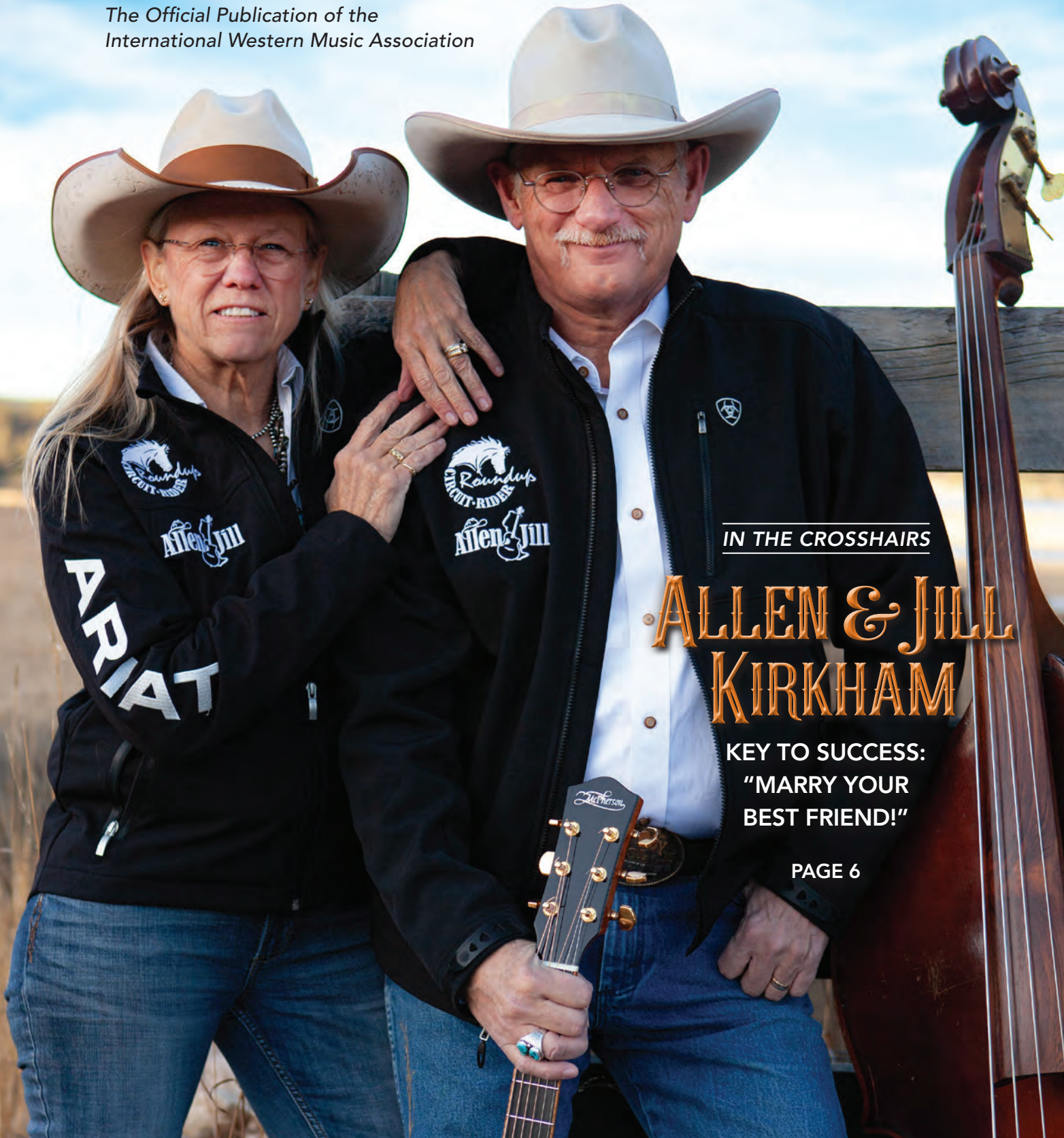


THE WESTERN WAY

The Official Publication of the
International Western Music Association



IN THE CROSSHAIRS

ALLEN & JILL KIRKHAM

KEY TO SUCCESS:
"MARRY YOUR
BEST FRIEND!"

PAGE 6

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From The President...



Marvin O'Dell
IWMA President

So-Long! Welcome! And “Thank You, Colonel!”

With the wrap-up of this year's IWMA Convention, I want to take a minute and thank Juni Fisher for her 12 years of service as a director on the IWMA board. Juni brought with her insights as a professional that helped us view things from a unique perspective during her time of service. We are sorry to see her leave the board this year. At the same time, we welcome Dave Martin, who served as an intern for 2022, onto our Board of Directors. As a music professional, Dave also has made very positive and valuable contributions during our discussions, and we are very happy to have him as a director. We also are welcoming Mark Munzert to our board as an intern this year. We believe Mark is a very positive addition and look forward to working with him.

About four years ago, Robert Lorbeer was asked if he would be willing to be President of the IWMA. At the time, he didn't feel that he wanted to take on the job. Fortunately, a couple of years later, he decided the time was right for him, and he became our president. What a stroke of good fortune for our organization!

Mr. Lorbeer (or the “colonel” as he is often referred to) has contributed maturity, wisdom, and a sense of propriety to our Board of Directors. It has been a privilege to serve on the IWMA Board of Directors under his leadership. He has ably led our board meetings while keeping them under control when discussions sometimes got out of hand with too many people wanting to speak at once. That does happen in board meetings. He has been a voice of clarity and reason when some ideas have been entertained past our purview or have been addressed until we are kicking a “dead horse.” That happens in board meetings, too. It has been said that “boards are where ideas go to die.” Under Mr. Lorbeer's leadership, that has not happened due to his willingness to allow for further thought and input on any idea that has been set forth by a director.

Unfortunately, Mr. Lorbeer has felt the need to step down from the IWMA President's role where he has led so well the last two years. The Board of Directors has asked me to step into that position, and I have agreed to do so for at least a year. Then the board and I can reevaluate and determine if I should continue on or if we should ask someone else to take the helm. In the meantime, I will attempt to hold the office with the dignity and care that has been exhibited for the last two years by Robert Lorbeer.

I think I can speak for the entire Board of Directors when I say “Thank You, Colonel” for so adequately leading us through the last two post-Covid years.

Marvin O'Dell
President IWMA



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Whether they are on the road singing their brand of western music, on horseback with the US Marshals Posse, or on the radio playing western gospel music on Circuit Rider Roundup, it is always Allen and Jill – always together, always living a life filled with adventure, always Western.

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Theresa O'Dell
Editor

What Do You See?

It isn't always good to look back. They say looking forward is what we need to do. But sometimes we look back to gain strength to go forward, to gain instruction on what works and what does not, or to see what was accomplished and

then determine how to build on it in the coming year.

What do you see when you look back to 2022? It will be different for everyone. Some have experienced relocation – always exciting but sometimes traumatic. Some have lived through the sadness of loss of a family member or other friends. Some have witnessed the joyful new life in the birth of a child, grandchild or great-grandchild. Some have journeyed through illnesses, either their own or of someone close to them. Looking back can be a “downer” or an “encourager.” It probably depends most on whose eyes are doing the looking.

Today, I'm looking back through the eyes of this magazine's editor and as a board member of the International Western Music Association. Here is what I see...

Excitement! New chapters have been added to the ranks of the IWMA regional chapters' list. We are happy to see added the new Black Hills and Beyond chapter that covers areas of South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming and Nebraska, and the new Tennessee chapter. We see new members stepping up to lead. We also see overall growth in IWMA membership.

Success! In November we held a wonderfully successful IWMA2022 Convention in Albuquerque. It was one of the largest with more vendors selling their wares, more local fans roaming the hallways, larger audiences in showcases, and new performers on the stages. And a healthy financial report for the organization was presented at the Annual meeting.

Sorrow! Not everything has been good news for our membership. We have said farewell to many of our friends, many were icons of our genre. It saddens me to have had to include so many obituaries in the magazine in 2022. They are gone from our hallways, but they remain in our hearts.

Change! Not always a good thing, but it can be positive. We saw change at the Convention with more

showcases being added and more new performers on stages. A new Coordinator has taken over the Youth Chapter, Almeda Bradshaw. A new intern was added to the Board of Directors, Mark Munzert. A new Vice-president was selected on the Board, Tom Swearingen. And a new President was named to lead the IWMA, Marvin O'Dell.

From my desk today, I look back on 2022 with good memories. But I also look forward with hope and renewed enthusiasm for a successful year to come for each reader of the *Western Way*. Wishing for you a pleasant reflection as you look back on 2022 with an even brighter portrait as you gaze into 2023.

Theresa



Valerie Beard

**It was such an honor to be named
the 2022 Female Poet of the Year.
Thank you so much to my IWMA family
for your support in 2022.
I look forward to seeing you in 2023!**

From The Executive Director...



Marsha Short
Executive Director

The last three months of the year are always a whirlwind: Halloween, the IWMA Convention, Thanksgiving, Christmas,

New Year's and then....nothing. You wake up one morning in January and discover the decorations are down, no big meals are planned, it's cold outside...what now?

Well, it's time to start planning the IWMA Convention! If you attended last year, you know what a great time it was. Thanks to all the volunteers who gave so much of their time in getting the mercantile and boutique set up, prepared and presented standing-room-only workshops, and shared their talent on stages. If you weren't there, enjoy the photo spread in this issue and start making plans to be with us this year.

A special thank you goes to Ranger Doug Green (IWMA Advisory Board and new Hall of Fame member) and Dave Stamey (Hall of Fame member). Both men donated their time and talent to IWMA and helped ensure the success of our convention. Other Hall of Fame members who were with us were O.J. Sikes and Joni Harms. We appreciate their continued support of IWMA.

As 2023 gets started, our wish to each of you is to have a happy, HEALTHY, and prosperous new year!

Marsha



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- Tigard Public Library, Tigard, OR
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In the CROSSHAIRS



Allen and Jill

With forty-two years of happy marriage, two wonderful daughters and sons-in-law and five beautiful grandchildren, I asked Allen Kirkham what he thought was the key to his and Jill's marital success. He quickly replied, "Marry your best friend!"

ALLEN AND JILL KIRKHAM

BY A.B. SHAW

GROWING UP

Little did Allen know that as a young boy his life-long best friend was born in the Illinois River town of Havana, Illinois, a mere thirty minutes away from his birthplace in Beardstown. Allen was born on the Illinois River, too, in 1953. He was an only child surrounded by family musicians and their love of early classic western singers like Marty Robbins, Gene Autry, Sons of the Pioneers and Roy Rogers. He grew up watching Saturday matinee westerns at the Princess Theater and, like so many kids of that era Allen wanted to be a cowboy. Spending summers on his Uncle Bob's farm and knowing Charles Goodnight and Wild Bill Hickok had been born not far from Beardstown helped feed extra excitement into Allen's cowboy dreams.

As eight-year-old Allen ate popcorn with his Silver Screen heroes, Jill was born into the world the oldest child of a minister father and a loving faith-filled home-maker mom. She grew up to be a serious tomboy, always packing a knife, and with two younger brothers in tow, she led the way for fishing adventures, football games and lots of hiking in the wooded acres behind their home. And, as Allen tells it, she is a modern-day Annie Oakley. She once outshot a retired Navy SEAL!

Because of her dad's vocation as a minister, church was a mainstay in Jill's upbringing. So, it's no wonder she would meet her future husband there. Allen had just returned from a one-year remote tour in Galena, Alaska, and was stationed at nearby Scott Air Force Base. Most of his military career, Allen served as a worship leader for Military Chapels and Churches wherever they were stationed, but this Sunday in 1978 he decided to attend a service off base where he met the preacher's daughter!

Fittingly, Allen's first conversation with Jill was over guitars and music. Later, Jill confided to a friend, "I want to marry a man just like him," but with the age difference that can seem vast when a person is young, Jill didn't think Allen would be interested in her.



Allen and Jill in 1979

YOUNG ADULTS

Their relationship as friends developed through a gospel band they formed called "Gift of Love." Over time, as they performed at youth rallies and other regional opportunities sharing the gospel through their music, they fell in love. In 1981, at the ages of 20 and 28, they married. Their next two years as newlyweds were spent finishing bachelor's degrees at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville. Here, Allen enrolled in and graduated from the Air Force ROTC Cadet program. Post-college, the two moved to Colorado Springs for Allen's Commissioned USAF Space Operations Officer assignment.

MILITARY LIFE

Allen's Dad, Ed Kirkham, in his younger years was a farmer, and a glove maker for Wells Lamont. He eventually retired as a marine welder. Although his father strongly desired to follow his brothers' lead and tried to enlist in all the military services when he turned 18 in 1944, because he had perforated ear drums from a childhood illness, he had to stay at home on the farm to feed the troops and the nation. Allen's uncles, his Dad's brothers, served during WWII. Uncle Bud Kirkham was killed, January 1945, in the Battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes Forest. Uncle Hank Kirkham was a Pearl Harbor survivor. Uncles Des Kirkham and Ephraim Kirkham served in Europe and the Pacific. And a family distant cousin, Lieutenant Virgil Kirkham, was the last US fighter pilot killed in Europe. With Allen's strong family heritage of military service as far back as the

American Revolution, it's no wonder he enlisted at age twenty-two as a USAF Enlisted Weather Specialist.

Allen went on to receive a Masters in Space Systems Management from Webster University with his dream of being an Air Force Astronaut. He served twenty-three years in the Air Force, retiring from Air Force Special Operations Command in January 2000. His dream of becoming an astronaut ended when the Space Shuttle Challenger blew up and the military astronaut program was terminated for several years. After 911, he received a call from an Army Special Forces contact and served 11 years in the War On Terror; five years as a US Army Space & Missile Defense Command GS-13 Military Space Analyst at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama followed by eight more years at the US Army Space & Missile Defense Battle Lab in Colorado Springs before retiring from the US Army in 2013.

LIFE AS A MILITARY WIFE

During their college years at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Jill received her Bachelor of Fine Art majoring in graphic design with a minor in printmaking. While following Allen on his military assignments, Jill put her education to use as a graphic designer, illustrator, caricature, and portrait artist. She worked as an educator teaching aspiring artists of all ages in a private studio. She also taught as a K-12 teacher and at the college level for the Air Force



USAF Major Allen Kirkham deployed to Sarajevo, Bosnia 1996.

Continued on page 8

IN THE CROSSHAIRS

Continued from page 7



Allen and Jill performing at Sunrise On The Prairie CD Release Concert in Colorado, Springs.

while overseas. An eight-year stint self-employed as a portrait and event photographer rounded out Jill's fine arts career before she and Allen retired and moved to South Dakota.

According to Jill, their lives have been full of adventure with the military from living in the outback of Australia, to touring throughout Germany and Austria, to exploring their favorite vacation destination Hawaii, to other fun stateside postings. She discovered a love for golf during their time in the Air Force and began to play a lot of tournaments. Jill's name is on the walls at three different bases as "Women's Base Champion." She was the "Air Force Champion" at the Military Dependents Golf Championships in 2004. She narrowly missed qualifying as a touring amateur on the LPGA's development tour, The Futures Tour by 1 handicap point. She coached boys and girls high school golf teams for eleven years, being named the Colorado State Coach of the Year in 2010.

MUSICAL BEGINNINGS

Jill began her musical adventure in the third grade with piano lessons. By junior high, she was ready for a guitar and her dad provided his old Kay guitar and a book of chords for Jill to learn. She and her brother sang together and played in the youth group at church. A few years into their marriage, Jill picked up and learned the bass when she and Allen began

playing western music. This was also about the time churches were transitioning from piano/organ music to a praise band format, so she cut her bass teeth on worship music, as well.

