

THE WESTERN WAY

The Official Publication of the
International Western Music Association

IN THE CROSSHAIRS

JOHN LOWELL

MULTI-AWARDED
SINGER/SONGWRITER

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2025 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

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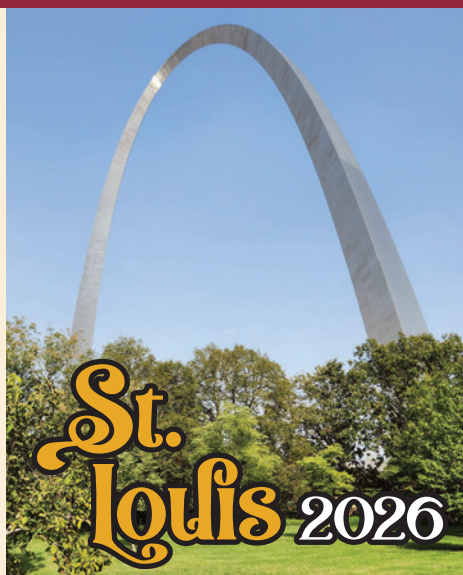
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From The President...



MARVIN O'DELL
IWMA President

Some things that I believe keep some performers from getting gigs...

... being critical of other musicians in hopes of keeping them from getting a job they want for themselves. (I personally know of one who has lost more than one job over this.)

...posting their political views on Facebook and other social media. (YIKES! This is the kiss of death! Keep it at home.)

...changing your performance outfits before the fans have even left the building. (It takes something away from your performance when your fans see you after the show in the same kind of clothes they're wearing.)

...being less than personable to the fans who would like to speak to you for a minute after the show. (I was at a performance after a show recently and went up after most people had left to speak to the performer for a second. She wouldn't even look at me as she brushed me off, obviously in a hurry to leave. If I had been wanting to hire her, I would have changed my plans right there.)

...actually believing "It's good enough for cowboy poetry" or "It's good enough for cowboy music." (I hate that attitude.)

...not wearing deodorant. (Ok, go ahead and laugh. But I was introduced to a performer once by a couple of other performers who thought I should bring him in for an event I was helping put together. I was nice to the gentleman, and he was a fine performer; but there was no way I could hire him with the way he smelled. Come on, now. This is just plain common sense.)

...being rude to and critical of your sound man in front of the audience. (A lot of those folks will be his friends, and some may be his family. Best to discuss matters with him at the intermission if you can't bring yourself to be kind to him in front of the crowd.)

...going on stage under the influence of whatever. (I'm amazed that anyone thinks this is a good idea.)

...failing to acknowledge those who got you there. (Thanking those who hired you is the first and foremost item to take care of before leaving the stage. And if you have an opening act that has gone on before you, they should be thanked also.)

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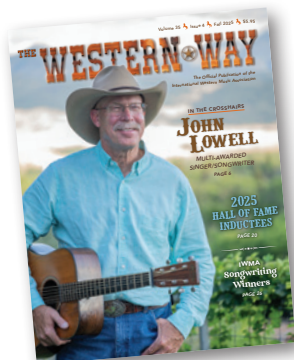
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ON THE COVER...

John Lowell has 43 years as a singer-songwriter and worldwide traveling performer. He has been featured on Garrison Keillor's "Prairie Home Companion" and was awarded the 2024 Montana Governor's Arts Award, the highest honor one can receive for work in the literary, visual or performing arts. John is an active member of the International Western Music Association.

Cover photo courtesy William Campbell Photography

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

Editor's Insight



Theresa O'Dell
Editor

IT WAS GOOD TO HEAR FROM YOU

In the previous issue, I discussed the increasing prevalence of transitioning to electronic magazine formats and offered some reflections on this emerging trend. The purpose of the article was to see how you, the reader, feel about such changes. I was pleased to have received some responses – someone is actually reading the article!

I was not surprised by the comments received. Here are a couple of those unedited responses:

"OH, NO! Not another one! My intro to "Western Way" was a copy of our magazine handed to me by another attendee at a Cowboy Gathering. I joined IWMA and now I pass my copies along to folks I meet. E-copies? PL EE ZE! You can bill me at a higher rate...but do not put my copy in the cloud!"

– Mark V D

I hated (well, disliked strongly) reading your Editorial! It's called "The Western Way!" That "way" is about the sights, the smells, the sounds, and the touch -the tactile- of the West! It's not about saving money. Or being "up-to -date!" I want the magazine in my hands. I want to see it in the traditional way. And I hand it off to others every time I'm done reading, seeing and yes, feeling it! So please, please, please don't stop printing it! Please!"

– Allen R.

While this is a small sample, it's clear that readers prefer print magazines over electronic versions. Most of our readership values the experience of physically holding and flipping through pages, a sentiment shared by this editor and the IWMA Board of Directors. The principal motivation for raising this consideration in the beginning is to proactively address future sustainability of the magazine considering rising costs, changing demographics of the readership, and other factors.

Please feel free to continue to share your perspectives regarding this topic. There are no immediate changes anticipated. We also welcome your input not only on the format of the magazine, but also any suggestions pertaining to its content, design, readability, or other relevant aspects.

The *Western Way* has always been for you, so let us know what you are thinking! Not every suggestion may be viable, and some could take longer to integrate, but we will not know about them if you do not express them. Contact me at editor@westernmusic.org.

A poster for the Arizona Folklore Preserve. The background is a textured green. At the top, the title "ARIZONA FOLKLORE PRESERVE" is written in a stylized, purple font. Below it, in a smaller, white font, is "The BEST Western and Acoustic Entertainment Center in the Southwest!". The next line says "SHOWS ON SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS" in a bold, purple font, followed by "2 pm Throughout the Year (Doors Open at 1 pm)" in a smaller, white font. To the right of this text is a purple line drawing of an acoustic guitar. Below the show information, it says "FOR RESERVATIONS" in a bold, purple font, followed by "ArizonaFolklore.com" in a smaller, white font. Then, "Ticket price \$20 for adults and \$10 for 17 and up" in a smaller, white font. Below that, the address "56 East Folklore Trail Hereford, AZ" is written in a smaller, white font, followed by "In Ramsey Canyon – Just 6 miles south of Sierra Vista (Highway 90 & 92 intersection)" in a smaller, white font. At the bottom left, it says "ARTIST CONTACT: Mike Rutherford Mike@rdiinc.us" in a smaller, white font. At the bottom right, there is a logo for the Arizona Folklore Preserve, which includes a stylized sun and mountains, and the text "Arizona Folklore Preserve IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA SOUTH" in a smaller, white font.

From The Executive Director...



Marsha Short
Executive Director

I think I've mentioned that I keep a list of ideas for these articles. Sometimes those ideas come together nicely and other times it seems like my mind is wandering. This is one of those wandering times.

Most of what I know about the news comes from headlines on my phone.

That's as far as it gets...I never click to get the full story. This was a recent headline: "Older Adults in the U.S. are Increasingly Dying from Unintentional Falls." You probably already see my question. Aren't most falls unintentional? Would you be ok if you intended to fall? Questions that will remain unanswered.

Recently, IWMA ran into a bit of "unpleasantness" when our bank accounts were hacked. Fortunately, IWMA Treasurer Diana Raven caught it quickly. Thanks to Timothy Acevedo at Wells Fargo in Denver for helping Diana set things right, and to Maria Gamero at Wells Fargo in Lewisville for helping us get all the accounts closed and new ones opened within 24 hours. Special thanks to John Seger for interrupting his well-deserved vacation to get our online ticket sales and membership updated so quickly. We didn't lose any money, just time, and Diana and I are a little grayer from the experience. Our accounts are secure, and we check them daily. The sad thing is that we'll never get the hackers, and they'll keep right on hacking. Keep an eye on your money!

When Microsoft updated a while ago, they added a thing called CoPilot. Every time I open a document, CoPilot jumps in and wants to write it for me. It's more annoying than that stupid paperclip that used to pop up all the time. Someday I'll let it write my article to see if it has an easier time thinking of a topic.

Thanks to everyone who sent in their nominations for the 2025 IWMA Awards of Excellence. All nominations have been sent to the judging committees, and we'll be announcing the finalists as soon as we know them. The awards will be presented on Saturday, November 15, during the IWMA Convention in Albuquerque. I hope you plan to be there!

Marsha



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

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- Arizona Folklore Preserve – Sierra Vista, AZ
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- Stockyards Museum – Ft. Worth, TX
- Tigard Public Library, Tigard, OR
- Rex Allen Arizona Cowboy Museum – Willcox, AZ
- IWMA Chapters at Local Gatherings and Festivals
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In the CROSSHAIRS



John Lowell at Suce Creek

JOHN LOWELL

By Tom Swearingen

For more than 45 years John Lowell has entertained audiences with his well-crafted songs and masterful guitar playing. He has been featured on Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*, toured the world with his bands Kane's River, Wheel Hoss, Lone Mountain Trio, Growling Old Men, Coppo Kaerner & Lowell, the John Lowell Band, and solo or with his vocalist wife Joanne Gardner Lowell. His smooth voice is featured on many albums, including 19 he's released.

In 2024 the IWMA named him Songwriter of the Year and his album *Snow on the Wineglass* the Western Album of the Year. In that year he was also awarded the Montana Governor's Arts Award representing the highest honor that Montana bestows on artists that work in the literary, visual or performing arts. In 2022 his album *She's Leaving Cheyenne* was a IWMA Traditional Album of the year nominee, and the song *Angus MacKenzie* from the album was named Working Cowboy Song of the Year. 2021 brought Lowell the Grand Prize in the Hazel Dickens Songwriting Contest for his song *Richmond*.

All this from a guy that may not have ever picked up a guitar if not for the fact that his sister never did. "When I was twelve years old," he recalls, "I distinctly remember the family dropping my mom off at the train station so she could go visit her mother. Dad stopped at a pawnshop on the way back and bought my sister a Harmony Sovereign. She was going to learn how to play it, but she never did. At that point I was playing trumpet in the school band, but I was never any good at it. Mostly



Bill Monroe shares some pickin' wisdom with John.

because I never practiced. But I was interested in her guitar, so I started going into her room and playing with it. Eventually I just moved it into my room, and I don't think she ever even noticed." Self-taught, John was mostly learning and playing John Denver songs in the early years. "I thought he was pretty cool. I still do." Along about his sophomore or junior year Lowell met a 5-string banjo player who was a mutual friend of the guys he was hanging out with and according to John, "I was severely bitten by the bluegrass bug, so I immersed myself into it for probably the next ten years. That's all I played. That's all I listened to."

After college in Flagstaff, he moved to Montana where he met some guys that were in a band in Jackson, Wyoming who were playing the same festival circuits he was in. "They had bluegrass instrumentation, but they were playing stuff like Janis Joplin's *Take Another Piece of My Heart* and Sting's *Englishman in New York*. They were obviously listening to a lot more music than bluegrass and they opened my eyes. I thought Holy Cats! There's a lot more good music out there than just bluegrass so that started my journey toward a wider world of music. That shifted my perspective."

But whatever Lowell's music journey, western music has been a constant. Born in New Jersey (although he usually doesn't admit it) his father's job transfer to Billings, Montana when he was "a little tiny guy" and

then to Colorado when he was in the first grade and then Phoenix and Scottsdale, Arizona where he finished high school, John now and for many years has called Livingston, Montana home. "Having lived in the West since I was six months old, I have a love affair with the American West. I've been playing and singing cowboy and western songs as long as I've been playing and singing. The first song I wrote in high school was a western song. Every record that I've had any input on and recorded including the bluegrass records, and the last half

dozen solo ones have all had at least one or two cowboy or western songs. So, I've been doing that forever."

Attending college at Northern Arizona in Flagstaff Lowell originally studied forestry because, "I thought I would be a forest ranger and spend my time riding around on horses out in the wilderness." Realizing that was a mistaken idea, and that there didn't happen to be many jobs in forestry at the time, he switched his major

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Making music with Tony Trischka (banjo) and Ben Winship (mandolin).

IN THE CROSSHAIRS

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Taking a break from music and pursuing an alternate passion.



Pickin' and grinnin' with Tim O'Brien.

to recreation. "That was a joke," he recalls. "I had a class where we were making Christmas wreaths and I thought I should do something a little more meaningful, so I went to English because I like to write, and I like to read." At some point concluding that about all he could do with an English degree was teach or write and not seeing that as a career he would enjoy, he took the advice of his brother-in-law and got a business degree. So, did he get his degree and start climbing the corporate ladder? No...but he recalls a lot of friends were doing that. "Our senior year

guys started walking around in suits because they were interviewing with AT&T or IBM and those guys have become very successful. I said, 'I'm going skiing'."

"I was on the 'five-year plan' in school doing summer jobs up in the Yellowstone wrangling dudes and building log cabins so when I got out of college I packed up everything I had and moved sight unseen to Bozeman." Since then, he's done a lot of different things. For a short time, Lowell made his living as a cowboy wrangling dudes outside of Cody, Wyoming and by West Yellowstone. For about three years he hired on to a Charolais ranch north of Belgrade, Montana, and spent three seasons guiding elk hunters packing up into Taylor Fork drainage of the Gallatin Range just north of Yellowstone Park. For eight years he was a purchaser for Gibson Guitars and then for Big Sky Carvers for another five. "All during the time my daughters were growing up I had day jobs and did music on the side. Once they left home, I ditched the day jobs."

Pretty much everything John does these days has something to do with music, and he's happy to add, usually in partnership with his wife Joanne, who in her past life was Senior VP of Sony Music's Video Production. Raised



Pictured from left are Dave Stamey, Marina Smith, Joanne Gardner Lowell and John.



John in his home studio.

in Kansas, she ended up in Nashville where she had a video production company with Rosanne Cash where they made videos for Alison Krauss, Chris LeDoux, Marty Stuart, Tanya Tucker, and Hank Williams Jr.'s duet with his father (through the magic of post-production). This led to an offer from Sony and ten years traveling the world making videos for Aerosmith, Ricky Martin, James Taylor, Will Smith, Mariah Carey, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, and hundreds more. When the writing was on the wall that Sony was merging with BMG and her job would change dramatically, she chunked the corporate world. Having loaned down payment money to help a friend buy a hot springs, she moved to Montana and lived in a tipi at the hot springs, which is where she and John met 20 years or so ago. "They had a music program, and I was one of the first performers," John recounts. "We discovered that our birthdays were about 18 hours apart. So, for the next 10 years or better we'd send 'Happy Birthday' emails to each other. I was married at the time. Following my divorce, we got together and when we turned 60, she on June 15 and I on June 16 eight years ago, we got married the next day on the 17th. That way we figure as we get older at least one of us should remember our Anniversary."

In addition to performing together whenever possible, John and Joanne are promoters and producers. For many years they put on what they called "The Livingston Hoot" a free concert shutting down main street in their Montana hometown. "We'd involve all the local non-profits and food vendors and bring in acts like Rodney Crowell, Vince Gill, and Roy Rogers (the Grammy nominated blues

artist...not the one readers of this magazine are likely thinking of). As many as 12,000 people packed the streets." Unfortunately, as with many things, after the pandemic it became unsustainable. But John and Joanne are producing a Livingston Songwriter Festival and book all the music for a local center for the arts. And they play music. John's schedule includes a two-week tour in Europe which he's done every Fall for 12 years or so. He's been playing in



Rodney Crowell officiates at Joanne and John's wedding in 2017.

Europe since 2002 when he performed at the Shetland Folk Festival. Whether playing or not Lowell gets to England at least once a year so he can see his two daughters, grandson, and soon an addition on the way.

As much as he enjoys performing Lowell's focus now is more into songwriting. "You have to write an awful lot of bad songs to get a good one," he suggests. "One of the first things I tell people in the songwriting camps I'm invited to is that I can't tell you how to write a good song or write a hit song. If there was a way, we'd all be doing it." John shares that anytime he hears something that might make a good

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IN THE CROSSHAIRS

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Just hangin' out with pal Mike Blakely near Fredericksburg, TX in 2023. John has the biggest hat!

song title he puts it in his phone memo section. "I love taking a little note or idea and creating art out of nothing. A painter starts with a blank canvas. A sculpturer with a lump of clay. I'm sure poetry is much the same. You get an idea, and you massage it and twist it and mold it into something you think sounds good. And that's the way it is with songwriting. What you end up with needs to sound pleasing." Lowell's philosophy regarding his singing? "I try to hit the notes accurately and not suck."

