

THE WESTERN WAY

The Official Publication of the Western Music Association

INSIDE - 2016 WMA
CONVENTION IN REVIEW

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and Still Singin’*

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An on-going gathering, updated continually with news; event listings; cowboy poems and songs; features about cowboy poets, musicians, publications, radio; and more.

Pictured: James F. Walker Nelson (1920-1993) in the late 1970s, farrier and father of poet Andy Nelson and Jim Nelson, co-hosts of Clear Out West (C.O.W.) Radio. Photo courtesy of the Nelson family This image is selected as the 2015 cover art for the double-CD compilation of highlights of all of the past CDs (release: Fall, 2015)

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 ROSE
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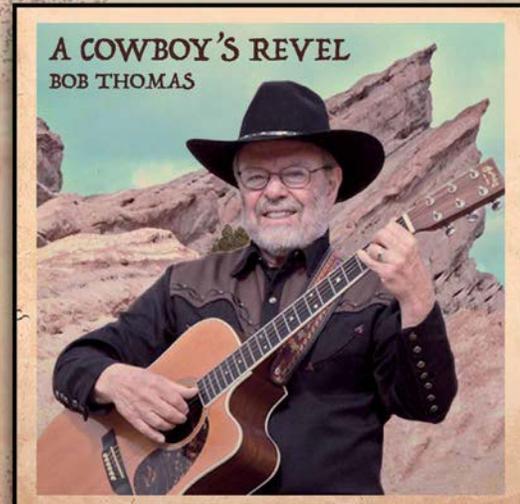


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From The President...



Marvin O'Dell
WMA President

“Great convention and award show!”

This is just one of many positive comments that have been sent to me personally by both fan members and musician members of the WMA since I arrived home from Albuquerque in November.

My own personal opinion is: if this wasn't the best convention we've ever had, it sure came awfully darn close. The venue change to the Hotel Albuquerque was often commented upon favorably. The performances were all done in a very professional manner. For the first time we set a goal for the Crisis Fundraiser Event - \$10,000. Not only was the goal met but it was exceeded

with a final tally of just under \$11,000 for the Fund. Well, I think that sent everyone home feeling pretty satisfied.

You know, there's always something to complain about. And there's always something that doesn't go as planned (e.g, Joni Harms not being able to make her flight connections and missing her performance for the Crisis Fund dinner). But there is always a whole lot more to compliment.

Once again, Marsha Short should be thanked by everyone for the many, many hours of work she put into making the WMA Convention happen. And, of course, even she couldn't work her magic if it were not for the many volunteers who offered to step in and handle important responsibilities. A huge “THANK YOU” goes out to each of you who said, “If you need me to do something, just let me know.” I can't express how important that kind of help is.

And let me just say to the fans of western music: there could be no western music if it weren't for those who support it by coming to listen to it. Never say, “I'm just a fan.” Because the musicians are “just musicians” if there is no one buying tickets and coming to their shows. We are all in this together, fans and musicians alike. One is not more important than the other; neither can exist without the other.

Thanks to all who attended the convention this year. I hope you went away feeling like it all ended too soon.

Marvin O'Dell
President, WMA



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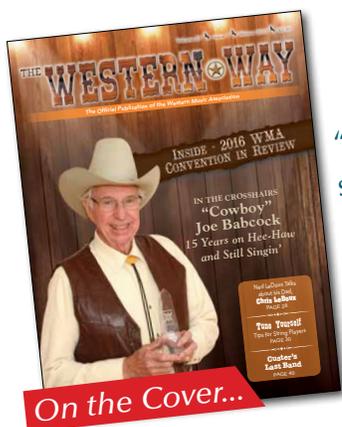
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Hee-Haw regular for over
15 years, is recognized
by the WMA.

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Editor's Insight



Theresa O'Dell

“Yesterday’s the past, tomorrow’s the future, but today is a gift. That’s why it’s called the present.”

This is an old saying – I’ve heard it and read it often. But when thinking of what bit of wisdom I might share in this issue, it kept popping into my head maybe because we are just entering a New Year; maybe because I’m getting older and know that I can’t undo what’s been done in my life; and, maybe it’s all of the above.

Let’s look at this saying. Yesterday is the past. For me and for all of us, we have sweet memories, heartbreaking sorrows and dismal disappointments. The annual Convention is over; awards were given; there may be disappointment for some who did not receive one. That cannot be changed. Change can come for tomorrow. If you don’t like all that you see when you look back, then write a different story. It is your future to shape and to change and to ensure that it will one day contain many sweet memories. When tomorrow becomes your past, I hope you have fewer regrets. Today is yours. It is a new page in your book. It is here you can ensure that your future is different. Practice kindness, work harder at your craft, take a class, learn a new skill, or set new goals. Do all that it takes (work!) to be a better husband, wife, brother, sister, parent, child, musician, entertainer, friend!

Best wishes in 2017. Give yourself the “present” of a great day so this time next year your sweet memories will far outweigh your sorrows and disappointments of “yesterday.”



Yesterday’s the past,
tomorrow the future,
but today is a gift.
That’s why it’s called
the present.

- Bil Keane

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From The Executive Director...



Marsha Short
Executive Director

When you're reading this, the holidays have passed and it's 2017!

The 2016 WMA Convention was a huge family reunion without the drama (ok, a little drama). It was everything the Board could have hoped for and more: members coming together as a family, helping each other and stepping in when needed. No one batted an eye when our Thursday night featured performer's flight was canceled....they just said "what

can I do?" and then did it. It was a great show and we raised nearly \$11,000 to help WMA family members who are facing hardships.

The hotel can't wait to have us back again next year (we can't wait, either). A shuttle driver stopped me in the parking lot to tell me that he'd been driving our group for years and he'd never had a nicer group of people in his van. He and his wife came to the Opry for the first time this year. The merchants in Old Town welcomed many of the performers into their stores and restaurants. There was always music in the gazebo and flash mobs were a huge hit for both the audience and those who took part in them.

We are blessed with so many incredibly talented young performers. You couldn't miss them this year – they were everywhere! Not only are they stepping up and holding their own alongside seasoned performers, they're downright nice! And performers who shared the stage with them were amazed at how professional, confident and accomplished they are.

As always, there were volunteers everywhere: in the CD Mercantile, the Consignment Shop, taking tickets, selling tickets.... again, members offering to step in where they were needed.

And speaking of volunteers, we have an incredibly dedicated group of individuals who are on the Board of Directors. The officers for 2017 are President: Marvin O'Dell; Executive Vice President: Jerry Hall; Vice President & General Counsel: Robert Fee; Secretary: Joe Brown, and Treasurer: Diana Raven. Other directors for 2017 are Juni Fisher, Belinda Gail, Rick Huff, Robert Lorbeer and Theresa O'Dell. 2017 Board Interns are Judy James and Yvonne Mayer. These people spend an incredible amount of time taking care of WMA business. The Board meets three times a year with conference calls in between. All of this is done at their own expense. If you're interested in applying for an internship on the 2018 Board, please let me know and I'll send you an application.

We at WMA wish you a happy, safe and peaceful 2017. It will be an interesting year....so keep a song in your heart and we'll see you down the trail. 



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2016 WMA Convention in Review

All photographs provided by Jack Hummel, Cindy Quigley and Lee Peters. Used by permission.