Allen's maternal grandmother was a professional silent movie musician on Laclede's Landing, St. Louis, in the early 1900s. She played classical guitar, accordion, and organ to set the mood for the scenes. Allen aspired to play guitar like his grandma and like his Uncle George! His grandpa Kirkham was known as a fine fiddler. Allen got his first guitar in junior high, a Harmony, as a gift from his dad.

Before enlisting in the Air Force, Allen learned music theory and performance at Lincoln Christian University and toured as a musician ambassador for the University. He attended professional stage performance training from Tom Jackson Seminars in Nashville and Franklin, TN. Then an opportune introduction to the Flying W Wranglers occurred while he and Jill were stationed in Colorado.

She tells how they went to a western chuckwagon show with a group from church. Chuckwagon Supper Shows were new to her, but something very familiar to Allen because western was the musical roots he grew up with. Repeat visits to the show led to a close friendship with the Flying W Wranglers along with an invitation to record in their private studio which led to their first album "Wildhorse" in 1991.

Says Jill: "Music has always been a large part of our lives, and still is! We've played all over the world doing all kinds of music. Early on, we did mostly gospel and worship, but the move to Colorado changed our musical lives forever."

Vern Thomson and Joe Stephenson of the Flying W Wranglers became Allen's mentors and taught him most of what he knows about performing a western music show. Allen did a lot of work with the Flying W Wranglers while stationed in Colorado Springs. Based in Colorado, Allen and Jill formed a band called "Timberline" and toured throughout a three-state region. In 2013, Allen and Jill worked for three seasons with the Circle B Chuckwagon Band in the Black Hills of South Dakota working as musicians, chuckwagon cooks, and Dude ride wranglers. In 2015, they formed their Duo, "Allen & Jill."



Allen & Jill at the Mount Rushmore Society Gala 2022

WESTERN DUO

Allen and Jill were ridin' ready when they hit the western music trail. They joined the IWMA in 2014 and with a whoop and a holler, they won the 2015 Cowboy Idol competition at the Columbia River Cowboy Gathering in Kennewick, Washington. In both 2018 and 2019, their recordings were recognized as National Traditional Country Music Association (NTCMA) - Rural Roots Music Commission Traditional Western CD of the Year awards. In 2019, they were inducted into the Legends of Dakota Country Music Hall of Fame for their lifelong contribution to country gospel and western music. That same year they were awarded the Academy of Western Artists Duo/Group of the Year 2019. Allen and Jill are 4-Time IWMA Award Nominee Finalists. Their original title song "Sunrise on The Prairie" debuted in *Western Way* magazine 10 Most Played Songs at #1 in Winter 2018. They are currently working steady annual music contracts of western entertainment with the Diamond Tours Dinner Shows in Rapid City and the High Plains Western Heritage Center Chuckwagon Dinners in Spearfish. They work with both the South Dakota Touring Artists Grant and Humanities Scholars programs. You can find Allen & Jill Kirkham in *Western Way* as IWMA Western Playlist Reporting DJs.

WESTERN RADIO

During the pandemic, Allen and Jill were contacted by Ben Parks of American Cowboy Radio. Ben asked if they would be interested in hosting a Sunday morning western gospel show on his station. Timing is everything and the Kirkhams know God has all things in His hands. They had been talking about that very idea and wondering if it was something they could do. Their answer to Ben was a resounding, "Yes!" and "Circuit Rider Roundup with Allen and Jill" was born. With her graphic arts background, Jill designed their logo and the two were well-branded when they showed up at the IWMA Convention this year to promote their show.

Allen and Jill have been and continue to be outstanding ambassadors for the western way of life, promoting and preserving the values of God and country through western music. Today they serve as active members of the US Marshals Posse, South Dakota Chapter, providing mounted traffic control at major events in the Black Hills. They have also served over the past year as volunteer monthly worship leaders at The Little White Church in Hill City. The opportunity for them to do a Christian radio program was an answer to prayer as they sought to know how to continue to honor God with their music. Now that Allen is retired from his full-time position as worship leader, he and Jill are giving themselves to sharing Good News through western music via modern technology. "Circuit Rider Roundup" is now syndicated and playing all over the world, thanks to the hard work and dedication of the solid western duo, "Allen & Jill." 🐾



Allen and Jill at the Custer Grand Jamboree in South Dakota.


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Penned by Lantern Light

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



THE OLD COOSIE

by Dale Page

*I watched the old nighthawk ride out of the camp
As I dumped out the dregs on the ground.
We'd shared the last cup in the cold and the damp
While we watched the Big Dipper spin 'round.*

*His shoulders were slumped as he rode toward the dark
To go face all his demons again.
When dawn rolls around with the trill of the lark,
He'll be back here, still packin' his pain.*

*We've never once spoke of the secrets we hold,
But our eyes lock in silent assent
Of emptiness earned in our vain search for gold
While our chances for peace came and went.*

*When I was a button, there's fire in my guts
And I burned ev'ry bridge that I crossed.
I whittled my youth with a thousand small cuts
And I never once cared what it cost.*

*I rented the life I could never afford
And sowed trouble wherever I went.
I traded my welcome for grief and discord,
Never cared how my wages was spent.*

*Then, just like that nighthawk, I chose the wrong trails
And those trails faded out, like my friends.
My dreams disappeared like the cloudy mares' tails
Broken up by life's cold winter winds.*

*Whatever the sins the old nighthawk has done,
I committed much more and much worse.
I's rightly accused of what caused me to run
And it's followed me here like a curse.*

*I broke all the rules and I broke ev'ry oath,
Broke the heart of one lass, maybe two.
I lived all my days in the dark undergrowth
Where the thorns and the wild roses grew.*

*I sit here alone in the fire's fading light
And I wonder how life went so fast.
I look for some way to turn wrong into right,
But can men ever outlive their past?*

*I'm left with the ashes of all of those years,
The mistakes and decisions I made.
I sit here tonight with my ghosts and my fears
In a life that I wish I could trade.*

*There just ain't no limit to what I would give
For a time without worry or strife,
But how many years will it take to outlive
All the evil I've done in my life?*

*The world won't remember the good things I've done;
It's my last act that folks will recall.
Lord, give me a chance as I finish this run
To break even for once and for all.*

*I lived my own life and I made my own choice,
Treated friends all too often like foes.
I listen at night to the devil's own voice
And I'm payin' for all that I chose.*



Dale Page worked his way through an English degree at Oklahoma State University by shoeing horses, repairing saddles, and riding bulls. He is a co-author of the book "Four Aces and a Queen," which was given a "Special Achievement Award" by the IWMA. This poem is a follow-up to Bruce Kiskaddon's "The Old Nighthawk."

In The Spotlight...

by Marvin O'Dell

...During Covid, amidst lockdowns, no gigs, no money, and boredom, **Carol Heuchan** was contacted about buying the publishing rights to a poem she had written. The poem was in response to a national challenge to write about a photo on the cover of a magazine. It was Australia's first car, the 1948 Holden. Carol, pretending to be a fella, wrote about the memories this icon might evoke. And she won the contest. The caller was none other than Mr. Bill Holden himself. He bought the poem, then contracted Carol to "re-write" a book and subsequently to write the publishing submissions. The result is an amazing coffee table book called *Holden our Own*. It came out just before last Christmas and is still on three of the major distributors' bestsellers lists.

...*Mile After Mile*, **Carol Markstrom's** latest album, received the Western Album of the Year Award in October from the Academy of Western Artists. In other news, Carol has been receiving awards for Best Musical Score and/or Best Music Video for the short-Western film *Miner's Candle*, most recently from the Cowpokes International Film Festival, the Wild Bunch Film Festival, and the Barcelona International Film Festival (honorable mention). The recorded song also won the 2022 Best Folk Original Female Award from the Red Carpet Award Show in Holland.

...In November, **The Outlaw Jesse Del** hosted a talk show-type of program in his acting class at the Movie People Studio in Aledo, TX, where he chatted with the actor Barry Corbin. The interview was filmed for future use and reference. Before the show, **Miss Devon and The Outlaw** performed a few songs for the other students and guests.

...**Mike Mahaney** recently played a benefit show for The Los Angeles Poverty Department skid row artists gala. He introduced his original "Homeless Meditation" that was well received. Mike is currently working on a project of environmental songs of the west.

...The new album from **The Dan Canyon Band** is due to be released soon. *Purple Sage (And Other Tales from the Plateau)* will be the title of the project. The songs on the album were inspired by the band's recent adventures in Eastern Washington State.

...**Buffalo Brian Marr** is recovering from rotator cuff surgery. He expects to be back on the concert trail soon.

...**Kimberly Kaye** released a new single to radio in November titled "I'm Not That Kind of Gal." The song makes a statement about being the kind of gal that chooses her boots, horse, open range, and the song of the coyote - not the kind of gals sitting in the parlor sippin' tea. Kimberly says it "has a Roy Rogers vibe, a Patsy Cline lyrical influence, and the rhythm of a ride across the prairie."

...A new Christmas single called "Holiday Roundup" was released in early December by **Buffalo Bill Boycott & Dr. Jo, Flower of the Prairie**. The duo also performed 12 Cowboy Christmas shows (they called it a "Holiday Roundup") from December 2nd till Dec 22nd in Wyoming - one at a 700-seat theatre in Rock Springs called Broadway Theatre, two shows at libraries nearer to home, and the rest at schools around the state.

..."RIDE EASY, PARD", a weekly column issued by **Vic Anderson**, has been picked up by the *Western AG Reporter*, one of the largest agricultural newspapers in the nation. The periodical is published in Billings, MT. The column has been published by *The Estes Park Trail Gazette* for over 10 years. Vic also does narration for the column and is available for voice over work in other genres.

...**Tom Swearingen** was a featured guest on **Bobbi Jean & Jim Bell's** LA Talk Radio show *Rendezvous with a Writer*. He also guest hosted with them with Tom's guests **Doc Mehl** and **Doris Dailey**. Tom was recently recognized by the Tualatin Historical Society with the 2022 President's Award for his performances in support of the organization.

...**Ron Christopher** released a single in December called "The Child." The song is a very moving relating of the life of Jesus Christ from the gospels. Ron introduced the song during the IWMA Convention's gospel concert on the final day of the event. The audience responded with a rousing round of applause. The song can be heard on Spotify, iTunes, Apple Music, and YouTube.

...**Jim Jones** is working on a new album at **Merel Bregante's** Cribworks Digital Audio studio. Also, first-time IWMA attendees **Randy Palmer** and **Joel White** have both booked time to begin new projects designed for the western music listener. Merel says, "The convention was a musical epiphany for them both." **Sarah Pierce**, too, is planning to release a compilation of previously recorded songs of the west and the cowboy life. It will be a blending of both traditional and contemporary western music. An early 2023 release is planned. Her new album of original songs is planned for mid-spring.

..."Everything That I hold Dear", the latest single release from **Clint Bradley**, has been getting some great airplay and some excellent reviews in both country and roots publications with even a mention on the mainstream news in the UK. Clint also reports that the 7" vinyl 45 has proved very popular in Europe and has created a real boost to sales. Gigs for the new year include a visit to Spain in January.

...**Marleen Bussma** has been named Poet Laureate for the *Saddlebag Dispatches* magazine, the award-winning home of great Western fiction. Her latest book and CD, *Deep Tracks*, each won the Will Rogers Medallion Award for excellence in western literature.

...**Morey Sullivan and the Brazos Valley Boys** will be releasing a new recording in March. *Instrumentals Only* is, as the title suggests, a compilation of 13 cuts including Orange Blossom Special, Steel Guitar Rag, and many other tunes requested at the band's live performances.

...**Almeda Bradshaw** has taken a hiatus from touring in order to better manage her Huntley, MT homelife. She plans to stay in touch with friends and fans through live stream shows and a podcast called RadioWEST. Plus, Almeda has accepted the IWMA Youth Chapter Directorship and is looking forward to working with all regional chapters in developing a campaign to promote youth involvement.

...Trying to stay on top of his new colt, playing fiddle with his boys up and down the long music road, and getting ready to release a new album has kept **Dave Munsick** busy. The new release, *BACKTRACKS*, will be a collection of Dave's new songs.

...**Dan Robert Crow** has partnered with singer/songwriter/historian **Karla Steen**, and as CROW AND KARLA recently did their "Sing the Legend" concert at the sold-out historic Schieffelin Hall in Tombstone, AZ. They also co-produced the play "The Trial of Billy the Kid" at the same venue.

...**Rex Rideout** offered his 7th annual Conifer Christmas show in December at the Venue Theatre in Conifer, CO. This is a benefit for the non-profits in Conifer.

...**Leah Sawyer** graduated from Oklahoma Wesleyan University in December with a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Business. This fall she won Reserve Grand Champion at the Grand Masters Fiddle Contest held at the Country Music Hall of Fame.

...In December, **Cisco Jim** and Taza de Mogollon once again brought smiles to downtown Santa Cruz, CA, with their Saddle Serenades. Cisco Jim and Taza work closely with the Downtown Santa Cruz Merchants Association to bring these Saddle Serenades free of charge to people visiting Santa Cruz. Cisco Jim continues playing western music at several clubs, pubs, cafes, and public venues in the Monterey Bay Area of California. 🐾

BADGER CLARK— LEAVES A LARGE SHADOW

BY REX RIDEOUT



Young Badger Clark, Jr.

“Who in H___ is this kid Clark, anyway? I don’t know how Clark knowed, but he knows!”

This “kid”, Charles “Badger” Clark Jr. was three months old when his family moved to the Dakota Territory in 1883 and later settled in Deadwood in 1898. Badger was the family name of his maternal grandmother. Charles Sr. was a Methodist minister. In time the Clark family would be struck by Tuberculosis. Charles’ brother was found to have it and died from the illness. His mother cared for him as best she could. Little was known of the disease and in time she also died from it. Years later Charles himself was diagnosed with the dreaded illness and his doctor told him to move to the Southwest where the dry desert air might prolong his life. Fate led him to Tombstone, Arizona, in 1906 where he met E.K. Springer who introduced him to the Kendall brothers. The Kendalls owned the Cross I Quarter Circle ranch about twenty miles east of Tombstone. Young Charles was looking for work and they agreed that they could use another hand.

Life in the West under the gaze of the Dragoon Mountains suited him well. In fact, he not only survived but thrived in the beauty of the desert. In time his illness was as he said, “forgotten.” By day he tended to the needs of the ranch and passersby. One of those was a cowboy named Bob Axtel who became close friends with Badger and later the subject of some of his stories. In the evening he would serenade the desert with his guitar singing such favorites as “El Ultimo Adios” and “Juanita.” He would also write. He was inspired to write poetry to share in the joy of his new surroundings. Those poems were sent to his family back in the Black Hills. Charles’ father had remarried, and his stepmother found value in the verses he sent home. She in turn sent them on to Pacific Monthly who also admired his work and put it to print.

The first notion young Badger had that he was being published was when he received a check in the mail for ten dollars. The revelation that someone would pay real money for his creations was most encouraging and he continued to write. He sent more poems to Pacific Monthly over the course of five years. During that time Badger returned to the Black Hills to care for his ailing father. At length he had enough material to publish his first collection, “Sun and Saddle Leather” in 1915. A second collection titled “Grass Grown Trails” was published in 1917.