In January of 2019, John and Joanne took some of his western songs to Elko for the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering and took a shot at the open mic, which won them a spot on the main stage Saturday night. Lowell recalls, "I felt like a complete moron because here I'd been playing and singing cowboy and western songs for years and years slipping them into bluegrass concerts and recordings and here's an entire audience I've been overlooking." So, he began writing and collecting material for the full cowboy record that would become *She's Leaving Cheyenne*. With no performances or touring

during the pandemic he used the time to record the album and release it. He joined the IWMA and sent the record to its list of DJs. "Then I went about my business," John recalls. "I was totally surprised when notified the album and eventual winning song Angus MacKenzie had been nominated." John says he figured, "Nobody knows who I am. I'm not going to win anything. I'm going elk hunting. So, I wasn't there for the awards, which I regret." After *She's Leaving Cheyenne* Lowell



John and Joanne taking some time at a friend's home. (2025)

thought, "Well, these guys like what I'm doing so I'm going to do another western record. The result was *Snow on the Wineglass*, on which John wrote or co-wrote everything except one song. This time John was at the awards to receive recognition for Western Album of the Year and Songwriter of the Year. And you can look forward to seeing and hearing him this year and at future conventions in Albuquerque because he's swapped weeks with other hunters so he can leave the convention on Sunday and that night be up in the mountains to start hunting. "Having joined the IWMA I find everyone has been so welcoming. Even though I've been playing the music for four decades or more I'm the new guy on the scene. So, I really appreciate the acceptance." 🐾

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

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Continued from page 2

...selling CD's that are poorly recorded for \$15. (It's a great way to rip off folks but a lousy way to promote yourself. I was once told by an artist that he didn't spend too much on his recordings because he thought the buyers would want him to sound like he does on stage. My response: "Almost everyone performing on stage goes flat here and there or plays a wrong note and even forgets words sometimes. I don't think anyone wants to buy a CD with that stuff in it.")

...putting pressure on talent buyers to hire you. (They will hire you if they like what you do and can afford you, and they will not hire you if they don't like what you do or don't have the budget to hire you. If they tend to run when they see you coming, it might be time to back off.)

...talking too much during performance. (Folks came to hear you sing and play and recite your poems. If you have a really compelling story, tell it, but know that the audience will get antsy after a bit. A show promoter said to me once: "I will never use him again. In an hour and a half show, he sang 5 songs and one medley. The rest was all storytelling. I didn't hire him to tell stories.")

...saying "Here's one I wrote" and "Here's another one I wrote" and "I wrote this one..." before every song. (This gets tiresome. It speaks to an "I" problem. We know you are a songwriter. You were probably introduced as one. This constant reminder of how good a songwriter you are would make me hesitate to hire you. Better to say at the beginning of your performance, "I'm going to sing some songs tonight that I have written over the years. I hope you enjoy them." 'Nuff said.)

...using profanity in your songs in a family-friendly setting. (This one's up for grabs. But most folks don't want their kids to hear it. A performer asked me once about using profanity in a song he was writing. I just suggested he use whatever would offend the fewest of his fans. Western music and cowboy poetry doesn't draw crowds that fill stadiums. It seems to me that the fewer we offend, the better off we are. But like I say, up for grabs.)

I may not be right about all of this, and much of it may not apply to you. In fact, I hope none of it applies to you. It's just some things that have stuck in my brain for a long time, and I finally told myself, "Well, somebody needs to say it!"

MARVIN O'DELL
President IWMA

4C COWBOY MUSIC AND POETRY GATHERING FOOD DRIVE



Saturday, August 16
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
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Available for Purchase



Free Event
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Contact: Ron Secoy
secoyron818@gmail.com
(580) 606-9574

By Ron Secoy

The **4C Cowboy Music and Poetry Gathering** on August 16 at Cache Creek Cowboy Church in Lawton, OK saw a good crowd and was a benefit event for the Lawton Food Bank. The all-day affair was followed by an evening Cowboy Country Showcase.

Admission to the Gathering was a donation of a nonperishable food item, while the Showcase was \$20 per ticket. Food donations exceeded 900 pounds; ticket sales brought in \$400. Dave Edwards, IWMA member, donated two (2) Zager acoustic guitars that brought in \$525 at auction, enabling the food bank to receive a \$1000 cash donation.

OK chapter member Ron Secoy hosted the Gathering while members Aspen Black and Donald Kevin Tuckfield shouldered the duties of emcee for both shows, respectively.

The first ever free event (planned to be annual) featured Oklahoma Cowboy Poet Laureates Jay Snider and Francine Roark Robison with Ed Meyer, Glenn Murray, Randy Lynn Shelley, William (Dub) Loyd, Therron Michael Carlson, Curtis Krigbaum, Robert Beene, Kenney Fields, Dan Hutchins, Smokey Culver, Billy Tumbleweed, Aspen Black, Devon Dawson, Teresa Burleson, Amiilya Lee, Don Williams, and Lily Anderson,

KLAW 101.3 FM radio station personality Jeri Anderson interviewed several IWMA members during her live broadcast of the event. Jeri also played Aspen Black's latest hit, "As Cowboy as They Come" on KLAW, starting Aspen's first venture into commercial radio. Aspen already hosts and online radio show, *Western Airwaves*.

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 Western Cattle Trail

by Tom Hawk

Six million Texas longhorn steers went up the Western Trail,
To Dodge and Ogallala to be shipped out on the rail,
Then on into Wyoming, Colorado, and Montan',
Three months of hard trail drivin' sure will make a boy a man.

The Civil War came to an end in Eighteen Sixty Five,
It left the State of Texas broke and struggling to survive.

The buffalo had disappeared where prairie grasses grow,
As well the native's way of life based on the buffalo.

Four trails began on Texas land to make the longhorn sales:
The Shawnee, Chisholm, Goodnight, and the Western to the rails.

The Shawnee to Missouri's yards, the Chisholm – Abilene,
The Goodnight to New Mexico, the Western – northern scenes.

The herds that came from Texan range met at Red River's shore,
And crossed those muddy waters at the site of Jon Doan's store.

They drove through Oklahoma's west, a stop at Fort Supply,
Through Kiowa and open range, then under Kansas sky.

The Texas Cattle Fever fear had closed the Eastern Trail,
So Dodge became the stopping place for access to the rail.

From Dodge the trail led north by west to cross Nebraska's line,
Then on to Ogallala there to sell all those bovines.

Our hardships they were challenging, our wage one buck a day,
Homesteaders and their soddie homes kept getting in the way.

We crossed so many streams and creeks where flooding had occurred,
We battled storms and night stampedes to save the longhorn herd.

Good graze was often lacking and our water just the same,
Some drovers couldn't make it and some ponies pulled up lame.

But Goodnight's fine chuck wagon fed us at the break of day,
And gave us Cookie's biscuits as he sent us on our way.

From Seven-Four to Eighty-Six the Western had to change
As ticky cattle quarantines closed down the open range.

Then barbed wire fencing came along to mark the homestead way
And closed the open cattle towns where drovers spent their pay.

Six million Texas longhorn steers went up the Western Trail,
To Dodge and Ogallala to be shipped out on the rail,
Then on into Wyoming, Colorado, and Montan',
Three months of hard trail drivin' sure will make a boy a man.



Tom Hawk, from Cumberland, Maryland, has been performing western music since 2008. He loves to yodel and sing songs from the first half of the twentieth century. He has performed at the Western Music Association's Annual Gathering since 2008, the National Traditional Music Festival in 2011 and 2018, and across the United States and in Europe. His first CD, *Yodeling Familiar Trails*, in collaboration with Greg Latta on instrumentals, came out in November 2010 and received the Rural Roots Music Commission/National Traditional Country Music Association award for the Best Traditional Yodeling CD for 2011. His second CD, *Earning My Spurs*, also in collaboration with Greg Latta, came out in February 2018 and received the Rural Roots Music Commission/National Traditional Country Music Association award for the Best Western Yodeling CD for 2018. Tom serves as Vice President of the WMA's Western Wordsmiths Chapter.

The Western World Tour



by Rick Huff

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

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

First, more breaking news from WSC (Western Sightings Central)! Acknowledging the international appeal of The Cowboy, an ad for the Honda Hybrid features a Frenchman who wants to be one (a cowboy, not a car). So, obviously, he heads West. As he charges around in his new wheels and cowboy hat the hands are suitably impressed! A Geico Insurance ad has the gecko trying to elude his fans by donning a mini-Stetson and mustache. In another commercial a cowboy (Walton Goggins) talks to his animals about WalMart's free delivery. Boost and Weathertech are using working ranch ladies to make their points. Old El Paso salsa is not only using a mounted cowboy to deliver the flavor of its new ad, but a singing one with a twinkle in his tooth to boot! And HGTV's Property Brothers' latest address involves "rural roots." Folks, they keep using Western. We've got Western. Can't we get them together?? Now....on to our main subject here.



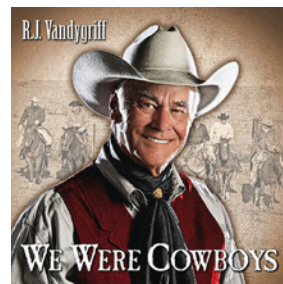
Charley Engel (aka "Chuckaroo The Buckaroo")

After two decades of turning out weekly radio programs, Oregon's Charley Engel (aka "Chuckaroo The Buckaroo") has adopted a more relaxed posture. "Twenty years of glamour and fame was enough," Engel jokes, "so I hung

up my saddle and now just sit in my rockin' chair while I smoke my pipe and dream of the good ol' days when music and art were made by hand, not machines!" Mid-year he launched the final new episode of his show "Calling All Cowboys." When we first interviewed him back in 2006, he was a comparative 'newbie' on low-power (LP) station KPOV. Then came Internet streaming and opportunities to net far bigger audiences. "In 2013," he says, "I was invited to produce, manage and host my own western music and cowboy poetry Internet Radio Station. It was Station

NFLY—No Fly Radio, sponsored by Spalding Labs. I actually got paid for that gig! My program 'The Flying SL Ranch Radio Show' ran for nine of those years that CAC was on the air." Over time he became appreciated on a number of levels for a number of talents. As Charley tells us, "during this same time as a DJ, I was also had a number of stories and western music CD reviews published in American Cowboy and True West magazines. As a graphic artist, it was my extreme pleasure to have designed a few CD packages and event posters for western performers. It is still a thrill when I see those covers show up in Spotify, Apple Music and other music catalogs. All of those endeavors were fueled, in part, by my role as a gallopin' galoot on the radio."

As you'd expect, Engel has fond memories of his time in our genre. "My major highlights as 'Chuckaroo The Buckaroo' would have to be getting to interview some of the greats in Western Music including Don Edwards, R.W. Hampton, Joni Harms, Katie Lee, Glenn Ohrlin, Dave Stamey, Wylie Gustafson, Tom Russell, and Milton Taylor the Aussie poet. I also got to chat with splendid performers like Atz Kilcher, Kerry Grombacher, Dick Gibford, Pip Gilette, Greg McCarty, Nevada Slim & Cimarron Sue, and my very first guest artist and writer of my theme song, John Grant."



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In The Spotlight...

by Marvin O'Dell

...Cowboy poet **Sam DeLeeuw** was inducted into the Utah Cowboy Hall of Fame in July. This is a distinctive and exciting honor for many reasons but in particular because Sam is only the second entertainer to be inducted into Utah's Cowboy Hall of Fame (the first being the much-loved cowboy poet Don Kennington). The Hall of Fame Induction ceremony was held at the Copper Nickel in Ogden, UT. Sam was inducted along with several other notable folks. Western singing band **SaddleStrings** performed at the ceremony.

...**Jon Chandler** was inducted into the Colorado Country Music Hall of Fame in August, acknowledging his contributions to Colorado's country, western, and roots music genres. "This is one of the most gratifying honors I can imagine," Chandler said. To commemorate Jon's mid-August three-night appearance at the Historic Hotel Colorado in Glenwood Springs, CO, the hotel's General Manager, Larry MacDonald, presented Jon with a new Resistol cowboy hat from Bullocks Western Wear custom-shaped by master hatter Bill Montag. The Twang Wranglers, a group of old friends and notable Colorado-based musicians assembled by iconic producer John Macy, are readying a live recording of country classics for release featuring Jon on lead vocals.

...**Kevin Tuckfield** has a radio show called Cowboy Radio Ride, broadcast on KWMV 88.5 FM, Mountain View AR. He was able to syndicate the show this year to stations in Arkansas, New Mexico, California, New York, Missouri, Canada, Mexico, and Australia. That means our IWMA Cowboy Music and Poetry is playing around the world! Kevin was also encouraged to re-edit and re-release his cowboy album *Bring on the Pain*. The album went to #1 on *The Western Way* summer issue chart. The song "Why He Rides" went to #1 on the Most Played Song chart in that same issue. To top things off, Kevin signed a one-song release/distribution in June with Colt Records in Nashville for the 4th of July with his song "It's a Free Country." They

liked it so well that they wanted to do another one with a national release of "Why He Rides" since it was #1 with the IWMA.

...**Patty Clayton** had the honor of being interviewed by Tom Brosseau for his Prairie Public Radio broadcast and NPR podcast titled the Great American Folk Show during her stay in Medora, ND. Tom is a folksinger and historian of folk music who hosts a live music program daily during the summer season in Medora. You can catch the podcast of the interview anytime at www.npr.org/podcasts/1204179427/the-great-american-folk-show.

...**Cisco Jim** mourned the loss of the star of his mounted Saddle Serenader shows. Silverado Espirit passed peacefully at home on January 25, 2025, age 39. This extraordinarily talented horse was well known throughout the Monterey Bay area of California. School children throughout the area are requesting his song, "Silverado!" Meanwhile, his understudy, Taza de Mogollon, has stepped full-time into the spotlight.

...**Dave Munsick** has been stirring up the road dust this summer, playing his *Songteller* shows, taking a few fishing trips, and playing fiddle with two of his sons, Tris and Ian. Highlights include playing on the big stage at Cheyenne Frontier Days, breaking in some songs for a new record release, and getting two new tires put on his tired tractor.

...**Rik "Yonder" Goodell** has published two books this year. *Ponderin's* is his second poetry book while *Wanna Cowboy, Do Ya?* is a book of 16 western short stories. They are available at Amazon.com or his website, yonderintales.com for an autographed copy.

...It's been a busy summer for **Jan Schiferl**. In September, **Rhonda Vincent** and the Rage came to her ranch to do a concert. The concert weekend also included "WJ Ranchfest" with performances by cowboy poets and

musicians from MT, CO, IA, NE, SD & ND, followed on the last day by a Cowboy Church service. In October, Jan will head to Ft. Worth, TX to perform at the Red Steagall Cowboy Gathering. Jan is also working on songs for a new recording project.

...Prairie Poet & Storyteller from Dakota City, NE, **Marci Broyhill** is honored and excited to announce that her book of narrative poetry, *Tangled Trails: Family, Friends & Folly*, has been awarded a 2025 Will Rogers Medallion Award in the category of Western Poetry. The Annual Awards Banquet will be held November 1st in Tulsa, OK.

...England's premier cowboy balladeer, **Clint Bradley**, has begun pre-production on his next western album, which he says he is pretty sure will be another collection of his own original songs. Clint has been out on the road with his western band throughout the summer and has made many new friends and introduced a lot of new folks to western music. He left for a European tour in September, covering Germany, Holland, and then on to Switzerland and Finland. He has also had another of his songs included in a UK BBC TV show called *Homes Under the Hammer*.

...Recently, **Bodhi Linde** has had his brother Sawyer aka "Pinky" join him on bass guitar. They have played all over the country this summer, playing in blues and bluegrass festivals as well as doing some recording in Nashville.

..."A Better Way", the recent single from **Carol Markstrom**, has captured listeners worldwide through the Australian Country Music Network and has had a presence on the Top-20 Australian Country Chart, recently reaching #3. Carol recently brought her music back to the Land of the Midnight Sun, performing at Salmonfest—one of the largest music events in Alaska—and at other venues on the Kenai Peninsula.

...J. Michael Mullins and Geary Parsons (**The Timberline Cowboys**) have had an eventful summer where they performed at The Arizona Folklore Preserve, The Arizona Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Prescott, AZ, two Durango, CO area fundraisers, and still managed to find time to finish and release their fourth studio album, *Watercolor Skies*. Geary continues to do Yeoman's work as the IWMA Colorado Chapter President.

...**E. Joe Brown** was the featured author/singer at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center in Duncan, OK, for their Day of the Cowboy celebration. His third novel in the *Kelly Can Saga* series launched in August. He supported that with a book tour through Oklahoma that included bookstores, libraries, radio, and newspaper interviews.

...**John Lowell** had a busy summer with shows, music camps and songwriting festivals all over the Rocky Mountain West. By the time you're reading this, he will have left and come home from a tour in England and another one in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic.

...*Wonder of the West* is the title of the third cowboy poetry album from **Sherl Cederburg**. She collaborated with musician **Pegie Douglas** on several of the tracks. This album is as varied as the West itself. You'll experience a little humor, a little sadness, some plain old storytelling, some life experiences, a few gospel based poems, and a whole lot of beautiful poetry.

...**T.J. Casey** says he has a new recording project in the works. Says he will go to work on it after he gets moved to Wyoming...

During the month of May, **Tom Poley** (Tucson, AZ) performed his banjo-infused western songs and poetry in southern Portugal and Paris and Marseille, France.

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ARIZONA COWBOY POETRY AND MUSIC GATHERING – PRESCOTT, AZ

The IWMA was well-represented in **Prescott, AZ in August** with many IWMA performers on hand to entertain the large crowd of fans in attendance. **Marvin and Theresa O'Dell** distributed literature and *Western Way* magazines at the event, sharing the IWMA mission with attendees. Thanks to **Doug and Cathy Figgs, Mark Munzert and Kathy Kelley**, and **Geary Parsons and J. Michael Mullins** for helping at the IWMA table.



Marvin and Mark talk to fans



Marvin with Poet Yvonne Hollenbeck



Poet Floyd Beard on stage



38th ARIZONA COWBOY POETS

GATHERING

MUSIC · POETRY · STORIES

AUG 6, 7 & 8 2026

More than 40 Musicians, Poets & Storytellers!