2016 WMA AWARD OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS

On behalf of the WMA Board, thank you to ALL who attended and participated in the 2016 Convention. There were lots of new faces and many familiar ones roaming the halls of the Hotel Albuquerque in Old Town. The enthusiasm was contagious; maybe it was all the NEW things happening. The new venue was wonderful; there was a new president placed at the helm when the board elected by acclamation the interim President, Marvin O'Dell, to lead the organization for the next year; there was a brand new event organized by Jerry Hall, Veterans Day Breakfast, to commemorate Veterans Day (which will probably become a tradition!); and, there were new performers on the stages and new vendors in the hallways. At the risk of sounding flippant, this just had to be one of the best Conventions in many years!

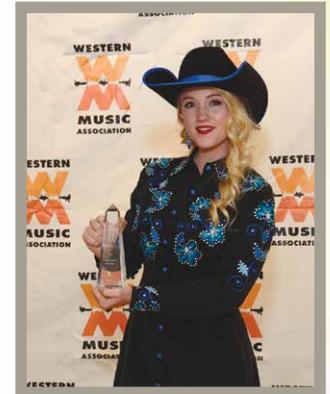
Such a wonderful event could not happen without a lot of volunteer help working alongside Executive Director, Marsha Short. Although not every person can be mentioned, it is important to thank Ms. Mary Ryland who gave of her valuable time and resources to independently advertise and market the Convention throughout Albuquerque weeks before the event. Old Town Albuquerque welcomed us all and the merchants provided performance venues, logos and flyers in every window. We so appreciate the hard work of Doug and Better Carter for canvassing Old Town and raising awareness that WMA was coming to town. Mike Roehm again got the WMA Convention banner hung at the Airport and distributed flyers to local businesses, and Rick Huff spent time and energy to fill the halls of the hotel with western décor that contributed so much to the ambiance. Other special recognition should be given to Jeanne Cahill for organizing the "flash mobs" in Old Town; Randy Fowler and Ed Hughes for tireless efforts at the registration desk throughout the convention; Jean Prescott, Lu Middleton and grandson Colton Knudson, Yvonne Creamer, Ida Wheat and grandson Cody Moore who organized and operated the WMA Consignment Store; David Veal who organized and operated the CD Mercantile along with a multitude of volunteers; Aspen Black with the assistance of Kerry Grombacher who organized and emceed the Campfire, Development and Pajama Showcase stages; and, all the anonymous committees for awards, those judges of various contests, and emcees of various stages throughout the convention. But especially thanks to all the performers who participated and all the fans who supported them. It would have been nothing without each one of you!

Enjoy the Convention review in pictures!

CONGRATULATIONS TOP WINNERS



Kristyn Harris
Entertainer of the Year



Mikki Daniel
Female Performer of the Year



Dave Stamey
*Male Performer of the Year,
Western Album of the Year, Song of the Year,
Songwriter of the Year*



3 Trails West
Group of the Year



Jeanne Cahill
Instrumentalist of the Year

2016 WMA Convention in Review

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S WINNERS

2016 Hall of Fame Inductees

Pat Brady
Dave Stamey

MUSIC

2016 Cowboy Swing Album of the Year
Trail Jazz - Cowboy Joe Babcock

2016 Crescendo Award
Jeneve Rose Mitchell

2016 Radio DJ/Radio Program of the Year
Judy James - Cowboy Jubilee & Western
Heritage Radio - Weatherford, TX

POETRY

2016 Male Poet of the Year
Floyd Beard

2016 Female Poet of the Year
Susie Knight

2016 Cowboy Poetry CD of the Year
Fillin' Tanks - Susie Knight

2016 Cowboy Poetry Book of the Year
Is She Country? - Marlene Bussma

OTHER SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

2016 Harmony Contest
Youth Division: Leah Sawyer &
Olivia Morgayne

Open Division: Miss Devon & The Outlaw
Marilyn Tuttle Best of the Best:
The Hanson Family

2016 Yodeling Contest
Male Division: Marty Kosel
Female Division: Lori Brooke

2016 Poetry Contest
Duane Nelson
Trey Pearson

2016 Georgie Sicking Award
Jessica Hedges

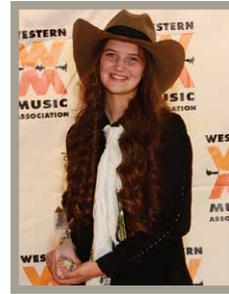
2016 Curly Musgrave Cowboy Spirit Award
Ray Rutherford

2016 Bill Wiley Award
Doug & Betty Carter

The WESTERN WAY



Cowboy Joe Babcock
*Cowboy Swing
Album of the Year*



Jeneve Rose Mitchell
Crescendo Award



Judy James
*DJ Radio
Program of the Year*



Floyd Beard
Male Poet of the Year



Susie Knight
*Female Poet of the Year
Cowboy Poetry CD of the Year*



Marlene Bussma
*Cowboy Poetry
Book of the Year*



**Leah Sawyer and
Olivia Morgayne**
*Harmony Contest Winner
Youth Division*



Lori Brooke
*Yodeling Contest Female
Division Winner*



**Trey Pearson and
Duane Nelson**
Poetry Contest Co-winners



Jessica Hedges
*Georgie Sicking
Poetry Award*



Ray Rutherford
*Curly Musgrave
Cowboy Spirit Award*



**Doug and
Betty Carter**
Bill Wiley Award



Marty Kosel
*Yodeling Contest Male
Division winner*



Miss Devon and Outlaw
*Harmony Contest
Open Division*



The Hanson Family
*Harmony Contest Marilyn
Tuttle Best of the Best Winner*

2016 WMA Convention in Review

WEDNESDAY

Night Swing
Band Spectacular



THURSDAY

Crisis Fundraising Dinner



2016 WMA Convention in Review

FRIDAY

Veterans Day Tribute Breakfast



Night Opry and Swing Dance



2016 WMA Convention in Review

SUNDAY

Cowboy Church and Special Showcase with Kristyn, Mikki, Jeneve and Friends



Other Happenings – Workshops



2016 WMA Convention in Review

Jams, Showcases, Pajama Jam, and More



2016 WMA Convention in Review

AROUND THE CONVENTION



2016 WMA Convention in Review

AROUND THE CONVENTION





Penned by Lantern Light

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

Riddles

by Trey Pearson

*“The following poems are those of the
Co-Winners of Poetry Presentations at the Convention.”*

Riddles

Riddle me this:

Given how fickle this world is
Its cultural shifting, limits, economics, and within it
the overall predicament
that a family making a substantial living
off generations of ranching
the same homestead
Is a phenomenon that with the wind,
Is nearly gone
Flown over the cookoos nest!
Then tell me:
Which occupations or businesses
would be significant in making the difference
of ensuring the next wave, the next generation
of landowner even has a fighting chance to exist!
Our cattle are gone...
All of them hauled off and probably never coming back
Cuz long before we came in overgrazing had
the land changing since the Spanish ages
Now, it's climate maybe
Natural springs evaporating...
and let me tell you something: To watch your trees dry up a die
Is like saying goodbye to your children.
Wells depleting...
Sinking with our hearts faster and deeper than any amount of cash
(or drill rig) is capable of reaching.
Meanwhile,
the population keeps booming
and who wants to live in apartment buildings
when the backwoods and pastures,
plus John Wayne in action looks this appealing!
Oil and gas.
Greed and industry.
Scouring the country for extended family
whose grandparents were ranchers but raised their
kids in the big city
And so they're cashing inheritance deeds needed,
leased to start drilling

No respect or the land!