That same year a second edition of "Sun and Saddle Leather" was also published. L. A. Huffman was asked to illustrate the book with his photographs. Mr. Huffman had been post photographer in General Miles' army at Fort Keogh on the Yellowstone. Mr. Huffman was also made sales rep for Clark's book in Montana and the surrounding states. He is quoted in the forward of the second edition. "Only yesterday I read aloud 'The Old Cow Man' (a poem from the book) to an old cow man, and when I had finished the stanza..." "He said in a choky voice and with more than a hint of moisture in his eyes, 'Who in H--- is this kid Clark, anyway?' and he coughed up three bones for copies of the book. Later by phone he ordered three more copies and added, 'You can break me if there's a dead poem in it. I read the "hull" twenty-two. I don't know how Clark knowed, but he knows!"

As word of his books got around, Badger was invited to speak of his poetry and ranch life for schools and clubs in the area. These engagements led to invitations to come speak at more distant venues. Starting in 1916 through the 1920s, public speaking became a major part of his life. Sometimes with a Chautauqua group and often, alone. It began for school commencements, then conventions,

Decoration Day, Independence Day celebrations and even the Mount Rushmore National Memorial. "I soon discovered that having a group of people at one's mercy was rather fun, and I have done a good deal of talking and reading my own verse since, at one time traveling from Vermont to Los Angeles and from Oregon to Florida on my own jaw, so to speak." All the while he continued to write and publish books; "Spike" (1925), "When Hot Springs Was a Pup" (1927), "Sky Lines and Wood Smoke" (1935).

Having grown up in a musical family, Badger enjoyed singing and played the guitar which fit in well during his ranching years in Arizona. Now during his public speaking career he would frequently sing some of his poems put to music while playing on the guitar. Having a pleasing baritone voice, he was the official soloist for funerals at Soldier's homes. He sang in a non-sectarian quartet in Hot Springs and sang in the May Festivals at Chadron State College. His musical experience allowed him to write musical scores for some of his poems. Others were put to music by Billy Simon, a cowboy in Arizona. These songs have been recorded by our most esteemed artists such as Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash,

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BADGER CLARK

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Judy Collins, Katie Lee, Emmylou Harris, Michael Martin Murphey and Don Edwards. His work is the basis of what we call Cowboy poetry and song today, it is known, sung or recited by anyone who takes an interest in this form of verse. He is one of our first cowboy poets and some argue, the first to be recognized as one.

Badger received a great honor in 1937 when he was named the first Poet Laureate of South Dakota by Governor Leslie Jensen. Badger would often claim the title was “Poet Lariat.” That same year he took in a movie, *Rhythm on the Range*, while visiting in Huron South Dakota. He was astonished to see Bing Crosby singing his very own Roundup Lullaby which was published in his first book in 1915. He and indignant friends sent letters to his publisher requesting credit for the song. Paramount Pictures did not correct the omission.

Perhaps the greatest honor bestowed to Badger Clark in his time was the singing of his “Lead My America” on the grounds of the Washington Monument in the nation’s capitol on Independence Day in 1952. It was sung by Private first-class Charles W. Oliver and backed by none other than the United States Marine Band.

President Calvin Coolidge was visiting the Custer State Park in 1927. At one point he stated that he had a favorite verse and would like to meet the man that he knew wrote it. “Where’s this poet, Badger Clark? I’d like to meet the author of ‘A Cowboy’s Prayer.’” There was a frantic search and Badger was rounded up and presented to President

Badger received a great honor in 1937 when he was named the first Poet Laureate of South Dakota by Governor Leslie Jensen. Badger would often claim the title was “Poet Lariat.”

Coolidge, where the two dined and enjoyed the afternoon together. President Eisenhower visited the area in 1953 and requested to see Badger Clark. It is said that Badger took the president fishing. Badger Clark continued lecturing and writing while living up in his cabin in Custer State Park right up to the end in 1957. He is buried in Hot Springs which he always considered his “hometown.” His cabin, the Badger Hole, is open for visitors but check with Custer State Park for times. Recent articles about him include “Requiem for a Cowboy Poet” by Peggy Sanders for HistoryNet and “Saddle Up With Badger Clark, America’s Forgotten Cowboy Poet” by Carson Vaughan for Smithsonian Magazine. The small-town boy from the Dakotas has left a large shadow.

(Earnest thanks go out to historian and author Greg Scott, Dakota Wesleyan University Archives and the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation for photos and assistance with this article.) 🐾

The Western World Tour



by Rick Huff

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

Tips? Comments? Ideas for the column, send to:
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Someday we may really start looking seriously at public relations and marketing in Western Music. But don't hold your breath. We haven't really done so up to now. So for this outing I've decided to profile a couple of admittedly weird examples of what creative marketing power can do. They are Nathan Odam and Robert Burck. The former became infamous as "The Legendary Stardust Cowboy." The latter, "The Naked Cowboy!" Aw, c'mon! "Bare" with me here!!

The IWMA (formerly WMA) has been around for thirty-three years as of 2022, but that doesn't mean Western Music exists through any meaningful level of public awareness. So far I'm afraid it only says some people gamely won't let it go. I'm happy they've held on, but its "Golden Age"...back when people actually knew the difference between "Western" and "Country"... ended in the 1960s. What can simply "holding on" do toward reestablishing the genre now that three complete generations have come who don't know what Western Music is?!! They don't know because we haven't told them. At least, not in any way they retain it. It's easy to say "media ignores it." It's equally simplistic to spout excuses like "it takes money to make it known." Not in the era of Social Media. Now it's even possible to make money as we make it known! It doesn't happen without a clever, clearly defined, intelligent plan. And that's where my two off-the-wall examples come in.

Nathan Carl Odam was born in Lubbock, Texas in 1947. He grew up surrounded by genuine cowboy life as well as the Hollywood-generated kind, and the music he would have heard most was Western with mixed-in "Hillbilly" as Country was still called in the 1940s. Gene Autry is generally credited with coining the term "Country & Western." Odam took a different trail. He was also obsessed with space adventure, so what was more natural (for him) than to combine "space" and "cowboy" (or was that a Steve Miller invention)?? At least Odam took the word "cowboy" along for the ride, weird though that trip has been. When he debuted his atonal, howling, jumping persona "The Legendary Stardust

Cowboy," he did it with an absolutely straight face, which he maintains to this day despite having adopted the good-natured nickname of "Ledge." Likewise unsmiling are the subsequently famous people who swear Odam was a genuine inspiration for them. They include Joe Ely and the late David Bowie. Both claim Odam was a genius of "unfettered creativity!" Bowie stated that his own performance character "Ziggy Stardust" was drawn, in name at least, from Odam. Ledge's song "Paralyzed" must be heard (and seen on YouTube) to be truly *un*appreciated! Believe it or not, it is the now-renowned producer T-Bone Burnett playing the lunatic drums on both the Mercury-released record and the video! I wish I could track down the source of a late 1960s-era quote "if you can't be good, be terrible/bizarre!" I first heard it applied to Herbert "Tiny Tim" Khaury who has obviously become yet another cult legend.

Well, then there's Robert John Burck (born 1970 in Cincinnati, Ohio...Len "Roy Rogers" Slye having been born c. 95 miles to the southeast). Burck wasn't terrible, but he was facing the threat of being reasonably talented yet obscure until someone jokingly suggested he could perform nude. Burck took it to the streets. New York City's Times Square, in fact! Thirty...*thirty*...some-odd years later, rain-sleet-or-shine, Burck still struts his muscular, nearly buff stuff serenading passersby, taking selfies with tourists and....oh yes...earning somewhere in the comfortable *six figures a year* doing it!!! Garbed only in tighty whities emblazoned across the butt with "The Naked Cowboy," fancy tooled boots (also bearing that name) and Cowboy hat (name again), Burck plies his profitable trade. Like "Ledge" has done, "Nake" (ok, my own nickname for him) has shrewdly expanded and capitalized on his image with (ironically) T-shirts. plus posters, albums, videos and much more. To fully grasp what has enshrined these guys, google them by name.

Is there anything we can learn from their success and name recognition? Is it just our human fascination with The Odd and The Bod? Maybe, but the word "cowboy" has remained right there with them. Nobody is saying their

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Chapter Update

ARIZONA CHAPTER

President: Gary Kirkman
eskirkman@hotmail.com

New officers for 2023 were elected and they are Gary Kirkman president; Ralph Brekan vice-president; Ashley Westcott secretary/treasurer. Congratulations to Gary Kirkman for his 8th great grand-child coming in February. Look for a new western swing video coming out in the spring by the Kirkman Country Classic band. Band members are Gary Kirkman, Ashley Westcott, Lyndee Ervien, and Amber Heap. Most sincere thanks must go to Sherry Walker for her many years of service in the IWMA, and specifically the AZ chapter. She has been outstanding. Also, thanks to all the officers that have served in the past. Our goals for the upcoming year are to have chapter meetings in various locations throughout the state such as Tucson, Phoenix, Prescott, and Show Low where members and nonmembers alike will be invited to perform. Also, to have special gatherings during holidays: Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Labor Day. Hopefully chapter members will want to pitch in and help.

BLACK HILLS & BEYOND CHAPTER

President: Brad Exton
ramblinrangers@yahoo.com

Greetings from the newly chartered Black Hills and Beyond chapter of the IWMA! We are very excited

to be able to represent the many musicians, poets, storytellers, and supporters of the Western way of life found in the northern tier of our country. Our geographical boundaries will take in South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming and Nebraska, but we hope to attract members from all over the U.S. to help support our efforts. Our founding meeting took place at the 2022 IWMA National Convention in Albuquerque in November, with the following members being selected as officers: Brad Exton (Ramblin' Rangers), President; Sherl Cederburg (poet), Vice President; Richard Cederburg, Treasurer; Bonnie Benson Exton (Ramblin' Rangers), Secretary; and Kimberly Kaye Bachman (musician/poet), Media and Marketing Coordinator. In addition, we intend



Black Hills Chapter Officers

to form standing committees for Youth, Education, Veterans, and Volunteers. If any of you out there would be interested in volunteering for one of the committee assignments, please contact us at the following e-mail address: ramblinrangers@yahoo.com. Again, please consider joining this new chapter to help us keep the Western culture alive and further the mission of the IWMA.

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

President: Greg Khougaz
gregkhougaz@earthlink.net

Howdy from California! If it's 51 degrees and raining in Los Angeles, it must be raining (snowing?) all over the world. All roads truly led to Albuquerque as we attended the IWMA Convention which is back at near full strength. Thank you to all making it a success, especially our IWMA National Board and Executive Director, Marsha Short. The music, poetry and Western comradery were, as always, not to be missed. From enjoying our own headliner, Dave Stamey, to watching our nonagenarian, Marilyn Tuttle, waltz



Marilyn Tuttle waltzing the night away, shown here with Greg Khougaz.

to late night jam sessions, a great time was had by all. We are already looking forward to IWMA 2023! Many of us attended and provided Western entertainment for a Christmas

party in conjunction with the Cowboy Social Club, December 10 and a Christmas potluck at our VPs Scott T's home on December 17. We are looking forward to a Western Music and poetry 2023!



Chapter members enjoy a great time in Albuquerque.

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Two-Cents of Songwriter Savvy

BY A.B. SHAW



**“Poetry is when emotion has found its thought
and the thought has found words.”**

Robert Frost, American Poet

**“Musical training is a more potent instrument
than any other because rhythm and harmony
find their way into the inward places of the soul.”**

Plato, The Republic

If poetry involves the heart and mind through cognizant expressions of feelings and if the body and soul are what resonate with music, then it stands to reason the combination of poetry and music in song serves as the ultimate expression of human experience. Why else has mankind been singing songs for centuries?

Interestingly, one camp of evolutionists claims the first humanoid able to sing dates back over a half million years to when the horseshoe-shaped hyoid bone in the throat developed. Another camp claims about a million years ago the common ancestor of Neanderthals and modern humans had the vocal anatomy to sing. So much for evolutionary accuracy.

One thing we do know is “Hurrian Hymn No. 6” is considered the world’s earliest melody, but the oldest musical composition to have survived in its entirety is a first century A.D. Greek tune known as the “Seikilos Epitaph.” The song was found engraved on an ancient marble column used to mark a woman’s gravesite in Turkey. But even before that, Jubal, the son of Lamech in Genesis 4:21, is described as ‘the father of all who play stringed instruments and pipes’, the one who first created music to be played on instruments.

**“There are not more than five musical notes,
yet the combinations of these five give rise to
more melodies than can ever be heard.”**

Sun Tzu, Chinese Philosopher

I think this is a debatable notion. I suppose it’s possible to create countless combinations, but how many of them are truly pleasing to the ear? Researchers have shown that music stimulates the cerebellum, a region of the brain crucial to motor control. Levitin says connections between the cerebellum and the limbic system (which is associated with emotion), “may explain why movement, emotion, and music are tied together.” <http://www.willimekmusic.de/music-and-emotions.pdf> But not every conceivable combination of notes can accomplish this. Dissonance does not produce emotionally and physically pleasing resonance.

How musical notes are combined in the structure of melody with meter, duration, pitch and timbre matter. Musical notes alone are void of emotion. It’s the mind that assigns an emotional response to a particular melodic combination of note vibrations as they travel through the ear and register in the brain. We’ve all had a melody stuck in our heads, right? Maybe it’s because it’s having a particularly pleasing emotional effect on your brain at that moment? Maybe it’s allowing your mind to process something subconscious? Maybe that’s why Tom Waits says, “I like beautiful melodies telling me terrible things.” Music is emotive, medicinal and a must for our well-being.

Last issue’s challenge was to take an existing song and use it as a template to write your own song. How did it go?

Over the years, I’ve heard songs with melodies that resonate deeply with me. I’ve used those melodies to write lyrics that express my response. Back about the summer of 2003, I heard a song titled “Jean” performed at the Montana Fiddle Camp by April Verch, one of my favorite Canadian fiddle instructors. Written by Terry Gonda in 3/4 time, it tells the true story of

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Almeda Bradshaw comes from a long line of writers. Her bookshelves hold a treasure of family journals, diaries, books and manuscripts dating back to the late 1800s. Almeda feels privileged to be carrying on that tradition through her own life of journaling, essays, poetry, songwriting and, under the pen name **A.B. Shaw**, her work as a free-lance writer and future novelist.

Chapter Update

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COLORADO CHAPTER

President: Sonja Oliver
psalmgarden@icloud.com

The 2023 Colorado Chapter is off and running like a racehorse! First, thanks to everyone who attended our Sharing Session at the IWMA Convention in November. (Thank you, Lindy Simmons, for bringing COOKIES!) It was probably the best one we've hosted, for sure! Our leadership has grown since the last Chapter Update. Our new President, Sonja Oliver, (Cripple Creek & Arkansas) has a desire to include Chapter Members in various capacities in 2023. Sonja says, "If you would like to become more involved in sharing Western Music and Cowboy Poetry in your area, we encourage you to reach out and let us know of your ideas and how the Chapter can help." Our new Vice President, Geary Parsons (Durango), has a passion for our Chapter. His email is gearyparsons@outlook.com. Susie Knight (Conifer) remains as Secretary/Treasurer and Showcase Liaison. Contact her at lassothecowgirl@yahoo.com if you have a suggestion for a Showcase venue in 2023. Dennis Knill (Lamar) is on the Advisory Board which means he can join in our Board Meetings (via Zoom) to listen in, make suggestions, question ideas, etc. We would like to see more of



2023 Chapter Board Members (From left: Susie Knight, Sonja Oliver, Geary Parsons, Dennis Knill)

our members step up to be on the Advisory Board. (How 'bout you?) Here's hopin' the new year's ropin' in more Showcases all around the State of Colorado, and that you'll be involved in all the happenings!