Featured Entertainers: Trinity Seely · Floyd & Valerie Beard and Kristyn Harris

Yavapai College · Prescott, AZ
AZCowboyPoets.org





IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 15

...**Aspen Black** has broken the barrier. Her western song "As Cowboy As They Come" is playing on mainstream radio! It was first picked up in California and Oklahoma, and her promoter is in talks with several more interested stations around the US.

...**Tom Swearingen** made his eighth appearance as guest host on "Rendezvous With a Writer Outwest" on the LA Talk Radio show regularly hosted by **Jim and Bobbi Jean Bell**. His guest was poet and author **Rick Steber**. And for the third time, Tom entertained and emceed the Tualatin, OR Historical Society's Heritage Evening annual fundraising event.

...Just released by **Mark Munzert** is his *Pensive 'n' Playful* book of cowboy poetry. Mark says he has "been positively overwhelmed with the response." He also said he thinks "folks will like it, and if they don't, it'd be a good firestarter."

...*End of the Trail* is the newest western swing release from **David Volk**. The project is an authentic treatment of mostly Bob Wills songs. Besides David's honest vocals and Eldon Shamblin-like guitar playing, the album features quite a few fantastic players including **Gabe Witcher** (Punch Brothers), **Marty Rifkin** (Glen Campbell), and **Randy Crenshaw** (Bob Dylan). The album is available on streaming services Apple, Spotify, etc.

...Teaming up to record a new single were **Sarah Pierce** and **Andi Renfree**. The song was released in early September and produced by Merel Bregante, who tells us that a new single from **Randy Palmer** is the next thing we should be watching for.

...**Claudia Nygaard** has finished recording her new album *To Race the Wind*. It was recorded in the legendary A room of Sound Emporium studios where iconic artists have cut since 1969. Skyler Chuckry engineered, and musicians included: Nick Buda on drums, Steve Mackey on double bass, Grammy winning Jeff Taylor of the Time Jumpers on piano and accordion, Seth Taylor on banjo and acoustic guitars, Tammy Rogers on fiddle, mandolin, and violas, and Dan Dugmore (numerous Grammys, Country Music Hall of Fame member, and Country Music Association musician of the year) played steel. Largely

thanks to Dan, the tracks on this album have a cinematic feel to them, and that's exactly what Claudia was looking for.

...**Rik "Yonder" Goodell** has published two new books. *Ponderin's* is his second cowboy poetry book, and *Wanna Cowboy Do Ya?* is an anthology of 16 western and cowboy short stories. Also, Rik will be headed to Tulsa in November to receive the Will Rogers Medallion Awards for his first Cowboy Poetry Book, *Yonderin' Tales*, and for his latest CD, *Cowboyin' With God*.

On Labor Day, **Vic Anderson** celebrated 70 years as a professional entertainer. At age 12, he began playing guitar and singing country songs by Hank Williams in the back dance floor of the Mint Bar in his hometown of White Sulphur Springs, MT. During the Labor Day Rodeo in town, Vic would stand outside the bar and wish he could sing there. Homer L, a musician from Livingston, MT who sang there regularly, asked Vic if he'd like to sing a song. He's not sure what he sang, but it may have been "Your Cheatin' Heart." After that night, Vic sat in with Homer L (real name: Homer Esterbrook) once or twice a week and received \$5 a night and all the pop he could drink. He wasn't allowed to go into the bar area. Vic did that a couple of years and then started a band with some friends: Ken Spurlin on banjo, his brother Rich on drums, Vic on rhythm guitar, and Howard Weaver on lead guitar. Vic did most of the singing.

...Cowboy poet **George Ray Russell**, along with 70 family members, friends, and fans celebrated his 85th birthday at the historic Niwot Hall (formerly Left Hand Grange #9 Hall) in Niwot, CO on August 17. George (accompanied by **Bruce Johnson** on guitar) performed a program of his original poems and songs and told many entertaining and humorous stories about his life. **Bruce and Marcia Johnson** performed opening songs for the show.

...**J. Michael Mullins** and his wife, **Kaye**, celebrated two exciting family events recently. Their son, Christopher, has retired after 22 years in the U.S. Army, and has moved close to home. Also, their granddaughter, Shelby, just graduated from The University of Texas at El Paso with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. 🐾



Chapter Updates

ARIZONA CHAPTER

President: Gary Kirkman
eskirkman@hotmail.com

What a season it has been! The 37th Arizona Cowboy Poets Gathering (August 7–9, Yavapai College, Prescott) was a great success! Performers included Timberline Cowboys, Gary & Jean Prescott, Terry Nash, Gail Steiger, Mark Munzert, Jack George, and Miska Paget—each keeping cowboy poetry and music alive with heartfelt artistry. Ashley Wescott's new single "Rattlesnake Waltz", released August 29, snakes through with haunting vocals and a desert-soaked rhythm—short, sharp, and unforgettable. Buddy Greenbloom announced his new LP, set for release October 31, just ahead of the IWMA 2025 Convention in Albuquerque, NM, in November. Thanks to all who joined us in Prescott and as we turn the corner into fall, we're filled with gratitude for the community that keeps western heritage alive through music, poetry, and fellowship. We look forward to seeing you this fall and at the convention!

BLACK HILLS & BEYOND CHAPTER

President: Brad Exton
ramblinrangers@yahoo.com

It's been a long, hot and busy summer for our chapter members, but now that fall is in the air, the temperature may have gone down but the schedules of our folks hasn't cooled off. North Dakotas artist and songwriter, Greg Hager has set an historical record by being the first musician in ND to record a live CD of self-penned

songs. This was in front of an audience of 500 people and is Greg's 11th album. If it's anything like his others, it's well worth the listen. Another North Dakota entertainer and author, RubyAnn Stiegelmeier, traveled to Hot Springs, SD to take part in the annual Arts Festival there. She is currently busy performing at various venues in ND and will be attending the National Book Festival as an attending author. Singer/songwriter, John Lowell is currently in England and will be touring Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic and Germany this fall, spreading his great music throughout those countries. Later in the winter he and wife Joanne will be performing in the Hill country of Texas. Our chapter VP, Sherl Cederburg has had a very busy summer and fall performing around the Black Hills and in Montana at the annual Cowboy Gathering in Lewistown. Sherl has released her third CD, "Wonder of the West". Poet, Dean Bruce has been traveling around several states within the chapter performing his poetry, including the Kara Creek Ranch in Wyoming and the Montana Cowboy Gathering in Lewistown. KC LaCourse is traveling to the Will Rogers Medallion Ceremony where she will receive an award for the Western Recorded Poetry category for "The Last Sunset". She will also be heading to Australia where she will host and perform at the Wentworth County Music Festival. Rik "Yonder" Goodell has two new books out, "Ponderin's", and "Wanna Cowboy Do Ya?" His first Cowboy Poetry book, "Yonderin' Tales" and his latest CD, "Cowboyin' With God" will both receive Will Rogers Medallion Awards in November. Pegie Douglas continues to be one of the busiest performers in the Black Hills with shows that include Sherl Cederburg, the Gumbo

Lilly Band, and her Badger Sett Band that documents the life and times of Charles "Badger" Clark, cowboy poet. She will be presenting the Life and Times of Badger Clark at this year's convention in ABQ. The Ramblin' Rangers had the honor of opening up for Kristyn Harris and friends at the 39th annual Montana Cowboy Gathering this year and then continued on to perform several more times in Montana. The fall sees them heading to shows in Nebraska, Wisconsin, South Dakota and New Mexico. Highlights of the fall schedule will be returning to the Empire Ranch in Arizona to join Doug Figgs for the ranch's annual fund raiser. A big honor for the Rangers will be their induction into the Legends of Dakota Country Music Hall of Fame at the end of September.

COLORADO CHAPTER

President: Geary Parsons
Gearyparsons@outlook.com

Fall is approaching quickly, and our Colorado Chapter members have been busy! The Timberline Cowboys performed at the *Prescott Cowboy Poetry Gathering* (August 7–9). It was a great event, and we even had the opportunity to sit at the IWMA table and share information about our organization. Steve Jones has launched a new website: www.yampasteve.com. George Russell celebrated his 85th birthday on August 7 with a special performance of his songs and poems. He followed that with another show on August 17 at Niwot Hall in Niwot, CO. Patty Clayton was honored as the featured guest on the *Great American Folk Show* in Medora, ND this August. Hosted by folksinger and songwriter Tom Brosseau, Patty spent two weeks there performing and was also

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RIDE EASY, PARD!

STORIES AND TALL TALES

BY VIC ANDERSON

THE MAD SCRAMBLE

I decided in 1961 when I was seventeen and graduated High School, I would be a bareback bronc rider. Our rodeo takes place on Labor Day weekend and would be my first rodeo as a contestant. I'd ridden horses doing ranch work since I was a small boy, and some of them bucked. I also worked for a local horse trainer and many of them bucked.

The Mad Scramble was the opening event of our rodeo. Six bareback broncs and six riders turned out at the same time. I was one of them.

My cousin Bill, who was a very good bronc rider, helped me get ready. The gates opened and six broncs and six riders leapt into the arena. These were wild horses from mountain ranges nearby. We didn't know if they'd buck, run away, fall down, bite or take after another horse. Turns out they did all of this.

My bronc, a mare, bucked pretty well, I was told. I felt the old style, soft leather riggin' tighten on my hand, and my spurs were in the shoulder where they should be. Then I was in a fog and my ears were ringing.

I saw my right foot stick out of the fog, but I wasn't spurring. Then the mare fell down, and my brain finally caught up with what was happening. A bronc with no rider came at me from my right, and another with the rider still aboard was bearing down on me from the left. Right in front of where my Mom was sitting.

I had enough sense to keep my weight on the riggin' and kept the mare from getting up. Both horses and one rider jumped over both me and the mare.

I walked back to the chutes where I was to start loading the bucking chutes. My cousin stopped me. Bill said, "With those horses heading for where you disappeared in all that dust, I thought you had a pretty short career."

RIDE EASY PARD.....Vic

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

2025 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE



Belinda Gail

Tom Swearingen

A natural entertainer with a dynamic and captivating voice, Belinda Gail's warm, and vibrant personality has resulted in her being dubbed by fans as "America's Western Sweetheart."

Born in California and raised in Nevada's Carson Valley through her pre-teens where her father drove truck, managed a mill, did day-work on ranches in the area, and raised cattle and horses on his own small ranch, she learned early the value of hard work and a "can-do" positive attitude. It was here that the foundation for her appreciation for the beauty and challenges of rural life was set.

Growing up Belinda was surrounded by music, whether that be the family singing in the car, entertaining themselves at home, or mom playing a big stack of records that her mom called "good music," country, and 40's standards.

Liking to sing but not thinking of herself as a singer, she was spurred into joining her best friend in the church choir where the choir director soon had Belinda being featured in solos. She found herself being asked to sing at weddings and other

events. In short order she was invited to join a local band and performed with them for several years.

In 1995 for an appearance with the band Belinda learned "I Want to be a Cowgirl Sweetheart" off a Suzy Bogguss CD just intending for it to be something different to add to her repertoire. Following the performance two men complimented her on the song and asked if she knew who wrote it, which she didn't. With that they dialed Patsy Montana (inaugural IWMA Hall of Fame inductee) telling her, "Here's a girl who knows your song," and handed the phone to Belinda and said, "Sing." After the song Patsy told Belinda she needed to sing western music. Not really knowing what that was or the difference between western and country music she asked, and Patsy told her ... and offered to help her.

From her work at the time as a travel agent Belinda knew Lonnie Hannah (one third of the future IWMA Hall of Fame group Sons of the San Joaquin) who also offered to help her. Lonnie and Patsy oriented her to the music and encouraged her, and suggested Belinda join the Western Music Association and attend its annual convention where she performed to a very welcoming audience.

For a year and half or more she interspersed her own gigs with her band with appearances with the Sons springboarding her career and leading to her first big solo gig at the Santa

Clarita Cowboy Festival. And what a celebrated career it's been and continues to be. Named one of the Top-50 Country & Western Entertainers by American Cowboy Magazine, seven-time IWMA Female Performer of the Year, three-time Academy of Western Artists Female Performer of the Year, appearances at major festivals and events throughout the US, Canada and Europe, and several acclaimed albums including two named IWMA Traditional Album of the Year.

Her career also included a dynamic duo with Curly Musgrave. With the 1999 Monterey Cowboy Festival as their first big billing as a duo they worked together for ten years and recorded three acclaimed albums and were named IWMA Duo or Group of the Year three times before his illness and untimely passing. Together, Belinda and Curly Musgrave were called "The Roy Rogers & Dale Evans of the 21st century" by no less than the son of that famous earlier duo, "Dusty" Roy Rogers, Jr.

With a desire to share not only the music but an actual physical glimpse into the lifestyle, Belinda is also thrilled to annually host her very successful, 'Cowgirl True Girlfriend Getaway Weekend'. This unique experience brings together women from across the country for a relaxing weekend of Western Music and Poetry, friends and fun.

2025 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE



Hot Club of Cowtown

Tom Swearingen

Austin-based multi award-winning hot jazz and western swing band Hot Club of Cowtown's roots trace back to 1994 when guitarist Whit Smith responded to an ad in Greenwich Village's arts and culture newspaper *The Village Voice* placed by violinist Elana James seeking band mates. Elana, who began studying violin at the age of four and went on to study violin and viola at the Manhattan School of Music discovered and fell in love with cowboy and western music while working as a wrangler at ranches in the West.

Although Whit had played guitar since he was very young with folk influence from his musician parents and played throughout the '70s and '80s in a series of rock bands, it was his day job at New York's Tower Records that led to his discovery of western swing. He fell in love with the energy of western swing, which blended perfectly with his passion for Django Reinhardt's distinctive "gypsy jazz" style.

Hot Club of Cowtown has mainly had three bass players over the years. Jake Erwin, whose slap-bass technique and love of both rockabilly and western swing helped further expand the group's sound joined in 2000 and is the player most people associate with the band. Retiring in 2020 he still plays with the band often

as does Beau Sample, who grew up in San Antonio, and Austinite Josh Hoag, formerly of Asleep at the Wheel.

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

Three decades of touring both on its own and with artists including the Avett Brothers, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, Dan Hicks, Bryan Ferry, Roxy Music, Squirrel Nut Zippers, the Mavericks, and others provides a lot of memories. Among the highlights was being on tour in England in 2004 when they got a call that Bob Dylan wanted them to be the opener for his upcoming tour with Willie Nelson.

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

While Hot Club of Cowtown has been recognized with several accolades and

awards over the years, including Ameripolitan Music Awards Western Swing Group of the Year for the band, and Western Swing Female of the Year for Elana, one of their earliest was the 2002 Western Music Association Crescendo Award.

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

The band has been featured on television, appearing on several episodes of *Larry's Country Diner*, as well as on *Later With Jools Holland* and the Jools Holland New Year's Eve *Hootenanny* (UK), *\$40 a Day with Rachel Ray*, *The Grand Ole Opry*, the *BBC Live From Glastonbury* broadcast (UK), *Good Morning Azerbaijan*, the *Texas Music Cafe*, and others. Film credits for songs include indie films *Four Dead Batteries* and *In Search of a Midnight Kiss*. United States radio appearances include *Mountain Stage*, *eTown*, *World Café*, *A Prairie Home Companion*, *All Things Considered*, *Morning Edition*, *Woodsongs Old-Time Radio Hour*, Sirius Satellite, XM Satellite, and many more.

2025 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE



Charles Badger Clark Jr.

By Rex Rideout

Charles Badger Clark Sr., his wife Mary, their son, Fred and newborn, Charles Jr. settled in the Dakota Territory in 1883. Mother and Fred would later die from Tuberculosis and the two Charles lived alone. Back in the Black Hills it was discovered that Charles, Jr. was also stricken with Tuberculosis so it was suggested he go to the desert southwest where the dry air might prolong his life.

Autumn of 1905 found him on a train to Arizona where he found work on a ranch about thirty miles East of Tombstone. Work was easy, driving cattle, mending fences and tending to the needs of guests who came by. Charles sang with guitar to entertain friends at the ranch. In the evening he would serenade the desert with his guitar singing such favorites as *El Ultimo Adios* and *Juanita*. A more vigorous life among the cowboys suited young Charles and in time his illness was “forgotten.” He thrived in the harsh beauty of the desert writing

letters to home along with poetry inspired by his new life. His father had married a school teacher named Anna Morris who saw quality in his verses and sent his work on to *Pacific Monthly*, a magazine in Oregon. Young Charles learned that he had been published in 1907 by receiving a check for ten dollars. This was very inspiring and he continued to write. He took on the name Badger Clark to distinguish himself as a writer. In 1910 he returned to the Black Hills to care for his ailing father and wrote of his adventures alongside his cowboy friends. He published his first book of twenty-two poems, *Sun and Saddle Leather* in 1915. *Grass-Grown Trails* followed in 1917. Around this time Badger was called upon for public speaking, telling of his poems and cowboy life. Later he would publish a book of short stories *Spike* in 1925, then a third collection of poetry *Skylines and Wood Smoke* in 1935.

During his public speaking career he would sing some of his poems as songs while playing the guitar. 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 who put a tune to *Border Affair* in 1921.