They'll just show up on your doorstep
and you'd be amazed at how much acreage
can be found in a filing cabinet
Or, stuffed in granddads old tobacco can!
This here's the floor plan
The wave breaking that my life is bade to withstand
So, here I stand
28, stepping up to the plate
and watching...Everything.
I once had a dream,
I was on the ranch and stepped out on the porch
as the sun rose on the land there were houses at my door.
And in a sudden eruption, camouflaged crews of construction
enacted a chain reaction:
Roads paved themselves over, cut banks started snaking towards us.
A bursting septic tank of people by the thousands surrounds us
swallowing every fencepost and cactus
car horns honking in torrents.
Mountain bikers were raining from the sky with parachutes
landing on the same mountain butte where
my grandmothers ashes flew!
And with it a cloud of black dust
as thick as Egyptian locusts engulfed us
faster than the talons of a peregrine falcon!
And no sooner was I devoured by the greed and the smog,
because fighting was like trying to silence a fire engine siren
fingerless in a parking garage!!~
So riddle me that
because I swear, from this day forward
the only promise I'm keeping
as if it were written in valentines day candy
Is that I am not leaving...
And some of you might ask:
“What about that young man's dreams to travel the world?”
But how can I do that?
What with the lingering possibility
of the ranch itself one day being the very end of me.
This is the long haul,

and it is not my fault!
But at the very least,
If I ever have a son or a daughter,
they'll know as sure as apples and oranges
or tap water on the border
who in the "H-E double hockey sticks"
stood here before em'!

NO. They'll say:
"Granddad was really one who rode or the brand"
but, only until I'm so far dug in
that you're better off reasoning with me
after I'm buried in the sand.
Because,
I am not leaving!



TREY PEARSON:

Hailing from Alpine Texas, Trey Pearson is a junior member of a ranching partnership outside of Presidio Texas. Trey's poetry has aired on radio, and was also featured "recited by the author" in the documentary, "Cowboy Zen," produced by Hal Canon (2014). A full-time ranch hand by day and practicing musician by night, Trey graduated Summa from Sul Ross State University with a degree in classical piano. He began writing and performing poetry at western events in 2011, on behalf of exposure to the annual Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering that takes place in Alpine, TX. Trey's inspirations are rooted in the love for the land, horses, western history, along with his own pioneer heritage.

SCATTER MY ASHES

by Duane Lee Nelson

Just scatter my ashes in the brandin' pen boys,
And turn loose my spirit to roam,
The pine-covered ridges and sage-brush hills,
That cowboys like me call home.

Just step on the back of a good ridin' horse, the long-stepping,
travelin' kind.
And scatter my ashes out on the trail, wherever your journey may
wind.

Or pack them on up to the head of the creek,
where the elk and the deer quench their thirst,
And lay them out slow on the ripply stream, oh,
but pray me some kind verses first.

All of these places will do for a bed,
when my final days come to their end.
Don't need no graveyard, nor church bells or such,
nor any carved stone to attend.

In ketch pens and round pens, and sorting corrals,
where a cowboy does much of his toil,
Or out on the desert or up in the hills, on the mesa,
and the canyon's red soil.

That's where my spirit will find final rest,
where horses and cattle abide,
Where the antelope roam near the prairie dog's home,
that's where I'll take my last ride.

So scatter my ashes in the brandin' pen boys,
I don't want to be underground,
Cause there sure aint no sun, nor wind or the rain,
and there's nary a horse to be found.

Just step on the back of that good riding horse,
a rim-rockin' sunuvagun,
Find us some gramma, bluestem and sage,
out where the coyotes run.

Yes, scatter my ashes out on the plains,
in the valleys and coulees and draws,
Where the buffalo grazed, and the grizzly bears raged,
near the tracks of the timberwolf's paws.

Yes, scatter my ashes in the brandin' pen, boys,
and turn loose my spirit to roam,
Then my searching will cease, and my soul will find peace,
as I come to my Heavenly home.



DUANE LEE NELSON

Fueled by a passion for the cowboy lifestyle and a love of entertaining, Duane has delighted audiences across the Northwest. From brandings and roundups, to stages at poetry gatherings large and small, Duane can be found making people laugh or bringing them to tears with his dynamic recitations of classic cowboy poetry and his own original poems. Duane and his wife Lori live on a wheat and cattle ranch near The Dalles, Oregon, where they take care of a small bunch of cows, ride for neighboring ranches, and try to teach their grandchildren "the cowboy way". "I thank the Good Lord for making me a cowboy, and for giving me the ability to share the cowboy lifestyle and traditions with other people."

FROM the TRAIL

Western Music Call To Parents

By Gale Rogers

(Long-time WMA Performing Member
with Journey West and The Red Hot Rhythm Rustlers)

Do your kids like to sing, or play an instrument, or maybe even both, and would like to perform and have a lot of FUN with other kids? Western Music offers them a chance to learn, grow, and shine along with others that have grown up with this clean, happy, fun and wholesome family music. The Western Music Association's mission is to preserve this music and to do that we need children coming up the ranks. The talent we witnessed at the 2016 WMA Convention was jaw-dropping to watch as the kids jammed and performed with all ages (and the seasoned performers were grinning the whole time playing along with them)!



Youth Perform at the Awards Show.
Photo courtesy C. Quigley

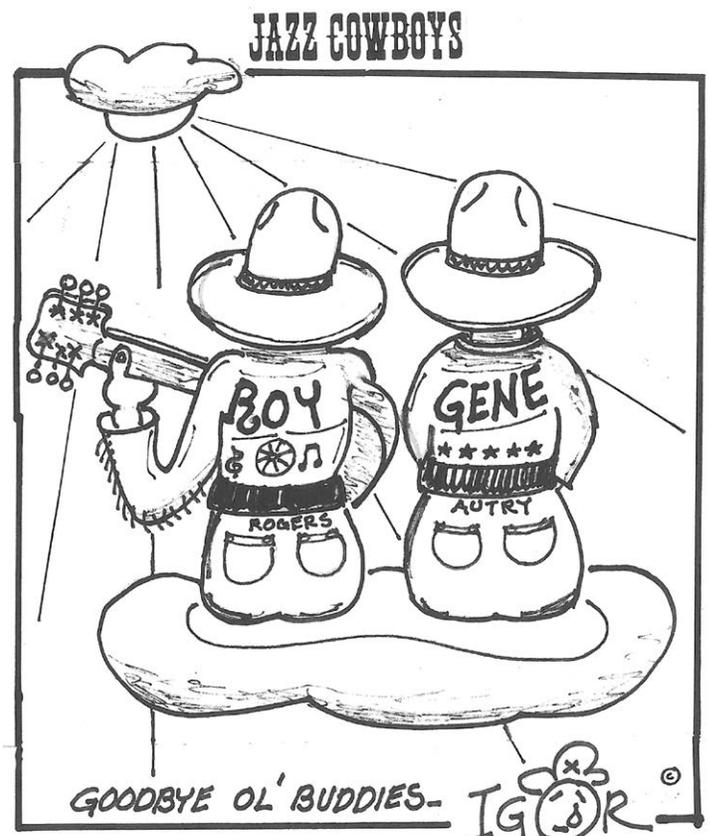
Western Music is a family, and it's not what most kids are hearing on the radio today. There are friendships and bonds being created because of this music. They help and support each other. It's hard to describe the feeling of being part of this group.