COLUMBIA CHAPTER

President: Tom Swearingen
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After two years of pandemic cancellations, Columbia Chapter was able to hold its annual meeting and showcase concert live to an appreciative audience in The Dalles, OR. Matinee and evening performances featured Larry Wilder, Kathy Moss, Border Crossing (Ed Wahl and Mike Dygert) Venessa Carpenter, Tom Swearingen, Chinook Winds (Veronica Manis and Joe McCutcheon), Ned Bodie, Sam Mattise, Duane Nelson, Wampus Cat, Janice Williams, and Ned Bodie. A highlight was the presentation of custom trophy

buckles and other prizes to 2022 Columbia Chapter Youth Poetry Contest winners Opal Wilson, Thomas Fitzgerald, and Venessa Carpenter. The audience was treated to performances of their poems. It was also announced that the contest continues in 2023 and is open to 3-12 grade students in OR, WA, ID, BC, with info and entry at iwmacolumbia.org. Officers elected for 2023 are Tom Swearingen, Pres. John Seger, VP, Nels Nelson, Treasure, Carla Swearingen, Secretary, with Directors Ned Bodie, Duane Nelson, Ed Wahl, and Mike Dygert. The chapter was well represented at the annual convention in ABQ with a number of attendees, award nominees, and workshop presenters. Chapter award winners were John Seger, Venessa Carpenter, Tom Swearingen, Joni Harms, Miss Devon and the Outlaw, and Jennifer Epps.



Kathy Moss



Duane Nelson



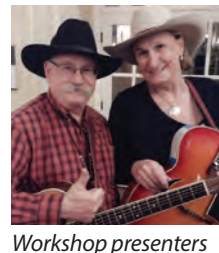
Janice Williams



Ned Bodie



Sam Mattise



Workshop presenters
Scott T and Grace Clark



Tom Swearingen with poetry contest winners Opal Wilson, Thomas Fitzgerald, Venessa Carpenter.



Mike Dygert and Ed Wahl

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WESTERN WORLD TOUR

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image is the kind we want to have for Western Music, but we do have something going for us that has never been exploited. Anonymity!!! Ours is the “hidden” endemic American music genre, flying under the radar, that still has its stars and creators. I’ll cut to the chase. THE POINT: If Western Music can’t be made to broadly capture the public’s attention (and *who* says it can’t?!), then look for ways to hook it inextricably to something that *does*!!! “Coat tail” the genre into visibility! In the early part of the 20th Century, “The Great Train Robbery” placed cowboys in front of a

public (many of whom had lived through the actual eras we celebrate), that was now drooling over the new “moving pictures.” It set the stage for “The Golden Age.” Poverty Row’s musical B-Westerns pushed it further. The song “Home On The Range” moved into its widest public awareness after Franklin Delano Roosevelt named it as his favorite song. Our challenge is to find the right thing...*the right* thought-provoking, soul-stirring, “like”-generating, TikTok-enflaming *thing* to hook it to. Think, creators, *think*! Coat tailing! Don’t knock it since we haven’t tried it. 🐾

TWO-CENTS OF SONGWRITER SAVVY

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Terry’s maternal grandparents, Frank and Jean, from their courtship to the hard days of their early married life, and through to old age. It expresses themes of hope, of faith, and knowing that love is always enough to see you through.

The song touched my heart with its poignant happy ending story. But it also saddened me because my mother’s name was Jean, and her marriage was very different. So, I rewrote the lyrics to tell my mom’s tragic story instead. I rarely sing it because it is so personal and sad. On rare occasion, I’ll sing it, with permission from Terry, as part of my testimony. We communicated about the song I’d written and how I had used hers as a template. She was honored and offered me the freedom to sing it publicly with credit to her.

Another time I used John Hartford’s song “Where Does an Old Time River Man Go” to write a song titled “Why Do I Feel the Way I Do” which is another of my testimony songs I don’t often sing, but when I do, I give Hartford credit for the melody. Tom Russell’s “Hallie Lonigan” provided the template for my unrecorded song “Sarah May.” Years ago, I shared the song I had adapted from my poem “Atmosphere” in a jam circle at an IWMA convention. I explained my process for writing the song and sang it using Russell’s melody verbatim. Later, I was told by a very serious songwriter that using another song’s music was not OK. I smiled, thanked that fellow and left him to his opinion.

The borrowing of melodies has been a hallmark of folk music and songwriting for thousands of years. Only because of the business of music publishing, and technologies making sound recordings possible in the last century, has copyright issues become de rigueur.

“Intellectual property” must be protected. That’s MY melody and you can’t have it! I find the mindset rather small and tedious.

Melodies and song formulas are constantly being recycled. I believe what makes a song a hit is not necessarily its total musical originality, but the perfect combination of words and melody giving expression to an experience that resonates deeply with one’s heart, mind, body, and soul. If the music is borrowed or heavily influenced by another song, then simply give credit where it’s due. And if you start making millions, then you can worry about copyright and royalty distributions. Not a bad problem to have. 🐾



Brand new CD by Patty Clayton!
thank you DJ's for making this #1 in the summer quarter!
CD or download now from www.pattyclayton.com

IWMA 2022 AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

MUSIC AWARDS



Kristyn Harris
*Entertainer of the Year and
Female Performer of the Year*



Randy Huston
*Male Performer of the Year
and Songwriter of the Year*



**The Cowboy Way –
Doug Figgs, Jim Jones, Mariam Funke** *(Not pictured)*
Duo or Group of the Year



Doug Figgs
"Yellow Horse"
Traditional Western Album of the Year



Mariam Funke
*Instrumentalist of the Year
(Not pictured)*



Venessa Carpenter
*Liz Masterson
Crescendo Award
(Not pictured)*



**Dan McCorison and
Les Buffham** *(Not pictured)*
*"Welcome to Wickenburg
Song of the Year*



Jim Winters
"Yearnin'"
Cowboy Swing Album of the Year



John Lowell
"Angus MacKenzie"
Working Cowboy Song of the Year

POETRY AWARDS



Tom Swearingen
Male Poet of the Year



Valerie Beard
Female Poet of the Year



Miska Paget
*"The Best Horses in Heaven, They Have No Tails"
Cowboy Poetry CD of the Year*



Marleen Bussma
*"Deep Tracks"
Cowboy Poetry Book of the Year*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION



Janice Brooks
*"Bus of Real Country"
Radio DJ/Radio Program of the Year*



Theresa O'Dell
President's Award



Phoebe White – Janet McBride Yodeling Award
Jeneve Rose Mitchell – Yodeling Award



Jennifer Epps
Poetry Contest Award



Happy Anderson
*"Take Me to Montana"
IWMA Songwriting Contest Winner*



Miss Devon and the Outlaw
Harmony Contest Award



Jack and Voleta Hummel
(Not pictured)
Curly Musgrave Silver Buckle Award
Accepted by Mike Rutherford



Joni Harms and Tom Swearingen
IWMA Team Penning Co-write Award



John Seger
Bill Wiley Award



Gary I. Holt
Pioneer Trail Award

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



There were 23 announced honorees inducted into the Western Music Hall of Fame at the Opening Day Luncheon. There were four additional inductees that were surprised with their Induction: **Don Cusic** (not in attendance, historian and former Editor of the *Western Way*); **Doug Green** (Historian and member of Riders In The Sky); **O.J. Sikes** (Historian and *Western Way* contributor); and the late **Foy Willing** (Musician. Wife Sharon Willing was present to accept the honor for her husband).

IWMA 2022 IN REVIEW

Two notable events took place at the Convention. On Wednesday, the Opening Day Lunch featured special guest Doug Green (Riders In The Sky and member of the Hall of Fame Committee), who was there to lead the induction of 23 individuals/groups into the Hall of Fame. At the conclusion, he was surprised to learn that he, too, along with three others were being inducted as well. On Thursday evening, attendees of the IWMA Fundraising Dinner were treated to an evening with Dave Stamey, the voice and persona of Western music. These two events alone made the Convention worth the price of admission!

WEDNESDAY OPENING LUNCH AND HALL OF FAME INDUCTION



IWMA FUNDRAISER WITH SPECIAL GUEST DAVE STAMEY



IWMA 2022 IN REVIEW



IWMA 2022 IN REVIEW



Les Buffham, unable to attend Convention, but was presented his songwriter's award (collaboration with Dan McCorison) from Mike Rutherford.



IWMA 2022 IN REVIEW



DON EDWARDS (1939 – 2022)



Contributed by OJ Sikes

Don Edwards passed away on Oct 23, 2022, following a long illness. He was 83. Don was a member of the IWMA's Hall of Fame, and two of his albums have been included

in the Folklore Archives of the Library of Congress. As a boy, he was drawn to the cowboy life by the books of Will James and B-Western movies. He taught himself to play guitar, starting at age ten, and later left his home in the East to pursue his dream of becoming a cowboy singer, working in Texas and New Mexico during his teens, perfecting his skills and gaining popularity throughout the West. Eventually, he was to perform around the world and record numerous albums of Western music.

In 1992 and 1996, he received the National Cowboy Hall of Fame's "Wrangler Award" for Outstanding Traditional Western Music. He also presented educational programs on Western music at Yale, Rice, Texas Christian and other universities, and he performed at Lincoln Center and at the World Trade Center in New York in the 1990s. Don also teamed up with cowboy poet Waddie Mitchell in highly acclaimed performances across the country, and he enjoyed recording with his friends, Tom Morrell and the Time-Warp Top Hands, and his long-time friend, accompanist and producer Rich O'Brien.

In 1997, Robert Redford asked Don to sing in his film, *The Horse Whisperer*. Subsequently, his music was included in two other feature films, *Silver City* and *The Grizzly Man*. Throughout his career, Don received many accolades. Bobby Weaver of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City, described him as "...the best purveyor of cowboy music in America today."

OPHELIA "BUZZ" FISHER (1927 – 2022)



The family of F. Ophelia "Buzz" Fisher is saddened to announce the passing of our matriarch, Buzz Fisher. Her father died when she was a young child and her mother raised Ophelia and her older brother, Charles, on her own,

blazing trails as a successful businesswoman in what was then a man's world of insurance and real estate development. This early influence helped shape little Ophelia into a strong and resilient woman. Ophelia was dubbed "Buzz" by her second-grade teacher who wanted to know "what the buzzing in the back of the room" was.

Raised in Tulare and a graduate of College of Sequoias, a friend introduced Buzz to C. Howard Fisher, a farmer in Prairie Center just outside of Strathmore. They were married on Valentine's Day 1953 at the Church of the Brethren. Buzz kept the books, drove cotton trailers to the gin and did all other chores of a typical farm wife. She used her award-winning photography and darkroom skills to benefit her community by teaching 4-H photography courses. Buzz loved to travel, visiting Europe multiple times and the Antarctic. She made several trips to Germany for farm tours with her Prairie Center neighbors. But some of her greatest times were on regional tours in a 1931 Model A coupe with the Happy Honkers, a Model A club.

Buzz was preceded in death by her husband Howard in 1983, former husband Stan Barnes, husband Milt Burtner whom she married in 1997, and her brother Charles Bosworth. She is survived by daughters Louise Fisher, Juni Fisher (Rusty Bane), and Susan Fisher; her grandchildren Amanda Miller (Kirill Solovykh) and Benjamin Miller (Sara Hunter Miller); great grandchildren Madelyn, Everly and Amelia Miller, and a multitude of nieces and nephews.

In Memoriam

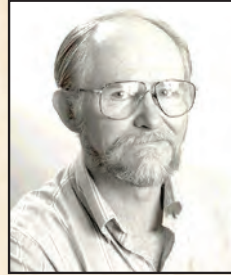
VAL GEISSLER (1939 – 2022)



IWMA Life Member, Val Geissler, 82, died Feb. 16, 2022, in Cody after a short illness. He was born Sept. 19, 1939, in San Francisco to Kenneth DuVal Geissler Sr. and Virginia Geissler. As a

little boy, Val dreamed of becoming a cowboy and from that point on, that was all he wanted to be. He was raised in Northern California and with support from his family and his unwavering determination, Val went on to pursue his dream of becoming a cowboy. Val was fortunate to work with many notable horse trainers, ranchers and mentors and learned how to be a top horse hand and live the true cowboy way. After attending Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo with studies in animal husbandry and ranch management, he went on to Montana to learn and ride on the KO Ranch and the E bar L Ranch. Val was awarded numerous awards for his work as a cowboy entertainer and poet. Val was the “boys” mentor for the movie *Unbranded* and he won the People’s Choice Award at the Banff Film Festival. He wrote the film’s title song “Border to Border” as well as a vast catalog of other songs. Val was invited to the home of President George H.W. Bush and First Lady, Barbara Bush as their special guest. He performed all over the United States but, true to his cowboy ways, he loved performing alongside the campfires and ranches around the Cody area the most. Val leaves behind his beloved close friends and family who will miss hearing his booming happy voice, his smile, charm and endlessly positive attitude.

LARRY HOPPER (1942 – 2022)

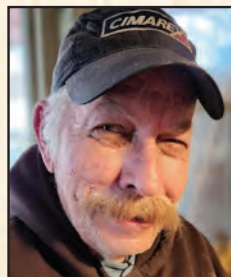


Western music historian and long-time DJ, Larry Hopper, passed away at his home in August 2022, shortly before his 80th birthday. He was a skilled computer technician and a talented illustrator.

But it was his Western movie and film hobby, plus his talent as a broadcaster, that made it possible for him to share Western music with thousands of radio listeners. His long career with station WFDU-FM, where he hosted “Down Home Frolic” (featuring interviews with Marty Robbins, Roy Rogers and others), brought him into prominence in the NY area. He also worked at a number of other stations where he hosted shows featuring Western music, Big Band music and vintage country music, beginning in 1975.

In 2002, his long-time interest in the Sons of the Pioneers led him to publish a guide on Bob Nolan for the University of North Carolina: *Bob Nolan: A Biographical Guide and Annotations to the Lyric Archive*. He was a stickler for accuracy when doing his research, and, with the assistance of historian Ken Griffis, he continued to revise his findings, even after initial publication. He was pre-deceased in 1986 by his wife of 11 years.

ANTHONY JOSEPH KOLODZIEJ (1950 – 2022)



Anthony J. Kolodziej, 72, IWMA Member, petroleum geologist and resident of Tulsa, Oklahoma, passed away on Wednesday, October 5, 2022. He was born Tuesday, March 28, 1950 in East Chicago, Illinois to Anthony Kolodziej and Mary (Spejewski) Kolodziej. He is survived by his wife Tracy.

Continued on page 31

Chapter Update

Continued from page 20

KANSAS CHAPTER

President: Orin Friesen
orin@rbanjoranch.com

Congratulations to IWMA Kansas Chapter member, Ron Wilson, who was recently inducted into the Kansas Cowboy Hall of Fame. The cowboy poet from the Lazy T Ranch near Manhattan, KS joins several current and former IWMA Kansas members in the hall of fame, including Johnny Western, Geff Dawson, Barry Ward, and Orin Friesen. Congratulations also to Jim Winters for receiving the 2022 IWMA Award for Western Swing Album of the Year. Jim is the lead singer with the award-winning western group, 3 Trails West, who are Kansas Chapter members. IWMA Kansas award-winning cowboy poet, Scott Wiswell has put his poetry into a book. *When the Stars Sang* is available through Amazon. For the Lunch & Learn program at our fall meeting, Orin Friesen spoke about the history of the Pony Express in Kansas. Orin has been studying Pony Express history since 1959, and finally began exploring the Pony Express Trail in detail in 2019. On October 30, the Diamond W Wranglers performed at the Wichita Union Stockyards for the KWLS Listener Appreciation Show. Headlining the show were Riders in the Sky.