John I. White sent a slightly different melody for *Border Affair* to Badger in 1933 asking for permission to air the song on his radio show. Badger was honored by being named the first *Poet Laureate of South Dakota* in 1937. That same year he took in a movie, *Rhythm on the Range*. As the movie played, he was astonished to see Bing Crosby singing his very own *Roundup Lullaby* as published in his first book. Another honor was the singing of his *Lead My America* at the Washington Monument in the Nation’s Capital, Independence Day, 1952.

Badger’s work put to music appears in the Jack Thorp and John Lomax collections. More recently these songs have been recorded by some of our favorite artists such as Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash, Judy Collins, Katie Lee, Emmylou Harris, Michael Martin Murphey and Don Edwards. He is one of our first cowboy poets. This hermit by choice through what he wrote is now recognized and admired throughout the Cowboy world. He would surely be flattered but would likely shrug off praise showered on him. Badger lived for the moment. As he said in his poem *Deer Trails*, “The joy is in the journey, and not in getting there.”



San Felipe de Neri Parish Church in the Old Town Albuquerque

ATTENDING THE 2025 CONVENTION?

Here is information and fun-facts you may like to know.

Explore the city and surrounding area of Old Town to the greatest possible extent. We are sure you will enjoy your stay!

SITES AND DISTANCES:

- **Old Town**, more than 150 shops and a lovely gazebo – walking 7 min, driving 3 min
- **Best Western Rio Grande** – walking 8 min, driving 2 min – The restaurant name is the Wild Avocado and on Tuesday night of the convention week the Black Hills & Beyond Chapter will present a Night of Music, free to all attendees.
- **Bottger Mansion** (a B&B) is the only Victorian era mansion in Old Town that remains relatively unchanged (1912) – walking 7 min, driving 3 min
- **Explora Science Center** – walking 13 min, driving 3 min
- **Albuquerque Museum** – walking 14 min, driving 4 min
- **Albuquerque Bio Park and Zoo** – driving 7 min
- **Rattlesnake Museum** – walking 9 min, driving 3 min

RESTAURANTS/EATERIES/PUBS AND DISTANCES:

- **Sawmill (Food Court)** – walking 5 min, driving 1 min
- **DH Lescombes** – walking 6 min, driving 1 min
- **Seasons Rotisserie & Grill** – walking 4min, driving 1 min
- **Two Cranes Bistro & Brew** – walking 6 min, driving 2 min
- **Ponderosa Brewing Co** – walking 9 min, driving 2 min
- **Central Grill and Coffee House** – walking 11 min, driving 2 min
- **Monroe's Restaurant** – driving 11 min
- **Sheehan Winery Tasting Room** – walking 6 min, driving 2 min (in Old Town)
- **Cocina Azul** – walking 22 min, driving 4 min
- **Noisy Water Winery** – walking 6 min, driving 2 min

WESTERN WORLD TOUR

Continued from page 13

Engel has physically 'hosted' performers as well. "Folks that have dropped in for a visit or to spend the night right here at the bunkhouse of our HouseTop Ranch in Bend, Oregon have included Michael Martin Murphey, Mary McMaslin, Brenn Hill, V The Gypsy Cowbell, Sourdough Slim (with) Robert Armstrong, Mary Kaye, Tom Hiatt, and Juni Fisher." He's also had some memorable misadventures. "There was my interview with the 'Desert Goddess of Glen Canyon' Katie Lee. I drove 3 hours to her hotel room in Portland with two friends, one of whom I asked to run the sound recording. It was a great interview, and Katy even sang "Old Delores" for us. But when I got home I found out my sound man, enraptured with the live interview, missed the fact that my mic was not working! I had to re-record all of my questions and comments and sync them into the original. Not an easy feat!"

Questionable imagery coming. When you try to retire from Western, you may find it's like the greenhorn's first time mucking out a stall. You'll never fully wash your hands of it! Charley intends to keep a hand in. As he puts it, "The ol' Chuckaroo ain't dead yet! 'Calling All Cowboys' will still live on airing as 'classic' episodes on 88.9 KPOV (and) a number of my syndicated stations. I have ideas for other programs, including an urban/western swing show and a sci-fi/guitar gods show. But as limited series, not weekly shows. Been there, done that!" To that we add since Charley Engel's "been there" he's "done that" quite well.

Happy New Trails, Chuckaroo!

#1 SONG
ON THE WESTERN CHARTS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL WESTERN MUSIC ASSN
FOR SUMMER 2025

KEVIN TUCKFIELD- WHY HE RIDES
COWITTEN BY NATHAN TUCKFIELD
CHAMPION AR BAREBACK BRONC RIDER




THANKS TO IWMA DJ'S FOR PLAYING MY SONGS
WWW.CROWMTNMUSIC.COM/MUSIC

REMEMBERING ARTIST JOE DE YOUNG

A LITTLE BIT of HISTORY

By Johnny D. Boggs

Western artist Joe De Young doesn't get the attention his mentor garnered. But when your mentor is Charles Marion Russell, that's to be expected. Not that Joe ever complained.

Born in 1894 in Webster Groves, Missouri, Joe quickly wanted to be a cowboy. His parents told him that his first word was "horse." In 1899, Joe's father got a job in the Cherokee Nation in what's now Dewey, Oklahoma, but Joe just spent summers there until 1905, when he joined his family full-time in Indian Territory.

In 1910, Joe, who had cowboied here and there, got a job as a wrangler in a motion picture being shot in Dewey in 1910. That film, *A Ranch in the Great Southwest*, launched Tom Mix's career. Three years later, Joe left Oklahoma to work on other Mix Westerns in Prescott, Arizona, but quickly contracted cerebral meningitis, which left the skinny, 5-foot-6, 19-year-old deaf.

Joe learned sign language and how to read lips.

He also started painting, and mailed Russell a letter, including sketches and photographs, asking for advice. Russell replied with one of his illustrated letters, and a correspondence blossomed.

I learned this from William Reynolds's *Joe De Young: A Life in the West* (Alamar Media, 2018). The biography's first print run sold out, but Reynolds says talks are under way for a new paperback edition.

In the spring of 1914, the De Yongs moved to Choteau, Montana, roughly 40 miles from the Russells' home in Great Falls, and Russell and Joe continued to correspond, sketch and paint. By January 1916, De Young was living with Charlie and Nancy Russell, looking after the house and livestock while the Russells traveled. As Charlie's apprentice, Joe learned the craft and business of art.

"When at the Russells we use the Indian sign language in ordinary conversation," Joe told Broadus, Montana's *The Powder River County Examiner* in 1922, "and this has been a great help in working among the Indians, especially the old ones[,] as they will tell things in signs that they will not speak of to a white man ordinarily."

Russell and Joe also watched silent movies, pointing out what filmmakers got wrong in Westerns.

That interest in film – and historical accuracy – would lead to another phase of Joe's career.

The Russells had been spending time in southern California since the early '20s, and, after Russell's death in 1926 in Great Falls, Joe settled in Santa Barbara, where he studied art at the Santa



Joe De Young and his dog Foxie on RV ride, around the 1960s. Courtesy Vel Miller Estate.



Illustration for the Starrett cabin in *Shane* by Joe De Young. Courtesy Bill Reynolds.

Barbara School of the Arts. “Years of ups-and-down followed,” he wrote in an excerpt of his unpublished autobiography, *I, Mine and Me*, that appeared in the Santa Barbara Historical Society’s *Noticias* in 1963.

De Yong wasn’t just a Russell promoter.

He introduced Channing Peake, who had studied with Picasso, to Maynard Dixon. “He felt the two had a lot in common,” Reynolds says.

“He would do matchmaking like that because he would help a lot of artists, especially in the ’30s, which really was kind of a golden age of Western art, right up until the time of the second world war.”

In 1936, Joe met John H. Fisher on a trail ride. Fisher was working for Cecil B. DeMille, who was about to start production on *The Plainsman*, and introduced Joe to the noted director. DeMille – “as big of an authenticity freak as De Yong,” Reynolds says – hired Joe.

After *The Plainsman*, Joe designed costumes and sets, drew scenic and storyboard designs, or advised on many films, including *Union Pacific* (1939), *Buffalo Bill* (1944), *Red River* (1948) and *Shane* (1953).

“It’s my contention that ... he was probably the most viewed Western artist in history simply because his interpretations of the West’s schematic and scenes were translated into film and had such a wide audience,” Reynolds says. “So he was very instrumental in later TV things, certainly *Centennial* and even *Lonesome Dove*. The desire for authenticity, especially proper horse gear, things like that.”

But his main job was promoting Russell’s legacy.

“He really was the keeper of Russell’s flame,” Reynolds says. “He really took that role very, very seriously.”

I think Joe really wanted people to understand the passion that Russell had for the West that was. And how it disappeared so quickly.”

Joe De Yong’s death in Los Angeles in 1975 didn’t get much attention outside of Montana. He was buried in Great Falls’s Highland Cemetery, not too far from Charlie and Nancy Russell’s graves and the graves of Joe’s parents.

Charlie gets more visitors. But that’s how Joe would have wanted it.

“I think so,” Reynolds says. “I really do. It’s a testament. Even in death, he wanted to have that adjacency to Russell. Pretty nice.” 🐾



Charles Marion Russell, 1900.
Courtesy
Wikimedia
Commons



Alan Ladd and Brandon de Wilde in *Shane*. Joe De Yong’s “interpretation of what Shane looked like, his drawing of the custom, is so different than what ultimately happened.”
Courtesy Paramount Pictures



The Scarf, 15x20 watercolor on illustration board, around the 1940s by Joe De Young. Courtesy Bill Reynolds



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

SONGWRITING CONTEST WINNERS!

The 2025 IWMA Songwriting contest ended with some really nice songs being entered. One judge said they were the best songs he had judged so far.

We are happy to announce the winners as follows:

FIRST PLACE: Kristyn Harris & Randy Huston with a fun song titled "Light Ranchin'."

SECOND PLACE: John Lowell and Joanne Gardner Lowell with a song titled "The Ghosts Upon My Back."

THIRD PLACE: Dan McCorison & Miska Paget with their song "Center of Gravity."

Six different individuals were involved as judges, all musicians with knowledge of western music. This contest was VERY close with several songs that were just a few points from being winners.

HONORABLE MENTION for those songs goes to Dan Steadman, Darrell Arnold & Tom Hiatt, Doug Figgs & Floyd Beard, Jeff Davidson, John Carr, Kailer Hedden, Leah Sawyer, Micki Fuhrman, Philip Wildman, Teresa Kay Orr, and Randy Palmer & Joel Alden White.

Thank you to everyone who entered songs this year. These wonderful songs should be recorded and put out there for everyone to hear!

WMSS THE BEST OF THE WEST CHILI COOK OFF

TRINITY SEELY NED LEDOUX KEVIN DAVIS

JANUARY 24, 2026
THE PEAK SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX
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FROM the TRAIL

THE IMAGE OF THE COWBOY AND THE CATTLE TRAILS OF THE PLAINS

By Tom Hawk

How did the current image of the cowboy come into existence? It was the young drovers who worked on the post-Civil War cattle trails who gave rise to the iconic image of the cowboy that we celebrate today in song, poem, story, paintings, movies and various other art forms. The rich histories of those cattle trail systems and the celebrations that occur along with them today provide new opportunities for western performers.

After the Civil War (1861-1865), there were four major cattle trail systems that brought mostly Texas longhorn cattle from southern Texas through northern Texas into Missouri, Oklahoma Territory, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming Territory, Montana Territory, Dakota Territory, Canada, and western Texas through New Mexico Territory and Colorado to railhead towns across the Great Plains, funneling beef for the slaughterhouses in Kansas City, Chicago and St. Louis and transporting live cattle to markets on the East Coast and in Europe. The emergence of the cattle trails in the aftermath of the Civil War occurred during the dynamic interplay on the Great Plains of the westward movement of the railroads, white settlers moving into the region due to the Homestead Act (1862), and the three westward-moving wagon trails of the Santa Fe, the Oregon, and the California that began in Kansas City, the rapidly disappearing bison herds, and the tragic relocation and confinement of the indigenous peoples of the Plains onto reservations.

Primary Cattle Trail Systems:

The four primary cattle trail systems were The Shawnee Trail, the Chisholm Trail, the Western Trail, and the Goodnight-Loving Trail.

The **Shawnee Trail** system operated on a small scale primarily before the Civil War through what is now Denison, TX, Grove, OK, and Baxter Springs, KS, to railheads in Sedalia, Kansas City, and St. Louis, MO, but shifted west to the Chisholm Trail system during the post-War period (1867-1874) due to the state-legislated quarantine line to protect the non-Texas cows of the Homesteaders from the lethal Texas Cattle Fever carried by the longhorns.

The **Chisholm Trail**, with its Abilene and Ellsworth, KS, Kansas Pacific railheads, and its Schuyler and Kearney, NE, Union Pacific railheads, operated primarily from 1867 to 1874, when the Kansas state-legislated Texas Cattle Fever quarantine line again shifted west and foreclosed the Chisholm Trail system for the herds.

The **Western Trail**, over which nearly ten million Texas cattle passed from 1874 until the last cattle drive in 1897, then became the primary cattle trail system, operating through Doan's Crossing, TX, on the Red River just south of Altus, OK, and Fort Supply, OK, taking advantage of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe (ATSF) railhead in Dodge City, KS, the Union Pacific railhead in Ogallala, NE, and the Great Northern and Northern Pacific in Montana Territory. The Western Trail also provided

stocker herds for new cattle ranches west and north in Wyoming, Montana Territory, Dakota Territory, and southwestern Canada.

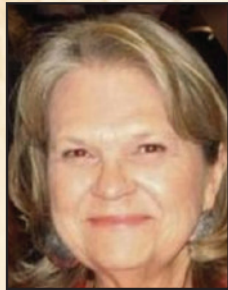
In 1866, Charlie Goodnight and Oliver Loving began driving cattle on the **Goodnight-Loving Trail** southwest from Weatherford, TX, west to the Pecos River, and then north into New Mexico Territory through Fort Sumner and over the Raton Pass into Colorado to the ATSF railhead in Pueblo, CO, the Kansas Pacific railhead in Denver, CO, and the Union Pacific railhead in Cheyenne, WY. When Goodnight moved his cattle operation into the Texas Panhandle near Amarillo, he created shorter alternative routes for his herds to Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming, bypassing New Mexico Territory. Two of these cattle trail systems, the Chisholm and Western, have been seeking National Historical Trail designation within the National Park Service since 2019 and have just formed a consortium with advocates for the other two cattle trail systems to promote the historical significance of the four cattle trails for tourism.

Prominent Cattle Towns and Museums:

There are many former cattle towns along the trails that celebrate the transit of the cattle herds and the cowboys who frequented their varied establishments. These towns include Fort Worth, TX; Duncan, Enid, Chickasha, Kingfisher, Altus, and Fort Supply, OK; Caldwell, Wichita, Newton, Abilene, Ellsworth, Kingman, and Dodge City, KS; Schuyler, Kearney, and Ogallala, NE; Roswell and Fort Sumner, NM; Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Denver, and Greely, CO; Cheyenne, WY; and towns in Montana such as Miles City and Deadwood and Belle Fourche in the western Dakotas. There are also numerous museums and monuments along the cattle trails that document the general location and interpret the cattle trail systems and historical artifacts of that time period. These include, but are not limited to: in Texas the Museums in the Stockyards in Fort Worth and the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in Canyon, near Amarillo; in Oklahoma the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, the Museum of the Western Prairie in Altus, and the Chisholm Trail Museum in Duncan; in Kansas Wichita's Cowtown and the Boot Hill Museum in Dodge City; in Wyoming, the West Texas Trail Museum, Moorcroft, and the Trail End State Historic Site in Sheridan; in South Dakota the Tri-State Museum in Belle Fourche; in Montana, the Range Riders Museum in Miles City.

If you look on the internet and contact the visitor bureaus in these former cattle towns and the regional museums, you should inquire as to when they have their annual celebrations and if they are looking for cowboy and western singers and poets to entertain their audiences. If you have a well-developed website, it will be helpful to both you and the town or museum. There might also be opportunities to perform at local schools and libraries. 🐾

JOY ALLEN (1954 – 2025)



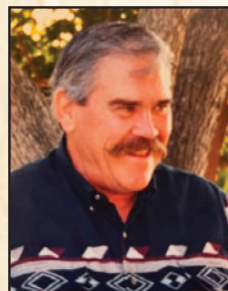
Joy grew up in Albuquerque and Grants, NM with some time in Florida. She graduated from Grants High School in 1972. She attended the University of New Mexico where she earned her bachelor's degree in education and taught elementary school

for 20 years in Grants. She married Dale Burns and lived in Aztec and Grants where they raised two children, Tory and Todd.

After her marriage ended, she moved to Rio Rancho where she enjoyed her view of the Sandias, involvement with her friends in IWMA (serving a term as secretary of the IWMA New Mexico Chapter), and proximity to her beloved grandchildren. Joy moved to Brady, TX in 2023 and continued her involvement with old country music, often meeting friends in Red River. She spent as much time as possible at her cabin on the family ranch on Mt. Taylor, but her later life was primarily focused on her grandchildren.

