? Eisenhower Tunnel is snow chains only. It's a white out."

Eisenhower Tunnel. Those two words in Colorado are the barometer for all east and west bound traffic. I-70 is the artery. Everything else are the tributaries that curve, swerve and switchback through the mountains. To stay on this interstate meant saving time. Should we risk it?

"Ah heck, it can't be that bad!" I laugh.

"IT IS THAT BAD! Don't you guys ever check the weather?" she asks a little concerned and perturbed at my blasé attitude.

"Nope! Look Gayle, we figure that we have to go from Point A to Point B and it really doesn't matter to us what the weather is going to do. We have to get there regardless."

After Gayle made another remark about our intelligence or lack of it, we hung up and drove on.

Up ahead we could see a dark blue cloud engulfing the highway and obscuring all vision of anything past it. We kept looking at the westbound vehicles emerging from that cloud. None of them had snow on them! It can't be that bad we rationalized; otherwise they would have snow stacked on their hood, roof or trunk, right?

"But have you noticed something?" Bear asks getting a little concerned.

"What's that?"

"We have not seen ANY other RVs in quite a while...it's like they all have shut down to wait out the storm"

He was right. As we started a contest between us to see who would be the first to see an RV going anywhere in any direction, the first few snowflakes began swirling around us. And then it hit. A complete whiteout. The road immediately became snow-packed and icy. Heavy, heavy snow swallowed us.

"Where are we?" I now questioned our decision to move forward at any cost.

"There's a town up ahead. Let's see if we can find the Visitor's Center and ask about RV Parks in the area." Bear replies.

Here's the thing about mountain towns. Especially those who tout that you can ski right up to your condo. Hills. Steep Hills. And they look even more steep and dangerous when you are in a big, clumsy, no traction motorhome. The Visitor's Center was at the bottom of the second hill or more like a toboggan flume in Damon. No way. We turned back out onto the highway and retreated back several miles

backtracking to the west and out of the storm.

We pull over on an off-ramp and call Gayle back.

"What's the weather like if we head south to Leadville and came in the south route through the Springs?" we now ask on speaker phone.

"You realize Leadville is over 10,000 ft?" she replies while I hear her clicking on the keyboard of her computer checking out the road conditions. She reads us the report....

"Snowpacked. Icy. Extreme weather advisory. Snow chains required. ...hmmm, says one of the roads is closed...." She trails off squinting at her screen trying to decipher the highway number.

"Ok, never mind....um....let's see...we can't go east or south and we just came from the west. That leaves one direction left if we are going to get home tonight. We can go north and skirt around the edge of the storm and then drop down somewhere south of Cheyenne, WY and hit I-25" Bear analyses out loud to Gayle and me at the same time.

Sounds like a plan so we take off to the north. We had a plan but no clue.

"Have you ever been this way?" I ask Bear who I call "Mr. Geographic" as he usually has been there at some point in the past.

"No, I have never been on this road. I looked at the map before we left back there and I didn't see any passes that we had to go over" he answers confidently.

The map was either wrong or maybe Bear doesn't know what the little red or green triangles on a map represent.

Soon we were smack in the middle of what we had just tried to escape. Only worse. We were on a mountain back road over a pass with no towns, no snow-plowing and no one else on the road. Period. And no turn-a rounds. All of the side roads were not plowed and were completely closed with a wall of snow 4-5 ft. high. Mailboxes and stop signs on these roads were buried all the way up to the top of the posts.

"This is so stupid! Do you realize if I lose control we will wind up at the bottom of this mountain or worse yet, over the side of the cliff?" Bear exasperates as he struggles to keep Aurora the RV from sliding sideways down the snowy and slick downhill.

"If that happens, run Aurora into the snow piled up on the mountain side of the road"

"What?!"

"No, I am serious."

Bear looks at me and says nothing. But I could read his eyes. They said "you're nuts." I ignored him.

I decide what the heck, I may as well enjoy the ride so I start taking pictures of the buried stop signs, abandoned -used-only-in -the -summer homes, and the beautiful tall pines with thick snow lying on every branch. Every branch.

When we finally get to the nearest town we pull in and call it a day. It's five o'clock in the afternoon. Bear pries his white knuckles off of the steering wheel and sighs a deep thankful sigh.

We made it. But ironically we are still two hours from home only now to the north instead of the west. And we had to spend the last four hours getting to this point. What is the old saying about God taking care of drunks and fools?