Diamond W Wranglers and Riders in the Sky

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

President: Dennis Russell
drnpoet@gmail.com

The New Mexico State Fair Western Heritage Days was a big hit and well attended. Reese Janca hosted and streamed this entire event. Bonnie Rutherford continues to provide her Music Venue Schedule updated monthly. Find this on the NM Chapter web page. Dave Levenson continues to hold a monthly Song and Poetry Corral on Zoom and then provides sound for our monthly live Open Mic at the Hopper. Judi Anderson and Bernard Carr made way for the new display racks that were used in the convention consignment store. Thanks to all the chapter members that volunteered their time. Kacey and Jenna Thunborg, The Twins, were a huge hit in every showcase they performed at the SWRFA Convention in Austin. Bobbie Jean Bell and Susan Buescher put together an Austin style 'After Hours Music and Poetry Showcase' with scheduled performers in a 15-minute time slot after the scheduled convention events were completed. Truly a huge hit! NM Chapter Award winners; 'The Cowboy Way' group of the year,



Doug Figs at Independence Creek

Doug Figs Yellow Horse Album of the Year, Randy Huston Male Performer and Songwriter of the year, Valerie Beard Female Poet of the Year. I will step down as President this year. It has been an honor to have had this opportunity to work with talented and fine

members of the New Mexico Chapter. New Officers are: David Nidel, President, Kim Linker, Treasurer, Dennis Russell, Secretary.




On stage at Independence Creek



2022 New Mexico chapter Christmas party.




Continued on page 32

35th ARIZONA
**COWBOY
POETS
GATHERING**
MUSIC · POETRY · STORIES



August 10, 11, 12, 2023
Yavapai College Performing Arts Center
Prescott, Arizona

AZCowboyPoets.org



In Memoriam

JOSEPH A. PARKER (1939 – 2022)

No Picture Available

Joseph A. Parker, 83, of Chandler, AZ, passed away on August 12, 2022. Joe was born on January 7, 1939, in San Francisco, CA to Helen and Andy Parker. He graduated from Los Angeles High and served in the U.S. Army, 1962-64. On December 19, 1964, Joe married Sandy Johnson in Hollywood, California.

Joe worked in the motion picture industry for David Wolper Productions, Walt Disney Studios, MGM and Universal Studios. He was a member of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, Motion Pictures Editors Guild Local 776 and the American Federation of Musicians Local 47.

Joe's dad was Andy Parker, leader of the highly talented Western group, Andy Parker & the Plainsmen. As a boy, he studied violin under the legendary fiddler, Harry Simms, one of the Plainsmen. When he retired from his position in the film industry, Joe started on a dream project: to locate and restore his dad's recorded works and make them available to the public once more. Only a few years before his death Joe accomplished his dream with the aid of the British Archive of Country Music (BACM), and the Plainsmen collection of 5 Western CDs occupies a prominent place in the BACM's catalogue today. Had it not been for Joe's tireless efforts and professional skill, most of that body of work would have been lost.

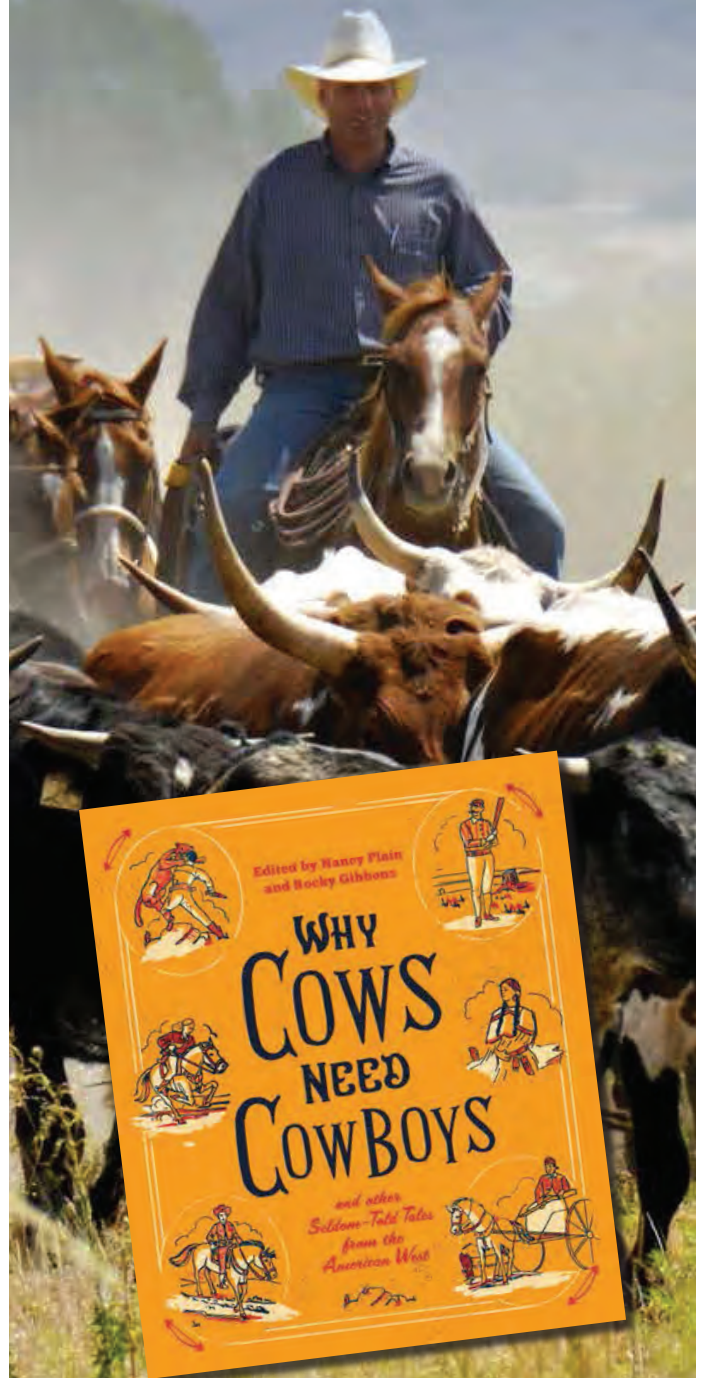
BENJAMIN NELSON (1954 – 2022)



IWMA member Benjamin Nelson from Dumas, TX, was born on December 30, 1954. He passed away on November 5, 2022. He was an over-the-road truckdriver. Benjamin had attended IWMA conventions where he would purchase

CDs from his favorite western entertainers and give them away to friends he'd meet at truck stops all over the country. His enthusiasm for western music and entertainment was infectious and will be missed.

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Visit www.westernwriters.org
to order your copy today!

Chapter Update

Continued from page 30

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

President: Robert Maxwell Case
robert@robertmaxwellcase.com

Our Oklahoma chapter's 2022 get-together and jam Sunday, October 16 at The Henhouse Cafe in Okemah, OK, was a great success with nearly two dozen members, family, and friends in attendance. Music and poetry performers included Curtis Krigbaum, Francine Roark Robison, Daryl Knight, Donnie Poindexter, Danny Carl Williams, and A Little Farther West (Susie and Robert Maxwell Case). A portion of the afternoon was devoted to our 2022 Annual Meeting. The board of director's slate of proposed officers was accepted by acclamation in lieu of a quorum. 2023 chapter president is Robert Maxwell Case, vice president is Donnie Poindexter, and secretary-treasurer is Danny Carl Williams.



Donnie Poindexter (L) and Curtis Krigbaum.



A Little Farther West.

TENNESSEE CHAPTER

President: Gary Holt
Gih50@live.com

Greetings from Nashville, TN y'all!!! It's been a few months of Firsts for the Tennessee Chapter and we are so excited to share!!! They say a picture is worth 1000 words and



Making music in Tennessee.



Making music with friends old and new.

I'll do my best to let the pictures speak for themselves! On October 24, we celebrated our First Annual IWMA Tennessee Chapter Potluck N' Pickin' gathering. Most of our Chapter members, including Hall of Fame members Cowboy Joe Babcock, Rex Allen Jr. and Ranger Doug Green, gathered at the home of our gracious Micki Fuhrman, "Magnolia Hill", hosting an evening of amazing food, a round of stories and music, and a chance to visit and fellowship with one another!!! We are already making plans for our 2023 Gathering!!! Another first and highlight for the Tennessee Chapter was our very First IWMA Conference and Awards night!!! Taking Albuquerque by storm, our Chapter enjoyed a week of



Cowboy Joe Babcock, Rex Allen, Jr and Doug Green at the TN chapter gathering.

wonderful workshops, exceptional music and poetry, catching up with old friends and making new ones!!! The Awards night was simply spectacular, and our Chapter garnered some very prestigious awards!!! Among the recipients were, Randy Houston, Doug Figgs, Phoebe White, Valerie Beard, Devon Dawson, and Jim Jones. Among the winners, our very own Chapter President received the Pioneer Trail award!!! What an honor!!! Congratulations to all the recipients and nominees!!! Last but certainly not least, upon arriving back in Nashville, the famous Commodore Grill welcomed Merna Lewis, Mary Kay Holt, Gable Hea, and Tecia McKenna for Debbie Champion's writers in the round IWMA night!!! Thank you, Debbie, for always supporting these artists and our brand of music! We are looking forward to an amazing 2023! Please visit our website and FB page to ride alongside us!!! Saddle up and God Bless!



Writers in the Round

Continued on page 45



BUFFHAM'S BUFFOONERY

by Les Buffham



SPEAKIN' FROM EXPERIENCE

Illustrations by A-10 /Etcheverry – Used by permission.

Author's Note: I got a note from one of my in-laws the other day, describin' some of the dos and don'ts when you're workin' out of a high country cow camp. She rides for the Leroux Creek pool in the Hotchkiss-Paonia, Colorado, area each summer. I thought I'd pass it along.

Hello, Brother-in-law:

I'm learning all sorts of useful stuff in cow camp this summer. Let me share my top ten points of new-found wisdom with you.

- 1) When you're mending fence and those pesky flies are buzzin' in your ears, never swat at them while holding a hammer.



- 2) In the spring, when the cricks are swollen and you are crossing one on a spooky horse, make sure Dumb Dog is crossing below you, or Dumb Dog will be swept under your bronc and when Dumb Dog is clawing for something to climb out on, life is easier if it's not your horse's belly.
- 3) When moving a bunch of cows early of a morning and that lead cow that's been calling her calf starts to sound like a little kid screaming, chances are it is a little kid screaming. You just drove your herd through some city folks' camp, and that child has never seen a cow up that close before.
- 4) Just because you're most always on horseback when coming up to the cattle guard with a gate beside it, there's no need to get out, open the gate and drive through it when you are in your pickup truck. Most folks drive across those cattle guards.

- 5) If you balance that real heavy steel post driver on top of your packsaddle for just a second, that's when your pack horse is going to shake himself. When this happens, do not attempt to break the fall with your foot.



- 6) Never, when referring to the load of salt you packed out from the last pile in the presence of your peers, make the statement that you were "one block short of a full load."
- 7) Always, when bustin' beaver dams with an ax, make sure that part you're standing on isn't the part that goes downstream.
- 8) Unless you like being freight-trained by a cow, don't assume she won't tromp on her own calf just to get to you when you are doctoring the lil' bugger.
- 9) If your glasses ain't too clean and you see what looks like a big lost cowdog loping down the hill toward you, don't assume that it is. Bears don't make good cowdogs.
- 10) When you catch your wrangle horse out of the herd and decide to ride him in with just a lead rope around his neck, and you step off in a moment of weakness just as he stampedes past the cavy towards the corral tryin' to be the first one there, always make sure the lead rope's not half-hitched around your hand. (One-armed cowpunchers ain't much in demand.)

You might want to share these lessons I've learned with all your friends so you all can learn from some of my mistakes.

Your sister-in-law,
Hazel



A MUSICAL NOTE AND **REVIEWS** FROM O.J. SIKES

To submit your CD for review, send to: O.J. Sikes, 681 Ellington Road, Ridgewood, NJ 07450
Required: Album cost, S&H cost, Address, Phone Number | **Questions?** You can email O.J. at ojsikes@gmail.com



Gene Autry: America's Favorite Cowboy



Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, The King of the Cowboys and his Queen.

I've never had a lot of free time. And now, at my age, I don't have much time at all! But once in a while I like to take a break and watch a good B-Western DVD. The problem is, especially as my eyes get older, it's really frustrating to turn on the machine and find that the movie I want to watch is blurred, not because I'm losing my vision, but because the film hasn't been restored. That was a major issue for years, but now, the situation is starting to change.

Actually, the change began long ago, when the **Gene Autry** office restored all of Gene's movies, from his Phantom Empire serial to his feature-length films, including his 2 color films, and all of his tv shows. These are jewels in the B-Western movie crown, but buyers must be careful. Some manufacturers have issued Autry DVDs that have not been restored. Avoid them like the plague! Instead, go to the GeneAutry.com website where you'll find, among other things, a link to the Autry Museum Gift Shop which still has many of the DVDs for sale, along with some of Gene's CDs and other items. Sadly, some items are now out-of-print, but those that are still available are

not-to-be-missed! And many are available via streaming. A visit to the website is well worthwhile.

More recently, Warner Archives has released a large number of movies in their Monogram Studios series. While these have not been restored, the video quality is outstanding. The series includes a lot of films, like those made by **Johnny Mack Brown**, **Whip Wilson** and **Rod Cameron**, that were not musical Westerns, but **Jimmy Wakely** worked at Monogram and a large number of his films are available. Heretofore, it has been remarkably difficult to find good copies of Wakely's films, so this series is a real treasure. And many or most of the **Tim Holt** films that feature **Ray Whitley** are available as well.

More recently still, the Film Detective company has restored **Roy Rogers'** *Lights of Old Santa Fe* (in color), with the **Sons of the Pioneers**, and Kino Lorber has restored and released at least 2 of Roy's other color films with **Foy Willing & the Riders of the Purple Sage**.

All of these items are available online, probably from your favorite source. If you have questions, feel free to send me an email message.

SONS OF THE PIONEERS "Red River Valley"



In 1934, Len Slye, Tim Spencer, Bob Nolan and Hugh Farr started a Western musical group

that soon became known as The Sons of the Pioneers. They made their first commercial recordings that year, and in 2022, the Sons of the Pioneers were still recording classic Western music! This new CD, *Red River Valley*, is the group's latest effort. Tim, Bob, Hugh and Len, who soon changed his name to Roy Rogers, are no longer around, but they started something that was meant to last.

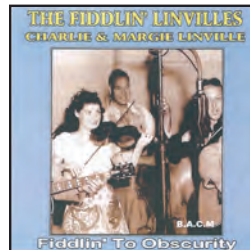
Roy's son, "Dusty," sings lead and solos on many of the songs on this new CD, and long-time members Tommy Nallie (current leader of the group), tenor Ken Lattimore and baritone John Fullerton, join fiddler Paul Elliott and bassist Chuck Ervin in a collection of 15 timeless Western classics. The up-tempo songs, e.g. "Way Out There" (the song that was the Pioneers' first recording, back in 1934), "Happy Cowboy" and "Cowboy Jubilee," will start toes a-tappin' and John Fullerton's rendition of "Cowpoke" and "Dusty's" solo on "Ridin' Down the Canyon," among others, are sure to become fan favorites, but there's much more, 15 tracks in all. And all are beautifully executed. These men are carrying on the tradition in fine style. Len, Tim, Bob & Hugh would have been proud!

Available from SonsofthePioneers.org, or pick up a copy at one of their concerts!