Joy's ashes were buried at the Elkins family cemetery near Prewitt, NM. She is survived by her daughter Tory Everhart (Eric) of Westcliffe, CO; her son, Todd Burns (Annalee) of Brady, TX; brother Luther "Eddie" Allen of Bellingham WA; grandchildren Gage Burns, Stone Everhart, Sage Everhart, Kate Burns, and Cole Burns and niece Maya Allen Gallegos.

JOSEPH (JOE) HANNAH (1932 – 2024)



Joseph (Joe) Edward Hannah was born in Missouri on February 21, 1932 to Lon M. Hannah and Melba K. Williams Hannah and passed away on December 26, 2024, in Visalia, CA.

When Joe was four years old, the family moved west to California to work in agriculture and settled in Ivanhoe. Joe attended Visalia

Union High School where he was a three-year letterman in both baseball and football. He was offered football scholarships from USC, UCLA, and Cal Berkeley but chose professional baseball where he was an outstanding catcher. On graduation night in 1951, Joe signed a minor league contract and signing bonus with the Chicago Cubs organization. After spending a year in the minor leagues, Joe was drafted into the U.S. Army where he was stationed in Fort Ord during the Korean War and proudly served his country that he loved.

Joe met Kay Kindy in High School where this friendship blossomed into love. Joe and Kay were married on February 7, 1953, and were happily married for 51 years until Kay's passing in 1953.

After being Honorably Discharged from the Army, Joe resumed his baseball career and spent 13 years in professional baseball, enjoying a very successful career in AAA. He retired from baseball in 1963 and returned to the Visalia area where he became a popular barber while attending Fresno State. Joe then began his next career in education. And what a career it was!

Joe had a lifelong love of music, and in 1987 with the encouragement of his son Lonnie, the Sons of the San Joaquin was formed. The group consisted of Joe, his brother Jack, and Lonnie. They have been credited with "rich durability of the traditional Western music they present, as well as the outstanding original cowboy songs" and being reminiscent of the Sons of the Pioneers. Roy Rogers called them "the only singing group who I feel sound like the original Sons of the Pioneers".

The Sons of the San Joaquin were inducted into the Western Music Association Hall of Fame in 2006. Several of their albums have been given awards by the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum (Cowboy Hall of Fame). The group toured the world and enjoyed sharing their music with their many fans.

Joe was preceded in death by his father Lon, mother Melba, brothers Robert (Bob) and Jack, first wife Kay, son James (Jimmy) and second wife Carol. Joe is survived by many other family members including grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

TOMMY NALLIE (1947 – 2024)



We are heartbroken to announce that Tommy Nallie, the Sons of the Pioneers affable and passionate former trail boss who extended the group's legacy into a tenth decade, died Aug. 4 of prostate cancer at Cox Medical Center in Branson, Missouri. He was 77.

Nallie, born in Beaumont, Texas, in 1947, first joined the group in 1983 and represented the last of the hugely talented Nallie family dynasty that was a vital part of the Pioneers' success since 1969, when his older brother Luther Nallie joined. Tommy took over as the group's fourth trail boss in 2015, when Luther stepped down. Tommy recently handed the role of trail boss to fellow Pioneer John Fullerton.

A fine tenor singer, Nallie was also talented on guitar, bass, violin, drums, and other instruments, and his deep knowledge of the Pioneers' musical catalog and intricate harmony arrangements provided a strong backbone for the group as it traversed a modern musical landscape. As a tireless leader, he was committed to keeping the group's legacy alive and preserving the traditional "Pioneer sound."

A full obituary with funeral arrangements will follow.

We thank Tommy for his stewardship, his passion, his talent, and his friendship. He was a lovable leader, and we will miss him deeply. Godspeed, Tommy

KATHRYN (KATHY) JO SAWYER (1961-2025)



Kathryn Jo Sawyer was born to Marvin Walling West and Janet Lee Graver West in Harrogate, England on November 6th, 1961. Kathy grew up in Indianapolis, Indiana along with her brothers, Gregory and Christopher West. Her hobbies as a child included ice skating, playing

ukulele, singing and attending church. While in high school, Kathy attended a youth event where she gave her life to Jesus and her life was forever changed.

Kathy attended Ball State University where she achieved a Bachelors Degree in Journalism and Communication. Upon graduation in 1984, she traveled with Up With People. While with the group, Kathy sang for the pope, performed with the 1986 Super Bowl Half-time Show, and formed a community that she would remain friends with for the rest of her life. Kathy worked as a recruiter for EDS which would later become HP.

In the midst of a successful career, Kathy's deepest desire was to raise a family. Her businesswoman days came to a screeching halt when her college roommate introduced her to a truck-driving songwriter from Texas. Kathy married David Stanley Sawyer in 1998 and traded her days of chasing a career to being a homemaker. Kathy and David spent the first 3 years of their marriage in Indianapolis where they had their daughter, Leah in 2001. Not long after Leah was born, the family moved to Fort Worth and finally got to Weatherford, Texas in 2003. Kathy and David completed their family when they adopted their son, David Sergey from Kudymkar, Russia.

The Sawyer Family began performing as a family band when Leah and son David were 7 and 5 years old. Kathy would enthuse the crowd with her emcee work and vocal harmonies while her family would provide music. As the years went by, her husband, David quit his day job to allow the family band to travel full-time. The Sawyers, along with their Mini Aussie Lomax, traveled around the country, performing in all kinds of venues from music festivals to churches. Kathy's role as a homemaker began to encompass running a family business. For Kathy, this was not only a logistical role, but a role that involved loving on the people in front of her. As Leah and David grew older, the family band's performance schedule slowed. Kathy began supporting her husband in his work as a caricature artist and sang with him while he led worship at Cross Timbers Bible Church.

Kathy passed away on April 29th, 2025, after a battle with ovarian cancer. She never allowed her disease to slow her down. Throughout her fight, Kathy continued to support her family and was constantly investing in community and coordinating events. Days before she died, Kathy was working on planning fiddle contests for the remainder of 2025.

Kathy was preceded in death by her mother, Janet Lee Graver West. She is survived by her husband, David Stanley Sawyer; her son, David Sergey Sawyer; her daughter, Leah Grace Sawyer; her father, Marvin (Butch) West; and her brothers, Gregory and Christopher West.

Chapter Updates

Continued from page 18

interviewed for Tom's NPR podcast of the same name. Lindy Simmons has completed another mystery theatre script for a group in Mancos. She is preparing for the Chapter Showcase in Golden on September 25 and is also busy finalizing plans for the upcoming Durango Cowboy Gathering, October 1–4. The Durango Cowboy Gathering is right around the corner! Evening performances will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel each night, with additional shows on Friday and Saturday afternoons at venues throughout downtown Durango. Saturday morning (October 4) begins with the Horseback Social and Motorless Parade on Main Avenue, followed this year by a new addition—the Street Fair on the 700 and 800 blocks of Main Avenue. Congratulations to Jon Chandler, who was inducted into the Colorado Country Music Hall of Fame in August! And don't forget—the 10th Annual Celebration of the Western Slope Cowboy Gathering takes place in Grand Junction, CO, October 31–November 1. Westcliff CO celebrated the fourth annual National Day of the Cowboy at Jones Theater. Performers were Jon Chandler, Ernie Martinez, Dale Page, Doug Figgs, JJ Steel, The Russellers, Kacy and Jenna, and Terry Nash.

COLUMBIA CHAPTER

President: Tom Swearingen
tomswearingen@gmail.com

Following the success of the "Around the Campfire" western music and cowboy poetry open mics our chapter



Barbara Nelson



Kathy Moss



Thomas Fitzgerald



Rik Goodell



Tom Swearingen

hosted the past two summers at the Bowman Museum in Prineville (known as the "Cowboy Capital of Oregon") we're set to hold our fall showcase concert there. Taking the stage will be Grace Clark, Thomas Fitzgerald, Rik Goodell, Kathy Moss, Barbara Nelson, Duane Nelson, Tom Swearingen, and Larry Wilder. Following the concert, we'll continue the fun with an open mic welcoming members and non-members alike. The Crook County Historical Society, operators of the museum, has been very supportive of our Prineville events and our Youth Cowboy Poetry Contest, now in its 5th year. Winners of this year's contest will be invited to share their poems at the



Grace Clark



Larry Wilder

concert. The chapter provides travel stipends to hopefully make it possible for the winners and their families to attend. Speaking of the youth poetry contest, singer-songwriter Venessa Carpenter, one of our past winners, has been performing quite a bit,

including shows at the Blackfoot, ID Fair. As busy as Venessa is, she's also finding time to craft custom adjustable leather guitar straps with carved designs, stamps, beaded patches, or all the above.



Venessa Carpenter's
 artistry

KANSAS CHAPTER

President: Martha Farrell
marthasfarrell@gmail.com

Hello friends – Most of our members were busy in and around the National Day of the Cowboy. Our biggest move as a chapter is that we shifted the finals of the Kansas Cowboy Poetry Contest to the Friday night before, which put a bigger spotlight on our event. Organized each year by our



2025 Kansas Chapter Poetry Contest Winners

Poet Lariat of Kansas, Ron Wilson, the finals are held at the Flint Hills Discovery Center in Manhattan, KS. They had a record attendance at the finals, as well as a record number of contestants at our regional contests. The winner of BOTH the Humorous and Serious categories was Pete King from Marietta, Oklahoma. Congratulations, Pete! We want to give a shoutout to the community of Cottonwood Falls, Kansas. For decades they've been holding Friday night music jams in

Continued on page 36

IWMA LIFETIME MEMBERS

Frank & Linda Achary	Metairie, LA	Paul Kelly	Santa Fe, NM
Lonesome Ron Affolter	Mankato, MN	Karen L. Killion	Forney, TX
Nolan Bruce Allen	Grand Island, NY	Ray Kraft	Loomis, CA
Rex Allen, Jr.	Nashville, TN	Fred LaBour	Ashland City, TN
Judi Anderson	Albuquerque, NM	Jane Leche	Westcliffe, CO
Cindy Argyle	Hooper, UT	Paul Lohr	Nashville, TN
Cowboy Joe Babcock	Franklin, TN	Clyde Lucas	Sylmar, CA
Cheryl Barnett	St. George, UT	Mike Mahaney	Burbank, CA
Troy Bateson	Vilonia, AR	Michael P. McAleenan	Piedmont, OK
Floyd Beard	Kim, CO	Janet McBride	Rockwall, TX
George & Doris Bensmiller	Armstrong, BC Canada	Steven "Mac" McCartney	Aurora, CO
John Bergstrom	Atascocita, TX	Tracy McHenry	Tucson, AZ
Carol Bobroff	San Diego, CA	Gary McMahan	Laporte, CO
Robin Freerks (Ned Bodie)	Goldendale, WA	Al "Doc" Mehl	Turner Valley, AB Canada
Sherry Bond	Nashville, TN	Tree Menane	Taos, NM
Ken Bucy	Mesa, AZ	Kathy Messenger	Sierra Vista, AZ
Brandt Buffham	Saugus, CA	Jon Messenger	Sierra Vista, AZ
Stephen S. Burnette	Brownsville, TN	Joseph Miskulin	Kirtland, OH
Robert Maxwell	Case Slick, OK	Michael Martin Murphey	Nashville, TN
Susan Booth	Case Slick, OK	Marvin O'Dell	Sun City, AZ
TJ Casey	Livingston, MT	Theresa O'Dell	Sun City, AZ
Alan Chenworth	Edwards, CA	Tom O'Malley	Harvard, ID
Woody Paul Chrisman	Nashville, TN	Darren Oliver	Castle Rock, CO
Patty Clayton	Edgewater, CO	Sara Lou Oliver	Castle Rock, CO
Karen Cloutier	Conyngham, PA	Billy Pitts	Kansas City, MO
Peggy Collins	Livermore, CA	Pamela Plaskitt	Waterloo, IA
Henry "Steve" Conroy	Sierra Vista, AZ	Rich Price	Oakdale, CA
Polly Cooke	Wickenburg, AZ	Jeff Pundt	Lakeside, AZ
Jan Michael Corey	Mesa, AZ	Diana Raven	Lakewood, CO
Stan Corliss	Hillsboro, OR	Herb Remington	Ruidoso, NM
William Crowe	Van Horn, TX	Steven Rhodes	Foosland, IL
Don Cusic	Nashville, TN	Victoria Rhodes	Foosland, IL
Mark & Marlene Davis	Chatsworth, CA	Don Richardson	Upland, CA
David DeBolt	Nolensville, TN	Barbara Richhart	Mancos, CO
Rich Dollarhide	Sierra Vista, AZ	LeeLee Robert	Jackson, WY
Dave Eaton	Scottsdale, AZ	Jessie D. Robertson	Fort Worth, TX
Arlys Eaton	Scottsdale, AZ	Roy "Dusty" Rogers, Jr.	Reeds Spring, MO
Fred Engel Kimball	Junction, UT	Elizabeth Rukavina	Arleta, CA
Bonnie Exton/Ramblin' Rangers	Hot Springs, SD	Mike Rutherford	Sierra Vista, AZ
Brad Exton/Ramblin' Rangers	Hot Springs, SD	Lori Rutherford	Sierra Vista, AZ
Robert E. Fee, Esq.	Tucson, AZ	Yvonne Ryan	San Jose, CA
Juni Fisher	Wilton, CA	Ray Ryan	San Jose, CA
Rick Flory	Jackson, WY	Mary M. Ryland-Sidekick Production	Albuquerque, NM
David A. Fulfs	Moscow, ID	Suzanne Samelson	Thermopolis, WY
Norbert Gauch	Walzenhausen Switzerland	Rudolf P. Schai	Bernhardzell Switzerland
Dixie Goodman	Sun City West, AZ	O.J. Sikes	Ridgewood, NJ
Douglas B. Green	Brentwood, TN	Lindy Simmons	Mancos, CO
Betsy Bell Hagar	Mill Valley, CA	Julie Spencer	Pacific City, OR
Jerry Hall	Porterville, CA	Dave Stamey	Orange Cove, CA
Patti Hamel	Tucson, AZ	Cheryl Stanley	Roswell, NM
Tex Hamel	Tucson, AZ	Red Steagall	Fort Worth, TX
Les Hamilton	Dubois, WY	Terri Taylor	Roy, UT
RW Hampton	Amarillo, TX	Steve Taylor	Roy, UT
Lisa Hampton	Amarillo, TX	Bob Taylor	El Cajon, CA
Calvin Danner Hampton	Amarillo, TX	Ed Terry Music, LLC	Merritt, NC
Lon Hannah	Visalia, CA	J. R. (Ray) Threatt	Oklahoma City, OK
Joni Harms	Canby, OR	Harvey Walker	Anaheim, CA
Eddy Harrison	Las Cruces, NM	Carlos Washington	Youngsville, NM
Tom & Jane Hilderbrand	Little River, SC	Washtub Jerry	Fort Davis, TX
Randy A. Hoyt	Clifton, CO	Leonard Werner	Flemington, NJ
Rick Huff	Albuquerque, NM	Johnny Western	Mesa, AZ
Voleta Hummel	Sierra Vista, AZ	Paula Erlene Williamson	Branson, MO
Charles Jennings	Rockville, MD	Norman Winter	Mills, WY
Emma F. Kaenzig	Walzenhausen Switzerland	Joyce Woodson	San Juan Capistrano, CA



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 ojisikes@gmail.com

“Back in the Saddle” (Now, Stay There!)

Recently, I did a computer search for the 1930's George O'Brien film, *Border G-Man*. I was looking for information on the song, “Back in the Saddle Again,” composed for the film by Ray Whitley. I didn't want to depend on a failing memory, but when I started looking, my computer search came up dry! The movie and the song were there, but I was looking for the story behind the song, and I couldn't find it.

The song's composer, Ray Whitley, is in our IWMA Hall of Fame, and years ago, when he was inducted posthumously, his widow, Kay (who gave Ray the idea for writing the song), came to the induction ceremony with members of the Whitley family. It was a memorable occasion! Among other things, Kay confirmed the story behind one of Western music's most famous songs, “Back in the Saddle Again.” But when the “great computer crash” occurred (and all of the Hall of Fame bios in the system were lost), we lost all that history.

Since the “origin” story was one of many that were lost, and since I could find no reference to it online, do you mind if I re-tell it here?

Well, Ray Whitley and his band, the Six-Bar Cowboys, were working on a B-Western film titled *Border G-Man* starring George O'Brien. The band was to supply the music, “on demand”, so, around 6am one morning the week of the filming, Ray's phone rang. In those



Ray Whitley

days, home phones were typically out in the hall, so Ray got out of bed to answer it. When he came back into the bedroom, he told his wife, “I'm back in the saddle again! That was the studio. They want me to write a new song for the movie we're working on. I guess I can do it, but I have no idea what to write about!”

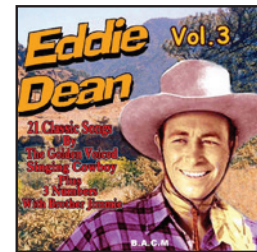
Kay replied, “Well, seems to me that you have your title already! All you have to do is add a few Yippie-ti-yi-yo's and you've got your song!” So, when Ray got to the studio, he brought that idea with him, and he sat down with his band and, together, they finished writing the song, “Back in the Saddle Again.” They not only performed the song in the film; they recorded it for the Decca record label!