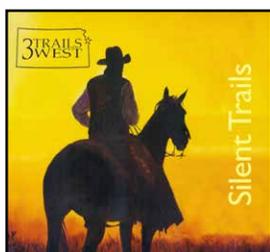
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RICK HUFF'S BEST OF THE WEST REVIEWS

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

To submit items for review, send to: Rick Huff, P.O. Box 8442, Albuquerque, NM 87198-8442. Include: Album cost, S&H cost, Address, Phone Number. We also recommend you furnish a land source (Address or PO Box) as well as Online sources for obtaining product. *Submitting a CD or Book for review does not guarantee that it will be reviewed or that a review will be published.* Finalized CD or book cover art must accompany the work and be unsigned.

3 TRAILS WEST "Silent Trails"



3 Trails West are the swingin' leaders of the all-time most popular lobby jam at the annual WMA

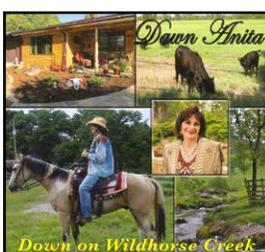
Conventions. If you appreciate them there, then here's the release that fully...and finally...captures their performance prowess! Theirs is a group that has come close to filling the lusty voice void after the Sons Of The San Joaquin's retirement. They and their musicianship shine here.

A strong song from the still under-appreciated Andy Parker & The Plainsmen opens it ("Along The Rio Grande") and later a second Parker classic shows up ("Traildust"). A sense of spirited fun prevails in tracks like Terry Gilkyson's "Fast Freight," Stuart Hamblen's feisty "Good Mornin' You All" and thoughtful honesty in Tim Spencer's "Silent Trails." Cowboy Joe Babcock's "Song Of The Prairie" and Kay Arnold's classic "Cross The Brazos At Waco" receive fine treatments as well.

In their take of Johnny Bond's "Cimarron" the band breaks into a bit of the Marketts' old instrumental "Out Of Limits," to get your attention. No fear! 3 Trails West will have accomplished that in Track #1! 14 tracks. Highly recommended.

CD: contact www.3TrailsWest.com

DAWN ANITA "Down on Wildfire Creek"



Dawn Anita (Plumlee) was the winner of the title Ms. Senior Oklahoma, she lives with her husband on

a ranch raising cattle and horses... and she's recorded an album I am naming "The Pick" of this quarter's CDs!! What more could you want? Solid, tight performances and great arrangements on good covers and original Western songs that bear intelligent lyrics and memorable melodies!! But maybe I satisfy easily...

Among the picks are the title track, "Out On The Land" (though a bit reminiscent of "Ghost Riders..."), "If You Want To Be A Cowboy," the apparently autobiographical "Dawni & Cloud," "Does Anybody Need A Cowboy," the swinging "Broke Him To Ride," "Ride The Wind," "Singing Cowboys" and "Ridin' Rainbows." One track ("Ride Of The Strawberry Roan") seems to have been mastered in a bit hot and clips in the playing (on my copy, anyway).

A lot of thought, arranging and performing talent went into this one...not to mention, I suspect, money. I'm afraid the album could remain unheard or untried due to not quite as much thought having been devoted to the cover packaging. I suggest bringing in a strong

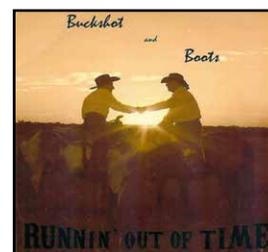
graphic artist or designer next time (or for any subsequent reissue of this one). The quality level shouldn't have come as quite THIS big a surprise!

Fourteen tracks. Highly recommended!

CD: www.dawnanita.com or inquire through dawnanita@yahoo.com

★ ★ ★

BUCKSHOT & BOOTS "Runnin' Out Of Time"



This CD from the Kansas duo known as Buckshot & Boots seems to be one of those that may have

been produced solely to give audiences a little take-home souvenir opportunity. But it is almost surely an accurate representation of their live effect.

In a mix of Country/Folk and Western originals, the album presents an intimate and home-done feel. Some of the guitar work comes off as being a bit rough around the edges. Some of the specific Western tracks by subject or setting include "Bravos River Sweetheart," "The Posse," "Trails End" and "Tough Trip Through Paradise (The Ballad Of Andrew Garcia)." Tracks I would call "picks" are "Memories Of You (To A

Continued on page 40

Friend Who's Passed On), "Trails End" and I would have included "Tough Trip Through Paradise..." were it not for the imbalance in presence between the guitar and the vocal.

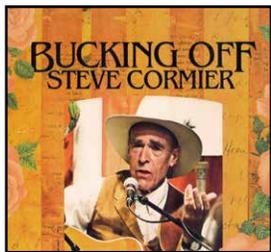
The album is available online in a format that can let you hear samples. Twelve tracks.