We watch the kids come in and soon they are winning awards all over the place - for harmony, yodeling, Album of the Year, Entertainer of the year, (Kristyn Harris -2016 Entertainer of the Year, and Mikki Daniel 2016 Female Performer of the Year) and competing against the adults and winning! And they all help each other. American Idol participant, Jeneve Rose Mitchell is part of our youth chapter, and what an inspiration she is. It was just a few short years ago we watched "little Kristyn Harris" joining in the jams with her big guitar. Saturday night she took home the Entertainer of the Year Award. Olivia Morgayne wowed us with her vocal talents at just 11 years old. The Sawyer kids (from Simple Gifts - The Sawyer Family Band) - Leah and David, are amazing with their instrumental talents - David with fiddle, trumpet, and mandolin, and Leah (harmony award winner) with vocals and fiddle. Hailey Sandoz, with her fiddle playing, has wowed the crowd backing up the "old-timers" on stage. It's so much fun

to watch the faces of the seasoned musicians as Hailey and Leah take their turns soloing with them. The Hanson Family trio just wowed us on stage, too, and won the Marilyn Tuttle "Best of the Best" harmony award.

On Saturday night the WMA showcased all of the youth on stage at our awards show - all 17 of them. Yes, it's a small group, and it's growing, but there is room for so many more. We'd like to see it double every year. Without them, Western Music will fade away. What are your kids listening to? Do you listen to the lyrics? I mean really listen - and understand it? (search lyrics on the Internet) Is that really what you want for them? They want to be stars. Let them try in a small, safe, friendly environment that will give them that chance, and mentor them. Western Music gives them the opportunity to shine their light among a unique family. I can't wait to bring my granddaughters to this.

Join the Western Music Association, find us on Facebook. Get involved with a local chapter. Find You Tube videos by searching for "WMA". Or contact me for more information. And please, please, please, support our youth by purchasing their CDs. 🐾



Cartoon by Igor. Used by permission.

In the **CROSSHAIRS**



“Cowboy” Joe Babcock

reason why Marty didn't return to the writer that had served up to him such great cowboy/western songs?

CJB: Well, it is my recollection that Marty had a number of big country songs after that – “Don't Worry”, “Devil Woman”, and others - so I was writing other stuff for him. Marty actually recorded 19 of my songs, including “A Little Sentimental” and “Turn The Lights Down Low” which were title songs of his albums. One of my favorites that I wrote for Marty was “Only In My Dreams.” I was honored to sing on some of Marty's recordings, including “Devil Woman”, “Among My Souvenirs” and “El Paso City.”

TWW: You credit Tompall & the Glaser Brothers with connecting you with Marty Robbins. Can you tell us how that came about?

CJB: Well, I was out in California trying to make it in music and having no luck at all. Matter of fact, I was broke with no job and no money at Christmas time. I had become a Christian a year before, and I prayed a simple prayer that if the Lord would help me get into music of some kind, I promised I would not abuse it. A few weeks later, maybe two, I got a call from Nashville. It was Tompall of the Glaser Bros. He said that they had auditioned for Marty Robbins; he hired them, and they were in Nashville singing with Marty Robbins on the Grand Ole Opry. But he said they had a problem. Brother Chuck was being drafted, and they were searching their minds for someone to take his place. He said, “Your name just kept coming back to our minds – “wonder what old Joe is doing?” I had grown up with them back in Nebraska but hadn't seen them for years. Well, I sold my car to get to Nashville, and two or three weeks later, I was standing on that hallowed circle at the Ryman singing “White Sport Coat” with Marty and the Glaser Brothers. That prayer changed the course of my life.

TWW: Have you maintained a relationship with the Glasers over the years?

CJB: Yes, I have. Tompall has passed away and Chuck had a stroke, but I still keep in contact with them - with Jim especially.

TWW: You wrote another song that did pretty well for you – one called “I Washed My Hands in Muddy Water.” Stonewall Jackson turned that into a huge country music hit.

CJB: (smiles) Yep, That was a good one.

THE WESTERN WAY: Joe, thank you for taking the time to answer some questions for our readers. First of all, when and why did you decide to perform with the word “Cowboy” in front of your name?

Cowboy Joe Babcock: Well, when I first started working with Marty Robbins, Louie Dunn, our drummer gave me that name. Being from Nebraska, I always wore a hat and cowboy boots and so that was my nickname. Louie had a nickname for everybody in the band.

TWW: O.K., let's talk about the cowboy songs you've written. If we're correct, you wrote the songs “Prairie Fire”, “Ghost Train”, “Doggone Cowboy”, “Dusty Winds”, and “Johnny Fedavo” for Marty Robbins. Is that correct?

CJB: Yes, that's correct. Marty was a great writer and my mentor. He was a great inspiration to me.

TWW: Are there any other cowboy songs of note from your pen that have been recorded by artists other than Marty?

CJB: Yes, Don Edwards recorded Ghost Train, Dave Stamey has recorded Dusty Winds and several artists have recorded Doggone Cowboy. I've also had songs recorded by Elvis Presley, Dolly Parton, Porter Wagoner, Stonewall Jackson, Mel Tillis, Dave Rich, and Johnny Rivers.

TWW: Now, it seems odd to us that after “Johnny Fedavo” in 1963, there are no more Joe Babcock western songs that we can uncover in the Marty Robbins discography. Was there a



WESTERN EVENTS CALENDAR*

2017

Colorado Cowboy Gathering

January 19-22 - Golden, Colorado

Western Music & Songwriters Series

January 28 - Tooele, Utah

Cochise Cowboy Poetry & Music Gathering

25th Anniversary

February 3-5 - Sierra Vista, Arizona

Cowtown Opry Gala

Honoring Bobby Flores

March 31 - Ft. Worth, Texas

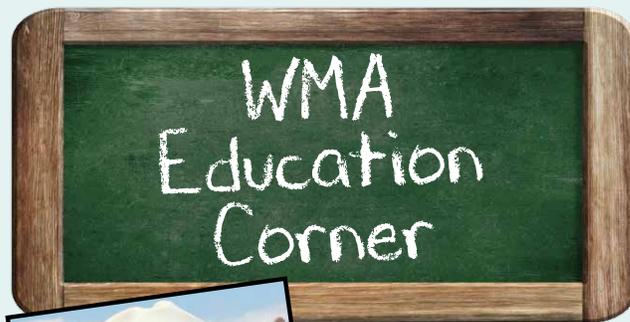
National Cowboy Symposium

September 8-10, 2017 - Lubbock, Texas

WMA Annual Convention

November 8-12 - Albuquerque, New Mexico

**(Not intended to be an all-inclusive list. To submit an event for the calendar, send the event name, date(s), Web site and City/State to: wveditor1@gmail.com.*



By Judy James

Happy 2017!

I trust your holidays were filled with good fellowship with family and friends.

Also, I enjoyed meeting and visiting with many of you at our family reunion, which we call the Western Music Association Convention. Congratulations to Jane Leche, the WMA Youth Chapter Coordinator, for planning and facilitating activities for the future of WMA, the very talented youth who attended this convention.