FIDDLIN' KATE AND CHARLIE LINVILLE, TEX RITTER, WESLEY TUTTLE, JOHNNY BOND, JOHNNY MERCER, TEXAS JIM LEWIS & HIS LONE STAR COWBOYS, MERLE TRAVIS, ETC.

"The Fiddlin' Linvilles: Fiddlin' to Obscurity"

BACM CD D 693



BACM has assembled a very nice collection of 28 sides recorded between 1938 and the early 50's, by two of

California's most talented and prolific musicians. On most tracks, they back other artists. One of my favorites is an easy-going Western swing tune Tex Ritter recorded for Capitol with Johnny Bond and Merle Travis sharing the guitar chores.

Others include sides recorded with Wesley Tuttle and his Coon Hunters,

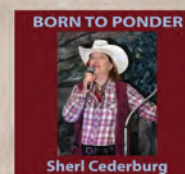
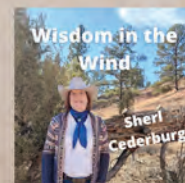
e.g. "Out on the Open Range," and 2 novelties with the legendary pop composer/singer, Johnny Mercer, "A Little Too Fer," and "The Covered Wagon Rolled Right Along." The latter was incorrectly attributed to comedian Morey Amsterdam, but it was actually composed by Hy Heath and movie cowboy sidekick and character actor, Britt Wood. But that little mistake doesn't interfere with the enjoyment of the music.

Additional favorites include the instrumental, "Spanish Two-Step" (by Texas Jim Lewis & his band) and Kate's rendition of "Louisiana Swing" with Johnny Bond and Joe Maphis from a Town Hall Party broadcast. But there's much more to enjoy. You can enjoy the talents of the fiddling duo, together or as soloists, as well as some of the most popular recording artists of the day, along with a couple of singers from 1946 who may be new to you. A fun collection from an exciting era. Available from the British Archive of Country Music website.

Thank you, DJ's for keeping my poetry on the charts, and in your listeners' hearts.



Sherl
Cederburg



www.sherlcederburg.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.

CLINT BRADLEY

"Everything That I Hold Dear" (Single)



While the new single release from our British buckaroo friend Clint Bradley is not specifically

Western by content, it is nicely multi-purpose. It asks a question that applies in various contexts including the Western one: "Am I a relic born too late into a world that loves to hate Everything That I Hold Dear?" Or, as Bradley states in the liner notes, the song is "a lament for a generation at odds with the agenda of change."

As is always the case with a Clint Bradley release, the production and performances are superlative. Bradley's clarion tenor lead vocal is at once expressive and musical. He also supplies harmonies and acoustic guitar. His support here comes from his co-producer and engineer Darren Allen (electric guitar/acoustic guitar/percussion), Dave Luke (acoustic guitar/mandolin), Connie Everard (double bass) and Danny Kelly (drums). Obviously the song will be available for download, but also as a CD single and an actual vinyl 45 RPM record backed with his popular song "Running Gun!" Truly a case of "what goes around comes around!" (And around and around...)

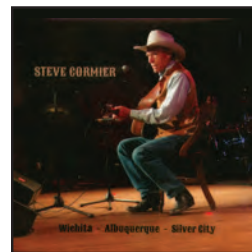
Clint tells us he has been working on new material and, if all is going according to plan, he may be recording Album #3 as you read this. 'Can't wait!!! Highly recommended.

Song availability: Through clintbradley.co.uk and the usual online sources.



STEVE CORMIER

"Wichita – Albuquerque – Silver City"



That's where it was recorded. Simple. Direct. Pretty much like its performer.

This

material isn't all shiny and buffed. Balladeer/historian Steve Cormier's newest collection has a raw singalong feel at certain times and provides a "soundbite from around the campfire" effect at others. Cormier's originals (and picks) this time are "Belle Of The Black Range," "Doc Bar and Hancock" "Sally Rooke" and "Closing The Bar" which features appropriate barroom piano licks provided by Dick Orr. Covers (and picks) are Mark Ross' "Bill Pickett," Woody Guthrie's version of "Gypsy Davey," James Grafton Rogers'

"Santa Fe Trail" and (likely) Frank H. Maynard's "Streets Of Laredo."

You'll hear of artists like Cormier who are "known or treasured by those who know," or who are fit to be on any list that might also include Glenn Ohrlin or The Gillette Brothers! Okay, that part is my own assessment. But unarguably such artists become a good deal more than mere Keepers Of The Flame. They are valuable promoters of our genre's origins and explorers of the continued worthiness to be found therein. If that's too heady, just remember Steve Cormier is a good ride, "traditionally" speaking. Twelve tracks, recommended.

CD: Available through stevecormier.net



JOHN FUSCO

"Borderlands"



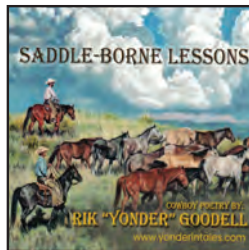
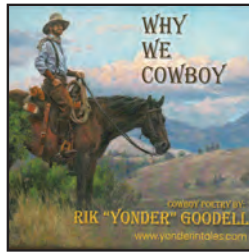
The press release uses phrases like "cinematic storytelling" and "hard-bitten grit" with "vivid

imagery and an overarching narrative." John Fusco says it's "a kind of peyote passion play." It's all that and more.

A working screenwriter of such films as "Thunderheart," "Hidalgo," "Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron" "Young Guns," "Young Guns II" and the new "Guns III: Alias Billy The Kid," Fusco the songwriter has found a natural trail to follow in the Western Saga Song. He knows how to tell a story. But with him he brings such acoustic and electrified elements as Spanish guitar with plugged-in fuzz guitar, marimba with Hammond organ, conga and bongo with rock drum. The success of it all is due in large part to the massive arranging talents of producer and performer George Walker Petit who brings some Dr. John thinking to Fusco's tales. "Coyote Man" (a deserved attack on a recent deadly human trafficking tragedy), "Dance of the Seven Veils" (a border saloon retelling of the Salome & John the Baptist story), "Horseback Jesus" (the Spanish and alliterative "hey-soos" it's the New Testament ahorse), "Run Rez Dog Run" (an indigenous charlatan gets his) and "Cowboy Picture" (both mental and celluloid) are examples, and Fusco's gritty delivery brings a certain appropriate Bob Seger exclamation point to the proceedings. It's also fitting to have used a Tom Russell painting for the CD cover as conceptually Fusco's collection could easily have been drawn from that artist's musical playbook as well. Ten tracks, highly recommended for the adventurous.

CD: Available through most of the popular online outlets

RIK "YONDER" GOODELL "Why We Cowboy" & "Saddle-Borne Lessons"



These releases appear to have been released as companion volumes, from their identical packaging and introductory notes. In any event, it's not a bad idea to acquire them both!

In those aforementioned notes, cowboy poet Rik "Yonder" Goodell freely admits he has never actually been a working cowboy. There's a general rule of authorship that states you should write about what you know. Goodell successfully brings what he knows to his subject instead, having found Cowboy Poetry to be an apt vehicle for his thoughts. His poems come off as being accurate, authentic and exceptionally well crafted. Then there is his delivery to consider. Goodell's experience as an actor serves him well. I have to say he is one of the best interpreters of verse I have ever encountered.

Frankly I am hard-pressed to name specific "picks" from among his gems, but I'll try. First from "Why We Cowboy" we'll choose the title track, "'Ridin' For The Brand," "Campfire Schoolin'," "Die First Then Quit," "The Cowboy Way" and "Handles & Horse Thieves." Then from "Saddle-Borne Tales:" "Moose Ropin'," "Gift From A Lusty Holstein," "Hearing Gratitude" and the double-meaning parable "The Wide and The Quick."

His CD "Why We Cowboy" contains an annotated booklet providing backstories for that album's works. The other album offers no such guide. Maybe Goodell took his own Harley-inspired advice "if I have to explain,

you wouldn't understand!" But all together, Goodell and his works are a cut above in all departments. Both CDs have fourteen tracks, both are very highly recommended.

CDs: Available through music.amazon.com/artists/BOBB3G1J1R/rik-yonder-goodell

KG & THE RANGER "Saturday Matinee"



Karen Gogolick and Rick Roltgen understand that issuing a collection of predominantly classic songs

doesn't necessarily mean "same old-same old!" To be sure some songs are instantly familiar, e.g., "My Adobe Hacienda," "Ridin' Down The Canyon," "Ragtime Cowboy Joe" and the like. But points of extra interest here include Folk icon Bill Staines' "Sweet Wyoming Home," a Patsy Montana favorite from back in the day "Shine On Rocky Mountain Moonlight" (penned by Louis Herscher), an original Patsy track "Old Nevada Moon" and Powder River Jack Lee's "Powder River Let 'Er Buck." The CD leads off with the duo's novel take of Perry Botkin & Raymond Allen's "Which Way'd They Go" dating from 1947. The late Nancy Thorwardson's "Jingle Bobs" puts in a fun appearance as well. An example of a Classic To Be!

KG & The Ranger have been harmonious favorites with (I)WMA audiences since the organization's earliest days. Their newest release proves they've still got it, and they've also got Angela Otte (harmony vocals) and Suzanne Lansford (fiddle) on board. Seventeen tracks, recommended.

CD: Available through kgandtheranger.com or by calling (608) 222-4084.

Continued on page 38

RICK HUFF'S REVIEWS

Continued from page 37

JO LYNNE KIRKWOOD

"A Western Life"



By any measure, herein you will find one of the better storytellers in verse,

due to both her delivery and her words. The "Western Life" of this collection's title actually takes in many lives and places from history and contemporary western America. But wherever she chooses to go, Jo Lynne Kirkwood can be counted on to give you a special ride getting there.

The tracks were apparently recorded in different locations, but for my ear the tonal shifts actually manage to provide dividers, somewhat like an egg carton! Picks (and there are many) include "Indoor Plumbing" (Grandpa's earnest efforts to modernize); the only too accurate and painful portrait of "Gina;" the suit of four poems "A Cowboy Season" (Summer, Autumn, Winter & Spring); the compelling "Forget Me Not;" "Timberline" (with its genesis so similar to that of Stuart Hamblen's "This Old House"); "Horse Killin'" and "The Auction."

In any representative library of superior Cowboy Poetry, Jo Lynne Kirkwood should (no, make that must) be present. Fourteen tracks, very highly recommended.

CD: Available through
jokirkwood.com

KC LACOURSE

"Drovers, Tributes and Heartbreak"



The promotional copy of this varied collection marks a first for me. It came with an attached thumb drive (pictured) encouraging instant upload by DJs. Interesting thinking! Of course, cowboy poet KC LaCourse is no newcomer to "interesting thinking." With it she is able to write persuasively from personal history and observation. In fact, the release contains a concise flier that states and shows inspirations for the various works.

LaCourse's delivery is animated and lively but never over the top. The pedigree for the collection perhaps could be said to rest with her award-winning tribute to her friend, the late Dawn Anita, entitled "Meetin' An Old Friend." Picks this time include LaCourse's salute to fellow poet Susie Knight called "The Real Deal," "The Legend of Bobby Blue," "Tumbleweed," "Followin' The Sun," "The Ghost," "Another Day" and "From My Window." The collection closes with a "bonus track" song co-written by LaCourse with Australian songster Warren Beatty who also performs it. Twenty tracks, recommended.

CD: For info see
m.facebook.com/kclacourse

STEVE MARKWARDT

"This Is Swing Country"



Yes, "this IS Swing Country," basically done as Bob Wills would have handled

its styling! And I'd bet he would have approved of a Steve Markwardt fronting his Playboys, too. Many of the tracks here are two steps and shuffles of varying tempos.

This album is a very nicely done mix of originals and Country covers. Some picks include the collection's up-tempo opener "Jamboree Of Western Swing," the shuffle "Oklahoma's Calling Me," "Long Gone Blues" (done a bit slower than usual), "These Boots" (...are made for walking back to you...), the holiday novelty "Swinging Santa" and "You've Been Talking In Your Sleep" (a real rouser)!

As we've said of him before, vocally Markwardt has a bit of "Rex Jr." in him, particularly in his higher registers. Fact check: On Markwardt's baseball analogy song "Swinging For The Bleachers," the lead lyric goes "people call me 'Babe Ruth' on the dance floor...just like him I'm the 'King of Swing'!" Actually Ruth was the "Sultan." Wills was the "King!" But you royally get the idea...

The 'Willsian' horns aren't present on all of the songs. There are budgets to consider, after all! But you shouldn't miss them. Thirteen tracks, highly recommended.

CD: Google by artist

BOBBY MARQUEZ

"The Cowboy Way" (EP)



Somehow ... somewhere along some line ... somebody decided that the division between 10

and 9 tracks denotes "album" over "EP." So, an "EP" this is, I guess. And, for our audiences, hopefully no one will think this is a CD called "Bobby Marquez" done by the band The Cowboy Way!!

An award-winning and nominated singer, Bobby Marquez is vocally a bit reminiscent of the late Charley Pride. But he also brings considerable songwriting chops to the table, his works having been picked up by the likes of Alan Jackson, Ty Herndon, George Strait, Rhonda Vincent and Johnny Rodriguez (who appears on one of the songs in this collection).

Picks include the title track "The Cowboy Way" penned by Marquez and Jennifer Herron (daughter of rodeo cowboy Wayne Herron, to whom the collection is dedicated) and the pair's "What's The Deal" which uses poker terminology to get another story told. The Country track "Ridin' My Thumb To Mexico" is the one featuring Johnny Rodriguez produced by Rex Allen Jr., who also provides acoustic guitar on "The Cowboy Way." Marquez sang his original song "Speak Love" as part of the IWMA 2022's Friday Night Opry, and it was well received.

It will be interesting to keep an eye on Bobby Marquez' progress in both the Texas and Nashville music scenes. Nine tracks, recommended.

CD: Available through bobbymarquez.com

ED MEYER

"Cowboy Serenade"



Ed Meyer possesses a warm, mellow baritone voice that tonally points in the direction of

maybe a Gordon Lightfoot. On this new release the fine singer/songwriter also benefits from the tasteful production of Aarom Meador and session support from Matthew Walton (lead and acoustic guitar & steel), Jess Meador (fiddles) and the inimitable Jake Hooker (upright bass).

Three of the tracks are nicely constructed and delivered poems. This is particularly true of "Me and Ol' Pard" with its surprise ending. We are naming it as one of the CD's pick tracks. The pick songs include the title track "Cowboy Serenade," a song called "Cowboy Til I Die" that Meyer actually wrote many years back for a pair of his friends and the easy loping "Horse Trainer," inspired by someone expressing to him that you can only be a good cowboy if "you ride a good horse."

In listening to these treatments of Ed Meyer's originals, you could easily accept his songs as being Golden Age classics. This may partially be due to producer Meador recognizing the material for what it is. Ten tracks, highly recommended.

CD: Email meyeree3@gmail.com

RICK NORCROSS & THE ALL STAR RAMBLERS

"God Bless The Mighty Pickle"



No, they are NOT saluting Mae West's "pickle in your pocket" joke! This one was a long green 1957 Flxible

Starliner tour bus that carried Rick Norcross & The All Star Ramblers to scores of shows over the course of 22 years. "The Pickle" now lives as "The Chief" in Marty Stuart's Congress of Country Music Museum in Philadelphia, Mississippi!! In the refurbishing of the vehicle it was renamed (and made red!)