CD: (www.cdbaby.com)



STEVE CORMIER

"Bucking Off"



It's like a visit and chat with your cowpoke friend from the neighboring spread! In fact Steve

Cormier really is a former working cowboy (in the Flint Hills of Kansas and eastern New Mexico), former bareback bronc rider, current actor, historian, PhD-degreed college professor and oh, yes a singer-songwriter, of course!

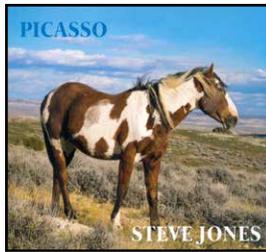
The On Tour "live" CD is a mix of stories about the songs followed by the songs, excepting the title track... which is all story and no song. Good story, though. The effect reminds me of the end-of-drive recordings done at the Bell Ranch, just for the amusement of the participants. Just jawin' and pickin and laughin'! It's "rustic" all the way, but the silly thing grows on you! Picks include the most authentic take yet on "Home On The Range" (done as an audience singalong as several are here), "Este Mundo" (based on an interview with a WPA artist in the 1940s about territorial life in New Mexico and a cappella takes of "High Tone Dance" and "Cole Younger." For broadcast purposes occasionally the vocal tracks are a bit distant from the mic.

Cormier doesn't follow any pattern and I doubt you'll find much else like him. That would be the reason he's probably worth your time! Twelve tracks.

CD: (visit www.stevicornier.net)

STEVE JONES

"Picasso"



The "Picasso" of the title is the wizened old outlaw leader of a mustang herd. The Les Buffham/

Steve Jones title song has now immortalized him as "King of the Mustangs, Guardian of the Realm!!"

Steve Jones was one half of the late lamented Yampa Valley Boys, and has struck out to "paddle his own canoe" as Jack Thorpe put it. This marks his first release since the passing of the partnership. Jones' projected vocal style works well on some of what I might call the bigger picture songs, such as "Six Gun For Hire" or "Irish Pub Song." Bill Staines' "Cowboy's Hard Times" and the Les Buffham/Hank Cramer ballad "Irish Cowboy's Lament" both come off well using the style. The intimate, unprocessed recording done on a couple of the more tender songs with Jones still projecting might come off to some as having more power than heart, and that may need to be a consideration and discussion in planning future recordings.

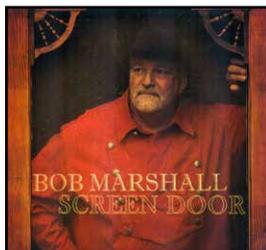
It's still a very worthy introduction to "Solo Jones." Twelve tracks.

CD: Ordering info not furnished. Contact Steve Young, Irish Coyote Music, PO Box 773611, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477 or email ksjbs@zirkel.us



BOB MARSHALL

"Screen Door"



Bob Marshall's newest release is an enjoyable, solid mix of Contemporary Western and Country tracks Ten

top Austin-area session people participated, including former WMA

artist/now Reckless Kelly leader Cody Braun. When you're aiming to secure Texas radio airplay, this is all to the good. But anyone doing it should know there is an Austin formula sound...and some of it has crept in here.

Picks from among the Marshall creations include the bluesy swinger "Hole In My Rope," "He Talks To God," "Rodeo Queen Deluxe" and "It's Gonna Get Western." Add to them Marshall's fine cover of the Donnie Blanz/Ed Bruce song "You Just Can't See Him From The Road."

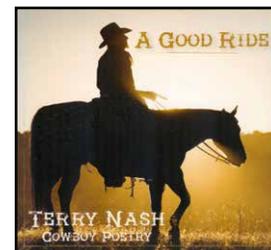
Bob Marshall is a strong enough performer to garner airplay and fans wherever he can, and he certainly can't be blamed for looking for both wherever they can be had. He's another example of the need to build a commercial base from which serious Western artists can work. Thirteen tracks. Recommended.

CD: \$20 ppd through cdbaby, iTunes, www.PayPal.me/BobMarshallMusic



TERRY NASH

"A Good Ride"



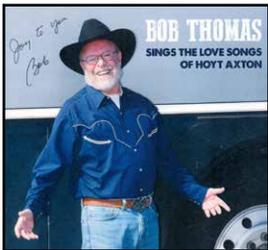
First, Terry Nash is, beyond a doubt, one of the best Cowboy Poets writing or delivering today.