For 2017, plans are being made to bring Youth Performance Workshops to areas throughout the country. If you are interested and want more details, email me - judy@judyjames.com. These are being presented by award winning educators and entertainers - all to improve areas of growth for young inspiring musicians.

As you plan your 2017 concert schedule, I encourage you include educational concerts to build relations between you and the WMA of tomorrow. Remember we also have to educate our audiences on what Western Music is. You are the very best ambassadors we have!

Happy Giggling in 2017!

Judy James

judy@judyjames.com



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



Spectators at the Wednesday Night Swing Dance.

Photo courtesy Lee Peters.

Chapter Update



ARIZONA CHAPTER

President: Yvonne Mayer
steidl-mayer@msn.com

Bunker is on the air! Chapter member, Bunker de France can be heard on KVOI radio 1030 AM. "Voices of the West" broadcasts every Saturday at 4PM. Content varies, including western writers, history of the West and music from western movies. The last Saturday of every month is dedicated to Western films.



Cimarron Sidekicks compete in Albuquerque. Photo courtesy Yvonne Mayer

Our chapter participated in the historic Empire Ranch Round-Up held on Nov. 5, providing an information table to promote Western Music and Poetry. Chapter member Janice Deardorff took the stage to entertain the crowd with old standards and her own compositions. Fans of Western Music will remember the Desert Sons; two former members of that group, Benny Young and Slim Tighe, now known as Young and Slim, were on hand to entertain as well. We continue to enjoy Western Music Night at Monterey Court in Tucson. The last Wednesday of each month is dedicated to Western Music, with donations going to benefit the chapter.



The Gray Amigos, Bill Rohstet, Ray St. Clair and Michael Dues, with Gail Gibbons performing at Western Music Night, Tucson Photo by Yvonne Mayer

We extend an invitation to performers traveling through our area to join us. If you are available, please call 520-803-7407 for details. Upcoming events include participating in the Tucson Rodeo Parade in February. Last year, which was the first year we took part, earned our wagon-full of cowboys first prize in the music category! We will participate in the Cochise Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Sierra Vista February 3-5 by setting up our information booth. We encourage our chapter performers to participate in the open-mike events. Our February meeting will be held in Phoenix.

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

President: Jack Hummel
westmusc@ix.netcom.com

Hello again to all. We hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving holiday and we extend our hopes that you all have continue to be blessed through the December Holiday season as well. Our quarter was dominated by super events and exciting performances. The OutWest Concert Series, co-sponsored by the WMACC, presented a returning performance by Kerry Grumbacher in October, followed by a first time appearance by Dennis Jay from Texas. Both Kerry and Dennis gave extraordinary performances and we all thank them for sharing and inspiring us with their talent! You can watch these programs at www.sctvoutwest.com. Our monthly Showcase Series at the Autry Museum of the American West continues to attract regular audiences and has created strong interest in the WMA. Even on a bad weather day or will other competing events at the Museum, these excellent performers pull good crowds. We thank the Autry for extending our stay through 2017! These Showcase performances are scheduled for the 3rd Sunday every month. Join us if you can! The Convention in Albuquerque was well attended by members of the California Chapter from Northern and Southern California, or other areas. In addition to enjoying the tremendous programs, it was wonderful to meet those folks we do not get to see often, meet new people, as well as discuss



Thirty-severn Chapter Members attend the Annual Convention.

issues and strategies with other chapter officers. We were especially pleased to see the reaction of Chapter members who attended for the first time! We promised it would be an extraordinary experience for them. It was for them as well as all of us who attended. The Veterans Day programs were especially well done and very moving! Few realize the hard work and planning that go into such an event and all us of thank you and all of the performers and presenters. Wow! The Chapter has developed a great tradition around the Convention: the WMACC Returning Survivors Dinner. Open to all who are traveling home through Flagstaff, we meet for a special dinner at Black Bart's Steakhouse where guests are entertained by talented singers from university music programs and they double as waiters! Please join us if you can next year!



Survivors Dinner. Thirteen Attendees. Photo courtesy Jack Hummel.

Following the Convention, many of our Chapter members attended the 18th Monterey Cowboy Music and Poetry Festival. Unfortunately we have not received feedback for that event and hope to report more in the next update.

COLORADO CHAPTER

President: Susie Knight
lassothecowgirl@yahoo.com

The Colorado (Branded Western) Chapter was very busy this fall. WMA-CO held its second annual Pikes Peak Cowboy

Continued on page 22

Chapter Update

Continued from page 21

Gathering (PPCG) on September 24th this year in Cripple Creek, Colorado and featured a variety of performers. The PPCG was held at The Cripple Creek Heritage Center in conjunction with the



Pike's Peak Cowboy Gathering Gang

Cripple Creek Fall Festival. Attendance at the event was much improved over 2015 and all enjoyed the excellent Western music and cowboy poetry presented by our crew. During the event, we also presented our second annual Top Hand Award which goes to a hard-working WMA-CO chapter member who contributes the most help in making WMA-CO's projects successful during the year. The winners of the beautiful, custom-made trophy buckle for 2016 were Tom and Donna Hatton, who put in so much time and effort this year making our showcases and the PPCG such a big success. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Sandy Reay for all the excellent work she has done during her tenure as WMA-CO Treasurer. Sandy has decided not to serve as a chapter officer next year and we will miss her contribution. She has done a great job keeping the chapter's finances in order the past two years. Sandy also took direct responsibility for managing the PPCG in 2016, putting in a huge amount of time and effort to make sure the event was successful. We wish Sandy all the best and look forward to her continued participation as a chapter member. In October, WMA-CO held an election to determine its board of officers for 2017. The newly elected officers are Susie Knight – President, Brian Roach – Vice-President, James Michael – Secretary and Tom Hatton – Treasurer. We are very pleased with the election of our new officers and are looking forward to achieving great things in 2017. In closing, we would like to congratulate

late all our Colorado Chapter members who won and/or were nominated for awards at the recent WMA convention in Albuquerque. We would also like to wish all our chapter members and all our fellow WMA members a peaceful winter season and good times in the coming year.

COLUMBIA CHAPTER President: Duane Nelson shortcutpoetry@hotmail.com

The Columbia Chapter closed out 2016 in fine fashion. October 23 found performers from all over Washington, Oregon, and Idaho joined by special guest Kerry Grombacher in scenic Bingen,



Duane Nelson- Co-Winner of the Poetry Contest. Photo courtesy J. Seger

Washington, playing to a packed house. Those folks got a full dose of classic and contemporary western music and cowboy poetry. New chapter officers were elected. Congratulations to: Duane Nelson-President; Tom Swearingen-Vice President; Judy Coder-Secretary; Lynn Kopelke-Treasurer. November found



The Hanson Family Singers, Harmony Contest winners mentoring the Youth Chapter. Photo courtesy L. Kopelke



Tom Swearingen kickin' it at The Friday Night Opry. Photo courtesy J. Seger

many of us kickin' up our heels in Albuquerque at the National Convention. It was great. Now we look forward to an exciting year ahead. See everybody down the trail in 2017!