Later, Gene Autry heard the song, liked it, modified the arrangement and recorded it for Columbia. Still later, he and his musical director, Carl Cotner, modified the arrangement further and made the song his radio theme song. It became a Western classic!

EDDIE DEAN, VOL 3

“The Golden Voiced Singing Cowboy”

BACMCDD740



My first memories of Eddie Dean go back, not to his movies or records, but to his photo

underneath the lid of an ice cream cup! Our local theater didn't show his films, which were made for PRC. So it took awhile for me to become acquainted with Dean's work.

But his contemporaries, Roy, Gene & Rex, thought so highly of his voice that they put his singing at the top of their singing cowboy lists. And, of course, his singing is what you get on this new BACM release containing 24 tracks! Three of the tracks, including “Oregon Trail,” have Eddie singing duets with his brother Jimmie, who, you may recall, worked with Gene Autry on his Melody Ranch radio show in the early '40s.

There are 5 other Western tunes among the 24 tracks, with the outstanding, up-tempo Texas tribute, “1501 Miles of Heaven” topping the list, followed by “Missouri,” “Iowa Rose,” “When I Move to that New Range” and the rare, “Little Grey Home in the West.” Among the country songs, you may enjoy “No, No, Not Grandma,” the Merle Travis standard “No Vacancy,” “The Low Road is Good Enough for

Me," "Dream Rose" and "Careless Darling," among others. An excellent package!

In recent years, BACM has redesigned their website so you can listen to excerpts from each track on a CD to help you make your decision, and the company has a wealth of rare material to choose from, much of it Western. Of course, you can order their product directly from their website: country-music-archive.com/



DICK REINHART

Dick Reinhart with his Universal Cowboys and his Lone Star Cowboys, Vol 2

BACMCDD744



Dick Reinhart is probably best-known for his work with the Jimmy Wakely Trio in the 1940s. He

died in 1948 at the age of 41, so his recorded output was limited. But we are fortunate to have 23 of his sides in this newly-released collection of vintage Western Swing recordings from the British Archive of Country Music (BACM), with informative liner notes by historian Kevin Coffey.

Reinhart worked with outstanding musicians throughout his career, coming in early-on to sub for Scotty Harrell in the Jimmy Wakely Trio, helping Wakely and Johnny Bond when they became members of Gene Autry's *Melody Ranch* radio cast in the early 40s. But before that, in 1939, he recorded one of my favorite tracks on this disc, the instrumental, "Cow Town Swing," with Lefty Perkins on steel and Darrell Kirkpatrick on fiddle.

The last song in this collection of 23, "Campfire Lullaby," was recorded with the Jimmy Wakely Trio as a transcription in 1942. In between, there are some fun Western swing tunes Reinhart recorded with his own Western swing bands, the

Universal Cowboys and the Lone Star Boys. Reinhart sings most of the vocal solos, but 6 of the tracks are duets with Vera Woods, and she solos on "Why Don't We Do This More Often?" from 1941, a song made famous by Kay Kyser's band featuring Harry Babbitt and Ginny Simms.

The back of the CD sports a beautiful color photo of the Wakely Trio with Reinhart, from 1942. A fine addition to your vintage Western swing collection, and you can listen to a few bars online on the BACM website before you purchase, if you like. Available online from country-music-archive.com/



BOBBIE AND BILL C. MALONE

Riders in the Sky – Romancing the West with Music and Humor (Book)

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2025



Did you ever start reading a new book and find that it's so fascinating you can't put it down? That's what happened to me when I started reading this

new history of "America's Favorite Cowboys." Extensively researched and beautifully written, this book is sure to be a welcome addition to every Western music lover's library! It opens with biographies, a chapter on Ranger Doug, followed by one on Too Slim, and then weaving the stories of Woody Paul and Joey "The Cow Polka King" into subsequent chapters relating the evolution of the group over the years.

Those later chapters examine the influence of managers, promoters and friends, and the interaction with Western super stars like Gene Autry (who loved their work), performing

with Roy Rogers & getting to know Bob Nolan and the Sons of the Pioneers. You are sure to recognize many of the names that make up part of the story (some may well be IWMA friends of yours).

How did Ranger Doug become a yodeler? And how did Too Slim learn to play his face? The book answers these and other burning questions. And on a more serious note, it goes into the challenges the Riders have faced and how they overcame them as they rose to the top over their nearly half-century-long career. The last chapter sums up the reasons for their success, but I won't offer a spoiler alert. This is a book everyone will love. Paperback, available on the Riders' website: www.ridersinthesky.com/store

So Many Cowboys!

Patty Clayton

NEW SINGLE BY PATTY CLAYTON

2024 IWMA FEMALE PERFORMER OF THE YEAR

WRITTEN BY PATTY CLAYTON AND
COWGAL POET SAM DELEEuw

SO MANY COWBOYS!

A WESTERN SWING SONG ABOUT
ROPING UP A ROMANCE! FEATURING
ERNE MARTINEZ AND VI WICKAM

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

THE ARIZONA WILDFLOWERS

"Back Home In The West"



Three siblings are at the core of The Arizona Wildflowers. Two of them, 13-year old vocalist Aspen Dietrich and 15-year old

vocalist Brie Dietrich, are already national champions on their chosen instruments (fiddle and guitar, respectively). Now you can sit back and let your mind's eye and ear do this review for me!

Other superior contributing artists on the ten-song collection include elder Dietrich sister Ranelle (fiddle/guitar/vocals), Darin Aldridge (guitar/mandolin) and Tim Surrect (bass). They've chosen eight Western Swing classics and The National Anthem to cover. Their takes of "San Antonio Rose," "Along The Navajo Trail," "Take Me Back To Tulsa," "Roly Poly," "Across The Alley From The Alamo," "Miss Molly," "I've Got Spurs That Jingle Jangle Jingle" and "Don't Fence Me In" are sure to please.

Very polished and professional all the way, hearing these young folks do what they do so well will give you some hope that the genre has an acoustic future in an age of tech. Very highly recommended.

ROBERT BEENE

"Born Too Late"



In a true case of been-there done-that, poet Robert Beene gives us an accurate portrait of being there and doing

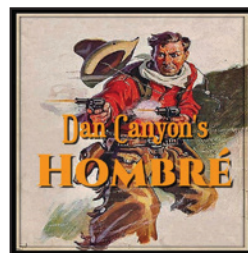
that in the cowboy way. His delivery is rangy and convincing, and his choices by subject and by order of works here should keep you very nicely engaged.

In a mix of originals and covers, Beene paints with words. Picks include his title track "Born Too Late" (performed to the sound of a solo campfire harmonica as it asks the question 'why was I built for a west that isn't here'), "Cowboy Tristan" (nice surprise ending), "Back Home" (a Black Hills Indian cowboy's perspective of the historic trail life), "How Long Will The Cowboy Last?" (the title says it) and fine covers of classics from Sunny Hancock ("The Horse Trader") and Bruce Kiskaddon ("Little Blue Roan"), plus an acapela song from Trey Allen ("Lowly Cowboy").

Here's one of those releases that may only appear in an electronic (non-CD) format. That's coming, you know. Hunt it up. You can thank me later. Eleven tracks, highly recommended.

THE DAN CANYON BAND

"Hombre"



Make no mistake. The creative mission of this group is notably different from most. They seek to plant Western

seedlings deeply into the Contemporary earth, but what sprouts is not Nashville Hot Country. The drums may lead, the fuzz guitar may follow and vocal harmony is along for the ride, too. But it's their own thing. For the listener, it's a fresh ride. Take it. This one is The Dan Canyon Band's best recording to date.

There are four familiar titles among the Dennis Coile originals, but surprise!! Pick track "Streets of Laredo" is a 'Coiled' amalgam of songs providing a different refrain and climax with some altered lyrics. "I'm An Old Cowhand" gives each band member a chance to solo. Their "Home On The Range" is a totally new original, having nothing to do with ol' Brewster Higley's classic. That one is another collection pick, as are "Ghosts Of Outlawed Men" and "Rodeo (that's 'Ro-day-oh') Rodeo."

For those familiar with earlier releases from the band, the filtering is gone from the vocals. I say "yay," and add that this collection of nine tracks is highly recommended.

SHERL CEDERBURG

"Wonder Of The West"



Noted purveyor of the spoken Cowboy arts Sherl Cederburg returns with a new release.

Here "Wonder Of The West" could also be spelled "wander" as it manages to travel a far piece for its subject matter.

Picks include "Equine Weatherman" (horse turned meteorologist), "One Really Nice Team" (Xmas verse with the sleigh's jingle bell harness matching the trotting speeds), "Ice Thaws, Hearts Melt" (a nice little courtin' story), "Sayings Momma Said" (for those who take their "folksy" in one gulp), "Attitude Is Everything" (an amalgam of Don Edwards' & DW Groethe's "Ridin'" as sung by Pegie Douglas done with Cederburg's parody poem "Whinin'"), "You Just Never Know" (a more conventional pairing of singer Pegie Douglas with verse), and okay, I'll throw in "Society For POOH" (Preservation Of Out Houses, although not recommended near food) and "Horse Sense" (very short but sweet).

Cederburg's delivery leans toward an up and dramatically emphasized styling. Her rangy tone of voice does effectively put you on the scene. Thirteen tracks total, recommended.



DOUG FIGGS

"Storm On The Mountain"



Broadening his Western horizon even further, much-awarded singer/songwriter Doug Figgs

offers a fine collection of originals, covers and collaborations with songwriter and poet friends Floyd

Beard, Andi Renfree, Terry Nash and Jeff Posey.

The Figgs-composed title track "Storm On The Mountain" was inspired by the Tim Cox painting that graces the front of the CD jacket, so I can truly say this song is an 'original' that's a 'cover!' It's also a CD pick. Others include "Cowboy's Legacy" (w/Floyd Beard), "Ghost of Charlie Glass" (w/Terry Nash), "Esta la Luz Esta Bien" (w/Andi Renfree), "The World's First Liar," "Wolves from the Yellowstone" (w/Jeff Posey), the Ryan Fritz song "Shoein' Broncs Again" and "They Were Cowboys." Although one song included isn't a fave of mine, Doug's cover of "Darcy Farrow" is one of the better ones you'll find.

Overall this album seems to have a renewed spirit or conviction, if you will, as if it became a special labor of love for all concerned. That makes it not just a new release from Doug Figgs. More of a NEW release! Twelve tracks, very highly recommended.



TIMBERLINE COWBOYS

"Watercolor Skies"



So here we find Colorado cowfolk using Arizona saguaros on their CD cover. Of course their native

mile-high timberline may well have obscured their "watercolor skies!"

The acoustic duo Timberline Cowboys is made up of Geary Parsons (rhythm, lead and bass guitars) and J. Michael Mullins (rhythm guitar and vocals). In their newest collection they showcase Mullins' original saga songs that cover a range of subjects. Picks include "The Texas Rose" (love that was at long last meant to be), "On Borrowed Time" (doesn't go where you might expect), "Night Rider" (could easily be

the continuation of the "Night Rider's Lament" plot), "What Do We Do With Old Cowboys?" (what indeed) and "The Final Ride" (in a way it's equal time offered with the preceding one).

The effect of the pair is a vintage one that will be instantly recognizable to longtime members and attendees at IWMA events. Eleven tracks, recommended.



KEVIN TUCKFIELD

"Bring On The Pain"



At times singer/songwriter Kevin Tuckfield performs in the vocal range of the

late John Conlee. But his subject matter rides the far larger range.

One of the picks from his newest release is its title track "Bring On The Pain." Equating the aches of a rough bronc ride with that of a breakup, "nothin' will hurt like I do now," the song says. Others include "Why He Rides," a co-write with his son Nathan. "Better Cowboy Up," "Country Til The Cows Come Home" and a fine adaptation of the classic song "The Railroad Corral." Several of the album's offerings were created with Tuckfield's frequent collaborator Joe Allen. The overall effect of the release is acoustic, comfortable and congenial.

Tuckfield is also a radio host who can be counted on to regularly offer some of the best of the recorded Western Music being put out today. His own offerings here will blend in nicely with any of it. Recommended, eleven tracks.

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Chapter Updates

Continued from page 30



*Cottonwood Falls with
Ron Wilson*



3 Trails West at Cottonwood Falls

the street in front of their historic courthouse. People drive in from miles around for the small town experience of sitting in the street and enjoying a concert. They call it Emma Chase Friday Night Music (after a fictionalized local character). In July they devoted an evening to Western Music and Cowboy Poetry. Rain dampened the street party so they moved inside and were treated to a special mini concert from 3 Trails West. Roger Eilts, Jim Winters and Leo Eilts were there, as well as our IWMA KS Secretary Jim Mathis. It is always a special time in Cottonwood Falls!

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

President: Judi Anderson

Judianderson@comcast.net

The New Mexico Chapter of The IWMA will be hosting a Jam Session on Thursday and Friday of the IWMA Convention from 11am to 4:30pm. If you would like to Host one of the Jam's or play in one please contact Vivienne Van. Vivienne445@gmail.com. You do not have to be a member to participate! Invite your friends! What a great way to

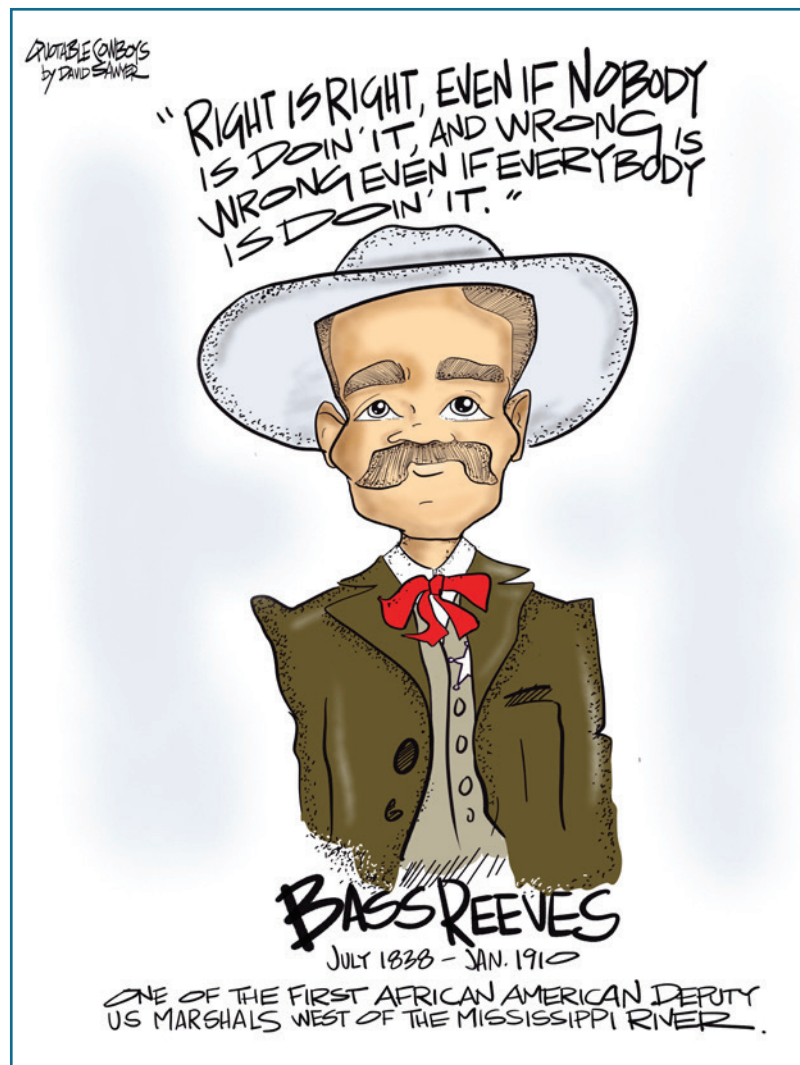
introduce them to IWMA! Member Patty Clayton is a featured guest on the NPR podcast The Great American Folk Show hosted by North Dakota folk singer and songwriter Tom Brosseau. Members Tony Duarte and Chuck Roberts, (The Peralta Playboys) will be performing for residents of The Vineyard in Albuquerque on September 20. The New Mexico Chapter hosted a Celebration of Life for our beloved member Joy Allen on August 17. The gathering of her friends and family shared music, poems and stories of Joy. She is so missed by all who knew her and were lucky to call her their friend. We are looking forward to seeing all our friends in November at the Convention!