I have always found his releases to be worth both your time and investment. Badger Clark's "Ridin'" was put to music as a song some years back. For this album, guitarist Ken Dravis helps to create a different but equally suitable mounting for Nash's enthusiastic take on it. Beyond the Clark cover, others include works of Kiskaddon ("The Lost Flannels"), Donnie Wynkoop (the hilarious "Fords [Snake Attack]") and Buck Ramsey ("Bad Job"). Original picks are "Homesteader," a fresh version of his wonderful work "A Cowman's Lot," an 'object' lesson (the object

being cow poop) called "Blurred Vision," "December Stragglers" and what could be called a modern-day "moral of the story" story "Skype (#don'tgetthispoundsignstuff)." I've said this in other reviews, but it holds true. This particular CD is one of those you might consider using when defining or illustrating what Cowboy Poetry is or should be. Fourteen tracks. Highly recommended. CD: \$18 ppd from Terry Nash, 1278 N Road, Loma, CO 81524 or visit www.terrbynashcowboypoet.com



BOB THOMAS
"Sings The Love Songs Of Hoyt Axton"



There are, in nature, voices that may not seem to have been intended to produce songs, but from which they pour forth unabated. Norman Blake, Tom Waits, the late Townes van Zandt and others I would place in the category. Bob Thomas, too.

In his lifetime Hoyt Axton created Western songs such as "Della & The Dealer" and "Wild Bull Rider." For this release the WMA's Bob Thomas departs from Western, but undoubtedly some of these words could come from Cowboy mouths ("Lion In The Winter," "Gypsy Moth" and, in a stretch, "In A Young Girl's Mind"). Thomas is elevated by the production values, including his daughter Erinn Rachelle and others on harmony vocals and arrangements and performances by the CD's producer Chad Watson. Many of Axton's allusions to escape, time passage and change are hooked to imagery of rivers and the sea...but we did have sailor-cowboys, didn't we?

Three Axton sidemen (Hank Barrio, Mark Dawson and Rhys Clark) appear on the best known of the songs "When The Morning Comes." Ten tracks.

CD: (visit www.bobthomasmusic.com)

WALL-EYED MOLES
"A Strong Heart Flows Over"



The musically wide ranging and freewheeling Moles are back, this time with some that are rarities

from a couple of different directions!

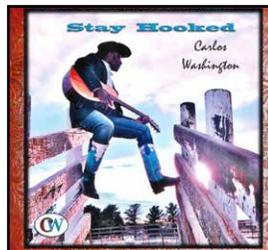
Not often are we treated to recorded vocal solos from two of the three Wall-Eyed Moles. We get them here from Jeanne "Victor Mole" Cahill and hubby Jerome "Vance Mole" Campbell, and they stack up just fine alongside those of Jon "Vivian Mole" Messenger! Covers in the collection include "Pancho & Lefty" (van Zandt), "The Question" (Woodson), "Roseville Fair" (Staines), "The Highwayman" (Webb), "South Wind Of Summer" (Hancock/Gilmore/Ely) and "Sweet Moments" (Hughes/Thompson). Originals this time include Messenger's "Nothin'" and "Threadbare Shining Memory." Cahill's are "Night Mare" and a co-write with Mike Hosea "The Man Behind The Star." Cambell's are a co-write with T.J. Nichols "Racing Mary To The Ford" and one with Mike Hosea called "August In Arizona."

The Moles are together for the fun of it, and the fun of it shows. Twelve tracks.

CD: (visit www.Wall-EyedMoles.com)



CARLOS WASHINGTON
"Stay Hooked"



Tight swing with a grin you can hear, plenty of personality and the focus on entertainment!

That's the approachable performance platform from which Colorado's former professional PRCA bull rider and team penning champion Carlos

Washington works, and it's winning him friends and followers big-time. Something about the contemporary elements in the arrangements and production of his CD "Stay Hooked" seem to flow particularly nicely. It's all there, yet not overbearing.

On this newest release, it's also nice to see he has covered some legitimately Western tracks that first rode the Country charts, so that they might come back into the Western recorded fold. There's no reason to shy away from Toby Keith's "Should Have Been A Cowboy," inspired when he and the band were lounging in a Dodge City nightspot and one of his guys was turned down for a dance by a local lass. Returning to the table, the musician sighed "I shoulda been a cowboy" and history was made! Or Lonestar's thoroughly Western Country hit "When Cowboy's Didn't Dance!" Such examples show Western is still with us if you look for it.

One correction. The track on Washington's CD incorrectly identified as "Cadillac Cowboy" is actually the late Chuck Pyle's "The Other Side Of The Hill." Eight tracks and a bonus ninth (I will never understand it)! Recommended.