EAST COAST CHAPTER President: Aspen Black Aspen@aspenblackcowgirl.com

The WMAECC has approved the planning of two chapter-sponsored events for the coming year. One is to be held in March in Villa Rica, GA, and the other is to take place in Cumberland, MD, in July. The Villa Rica event will have a festival atmosphere, while the Cumberland event will be a more formal concert event. Details and dates will be announced soon. Kerry Grombacher is taking lead in production for the Villa Rica event; Tom Hawk is the contact member for Cumberland. Hats off to our chapter members who received finalist award nominations this year: Miss Devon & The Outlaw for Duo of the Year, Almeda Bradshaw for Song of the Year, Eddy Leverett for DJ/Radio Program of the Year, and Aspen Black for Female Poet of the Year, Poetry CD of the Year, and Poetry Book of the Year.

KANSAS CHAPTER President: Jeff Davidson jeff@jeffdavidsonmusic.com

Kansas members "3 Trails West" took the honor of group of the year at the recent WMA convention in Albuquerque. The award recognizes them for having shown the greatest competence in recordings or concerts and in taking the genre of Western Music to the public. They won a similar award with the Academy of Western Artists last spring. Congrats Leo, Jim and Roger.

Chapter Update

Continued from page 22

Well deserved. During the quarterly meeting in October a new slate of officers was elected to lead the chapter in 2017. Orin Friesen will take the reins



Leo Eilts, Jim Winters, Roger Eilts (3 Trails West) Photo courtesy Jack Hummel

of President, Jim Farrell is now vice president, Sharon Chesmore remains as secretary and Roy Pethel is the new treasurer. Orin has a long history with KFDI radio, as well as more recently the general manager of the Prairie Rose Chuckwagon, and the leader of the Prairie Rose Rangers western musical group. Jim has made a career in the recording industry as an engineer, musician and producer. He is also a long time member of the Diamond W Wranglers western musical group. Sharon is western music's number 1 fan. Nobody promotes western music more than Sharon and Roy is not only a fan, but is also prolific at reciting poetry. During the meeting, members discussed the very successful Trails, Rails and Tales event in Abilene which began a year-long celebration of the 150 years since cattle were first delivered to Abilene on the Chisholm Trail (Sept. 5, 1867). The chapter was employed to provide entertainment – were well received, and will again provide entertainment during a similar event in September of 2017.

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

President: Michael Hosea

mhosea@zianet.com

The New Mexico Chapter has had a very busy and interesting fall season. Our September concert was to be the first of our Summer Series to take place outside the Albuquerque area. It was to be held September 9th at McGee Park in Farmington, NM and feature chapter members James Michael, Jeanne Cahill and Jerome Campbell. Unfortunately, Jerome had a very serious heart problem in early September and the show had to be postponed. We are very pleased

to report, however, that Jerome is back to normal (well, normal for Jerome) and the show is being re-scheduled for March 11, 2017. Our final concert for 2016 will be our annual Christmas Concert. It will be held December 8th at a new venue for us on the New Mexico State Fair Grounds. The venue is called the African American Performing Arts Center. The concert will feature the Flying J Wranglers from Ruidoso. The Flying J put on a great show last year and we are anticipating an excellent show this year. Our Summer Concert Series this year at the Rio Bravo Brewing Company (RBBC) was such a success that we have decided to initiate a Winter Concert Series as well. The first winter concert will take place January 21st at the RBBC and will feature The Tumbleweeds. If you plan to be in Albuquerque that night, please be sure to drop by the RBBC for a great evening of music and dancing. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Cathy Figgs for her service these past two years as WMA-NM Treasurer. Cathy and her husband, Doug are very busy these days and Cathy has decided not to serve as treasurer in 2017. Cathy has done a fine job keeping the chapter's finances in order during her tenure as treasurer and we wish her and Doug all the best. In October, WMA-NM held an election to determine its board of officers for 2017. The newly elected officers are James Michael – President, Michael Coy – Vice-President, Joy Burns Secretary and Betty Maes de Carter – Treasurer. We are very pleased with the election of our new officers and are looking forward to achieving great things in 2017. In November, WMA-NM members were very active at the WMA Convention in Albuquerque. Two of our members (Betty Carter and Bernard Carr) did a tremendous job of setting up opportunities for all WMA performers who wanted to provide entertainment in Old Town during the convention. One of our members (Jeanne Cahill) put together two "flash mobs" in Old Town during the convention. Another of our members (Kristyn Harris) made an appearance on KRQE Television to promote the convention. We of the New Mexico Chapter firmly believe that Albuquerque is the WMA's home town and we try to do everything we can to increase awareness in the Albuquerque area of who we are and what we do. As many of you already know, WMA-NM hosted a new event this year at the con-

vention. On Sunday afternoon, following Cowboy Church, WMA-NM held its first Rising Stars Concert. If you did not see the performance, you missed a truly outstanding show. The all-star line up included Jeneve Rose Mitchell (2016 Crescendo Award Winner), Mikki Daniel (2016 Female Performer of the Year) and Kristyn Harris (2016 Entertainer of the Year). Each alone would have been outstanding. The three together were absolutely spectacular. WMA-NM would like to thank these three incredibly special young women for donating their time to this event. We would also like to thank all those who provided support, including Jordan Brambila, Jeanne Cahill, Jim Jones, Scott Wilson, Anne Wilson, Michael Coy, Kenny Coy, Marion Rutherford, Joy Burns, Joe Brown and Marsha Short. In closing, I would like to personally thank all the hard-working members of WMA-NM who have made 2016 such a wonderful year for Western music in New Mexico. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve as your president.

TEXAS CHAPTER

Coordinator: Marsha Short
marsha@westernmusic.org

A kick-off meeting for the WMA Texas Chapter will be held on March 19 in the Ft. Worth area. For more information, contact Marsha Short at 505-563-0673 or marsha@westernmusic.org Come prepared to volunteer!

WESTERN WORDSMITHS CHAPTER

President: Geoff "Poppa Mac" Mackay
e-mail: poppamac@hotmail.com

Another successful WMA convention has come and gone. A big thank you to the entire national WMA board for a job well done. It was wonderful to see many old friends and to have the chance to meet some amazing new ones. There was so much talent gathered in the Hotel Albuquerque with the sounds of Western Music floating throughout the building. A big "congratulations" to all the award winners. The poetry contest was a success with 12 wonderful poets competing. It ended up in a tie. Look for both the winning poems in this issue of the Western Way. New Chapter executives were elected at the convention. Geoff "Poppa Mac" Mackay will be back for another term as President, Vic Anderson returns as Vice President, with Mark

Continued on page 24

My sincere thanks to the WMA!

SUSIE KNIGHT

2016

Female Poet of the Year

Cowboy Poetry CD of the Year
Fillin' Tanks

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Photography by Valerie Beard



Chapter Update

Continued from page 23

Munzert back as Secretary. A big thank you to Teresa Bureson for her help and work as Treasurer. Mr. Smokey Culver has stepped up to take on the Treasurer's role. With the New Year comes another round of Cowboy gatherings and it's so encouraging to see so many of the wordsmiths' members participating, if not headlining. Lastly I'd like to wish all WMA members best wishes for the New Year. I hope your holidays were spent surrounded by family and friends while the sounds of Western music filled the air. May God Bless and keep you always.