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

President: Leigh Ann Matthews

info@matthews-music.com

The 4C Cowboy Music and Poetry Gathering on August 16 at the Cache Creek Cowboy Church in Lawton, OK drew a good crowd and was a benefit for the Lawton, OK Food Bank. The all-day affair was followed by an evening Cowboy Country Showcase Admission to the Gathering was a donation of a nonperishable food item, while the Showcase was \$20 per ticket. Food donations exceeded 900 pounds, while tickets brought in \$400. Dave Edwards, IWMA member, donated 2 Zager acoustic guitars that brought in \$525 at auction, enabling the food bank to



receive a \$1000 cash donation. OK chapter member Ron Secoy hosted the Gathering while members Aspen Black and Donald Kevin Tuckfield shouldered the duties of emcee for both shows, respectively. The first ever free event (planned to be annual) featured Oklahoma Cowboy Poet Laureates and musicians Jay Snider and Francine Roark Robison with Ed Meyer, Glenn Murray, Randy Lynn Shelley, William (Dub) Loyd, Therron Michael Carlson, Curtis Krigbaum, Robert Beene, Kenney Fields, Dan Hutchins, Smokey Culver, Billy Tumbleweed, Aspen Black, Devon Dawson, Teresa Burleson, Amiilya Lee, Don Williams, and Lily Anderson, KLaw 101.3 FM radio station personality Jeri Anderson interviewed several IWMA members during her live broadcast of the event. Jeri also played Aspen Black's latest hit, "As Cowboy as They Come" on KLaw, starting Aspen's first venture into commercial radio. Aspen already hosts an online radio show, Western Airwaves. Scott and Leigh Ann Matthews performed at the Muskogee Little Theater August 16 and 17, joining other local talent to present a variety show titled "A Night at the Drive Inn" to benefit the Muskogee Food Pantry. The duo also performed during the 35th Annual Dusk Till Dawn Blues Festival Labor Day weekend in Rentiesville, OK in loving memory of blueswoman and founder of the festival, Selby Minner.

TENNESSEE CHAPTER

President: Mary Kaye Holt
marykayeholt@yahoo.com

The Tennessee Chapter has had tremendous 3rd Quarter! We're so proud of our young members! Birdie Nichols has been performing from Tennessee to Arizona and has a new movie in the works. Bodhi Linde has been performing and traveling as well and recently he and younger brother Pinky played for 8 hours straight in South Dakota, a benefit to raise money for needy children's lunch



Birdie Nichols, Bodhi Linde and new Tennessee Chapter member Moriah Owenby.



Clint Bradley, Claudia Nygaard and friends

money. Welcome to the TN Chapter Georgia's talented Moriah Owenby! From England, TN Chapter member Clint Bradley recently was special guest on two-time IWMA Radio Program of the Year, The CAMPFIRE CAFÉ, and announced a new album in the works. Claudia Nygaard was excited to be a featured performer at the World-Famous Bluebird Cafe and is wrapping up a new album as well! IWMA-TN Secretary Aspen Black is burning up the trail performing in venues both East and West of the Mississippi introducing audiences to the world of Western Music. Welcome new member, the talented Mark Lynn Young! Mark Lynn recently performed with the TN Chapter at



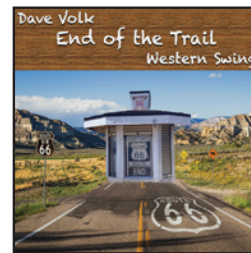
Aspen Black (left) and new Tennessee Chapter member, Mark Lynn Young

Continued on page 47

RICK HUFF'S REVIEWS

Continued from page 33

DAVID ("DAVE") VOLK *"End Of The Trail" (EP)*



The information provided for the release says he's "David." The cover art for it proclaims he's

"Dave." Either way, folk...it's "Volk!" And he's well worth your time.

On this EP of eight classic Western Swing standards, the listener will be treated to exceptionally well done renderings that benefit from a reverentially intimate feel. Other adjectives that could be accurately applied include "comfortable," "warm" and "cozy." In its easy going style, it's almost deceptive in its masking of the skill it takes to perform. All eight tracks can be called "picks." They are Cindy Walker's "Miss Molly," Johnny Mercer's "I'm An Old Cowhand," Bob Wills' "Faded Love" and "Maiden's Prayer," Art Sizemore & Paul Biese's "Right Or Wrong," Kokomo Arnold's "Milk Cow Blues," Fred Rose's "Deep Water" and Bobby Troup's "Get Your Kicks On Route 66."

Volk's mellow tenor vocals are enhanced with solid harmony. The release is available through Spotify, Apple Tunes and the other sources, so put it in your sights (and hearing). Very highly recommended. 🐾

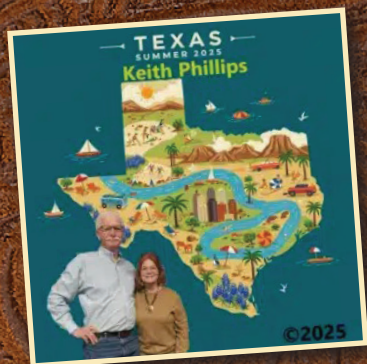
★ IWMA 2025 ★
ALBUQUERQUE
NOV. 12 – 16
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*Hope to
 see you there!!*

REVIEWS: SINGLE RELEASES

Sampling The Singles

BY RICK HUFF



Guess what!! When we were least expecting it, we got in a terrific big-production Western saga song. Balladeer **John Eustrom** gives us **Outlaw Lullabye**, a good ol' ridin' by the light of the moon and a- bullet-is-my-destiny killer diller! The big Western guitar is here and Marty Robbins must be up there smilin' since it's done in tribute to his musical legacy. Big boots to fill are filled well with this one.

Kevin Tuckfield has issued a fine uptempo all-acoustic single. **Cowboys On The Trail** is his third release this year. The title says it. It's all about what they are, where they go, what they do and what they know. Tuckfield calls it a collaboration with John A. Lomax's songbook, so you know it's the classic portrait of the Western icon. What most will care about is that it's also very danceable.

From an EP called "Texas Summer 2025" comes the song **Turkey**, a happy salute to the town and its annual Bob Wills Days celebration. **Keith Phillips** points out if Western Swing found its feet in Fort Worth it first learned to crawl in Turkey and finally flew at Cain's Ballroom in Tulsa. We'll add Roy, New Mexico to that list where the Wills brothers were barbers and "San Antonio Rose" first bloomed.

In a genre I think we could safely call "Boogie Swing" (or maybe that should be "Jitterbug Swing?"), Irishman **Ryan Lynch** sends out big-time happy vibes in his uptempo take of the Ray Pennington song **Sunshine Man**. Likely dancers will find it physically and psychologically impossible to remain seated. The truest test, however? Even the bricks on the ends of my legs were trying to do something!

Ireland strikes again! **Shawn Cuddy** has produced a wonderful swinging cover that is an amalgam of Western imagery and youthful Cowboy fantasy. Tom T. Hall's **Pinto The Wonder Horse** stems from a purported notice in the paper announcing the animal's passing. It nicely covers what B-Westerns could mean to the kid sitting in the dark of a movie theater and how it flavors the outlook of the man.

Ireland's **Alastair Spence** has got his Irish up at somebody. But many Western Swing artists have gone there when they've performed Hank Williams Sr.'s **Mind Your Own Business**. Spence's is a terrific guitar, fiddle and steel combo version and his solid baritone-bass voice carries the proceedings well. Maybe folks haven't learned to 'mind their own business' yet cuz it's such fun to dance to!

The genre is Western Swing but the subject is *pickle ball*!!! Those are the fascinating facts in the song **Anna Leigh** from **David Francis w/ John English & The Western Swingers**. As he watched the 18-year-old phenom Anna Leigh Waters totally Billie-Jean-King a skilled male opponent, Francis naturally conceived of taking it to the dance floor! So we'll say "it scores points" and you'll say "it's a winner."

A conundrum! I can't really be sure if singer/songwriter **Brian Hassan** has cleverly mastered his face into the famous Daguerreotype of a teenage Jesse James or just used the original to promote his new single **Highwayman**. Looking him up, he does bear more than a passing likeness to the legendary bandit. Regardless, if you see a solid Western connection is clearly made with its use, "hands up!!!"

Irishman **Damian Davis** sends us a mellow, harmonious Western Swinger in **Your Loving Eyes**. It's traditionally styled with the fiddles and steel in place. He sings/swings the role of a singer/swinger up on the stage being distracted by some loving peepers way out on the dance floor! The stage lights must not be very bright in his own 'peepers,' or maybe that singer isn't. Either way, it's a pleasant sashay.

From Ballynahinch, Co. Down comes the versatile former music teacher-turned Country Swinger **Barry Owen** with **Cross Your Heart**. Call me an angst party pooper, but I really prefer the Swing songs like this that have a positive relationship message. Or a positive one about nearly anything else. Enough drowning our sorrows, already! Order up some smiles. Then remember to tip your server.

Singer **Ryan Bodine** has offered up one of those 'big city guy longs for the simplicity of the west' songs, but with a twist. In **Barstow To HB** he dreams of "where his daddy hung his cowboy hat" and "the smell of the desert rain," so he goes east to find 'The West.' It doesn't work out. He returns to the west coast "like a tumbleweed into the sea." Its moral: You can never go home-on-the-range again??

The prolific **Bob Marshall** has released another single from his CD "Horses That Run Far Away." The easy acoustic ballad **Hats To The Sky** is a portrait of hero worship from the perspective of a youngster. With lyrics like "hats to the sky, boots to the ground" and "the limps and scars they carried with pride each told the story of an eight-second ride," its full-bore Western pedigree is proudly delineated.

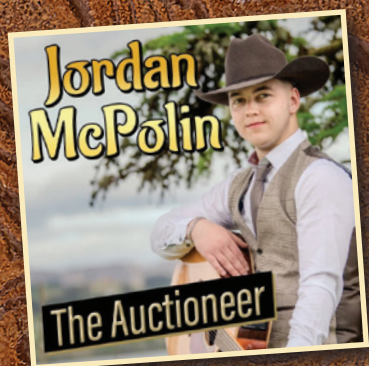
More Swing swings in from The Emerald Isle! **Katelynn Marie** is determined to hit the dance floor. **Gonna Find Me A Country Boy**, she says! That just about guarantees her a swing or twelve around the room and, if things go further, possibly the opportunity down the trail to help pull a calf! Okay, she probably isn't thinking that far ahead, but her dance partner may be checking out her biceps anyway!





Longford, Ireland's **Brid Shaughnessy** swings nicely in her newest called **Fillin' My Cup**. It takes a lot, she tells us, but if you've got the spigot she's got the vessel....or words to that effect. It's a jolly little romp with good fiddle and fervor. Actually, she just knows what she wants out of life, or the songwriters (three of 'em) do. To their wish list you can add having this one become a chart hit!

Ireland's **Eddie Carey** was inspired by a neighbor saying "I can't get along on my farm without **My Little Massey**." Every day "I put the cows in and put 'em back out." Of course herding by tractor is not your classic 'cowboy way,' but maybe it's closer than herdin' by helicopter. Could herding by drone be next? Cattle are used to buzzing flies, so buzzing fly-bys might not be effective!!



In the Country Swing song **She Don't Break It**, that doggone doin'-wrong cheatin' lady is finally losing her grip on the heart of North Carolina-born singer/songwriter **Trey Calloway**. The swing effect is at full strength, however. It would be true *Western* Swing except the twin fiddles are missing. Dancers likely won't miss 'em much. They'll be too busy with the footwork. Spread the corn starch.

In a new version of Leroy Van Dyke & Buddy Black's classic **The Auctioneer**, singer **Jordan McPolin** slows it down enough that *anyone* can tell "how he can talk so rapidly!" So if you've wanted to learn the song, listen to this version, then go out to the barn and practice because "we can't have a mediocre man." Then, fer gosh sakes, *speed it up* to put the 'mystery' back into it! Livestock's countin' on ya.

From County Down comes a swinger as we continue to 'count down' the releases from Old Eire! **Music In My Heart** from **Bonnie Stewart** has the twin fiddles and the steel that warm the heart and move the feet of all, or most, who hear it. My feet can't be moved, but that's my problem. American-style Western Swing is well-entrenched in the British Isles in general and Ireland in particular.



Steven Stokes has issued an interesting one called **Water For My Horses**. An outlaw is shot, possibly by a lawman or maybe it's another badman. At least the dying man sure considers him to be the latter. He vows his assassin's soul will burn in Hell. But he still wants the guy to see to watering his animals. Of course we know there's more to the curse. The cost of Purina Horsechow will be on the killer, too.

First, Australian balladeer/songwriter **Owen Smith** has a song telling the roughness of life on a remote station (ranch). **Desert Blooming** is the upside after the destructive flooding that cut off supply roads leaving him and family stranded before air relief came. Then comes a novelty Swinger **Upper Class Bogan**, with tons of native slang. Can you dance and hold an Aussie phrase book at the same time??

"I may live in the city but **No City Lives In Me**," sings Aussie balladeer **Brooke Seabrook** in her pleasing new acoustic single. She daydreams of living "the Outback" life, but she's talked with the "bushies" often enough to know she couldn't really do it. Still the desire remains. It's a sentiment many of us can relate to as we sit in our armchair 'saddles' without cow snot blown all over us.

Lots of folks have a **Thing About Texas** (more than one thing, if you tally it up)! But it took the team of **Ronnie, Rodney & Johnny** to put this particular thing together. Nashville's Rodney Collins worked on it with friends Ronnie McDowell and Johnny Rodriguez and came up with this mellow tribute to the Texas music scene. It turned out to be the final recording of the late Rodriguez. It's a fitting farewell.

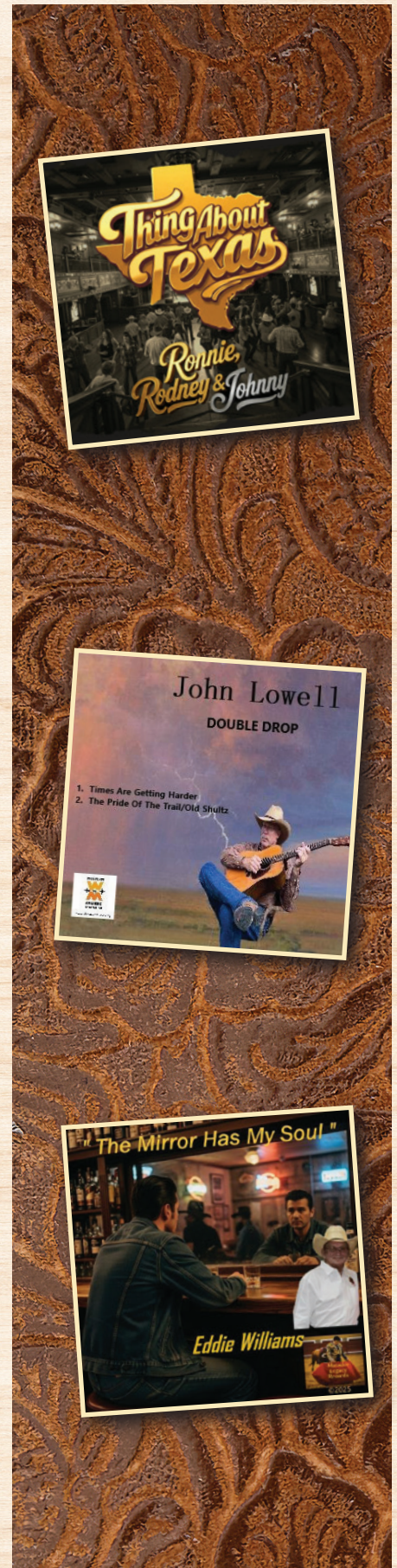
In **Rain Song**, his second release from his second CD, Texan **CJ Hooper** uses the imagery of an approaching storm to portray the looming gloom of an old memory. We assume the porch in his mind is on a Western range since sitting in a high-rise would obstruct the view. He's taken the classic Johnny Cashian galloping tick-tock guitar beat and expanded on it in the arrangement. Very catchy. Catch it!

Montana's esteemed songsmith **John Lowell** has released a couple of singles from last year's elegant CD "Snow On The Wineglass." In a duet with co-writer Jim Shultz, we get **The Pride Of The Trail/Old Shultz**, a fine saga song about the two fastest horses around. Then there's **Times Are Gettin' Harder Everyday** which, despite certain online posts to the contrary, they are. Sing it, John!

A couple of songs freshly sent by **Kent Thompson** offer you nice variety for your dance moves. **Lock Stock & Barrel** has a different "swing" to it. When she left she even took his gun! A bit of advice. Don't follow her. Then there's his swinging waltz that clearly states its direction in its title: **Two Steppin' Song**. Both are well-produced examples of the Country Swing and Western Swing arts.

It's not a Western song but it was co-written by a Western Music Hall Of Famer. Billy Hill ("Wagon Wheels," "Empty Saddles," "The Last Roundup" etc.) and Peter DeRose created the slow shuffle **Have You Ever Been Lonely**. The classic gets a respectful dusting off by **Pat Bucke & Rosalind Clare**, two more artists from the Emerald Isle who value the contents of the American Music treasure chest.

In his newest single for the Matador/Legacy label **The Mirror Has My Soul**, we find singer **Eddie Williams** indulging in some serious reflection. 'Couldn't resist. It's a twin fiddle-propelled song. As is usually the case, neither the big glass behind the bar nor the small one in front of him has answers. Another problem. Dealing with mirrors, if the song 'breaks' big, it might mean seven years bad luck! 🐾





Book Nook Reviews & More

BY KAREN CAMPBELL



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

Lyrics and Length

One concern that rarely gets the attention it deserves is this: How long should a poem, song, or story be? Like many creative questions, the answer is often a vague, “It depends,” or the more poetic, “As long as it needs to be.” But that doesn’t mean we’re left without guideposts. There are ways to gauge whether a piece drags with filler or, on the flip side, comes up short and leaves out key moments or details.