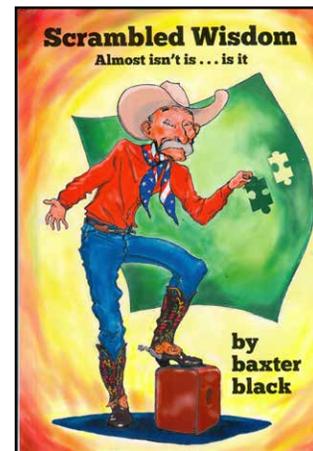
CD: (ordering info not furnished)



BOOK REVIEW

BAXTER BLACK
"Scrambled Wisdom Almost Isn't Is...Is It"

ISBN: 978-0-939343-64-5



If the various computer auto-corrects through which it will run actually allow Baxter Black's title for his latest book to remain

Continued on page 49

ENDOWMENT 101: HOW TO MAKE A MEANINGFUL INVESTMENT IN THE WESTERN MUSIC ASSOCIATION

By Robert Fee

Robert Fee is an attorney from Tucson, AZ and is currently the Vice President General Counsel for the Western Music Association.

The Western Music Association relies on support from its members and friends to thrive. Building a strong endowment is one of the best ways the WMA can meet its mission of supporting the preservation, performance and composition of historic, traditional and contemporary music and poetry of the West.

WHAT IS AN ENDOWMENT FUND?

An endowment fund is established with cash gifts that are invested by the WMA Board to support, in perpetuity, what you specify when you make your gift. The interest from your donation supports the WMA now and for years to come. Endowment income can be used to underwrite programs that have not been funded, support budgets when there are shortfalls, and to help us fulfill our obligations to our members.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE ENDOWMENT FUND?

The goal of the WMA Endowment Fund is to raise one million dollars in cash and pledges. Our intent is to create long-term financial stability for the WMA. Building an endowment fund allows us to generate a stable and adequate source of income to sustain our current programs and initiate new ones to meet the needs of our members.

HOW ARE THESE FUNDS INVESTED AND MONITORED?

The WMA's endowment funds are overseen by an Investment Management Committee. The Board has approved an investment policy that meets our investment objectives and performance measures for the funds.

CAN I DESIGNATE MY ENDOWMENT FUND PLEDGE TO BE USED FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE OR PROGRAM?

If you donate \$25,000 or more, you may create a named endowment fund or a donor-advised fund. All other funds pledged will be placed in the general endowment fund. Only the investment income will be spent – the principal will be held in perpetuity.

IS MY DONATION TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

Yes, the WMA is a non-profit organization accorded tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), which enables donors to deduct gifts made to the fullest extent of tax laws. Donors should consult their own tax accountant, attorney or financial advisor to determine the most advantageous tax or financial situation.

HOW MAY I OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT INVESTING IN THE WESTERN MUSIC ASSOCIATION?

You may contact WMA Executive Director Marsha Short at (505) 563-0673 or marsha@westernmusic.org. 



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Johnny Western Mesa, AZ
Norman Winter Dubois, WY
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Reed's Reading

Recommendations & Book Reviews



Ollie Reed, Jr.

To have your book reviewed by Ollie, send a copy to: Ollie Reed, Jr., P.O. Box 2381, Corrales, N.M. 87048 or contact him at: olreed.com@gmail.com

DEANNA DICKINSON MCCALL

"Rough Patches II"



Deanna McCall doesn't need to prove her ranching credentials through her writing. She has ranched in a few states, including 25

years on a Nevada spread that didn't have phones or electricity. These days she and her husband work a ranch in the Sacramento Mountains in southern New Mexico.

But even if you didn't know she was the real deal, you'd figure that out pretty quick while reading the nine short stories in this collection. Her best stories -- "Mildred's Grandchildren," "Darlene's Pain" and "Gracie's Gate" -- are the ones that most reflect the life of women living close to the land, the life McCall knows so well.

It's more than just her vivid descriptions of pulling calves, working fence and horse wrecks. It's her grasp of the determination, desperation and disappointments that are all part of the cattle business today, as well as the love of the life, the hope and the fulfillment, that make her stories ring true.

When she strays from these central themes, as she does in the mystery and suspense stories

"Cindy's Dreams" and "Cisterns and Shops," the result is effectively creepy but less satisfying.

I found the story of Mildred, a survivor of Oklahoma's harsh dust bowl days, to be much more absorbing. Here's a woman who left most of her children in Oklahoma graves to start a new life in California with her husband and one surviving child. She finds bitter disillusionment in the Golden State but not more than her hard work, steadfast faith in God, love of the land and loyalty to her family is up to.

In "Darlene's Pain," the title character is 46, a cancer survivor who is trying to run the family ranch after her father's death. As if that wasn't difficult enough, she's got to contend with rustlers.

"She slowly approached the cattle and sounded her call quietly. At least one calf answered. She carefully began to walk around the perimeter, trying not to startle the calves. She noted the peeling brands."

Grace, the protagonist in "Gracie's Gate," works 60 hours a week in a ag supply and feed store so she can afford to keep the ranch that she works alone.