The Ramblers' lady vocalist Taryn Noelle was honored in 2019 with a Will Rogers Award from the AWA for Western Swing Vocalist of the Year, and she struts her stuff in this release with a fine cover version of "Shame On You." This sampler also includes "Out In The Cold," "They Go Faster," the novelty "Help Us Find Our Song" and the title track. The basic effect of "Vermont's Premiere Western Swing Band" is authentic and loose-limbed, You can almost feel the protective chicken wire enclosure around them, although one suspects their northeastern crowd is a bit more staid in their "critiques" than Texas road house patrons tend to be!

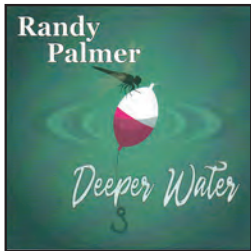
Rick Norcross is closing in on six decades of being a performing musician. In fact his life was the subject of the Stephen Russell Payne book "Riding My Guitar!" So you can rightly assume he knows a swing or two about how to keep the folks dancing. This five-song EP is a teaser for a reunion tour album coming in 2023, and it's recommended.

EP and other music: Available through rickandtheallstarramblers.com

Continued on page 40

RANDY PALMER

"Deeper Water"



In his higher projected vocal register singer/songwriter Randy

Palmer edges toward the John Denver effect, but he is certainly no copy. He also exhibits a lower grit Denver never employed.

Palmer wrote or co-wrote all of these songs. The arrangements show influences of both Country and Americana and are performed well, but that's an assumption that can generally be made with safety when producer Merel Bregante is in the mix (an abundance of top session folks on his speed dial)! The arguably Western picks here include "Somewhere Down The Line," a co-write with Randall Lewis Brown "High Plains" (with its interesting contemporary Bluegrass march feel), and the lilting "Welcome To My Home."

There are strong messages to be found throughout, drawn from Palmer's own experiences and those of his ancestors. There's plenty here that can be cited to recommend the CD, so we will! Twelve tracks total.

CD: Available through RandyPalmerMusic.com

KEITH PHILLIPS

"A Texas Life"



Keith Phillips' newest release is an adroit mix of what would now be called "True"

Country, a

couple of nice Western songs and plenty of Western Swing tracks, all with top-notch production values. And Phillips' fine baritone voice sells his songs well.

Although the message contained in "Ridin' For The Brand" is unmistakable, the song still manages to not proselytize. Other picks include the wistful Western tune "Old Pony" and the spirited Western Swing entries "Live Oak Tree," "Give It Hell Tomorrow," "Honky Tonk School" and "Look Right Here At Me." He also swings a final track "When You Say Merry Christmas." A couple of other noteworthy tracks include tributes to a fallen missionary soldier and departed Houston firefighters.

Keith Phillips is an artist who is firmly in control of his crafts of songwriting and performing. We'll be eagerly watching for more Western observations from him. Twelve tracks, highly recommended.

CD: Downloads through [deezer.com/en/artist/1135900](https://www.deezer.com/en/artist/1135900)

THE RENFREES

"97 Acres"



We're used to hearing in song about the classic "hundred and forty acres" from the original land

rush days. The Renfrees' acreage is more specifically designated. Here it represents a father's legacy in land

to his sons, who now must sell, soon to watch the man's beloved property be broken up into "ranchettes" or "ranchitos" or whatever the heck city developers may choose to dub them. It's a prime example of the extra thought process inserted by Andrea and Peter Renfree.

Tight musicianship and melodious, mellow-toned vocals are constants in the works of this duo. All eleven tracks of their release are done beautifully, but we'll name as picks that title track "97 Acres," "2 Sisters & A Gun," Andrea's tough-minded co-write with Mark Beets "Wings" and her song written with Benjamin Davis Corley "The Banks of the River." The album's Western Swing picks include Andrea's "Good Morning Teardrops" and "Texas Stars," her co-write with Madeline Fisher and Solie Lynn.

This release is more than "97 Acres" worth of Western delights. Eleven tracks total, very highly recommended.

CD: Available through [renfrees.com](https://www.renfrees.com)

RUSTED SPURS WEST

"Arizona Stars"



Here's this group's first "post COVID CD," which means...aside from the outlaw songs... there were no

masks to be seen! The release marks another first. They've included some fine original songs this time.

Rusted Spurs West is a mellow acoustic trio in the grand mold of such classic and Western revival groups as The Frontiersmen & Joanie and The Lobo Rangers. They are Tex & Patti Hamel (accordion & acoustic guitar respectively plus lead and harmony vocals) and Slim Denoncourt (bass plus lead & harmony vocals). The tasteful

support of Alvin Blaine's lap steel and dobro, and Nick Coventry's fiddle completes the package.

Original picks include "That's How The Cowgirl Swings (although lyrically it seems to be "The Way The" rather than "How The"!), the easy lope title track "Arizona Stars" and "Sonoran Desert Winds" (which reminds me of IWMA Hall Of Famer Hi Busse's style of chord modulations). Cover picks are "Ki Yi Yippee" (by former band member Mark Halverson), Louise Massey's "Adobe Hacienda," the Irish instrumental medley "Cowboy Ceilidh," the swinging "Hanging Around" and Bob Nolan's "Happy Rovin' Cowboy." Thirteen tracks, highly recommended.

CD: Available through
dvd bob@denonco.net



CARLOS WASHINGTON'S STEEL HORSE SWING

"Desert Skies" (Single)



Sometimes you don't have to pull out all of your adjectives to try to cover a subject. Sometimes

you know the quality of what you're about to hear is a given. Carlos Washington never releases something that should remain corralled. This new single from songwriter Toy Caldwell doesn't disappoint either!

Washington and producer/participant Ernie Martinez have pulled out all the desired Cowboy Swing stops to give it the treatment it deserves. The effect is wonderfully cozy, easy Swing with tasty steel guitar, sax and fiddle solos... giving everyone a chance to shine. Personnel includes Washington's vocal (of course) plus Nick Worley (fiddle), Tom Broderick (steel guitar),

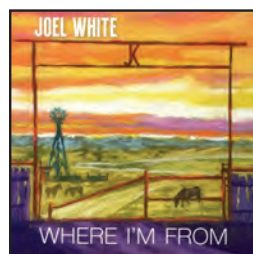
Jesse West (electric upright bass), Carlos Chavez (tenor saxophone) and of course Ernie Martinez (electric Eastman Archtop plus percussion and drums).

So!! Are these single releases that have shown up from Carlos Washington and company inching toward a CD-full? We have but to wait. In the meantime, the newest single is highly recommended.

Single: Downloads available through
steelhorseswing.com



JOEL WHITE *"Where I'm From"*



Singer/songwriter Joel White's vocal styling seems to have been cut from John Prine & Kris

Kristofferson whole cloth. In fact, they are two of the many performers he cites as being inspirations. And like those two, White doesn't steer clear of tough looks at life. That's not to say he doesn't also paint some portraits of satisfaction amid trying circumstances.

White's release is what I would term "peripherally Western." In this case the Western genre is represented predominantly through characters (ramblers, gamblers and the like) and locales ("Littlefield Texas 24" and "Bluewater Bar," having been set in Bluewater, NM, an actual location. My dad got caught in a kangaroo court speed trap there in the 1950s! White's "Bluewater Bar" was nominated for IWMA Western Song of the Year and received a fine performance by its composer during this year's Awards Ceremony in Albuquerque.

Tightly produced by Merel Bregante, this CD shows the promise of possible things to come. Joel

White is a solid West Texas-raised performer and songwriter who can certainly create more specific Western content in the future. Thirteen tracks, recommended.

CD: Available through
joelawhitemusic.com



PHOEBE WHITE *"UnXpected"*



The speed yodeling phenom Phoebe White recorded this CD at the tender age of twelve!

Recently turned thirteen, she proceeded to set the IWMA 2022 audience on its collective ear in Albuquerque. She has attracted obviously outstanding musical support for her project (Riders In The Sky, The McLain Family and Michael Jonathon).

Blessed with an exceptionally strong voice for her age, White stands ready to follow in the footsteps of similarly bestowed "kids" like Tanya Tucker and Leann Rimes. Hopefully she will be mentored by some of our outstanding interpreters of Western songs to help build on her song selling talents. It's only natural that she currently tends to handle non-yodel songs with full yodel force, but the yodel tracks she offers are solid and very worth the price of admission. These include the specially rechristened "Phoebe The Yodeling Cowgirl," "Yodeling Blues (Down In The Valley)," "I Want To Be A Cowboys Sweetheart" and "Whatever Happened To The Yodeling Cowgirls?"

Overall, Phoebe White may be able to be listed as Western's latest gift to the world's airwaves (and ear waves)! Ten tracks, highly recommended.

CD: Available through
singphoebesing.com 🐾

Reed's Reading

Recommendations & Book Reviews



Ollie Reed, Jr.

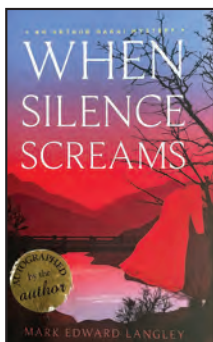
To have your book reviewed by Ollie, send a copy to: Ollie Reed, Jr., P.O. Box 2381, Corrales, N.M. 87048 or contact him at: olreed.com@gmail.com

Tony Hillerman's "The Blessing Way," 1970, was the first of 18 mystery novels featuring Navajo tribal policemen Joe Leaphorn and, later, Jim Chee. Hillerman died in 2008, but his daughter Anne picked up the saga with 2013's "Spider Woman's Daughter" and has since added six more novels to the series.

This past June, "Dark Winds," a six-episode TV series based on the Leaphorn and Chee novels, premiered on AMC and AMC+. A second season of six shows is planned for 2023.

Is Navajo mystery fiction now a legitimate sub-genre in popular American literature? In this issue, I investigate two novels that support that notion.

MARK EDWARD LANGLEY *When Silence Screams*



This novel addresses the very real tragedy of the many thousands of indigenous girls and women who have been murdered or remain missing. Readers

are warned that it does this in uncomfortable detail, graphically describing the physical abuse inflicted on girls, some preteen, and young women forced into the sex trade.

I was about to call the author on going too far, when I considered the fact that this is an issue that should shock us to the point that we don't forget it, to the point we want to find out what can be done to help stop the horror.

"When Silence Screams" is the third mystery/thriller featuring Arthur Nakai, a Navajo man who served in combat as a U.S. Marine and was later part of a special U.S. government unit

that battled human traffickers and drug smugglers along the U.S./Mexico border.

Now, Arthur lives in northwest New Mexico with his wife, Sharon, a television reporter and anchor, and Ak'is, a dog that is part Siberian Husky and part wolf.

Arthur has recently been issued a private investigator's license, and in the second chapter he is visited by a Navajo woman who asks him to find her 19-year-old daughter, April Manygoats, who has been missing for six months.

That's a cold trail, but Nakai is moved to help the woman and sets out with Ak'is for Santa Fe, the last place April's family saw her. His inquiries lead him to Albuquerque and a sleazy job for one called the Cuban, who runs a house of prostitution specializing in young women and underage girls.

Meanwhile, Arthur's friend Captain Jake Bilagody of the Navajo Nation Police Department is investigating the disappearance of a 15-year-old girl, who appears to have been abducted from the reservation, and the murder of a young, pregnant woman whose

body was discovered in a lake on the reservation.

There's a lot going on, and, with a couple of exceptions, author Langley sets a brisk pace. There's a speed bump when a character goes into the description of a mining operation we don't need to know about. And the investigation into the murder of the young pregnant woman, while intriguing and exciting enough, seems to serve no purpose other than to set up a relationship the author intends to explore later in the series.

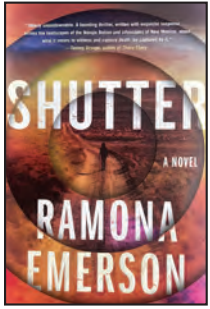
On the plus side, Langley has created a suspense-filled plot featuring two villains we can't wait to see get what's coming to them, and he gives us a slam-bang ending that makes that happen.

One final thought. Sometimes it's good to keep a dog that's half husky and half wolf in your vehicle. Never know when it might be useful.

("When Silence Screams," 9798533959858; paperback, 277 pages; self-published; available at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), [barnesandnoble.com](https://www.barnesandnoble.com) and other outlets.)

RAMONA EMERSON

Shutter



Ramona Emerson is a writer, filmmaker, photographer and editor who lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She is also Navajo, or Dine as her people refer

to themselves, and is originally from Tohatchi, New Mexico, on the Navajo Reservation.

This is her first novel, but it is difficult to imagine anyone more suited than her to write it. Her protagonist is Rita Todacheene, a Navajo woman who works as a forensic photographer for the Albuquerque Police Department. That means Rita takes photographs of scenes being investigated by the police – places where accidents, crimes and suicides have happened.

As the novel opens, she is on her way to take photos of a body – or rather the very many pieces of a body – that belonged to a woman who has fallen from a freeway overpass in Albuquerque.

Looks like a suicide, right? Rita might have believed so if the woman, Erma Singleton, had not told her she had been murdered.

Rita can see ghosts. Not just Erma's ghosts but lots of ghosts. It's been that way since she was an infant. That's an unsettling ability for anyone, but especially for a Navajo because the Dine have a great fear of the dead.

Actually, Rita takes her special vision in stride and enjoys visiting with specters such as her grandfather, whom she had not known when he was alive. But people on the reservation look at her strangely, some are scared of her, and her beloved grandmother is always taking her to see Mr. Bitsilly, a Navajo medicine man, in the hope he can pray the spirits out of Rita's life.

But nothing or no one is going to free Rita of Erma's presence. This is one angry ghost. She will not leave

Rita be until the photographer brings to justice the men who threw Erma off the overpass and took her forever away from her little girl.

Rita is soon embroiled in an investigation involving drug cartels and corrupt cops, men so vicious they think nothing of murdering entire families and each other.

Once readers get accustomed to the ghosts, and that happens quickly, they will find this a novel to savor. Emerson moves agilely back and forth between Albuquerque and the reservation, places she knows very well. Longtime Albuquerque-area residents, such as I am, will recognize actual crimes that inspired incidents in the book.

But only someone with Emerson's background could dig into the many layers of reservation life, reveal the poverty, prejudice and hopelessness that destroy some who grow up there and celebrate the love and community support that help others survive and succeed.

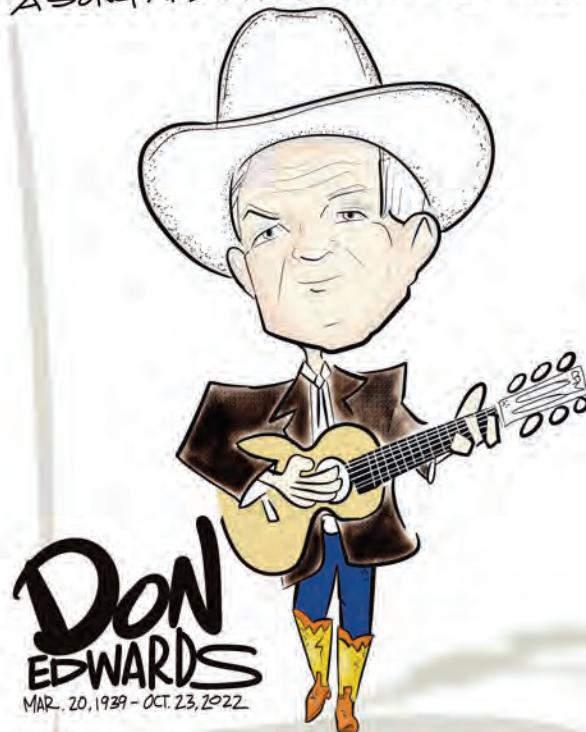
In Rita's case, her passion for photography and her grandmother's strength provide her with all the encouragement and opportunity she needs to thrive in the white man's world while retaining an affection and respect for the land and the ways of her people.