Take the lyric, for example. The term originally referred to a short poem intended to be sung with a lyre, and ancient Greek poets like Sappho were masters of the form. Sappho, one of the most revered female poets of her time, often wrote works just 2–6 lines long, focused on a single, concentrated image, idea, or emotion. These short poetic “studies” are often quick to read and linger in the mind. Japanese haiku take a similar approach of three brief lines with a 5-7-5 syllable count, and offer precise, distilled reflections on nature or a fleeting moment. While Eastern traditions have embraced short forms, much of Western writing has favored longer poetic structures, though the potential of short-form poetry remains wide open.

On the longer side of the spectrum sits the ballad, a narrative form composed of multiple quatrains, often in an ABAB or ABCB rhyme scheme. Cowboy poetry in particular leans heavily on this structure. Baxter Black’s “The Buckskin Mare” is a noteworthy example of the extended ballad form. Some Western poems edge into epic territory, though not often. Buck Ramsey’s “Anthem,” and “As I Rode Out on the

Morning” are among the closest examples of a true epic in the cowboy tradition—long, meditative, and rich in imagery.

In my experience, most cowboy poems I review fall in the midrange of around four to ten stanzas, often in a familiar ballad rhythm. Short, punchy poems are less common, though they can be highly effective. Longer narrative poems do occur, though they tend to drift from strict structure and lean more into storytelling.

One of the trickiest revision questions a writer can ask is, “Do I really need this line or stanza?” Knowing your poem’s core purpose, whether it’s to tell a story, evoke a feeling, or spotlight an image, helps sharpen your choices. Most first drafts run a little long and benefit from tightening. Cutting filler isn’t just about trimming for length but rather about honing focus. Letting a draft rest for a while before revising can be invaluable. With fresh eyes, it’s easier to spot what’s working and what’s just taking up space.

It’s also worth considering how the poem will be delivered. Is it meant to be read silently or performed aloud? Performance poems often run a bit longer to build momentum and sustain engagement, but they must still stay within the listener’s attention span and a performer’s ability to memorize. Many poem sets are no longer than thirty minutes max and most open mic sets are around five minutes or less. Poems written for the page, on the other hand, can swing shorter or longer. A short poem allows for deep reflection, while a longer one can be savored in sections.

Remember also that a poem's visual length can strongly influence how it's received. A wall of text with few stanza breaks may seem daunting to readers, even if the content is engaging. Visually overwhelming poems can cause the eye to glaze over before the poem even has a chance to speak.

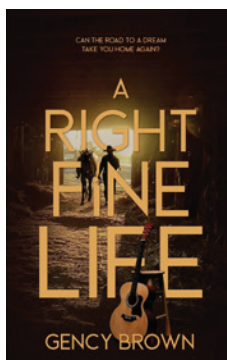
Longer poems also tend to wrestle more with complex rhyme schemes, especially in traditional forms. That's why they're often structured in simpler repeated units like couplets, tercets, quatrains, or quintains. These stanza forms help sustain rhythm and rhyme over a longer stretch. On the other hand, shorter poems offer a great playground for experimentation. You can try intricate rhyme patterns or longer stanza lengths without the risk of overwhelming the reader or the form collapsing under its own weight.

Another common challenge is finding a strong ending. Many poets try to land on a resonant final line or image, but in searching for it, they "write around" the moment rather than toward it. This often results in a few extra stanzas or lines that act more like scaffolding than poetry. These "thinking while writing" lines can clutter the ending. If you find yourself doing this, don't worry since it's a normal part of drafting. Just be sure to trim them in revision, so the final note hits clean and strong.

Ultimately, there's no perfect length. But by keeping purpose, audience, and form in mind, writers can find the sweet spot where every line earns its place.

GENCY BROWN

***A Right Fine Life* 2024,
Wild Rose Press. \$18.99,
paperback, \$5.99 Kindle ebook,
307 pgs.**



Winner of the New Mexico Press Women's Communications Contest, *A Right Fine Life* follows Randy Walters's pursuit of a country music career in

Nashville. Across 33 brisk chapters and an epilogue, Brown charts Randy's climb through self-financed albums, small gigs, divorce, fatherhood, addiction, and fleeting fame.

The novel builds slowly, focusing less on quick action and more on the realistic struggles of an aspiring artist. Randy's choices aren't always sympathetic, yet the mix of failures and small triumphs ultimately leaves him grounded in his heritage and finding an alternative path beyond the Nashville spotlight.

Brown's dialogue-driven, slice-of-life style keeps the story moving, though the frequent scene breaks

can make it harder to sink fully into the narrative. The book spans several years, offering breadth over depth, which some readers may appreciate and others may find a bit thin.

With themes of addiction, self-harm, and family dysfunction, this novel is best suited for older teens and adults. For readers drawn to stories of grit, resilience, and the hard edges of the music industry, *A Right Fine Life* offers a thoughtful and bittersweet journey.

Interested readers can purchase a paperback copy from Wild Rose Press or buy an electronic copy on Amazon Kindle. 🐾

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

Western Playlists – Reporters

Here are the DJs who submitted their playlists this quarter:

Joe Angel

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

Marshal Allen Bailey

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

Bobbi Jean Bell

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

Skip Bessonette

"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

Aspen Black

"Western Air Waves"
6537 Forest View Rd., Roanoke, VA 24018
Broadcast on Mixcloud and
WROE 97.5 FM.
Prefers high quality mp3s via email or
USB drive but will take CDs, too
Western Music, Western Swing, &
Cowboy Poetry
aspen@aspenblackcowgirl.com

Janice Brooks

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

Roger & Leo Eilts

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

Doug Figgs

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

Nancy Flagg

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

Paul Hazell

PH Records
Royal Mail Building (PO Box 3)
Brambleside
Bellbrook Industrial Estate
Uckfield, East Sussex
TN22 1XX United Kingdom
"Paul Hazell's World Of Country"
Big River FM (NZ) and others and
several other stations around the world
Paulhazellsworldofcountry@gmail.com
Telephone: +44 7775 545 902

Allen & Jill Kirkham

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

Susie Knight

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

Jarle Kvale

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

Eddy Leverett

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

Butch and Christina Martin

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

Hugh McLennan

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

Marvin O'Dell*"Around the Campfire"*

KKRN, Redding, CA
 KZNQ, Santa Clarita, CA
 SCAZRadio.com, Sun City, AZ
 www.earsradio.com
 meoteo@aol.com
 10430 W. Loma Blanca Dr., Sun City, AZ 85351
 805-551-4649

Ben Parks*"Music Wrangler"*

American Cowboy Radio
 3904 Danbury Drive, Amarillo, TX 79109
 806-676-9500 (cell)
 ben@rt66.media

O.J. Sikes

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

JJ Steele*"Cowboy Corral"*

c/o JJ Steele
 KLZR
 103 South 2nd Street
 Westcliffe, CO 81252

Kevin Tuckfield

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

Attention DJs! Your contributions to *The Western Way* charts are welcomed.

Please send your playlist, including the song and the CD on which it appears, to meoteo@aol.com.

International Western Music Association

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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. Porch Music – Dave Stamey
2. Storm on the Mountain – Doug Figgs
3. Joel Alden White – Roads & Barbwire
4. Bring on the Pain – Kevin Tuckfield
5. Hombre – Dan Canyon
6. A Western Tale to Tell – Marvin O'Dell
7. Confessions of a Ghost Town – Kacey & Greta Thunborg
8. Dust of Lost Angeles – Ron Christopher
9. Hilary Gardner – On the Trail With the Lonesome Pines
10. Just Keepin' it Ranchy – Ryan Fritz
11. Blessed by the West – Sarah Pierce
12. They Ride – Ed Meyer
13. Back Home in the West – The Arizona Wildflowers
14. Ghost Smoke – Jon Chandler
15. Twilight Blue – Poi Rogers
16. Snow on the Wineglass – John Lowell
17. Cowgirl's Delight – Phoebe White
18. Trackin' On – The Russellers
19. Light of the Moon – Lori Beth Brooke
20. A Little Bit Country – The Arizona Wildflowers
21. Big Medicine – Trish Munsick & the Innocents
22. The Texas Trio – The Texas Trio
23. Seekers – Carol Markstrom
24. Into the West – Birdie Nichols
25. A Little Western, A Little Swing – Carlos Washington
26. Singing to Cows – Chris Guenther
27. From the Saddle to Symphony Hall – Dave Alexander
28. End of the Trail – Dave Volk
29. Cowboy Rhythm – Dennis Jay
30. Watercolor Skies – The Timberline Cowboys

10 MOST PLAYED WESTERN SWING ALBUMS

1. Back Home in the West – The Arizona Wildflowers
2. Twilight Blues – Poi Rogers
3. A Little Western, A Little Swing – Carlos Washington
4. Light of the Moon – Lori Beth Brooke
5. The Texas Trio – The Texas Trio
6. From the Saddle to Symphony Hall – Dave Alexander
7. End of the Trail – Dave Volk
8. A Place to Fall – Kristyn Harris
9. 12-6 Central – The Western Swing Authority
10. Traditionally Yours – Dave Edwards
- Little Bit of Texas – Carlos Washington

12 MOST PLAYED COWBOY POETRY ALBUMS

1. Just Passin' Thru – JJ Steele
2. The Last Sunset – K.C. LaCourse
- Range Rhymes – Lindy Simmons
4. Cow Camp Serenade – Duane Nelson
5. Thin Clean Air – Danny McCurry
6. Cowboyin' With God – Rik "Yonder" Goodell
- Old West Memories – Rocky Sullivan
8. Pensive 'n' Playful – Mark Munzert
9. Cowboy Psalms – Ron Secoy
10. The Truth – A.K. Moss
- The Girl in the Yellow Checked Dress – Duane Nelson

12 MOST PLAYED SONGS BY WESTERN MUSIC DJs

1. As Cowboy as They Come – Aspen Black
2. So Many Cowboys – Patty Clayton
3. Dance, Ponies, Dance – Randy Palmer
4. Wild Again – Dave Stamey
5. The Winds of Texas – Marvin O'Dell
6. Roads and Barbwire – Joel Alden White
7. Cowboy's Legacy – Doug Figgs
8. Home on the Range – Dan Canyon
- The Cows are Out – Kenny Crider
- The Highly Exalted – Lon Hannah
- A Wondering Stray – John Lowell
12. Cowgirl From Illinois – Doug Figgs

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

Chapter Updates

Continued from page 37



Gone With The West

the renown Vanderbilt Commodore Inn in Nashville and is looking forward to performing in Albuquerque at the convention in November! Gone With the West celebrated a highly successful Tumbleweed Tour through the West and wrapped up August with two highly successful performances at the Tennessee State Fair in Lebanon. Traveling and promoting Western Music across the globe and more new music in the works...it's an exciting time for the IWMA and the Tennessee Chapter! See ya' in November!!

TEXAS CHAPTER

President: Cary Wiseman
Wisemanranch71@gmail.com

We hope everyone had an amazing summer. The Y Bar J Western Music and Poetry Camp was a success for both weeks, and the kids who attended learned so much, made new friends, and had a lot of fun.



Campers from the Summer Camp program



Young people who participated in the Western Music and Poetry Camp.

If you know a kiddo who would be interested in a music and poetry camp, you can find more information about future camp dates and info on Facebook. National Day of the Cowboy brought many events all across Texas, and Devon Dawson, Kristyn Harris, Ed Meyer, and Teresa Burleson were all in Dublin for the day. Red Steagall's Cowboy Gathering is soon approaching, and many Texas members will be attending and performing during the weekend festivities, so make sure to check out the schedule and see who will be there. The IWMA Convention is right around the corner, and we can't wait to see everyone in Albuquerque!! God Bless and Happy Trails!

UTAH CHAPTER

President: Dale Major
Cvcowboyrendezvous@gmail.com

Greetings from the Beehive state. Our members have had a very active summer with a variety of performance opportunities centered around multiple local, county, and statewide celebrations. Most county fairs have had performances from many of our members statewide. As a group, we were invited to a summer party in conjunction with the Cowboy Poets of Utah held mid-state in Sevier County. A fine meal was shared along with an evening of entertainment shared with some of the local residents. A great time was enjoyed by all. Our next meeting will occur in October down south in St. George country and a large group is expected to attend.

In July, one of our most celebrated and beloved poet entertainers, Sam DeLeeuw, was inducted to the Utah Cowboy Hall of Fame. Sam is only the second entertainer to be inducted into this prestigious group, with poet Don Kennington being inducted years previous. Sam is very well known locally, regionally, as well as nationally. She has graced the stage of every major 'gathering' and a whole bunch of smaller ones, and has always been a friend and mentor to budding poets and musicians. The cowboy poetry world has benefited from her stories and rhymes, and this award was well deserved. Our chapter is looking forward to a busy fall and holiday schedule as well as the annual IWMA convention.

WESTERN WORDSMITHS CHAPTER

President: Ron Wilson
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Many thanks to Book Nook Reviews & More author Karen Campbell who shared excellent advice for quality writing on our August Western Wordsmiths membership zoom. We had our most participants ever! Many Western Wordsmiths members have been on the road, from National Day of the Cowboy celebrations to regional events. Mark Munzert reports that Marvin and Theresa O'Dell were able to sign up several IWMA members at the Arizona Cowboy Poetry Gathering where Mark recently performed. Lindy Simmons is putting on the Durango Cowboy Gathering which will include performances by Wordsmiths Jeff Davidson, Rik "Yonder" Goodell, Mark Munzert, Miska Paget, George Ray Russell, and other IWMA performers. Jeff Davidson has been performing at range management schools. Rik "Yonder" Goodell says he is having his busiest season ever, recently

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Chapter Updates

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performing at the Montana Cowboy Poetry Gathering and Northwest Montana Fair, for example. Recently Pete King swept the Kansas cowboy poetry contest, winning both the serious and humorous divisions. That contest was held in conjunction with the National Day of the Cowboy celebration. Past Kansas cowboy poetry contest double winner Betty Burlingham will be competing in the Kansas State Fair senior talent contest. Sherl Cederburg reports that her new album "Wonder of the West" will be coming soon. Ron Secoy hosted the 4C Cowboy Music and Poetry Gathering in Lawton, Oklahoma with many poets including Francine Roark Robison, Aspen Black, Devon Dawson, and Smokey Culver. Lori Beth Brooke recently performed with 3 Trails West and will join them again at the Walnut Valley Festival in Winfield, KS. Kathy Moss reports that she has just finished her novel "Red Roan," which is also the topic of a poem by the same name. The novel is a story about a half-Indian boy coming of age in the 1920s. Happy Birthday to George Ray Russell! He celebrated his 85th birthday with a performance and cake and champagne party in Colorado. Be sure to come to Albuquerque! Among the workshops will be a program by Lindy Simmons on involving youth and a workshop by Tom Hawk and others about opportunities created by historic trails such as the Western Cattle Trail. Hope to see you there!

YOUTH CHAPTER

Committee:

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The Convention is just weeks away now, and Youth Chapter members are ready to go! They have a special day on Friday with presentations from Marvin O'Dell ("What IS IWMA & Why Are You a Member?"), Theresa O'Dell ("The Western Way – Your Opportunity to Shine In The Spotlight"), and LeeLee Robert's workshop "Branding: PR & Marketing...Your Trail to Success!" All this plus a panel of established performers to talk about where they came from and how they got to where they are today. The Youth Chapter Showcase on Saturday will feature all the members, and they'll participate in the Hall of Fame inductions on Saturday night. It's a busy time for everyone! Right now, there are over 40 members in the Youth Chapter with more being added. They're from coast to coast and border to border. Don't miss the chance to hear the future of Western Music and Cowboy Poetry. 🐾

CELEBRATING NATIONAL DAY OF THE COWBOY

Across the country, communities celebrated the National Day of the Cowboy on July 26. Here are a few event highlights and participants.

COLORADO: Dennis Russell and JJ Steele hosted the 4th Annual Day of the Cowboy Celebration at the Historic Jones Theater in downtown Westcliffe, Colorado. The town continues to lead in honoring the National Day of the Cowboy. Floyd Beard gave the invocation, and Terry Nash emceed with humor and poetry. Kasey and Jenna Thunborg opened the show, followed by JJ Steele performing pieces from his new CD, and Doug Figgs with heartfelt songs. Guest poet Dale Page impressed the audience, and Jon Chandler with Ernie Martinez brought everyone to their feet. Ranger Jane Leche and Suzie Turcot handled stage and set design for this outstanding event.



Dennis Russell and JJ Steele

TEXAS: On Saturday, July 26, the Rodeo Heritage Museum in Dublin, Texas, hosted a day of food, fellowship, and performances by Teresa Burleson, Devon Dawson, and Kristyn Harris. In the afternoon, the celebration moved outdoors for the NATIONAL DAY OF THE COWBOY 2025 program. Teresa opened with poetry, followed by solo sets from Devon and Kristyn, then a music and poetry round robin with Ed Meyer, David Smith, Ol' Jim Cathy, Dustin West, and John Pelham. The event closed with the gals joined by fiddler Michelle Kuhlman for a lively western swing set. Thanks to the museum committee and Rick Taylor for organizing this great western celebration.



NEW MEXICO: Our 2026 National Day of the Cowboy event was a great success at The Best Western Rio Grande in Albuquerque, running from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Performers included The Ramblin' Rangers, Belinda Gail, Austin Van, Jim Jones, and Mariam Funke; poet Jack George; authors Melody Groves, Gency Brown, and Jim Jones; and photographer Cindy Quigley. KDNF-AM Radio hosted a live remote broadcast.

Article Design: Brett Frame

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