"Grace rolled down the windows and let the country fresh air roll through the truck. She slouched down in the seat, stretching her tired legs out. Heading home always seemed to give her a second wind."

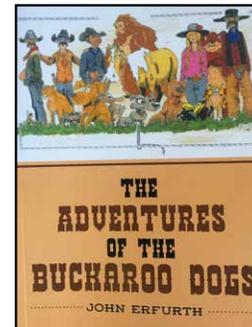
McCall writes about strong women who are unflinching in the face of fierce challenges, and she does so in an evocative style that makes you feel the aches in

the joints of their leather-tough but bruised bodies and sense the disquiet they keep deep inside.

"Rough Patches II," ISBN 9780986249198, paperback, \$19.95, The Frontier Project, Inc., 2017, available in bookstores and through amazon.com

JOHN ERFURTH

"The Adventures of the Buckaroo Dogs"



Here's one for the youngsters, those little ones who might not be ready to do the reading on their own but would enjoy hearing their

mom or dad tell them the tales.

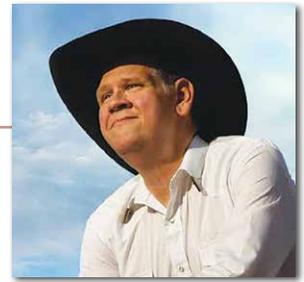
The heroes are three ranch dogs who work security on the Dry Gulch Land and Cattle Company in eastern Oregon. Waddie is the boss dog. He's just taken over the top-dog job from Wes, the old timer who has the smarts that go with experience but is slowing down a getting a tad grumpy. Woodrow is the bright-eyed youngster who is still learning the ropes.

John Erfurth's name is on the cover but it's clear from John's dedication that this book is a collaborative effort. John came

Continued on page 49



GOLDEN NUGGETS



by Buck Helton

Editor's Note: We just received word that Buck was involved in a multi-car collision and is hospitalized. He is pretty battered and bruised with a broken clavicle and is unable to provide a new Golden Nuggets for this issue. We have chosen to pull from the archives and repeat one of Buck's feature articles from Spring 2014 issue. Enjoy! We send thoughts and prayers to Buck for a speedy recovery.

Howdy pards!

The American Cowboy, being exposed as he was and is on a daily basis to the beauty and wonder of God's creation, has always been a deeply spiritual fellow. You may or may not find him at a church service on Sunday mornings, but every Cowboy knows there is a Maker of creation, that He is good for He gave us such beauty, and that we will have to give an account of our lives before Him one day. As such, Gospel songs and hymns have long made up an essential part of the Cowboy's songbook.

We are going to focus on one this go round that started life as a piece of Cowboy Poetry, titled "The Cowboy's Sweet Bye and Bye" by D.J. O'Malley. Mr. O'Malley, as you may recall from an earlier column, also wrote the lyrics for "When the Works all Done this Fall" which was the very first hit Cowboy record. Sweet bye and bye was first published in The Miles City Stock growers Journal in Miles City, Montana, in the mid to late 1880's (Sorry for the lack of an exact date, I just moved, and don't have access to all my reference materials right at this moment!) It became immensely popular very quickly. At some point, an enterprising puncher fit the lyrics to the tune of

"My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean" and the song became known variously as Cowboy's Dream, Cowboy's Prayer, and Roll on Little Doggies. The Bonnie in the song, by the way, is not a girl, nor is this a love song, but an early political protest. It is a Scottish song lamenting the usurpation of the throne of Scotland by the English and the exile of their rightful ruler, Charles Stuart, known to history as Bonnie Prince Charlie.

Like many of the classic Western songs, this one exists today only because someone took the time to write it down. In this instance, that someone was Owen Wister who gave us the classic Western novel (later film and TV series), The Virginian. He mentioned in one of his diaries hearing "an old trail song" on a drive outside Brownwood Texas.

The concept was also addressed by a better known writer, Will Barnes, for the Saturday Evening Post. Mr. O'Malley's publication, however, was first. According to O'Malley, he got the idea from one of the hands on the N-bar-N Ranch who was fond of hymns, and frequently sang the Sweet Bye and Bye with the ending refrain "I wonder if ever a Cowboy, would drift to that sweet bye and bye." Below is the original text.