YOUTH CHAPTER

Coordinator: Jane Leche
rangerjane@rocketmail.com

Congratulations to Youth Chapter member Mikki Daniel, 2016 Female Performer of the Year! This is Mikki's last year with the Youth Chapter and the WMA has watched her grow into a very accomplished singer, songwriter and musician. Jeneve Rose Mitchell took home the 2016 Crescendo Award and Olivia Morgayne and Leah Sawyer won the Harmony Award, Youth Division. Other Youth Chapter members rocked the convention in several showcases and jams throughout the weekend. The WMA Youth Chapter continues to grow thanks to local state chapters, festival organizers, parents and guardians and

the WMA Board and staff. There were 20 Youth Chapter members and 2 new members in attendance at the WMA Convention this year. Also, kudos to Johnny Neill and Ernie Martinez for taking time out of their busy schedules to host an excellent coaching session on fiddle, guitar and general performance for our up and coming young performers, and to Stan and Alma Tussing for their continued generous support to the youth program at the convention. As always, festival organizers are encouraged to host a youth stage and youth workshops at their festivals and state Chapters are urged to support their local Youth Chapter members by providing performance opportunities or events for youth to participate in and continuing to promote western music and poetry in local schools. Also, donations to the *Youth Education Scholarship Fund* are greatly appreciated and support the growth of our young performers. More information on the Youth Chapter can be found at: <http://www.westernmusic.org/youth-chapter> or contact Jane Leche, Youth Chapter Coordinator at rangerjane@rocketmail.com. 🐾

★ Thank you ★
★ WMA, ★
it is an honor
to be selected as
2016 Male Poet
of the Year.

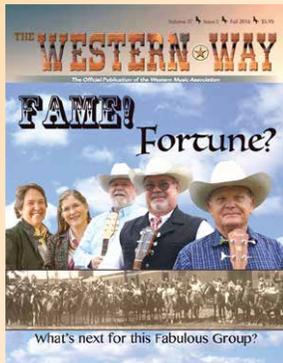


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**Western
Music
Association
Web Site**

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

www.westernmusic.org



For those who were unable to attend the Convention or at least enjoy the Friday Night Opry, you missed a clever, comedic presentation by Notable Exceptions and Jerry Hall and Trick Shot. It was their attempt for "gentle persuasion" of the Western Way to get on the Cover! Although it didn't completely persuade, it did garner enough smiles and laughter to prompt their "cover version" get in the magazine! Here is how Judy Coder explains their version of "Cover of the Western Way."

"We performed 'Cover of the Western Way' by permission from Donnie Blanz, who wrote and performed it for the WMA gathering in Wichita in 2003. The original version, "The Cover of 'Rolling Stone'" is a song written by Shel Silverstein and first recorded by American rock group Dr. Hook & the Medicine Show. It was a big success for them; it peaked at number six on the U.S. pop charts for two weeks on March 17-24, 1973. As the song was riding high on the charts, the magazine acquiesced to Dr. Hook's request -- sort of. The March 29, 1973 cover of Rolling Stone did feature the band, but in caricature, rather than in a photograph. Also, the group's name was not used; instead the caption read simply, "What's-Their-Names Make the Cover."

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

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WRAPPIN' IT UP

REX ALLEN DAYS, WILLCOX, AZ

by Theresa O'Dell

Willcox, AZ – the proclaimed “cattle capital of the world” – was the home of 65th annual Rex Allen Days September 30-October 2. The warm fall days and the cooler evenings, the historic buildings, and the local cowboys and cowgirls provided a wonderful setting for the event.



Willcox, AZ

Interim WMA President, Marvin O'Dell, and this Editor were invited guests to the event. Marvin represented the Association at the Willcox Cowboy Hall of Fame induction banquet where two local folks were added to the Cowboy Hall of Fame which is housed in the Rex Allen Museum. Marvin was also asked to be the Grand Marshall of the Parade held on Saturday



Marvin O'Dell as Grand Marshall

morning. Other honored guests included the Mayor and his wife, and of course, Rex Allen Jr. The streets



Mayor and Mrs Robert Irvin

were lined with adults and children from Willcox and the surrounding communities.

Special musical guests for the event included Carol Markstrom, Buck Helton and Rex Allen, Jr. Rex also



Carol Markstrom on Stage



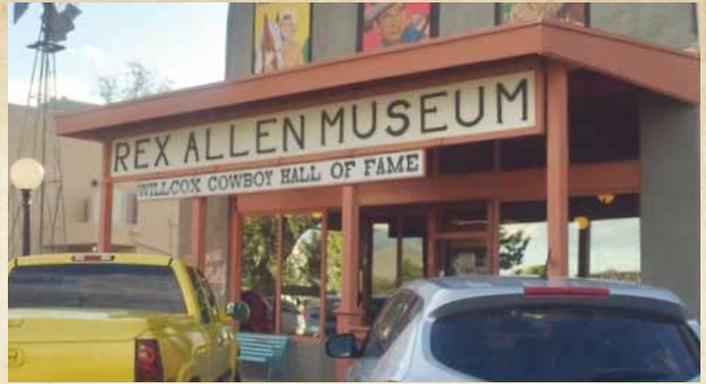
Rex Allen, Jr. on Stage

conducted a wonderful outdoor Q&A session that was well-attended and allowed the event visitors to get “up close and personal” with him, asking lots of questions about his life as a celebrity kid growing up in Hollywood and his plans for the future after his announced “retirement.” (Do western performers ever really retire?)



Rex Allen in Q&A Session

Willcox, AZ is a wonderful setting for any western gathering. An especially notable place to visit is the Rex Allen Museum which is home to lots of film memorabilia



Rex Allen Museum, Willcox, AZ

from Rex, Sr., as well as a wonderful display showcasing Rex, Jr.'s colorful life. It was a pleasant place to relax in the afternoon as Carol Markstrom and others



Carol Markstrom and Friends Jam

provided a music jam. Another must-see place to visit is the Friends of Marty Robbins Museum also in Willcox.



Friends of Marty Robbins Museum, Willcox, AZ

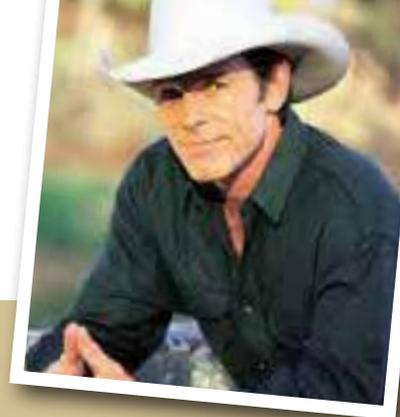
This privately owned/funded showplace belonging to Juanita Buckley is a treasure chest of Marty memorabilia! Both Museums are open year-round and worth the trip!

Chris LeDoux

His Legacy Lives On

(Based on an Interview with Chris' son, Ned LeDoux)

By Shannon Cole – Used by permission



Some cowboy legends seem like myths because the memories remembered or the stories told are portrayed so deeply.