In this book, the reservation scenes are sometimes a welcome refuge from the gritty harshness of Albuquerque's mean streets.

"Grandma and I used to take long walks into the dry riverbeds behind her house, looking for the long, green Navajo tea stalks that peeked out of the sand. Before gathering the stalks, Grandma would pray in Navajo and sprinkle her yellow corn pollen on them – we had to thank the tea before we could use it."

("Shutter," 9781641293334; hardback, 300 pages, \$25.95; Soho Crime; available at bookstores and amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com, bookpage.com and other outlets.) 🐾

"AND I RIDE WHEREVER THE WIND BLOWS.
I'M DRIFTIN' LIKE A TUMBLEWEED.
I'M JUST A WANDERIN' TROUBADOUR.
A SONG AND MY GUITAR IS ALL I NEED."



Western Playlists - Reporters

Here are the DJs who submitted their playlists this quarter:

Joe Angel

KEOS
PO Box 1085
Del Valle, TX 78617
jangeladj@arhaven.com
530-265-9073
916-233-6203
www.kvmr.org
back40radio@kvmr.org

Marshal Allen Bailey

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

Bobbi Jean Bell

"OutWest Hour"
KUPR, www.kupr.org
Out West, 8201 Golf Course Rd NW
Ste D3, #189
Albuquerque, NM 87120
"Campfire Café" & "Saddle Up, America"
Equestrian Legacy Radio Network
Co-host with Gary Holt
bobbijeanbell@gmail.com
www.equestrianlegacy.net
661-714-0045

Skip Bessonette & His Pard Lucky

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

Janice Brooks

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

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
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leo@thederrieres.com
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Doug Figgs

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http://www.RioGrandeValleyRadio.com

Nancy Flagg

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

Paul Hazell

PH Records
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Bellbrook Industrial Estate
Uckfield
East Sussex
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"Paul Hazell's World Of Country"
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several other stations around the world
Paulhazellsworldofcountry@gmail.com
Telephone: +44 7775 545 902

Randy Hill

"Western Swing Time Radio Show"
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Austin, TX 78759
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westernswingtime@gmail.com
www.westernswingtime.com

Gary Holt

"Campfire Cafe and Saddle Up America"
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www.equestrianlegacy.net
gih50@live.com
615-478-2138

Judy James

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

Allen & Jill Kirkham

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Al Krtil

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alkrtil@yahoo.com

Jarle Kvale

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AM 1230 KOTS Radio

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realwestoldwest@live.com

www.realwestoldwest.com

www.demingradio.com

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JJ Steele*"Cowboy Corral"*

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Tommy Tucker*"Snake River Radio Roundup"*

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805 Stewart Ave.

Lewiston, ID. 83501

208-743-1551

tommy@idavend.com

*"Keepin' It Western"***Wayne & Kathy***"Swing 'n' Country"*

KBOO 90.7 FM

20 SE 8th Ave.

Portland, OR 97214

wkjswingandcountry@comcast.net

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.

Chapter Update

*Continued from page 32***TEXAS CHAPTER****President: Cary Wiseman****Wisemanranch71@gmail.com**

Hello from the Texas Chapter, our Chapter elections are final.

President - Cary Wiseman

Vice President - Judy James

Secretary - Charlet Meyer

Treasurer - Wesley Stafford

Social Media - Teresa Burleson

We want to thank every member for their support, and we hope the New Year brings much success and many great performances. The Texas Chapter hosted its first event of 2023 on January 7 at the Jasper County Cowboy Church in Jasper, TX. from 10:00am to 4:00pm. We look forward to meeting new friends and visiting with old friends. If you are interested in any of our events, then go to our Texas Chapter Facebook page or email me or Judy James. Happy Trails!

WESTERN WORDSMITHS CHAPTER**President: Mark Munzert****markmunzert@gmail.com**

And what a Convention it was!

The Western Wordsmiths was represented very well with five category winners and fourteen nominees undoubtedly mentioned in this issue of Western Way. The Cowboy Poetry Contest was the highlight for many Western Wordsmith Chapter Contestants: Floyd Beard; Valerie Beard; Ned Bodie; Almeda Bradshaw; Jeff Davidson; Rik Goodell; Tom Hawk; KC LaCourse; Miska Paget; Francine Roark Robison; Dennis Russell; George Ray Russell; and Ron Wilson made judging this affair very difficult. Judges were Wordsmiths: Smokey Culver; Jo Lynne Kirkwood; Susie Knight; and Tom Swearingen, ably aided by Carol Markstrom. Tip of the hat to: Kimberly Kaye (Emcee) and Kathy Kelley (timer) for putting up with yours truly.



Poetry Contest Contestants. Photo courtesy Dorinda Burks Photography



Poetry Contest Judges. Photo courtesy Dorinda Burks Photography

There were a few folks intentent to making it to Albuquerque including: Vic Anderson; Terry Nash; Dale Page; and Linda Nadon's flight challenges made

Continued on page 47

Western Charts

Attention Musicians and Poets! Various DJ friends have reported their playlists for the last quarter, thus helping us compile these charts reflecting which CDs are being played the most on their radio shows. You will find a listing of those reporting DJs in this issue.

TOP 30 COWBOY / WESTERN ALBUMS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. The Real West – Patty Clayton | 17. Rancher's Paradise – Barry Ward |
| 2. The Yellow Horse – Doug Figgs | 18. Straight From the Heart – Cyndi K. Austin & Suzi Killman |
| 3. Westbound – Micki Fuhrman | 19. Frontier – Mary Kaye |
| 4. Between a Horse and Me – Almeda Bradshaw | 20. Little Bit of Texas – Carlos Washington |
| 5. Times Like These – Randy Huston | 21. A Place to Land – Kristyn Harris |
| 6. Good Days Are Comin' – Jim Jones | 22. Words and Music – Jim Jones |
| 7. Sugarfoot – Paul Kelly | 23. Mile After Mile – Carol Markstrom |
| 8. Me and Les – Dan McCorison | 24. Travelin' West – Allan Chapman & Rodeo Kate |
| 9. She's Leaving Cheyenne – John Lowell | 25. Cow Pony – Ryan Fritz |
| 10. Arizona Stars – Rusted Spurs West | 26. Turn 'em Loose – Susie Knight |
| 11. Old West Requests – Pioneer Pepper | 27. Rhythm Rides Again – The Hanson Family |
| 12. Sidekicks and Saddle Pals – Dan Robert Crow | 28. Texas Star – Lori Beth Brooke |
| 13. Range of the Buffalo – Kerry Grombacher | 29. Family Shiloh at the Gold Copper Cross – The Family Shiloh |
| 14. The Last Best West – Jim Reader | 30. One More River to Cross – The Ramblin' Rangers |
| 15. American Outlaw – Chris Guenther | |
| 16. Doin' What We Do – The Cowboy Way | |

TOP 10 WESTERN SWING ALBUMS

1. Yearnin' – Jim Winters
2. Arizona Skies – Rusted Spurs West
3. A Place to Land – Kristyn Harris
4. Little Bit of Texas – Carlos Washington
5. Rhythm Rides Again – The Hanson Family
6. Texas Star – Lori Beth Brooke
Dancin' With Swingitude – Grace Clark
8. This is Swing Country – Steve Markwardt
Texas Bound – Bret Raper
10. Devil on My Tail – The Hot Texas Swing Band

10 MOST PLAYED SONGS BY WESTERN MUSIC DJS

1. Everything That I Hold Dear – Clint Bradley
2. Long Gone Out West Blues – Patty Clayton
3. Ride the River – Jim Jones
4. Blue Prairie – Micki Fuhrman
5. If I Had a Horse – Almeda Bradshaw
6. Angus MacKenzie – John Lowell
Welcome to Wickenburg – Dan McCorison
8. The Hands That Held the Child – Randy Huston
9. What a Moon – Micki Fuhrman
Way of the Cowboy – Randy Huston

10 MOST PLAYED POETRY ALBUMS

1. No Better Life – Valerie Beard
2. Between the Sun and the Moon – Teresa Burleson
3. New Mexico Stray – Dennis Russell
4. The Best Horses in Heaven They Have No Tails – Miska Paget
5. Wisdom in the Wind – Sherl Cederburg
6. Horse Tales and Cow Trails – Floyd Beard
Circle Back – Kimberly Kaye
8. Language of the Land – Tom Swearingen
9. Deep Tracks – Marleen Bussma
Born to Ponder – Sherl Cederburg
They Come Prancin' – A.K. Moss
Pensive 'n' Playful – Mark Munzert
A Good Ride – Terry Nash

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

MAILBAG



I truly had a wonderful time [at the convention] seeing friends I hadn't seen in years and meeting new people that I hope to see again. Although I attended only the first day of the convention, I was so impressed with the fact that everyone worked so smoothly to

ensure that all the attendees knew exactly where to go, and when; everyone was gracious and knowledgeable. And the Albuquerque Hotel was a perfect venue! I am grateful to IWMA for inviting me to participate in my late husband's (and Sid Robin's) induction into the Hall of Fame. The plaque is exceptionally handsome, and the memory of my day with IWMA will stay with me as a once-in-a-lifetime happening. I am grateful to everyone involved and hope to come back again one day.

~ Sharon Willing

I would like to sincerely thank the International Western Music Association, its board, members and the DJ's who play my music and (everyone else's) cowboy/western music on their shows.

Your vote of confidence in my music by naming my song "Angus MacKenzie" as the winner of the 2022 Working Cowboy Song of The Year is one of the biggest honors of my life. The folks who play this music are like a family. I've been writing, playing and singing cowboy and western music for over 35 years, but it's been in the bluegrass world. To have the musicians, writers and DJs in the world of cowboy music recognize my music with an award like this is a huge validation of my work. My first offering to this format garnered four nominations, including album of the year. And the prettiest award I've seen gets to live in our Montana living room. If I can ever help your shows or events with station ID's or appearances, please let me know. We plan to tour 'til we wear out, and that won't be for a while. Thank you. I'm humbled.

~ John Lowell

Chapter Update

Continued from page 32

it impossible for her to get to the Convention but you can catch-up with her via her "Critters an' Calamities" combination of Poetry and Photos of life on the N7 Ranch. Micki Fuhrman wrote the cover story, "Pioneering Women Who Filmed the West," for the December 2022 issue of Roundup Magazine (Western Writers of America). Profiled are the first women who directed, wrote or produced Western films. She's also finishing up a novel, tentatively titled *The Portraitist*, set near Prescott, Arizona, in the late 1880s.

YOUTH CHAPTER

President: Jenna Thunborg
trademistakesformemories@gmail.com

The Youth Chapter had a very successful meeting at this year's convention. We held a drawing for a 1945 Melody Ranch Gene Autry Memorabilia Guitar and were able to raise \$900.00 to provide youth chapter members scholarships



Alice Black with Ned Brodie and the Gene Autry Guitar.

and cover other expenses.

Congratulations to Ned Bodie for winning the guitar! We also had two guest speakers at our meeting to whom we'd like to extend our thanks, Belinda Gail who conducted a Stage Presence Workshop and Jim Jones who conducted a Songwriting Workshop. We have big plans for next year! 🐾



Youth Chapter members from left Jenna Thunborg, Kacey Thunborg, Alice Black, Phoebe White and Jack George.

IWMA LIFETIME MEMBERS

Nolan Bruce Allen
 Rex Allen, Jr.
 Judi Anderson
 Cindy Argyle
 Cowboy Joe Babcock
 Troy Bateson
 Floyd Beard
 George & Doris Bensmiller
 John Bergstrom
 Carol Bobbroff
 Sherry Bond
 Mark E. Brown
 Ken Bucy
 Les Buffham
 Stephen S. Burnette
 Robert Maxwell Case
 Susan Booth Case
 Woody Paul Chrisman
 Patty Clayton
 Karen Cloutier
 Peggy Collins
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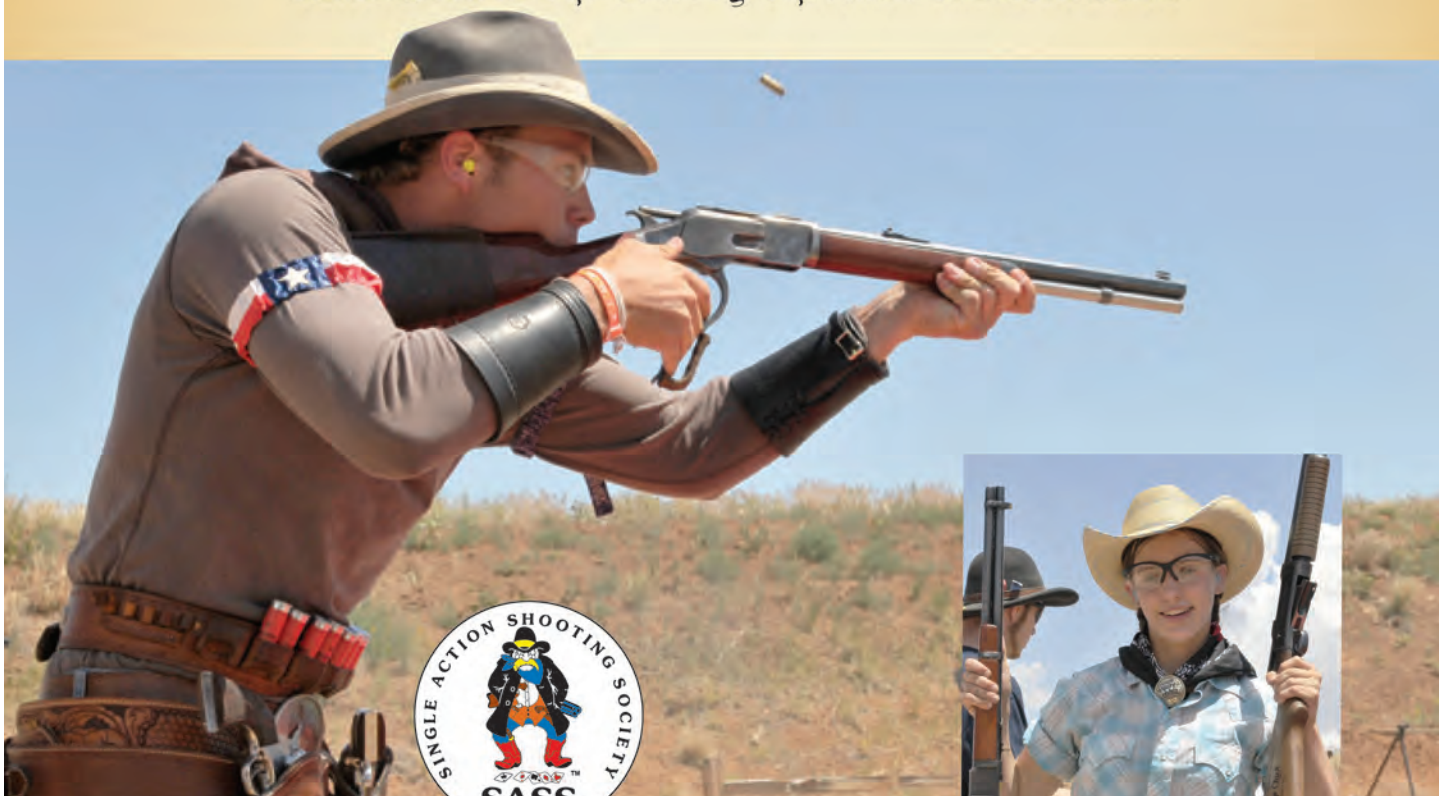
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