*To-night as I lay on the prairie,
Looking up at the stars in the sky,
I wonder if ever a cowboy
Will go to that sweet by-and-by.*

*For the trail to that bright mystic region
Is both narrow and dim, so they say,
While the broad one that leads to perdition
Is posted and blazed all the way.*

*Now I wonder whose fault that so many
Will be lost at the great final day,
When they might have been rich, and had plenty
Had they known of the dim narrow way.*

*I hear there will be a grand roundup,
When the cowboys, like others, will stand,
To be cut by the riders of judgment,
Who are posted and know every brand.*

*Then perhaps there may be a stray cowboy,
Unbranded, unclaimed by none nigh,
To be mavericked by the riders of judgment,
And shipped to the sweet by-and-by.*

*Hope you've enjoyed this look at one of the Cowboy's favorite
early Gospel songs.
'til next time, Happy Trails!*



Western Charts

TOP 30 COWBOY / WESTERN ALBUMS

1. Satisfied Hearts - Gary & Jean Prescott
2. Songs and Tales of the Old Chisholm Trail - K.R. Wood & Friends
3. Cowboy - The High Country Cowboys
4. The Cowboy Way - The Cowboy Way
5. Somewhere There's Music - The Swing Sisters
6. Pale Moon on the Prairie - Rick Pickren
7. Wall-Eyed Moles - The Wall-Eyed Moles
8. This is the Last Cowboy Song - Rex Allen, Jr.
9. Screen Door - Bob Marshall
10. Cowboy Life - Donnie Poindexter
11. Western Stories - Dave Stamey
12. Living the Western Dream - Joyce Woodson
13. Lovin' the West - Aspen Black
14. Home on the Range Soundtrack - Various Artists
15. Ride a Wide Circle - Mary Kaye
16. Montana Moon - Dan McCorison
17. Off the Grid - Jeneve Rose Mitchell
18. One More Ride - Sons of the San Joaquin
19. Shadow Dust - Sam Matisse
20. Silent Trails - 3 Trails West
21. Live - Leah Sawyer
22. Take Me Back to Texas - Mary Kaye
23. Western & Country - Dennis Jay
24. Cowgirl Swing - Mikki Daniel
25. Linger Awhile - Liz Masterson
26. Too Hot to Handle - Red Hot Rhythm Rustlers
27. Down the Trail - Kristyn Harris
28. Wanted: Cowboys, Outlaws, and Dreams - Sisters of the Silver Sage
29. Cohorts and Collaborators - Various Artists
30. Welcome Home - Barry Ward

TOP 10 WESTERN SWING ALBUMS

1. Swingin' Through the Years - Chuck Cusimano
2. Off the Beaten Trail - Hot Texas Swing Band
3. Trail Jazz - Cowboy Joe Babcock
4. Ain't Dead Yet - Hot Texas Swing Band
5. Somewhere There's Music - The Swing Sisters
6. Wild Blue Yonder - The Western Flyers
7. Susie Blue & the Lonesome Fellas - Susie Blue
8. Dime Stories, Vol. 2 - Carolyn Sills Combo
9. Jack Phillips - Jack Phillips
10. Dancing on Daddy's Boots - Kim Blakey

10 MOST PLAYED POETRY ALBUMS

1. Cowboy Seasons - Sam DeLeeuw
2. Short Grass Country - Floyd Beard
3. Rhyme 'Em, Cowboy - Tom Swearingen
4. Saddle Up for Cowboy Poetry - Marleen Bussma
5. The Calf Book - Theresa Burleson
6. Idaho Ed - Jerry Bell
7. Masters - Various Artists
8. Rhyming the Range - Yvonne Hollenbeck
9. Baxter Black's NPR CD's - Baxter Black
Scrapin' By - Marleen Bussma
Fillin' Tanks - Susie Knight
Cowboy Lonesome - Duane Nelson

10 MOST PLAYED SONGS BY WESTERN MUSIC DJs

1. Cowboy Swing - Leah Sawyer
2. Tall in the Saddle - Jean Prescott
3. Call of the Canyon - Rex Allen, Jr.
4. Los Ladrones - The Cowboy Way
5. Grit, Grace, and Balin' Twine - Mary Kaye
6. He Always Rode Good Horses - Jean Prescott
I Once Rode With the Best - Gary Prescott
The Pitchfork Grays - Gary Prescott
The Ridge - Jean Prescott
10. Take Me Back to Texas When I Die - The Cowboy Way
Tularosa Rose - The Cowboy Way

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

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

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

Western Playlists - Reporters

Here are the DJs who submitted their playlists this quarter:

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

Michael Babiarz
KVMR Community Radio 89.5FM
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www.kvmr.org
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Santa Clarita, CA 91387
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www.earsradio.com
skipbessonette@gmail.com

Janice Brooks
Bus of Real Country
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Pleasant Gap, PA 16823
Busgaljb@gmail.com

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

Chuckaroo the Buckaroo
Calling All Cowboys Radio
88.9 FM, KPOV High Desert
Community Radio
<http://www.kpov.org>
http://kpov.od.streamguys.us/calling_all_cowboys_new_56k.mp3
e-mail: callingallcowboys@hotmail.com
Station NFLY – No Fly Internet Radio/
The Flying SL Ranch Radio Show
radio.spalding-labs.com
22470 Rickard Rd.
Bend, OR 97702
541-388-2537

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](https://www.facebook.com/cowboytracks)

KWC Ameriana Radio Station
Miguel A. Diaz Gonzalez
avenida galtzaraborda nº47 2ªA
20100 renteria
Guipuzcoa
España
miguelbilly56@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

Judy James
Cowboy Jubilee with Judy James and
Western Heritage Radio
PO Box 953
Weatherford, Texas 76086
judy@judyjames.com

Al Krtil
"Early Morning Trails"
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Ship Bottom, NJ 08008-4637
(609) 361-8277
alkrtil@yahoo.com
www.sudzincountry.com

Jarle Kvale
KEYA Public Radio
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Belcourt, ND 58316
jkkeya@utma.com

Graham Lees
Radio HWD
13 Overthorpe Ave.
Dewsbury, West Yorkshire
WF120DS, UK
graham@grahamlees.co.uk

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

Wyn Machon
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Oamaru 9400
New Zealand
New Zealand Country Music Radio
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wynmachon39@gmail.com

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Earsradio.com
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KKTY, 100.1, Douglas, WY
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www.romancingthewest.org
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Marvin O'Dell
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KKRN (Redding, CA)
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Barbara Richhart
Western Belle of KSJD
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Studio: Sundays 12:00-2: PM
Studio: 970-564-0808
Home: 970-882-1413
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realwestoldwest@live.com
www.realwestoldwest.com
www.demingradio.com
[Facebook/totsieslover](https://www.facebook.com/totsieslover)

Eric Swansick
Back at the Bunkhouse
13800 NE Merchant Rd.
Carlton, OR 97111
503-708-3960

Tommy Tucker
"Snake River Radio Roundup"
KRLC Radio
805 Stewart Ave.
Lewiston, ID. 83501
208-743-1551
tommy@idavend.com
"Keepin' It Western"

Wayne & Kathy
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KBOO 90.7 FM
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Portland, OR 97214
wkjswingandcountry@comcast.net

Leonard Werner
Country Routes
WDVR FM 89.7 & 91.9
PO Box 191
Sergeantsville, NJ 08557
609-397-1620
www.wdvrfm.org
Leonardwerner44@comcast.net 

Reed's Reading, continued from page 45

up with the idea, basing the seven adventures recounted here on his observations of his own cow dogs. But he notes that his late friend Jay Pierce helped him write it and did some of the illustrations. Other illustrations were contributed by Etienne "A-10" Etcheverry.

In the course of their duties on the ranch, the dogs tangle with a coyote named Trickster, Brutus the bobcat, a bull with a short

fuse, rustlers, even Bigfoot.

The stories take longer than they should to get to the climax, but the extended dialogue between the animal characters may appeal to young children.

And don't expect stories that teach kids how things really are on ranches. While some details are right enough, we also have Trickster coyote raiding the chicken house, not to eat a hen but to kidnap her so that she will provide eggs for him. And

there's actually a live-and-let-live understanding between one of the dogs and the coyote, which we all know is a fantasy.

But it's just that fairytale approach that makes this book a good candidate for bedtime reading for kids.

("The Adventures of the Buckaroo Dogs," ISBN 9781684092413, paperback, \$14.95, Page Publishing, Inc., 2017, available in bookstores and through amazon.com) 

Review, continued from page 41

unmolested without major reprogramming, it'll be a miracle! Or as Black puts at one point in the book: "Anlkadhltlid;s;apoliet eto tp-nongljeryrypp (and this applies to typing, too)!"

Here we have a collection of mini-essays and some poems, each with an afterthought (or Baxter-thought?)...such as "if life gives you llamas, make llamanade" and "if three out of four people suffer from diarrhea, does that mean one out

of five enjoys it" and "(when) Horace Greeley said 'go west, young man'... three hundred people in San Francisco drowned." You get the picture, and boy what a picture. The book is dedicated to the late Pat Richardson, and some of his pearls are strung in as well.

There's a good measure of education here on the perils, strangeness, wonder, wackiness and indispensability of the agricultural life. Occasionally some of it will be best appreciated by his target audience and some of his traditional targets

are again in his cross-hairs, but when he pitches haymakers, he's just feeding the herd. Recommended, but then when would something from BB not be?!!

Book (162 pages) – Coyote Cowboy Company, PO Box 2190, Benson, AZ 85602 or visit www.baxterblack.com 





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