Born on October 2, 1948 in Biloxi, Mississippi. Chris LeDoux was loved by many; sadly his life was taken home to the Lord on March 9, 2005 in Casper, Wyoming by a rare form of cancer at a young age of 56. Growing up with a father who was an Air force Pilot, LeDoux traveled the world with his family when he was just a boy. He dreamed of being a rodeo champ one day, he looked up to rodeo stars and sang along with Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings. Later, as his success began to grow, he was lead to follow his heart in country music and rodeo. There, he found who he was; a tough cowboy and a talented country artist. His many poems became the lyrics to some of his most remembered songs we know and love today. Cowboys and rodeo fans would buy his 8 tracks he sold off the back of his tailgate. Ledoux's passion for rodeo reflected in his music, songs like "8 Second Ride" or "Look at you girl" became some of our all time favorites. His music captured the spirit of the American West and the hearts of millions of faithful fans that were wowed at every concert he played. LeDoux even played the Grand Ol' Opry in Nashville.

Long before his music career, LeDoux began competing in junior rodeos in Texas when he was just a Buckaroo barely in boots. The seriousness of this young man leads him to believe that he would become a world champ and a well known rodeo cowboy. LeDoux won the world title in bare-back riding in 1976. His titles earned him four qualified rides to the National Finals Rodeo. After numerous wins, awards and dedication, he was inducted into the Rodeo Hall Of Fame in 2005. LeDoux once said "The road to Heaven is a hell of a ride."

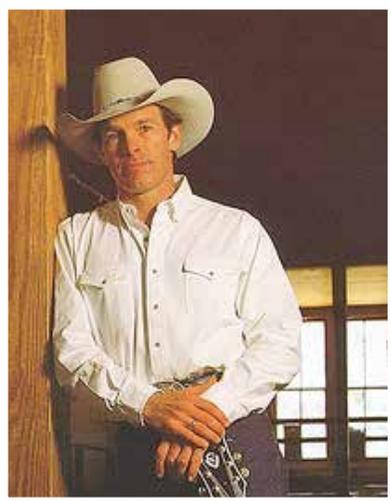
Back on the ranch in Wyoming, LeDoux's home is filled with

priceless photographs hung on the walls, saddles, worn out chaps and gold buckles that glisten from the soft light in the room where his fame is displayed. His gentle spirit brings his family comfort and beloved memories of their life together.

Despite being famous, LeDoux was very well grounded, naturally gifted and knew his heart belonged in Wyoming where the roots grew deep. LeDoux's music career brought him fame and recognition outside the rodeo world. He retired his worn out leather chaps in the early 80's to focus on home, ranching and his musical journey. LeDoux lived a blessed life, nestled quietly for many years on his family ranch in beautiful Kaycee, Wyoming with the love of his life, Peggy and his 5 precious children, Ned, Clay, Will, Beau and Cindi. He taught each one of them to believe in their dreams, to treat other's the way they want to be treated and to lead by example.

Home was where is heart was when he was on the road; LeDoux was a true family man, a hero to his children and a blessing to his wife. The small community of Kaycee, Wyoming welcomed him as if he was one of their own. Down at the local diner, they talked about the price of cattle over the next rock and roll rodeo show. While the family sometimes traveled with him, he felt most comfortable at home gathered around talking to his children about how their day went at school. Sports played a big part in their lives and he was always interested in how well they played. "Above all my achievements, I want to be known as a good family man." His son, Ned says proudly, "And he was."

Recently, I sat down with one of Chris's sons, Ned LeDoux. He shared some heartwarming stories, timeless memories from childhood and how he carries on his father's legacy in his own life today. With a family of his own, Ned and his beautiful wife Morgan are tucked back along the countryside with their sweet boy Bronson. LeDoux began playing drums at age 5 and with musical inspirations he quickly learned he was gifted, he continued to play drums until the first time he discovered his voice at age 36. He would sneak up on stage and sing his favorite song, "Rodeo Man" as a tribute to his father, shortly after he passed. Inspired by the music of Chris LeDoux, Ned joined his father's band "Western Underground."



To honor a great American icon, the band would carry on the musical spirit of LeDoux. When I asked Ned what his greatest fear was, he replied "Getting up in front of an audience, but it wasn't too long before I realized, "People want to hear me sing, it makes me feel proud to sing my father's songs." Ned remembers some of the last words his father said "Play all the shows with your best, give it your all son." One

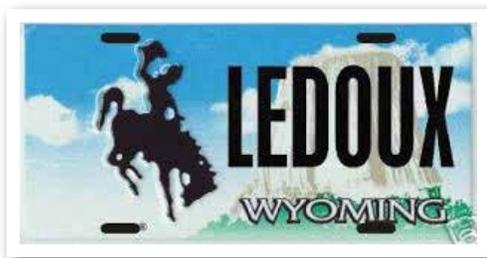


song that spoke straight to Ned's heart was "Song of Wyoming", "It was like beautiful poetry."

Ned's father set down a pretty good stone for his children, "I want to be just like him, if I end up being half the man, I'm good with that." Say's Ned. "My father passed down good work ethic in all of his children and now I can pass it down to my own son Bronson, to achieve, work for it and to dream big, become who you are meant to be."

One year, the boys and their dad built a barn. They would sing along to oldies but goodies and build miles and miles of fence. One of the things he remembers hearing was "If I need your help, I'll holler!" There's nothing like a good honest day of work. When I asked Ned what he missed the most he replied quietly "I miss his handshake, I really miss his handshake." "Sometimes I would find my father sitting alone in his truck or out in the barn singing, those are some of my best memories."

It's Christmas time in Wyoming at the LeDoux ranch. Winters are cold and frosty; Grandmother's gifts are beautifully wrapped with love under the tree, Christmas music playing quietly in the background and Grandchildren are snuggled in soft footed pajamas enjoying hot



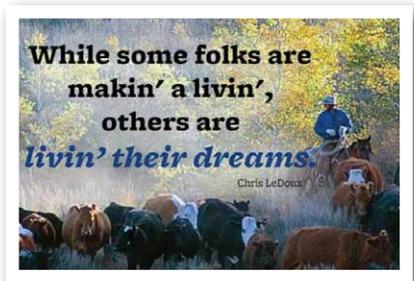
coco and buttered popcorn. The smell of pot roast and fresh baked pies fills the room. Family is gathered around laughing and sharing

priceless childhood memories when their dad was home. When I asked Ned what his favorite childhood memory was, he said, "Our family tradition was going into Wyoming's Big Horn Mountains, stomping through deep snow, cutting down our Christmas tree and bringing it home."

"There were so many treasured Christmas memories growing up with dad, LeDoux says, but this one was one of my

favorites. When I was only 6 years old my father said "Let's go out to the barn son, I got something to show you." "Being a young boy, I brought my cap pistol Santa brought me and followed dad to the barn. There behind the old barn doors stood my very first horse wrapped in a big red ribbon! Those are special moments shared with my dad that I will cherish in my heart forever."

When we lose a loved one, we sometimes wish we had said what was in our hearts before they go home to be with sweet Jesus. I asked Ned, "If you could send your father a message in heaven, what would it be?"



It got real quiet, and then he said "I know you're up there looking down, proud of who I've become, carrying on in your honor, singing the songs that you loved and wrote straight from your cowboy heart, being a good

father to my son Bronson, a strong loving husband to my wife, I learned from you dad, to be a man."

Faith in God includes Faith in His timing and Ned said, "I believe God needed a pretty good ranch hand." LeDoux said it best when he sang "God must be a Cowboy".

And in the end, a great American Author Louis L'Amour once said, "No memory is ever alone; it's at the end of a trail of memories, a dozen trails that each have their own associations." 

SHANNON COLE

Writer of the Year 2014

Creative Partner / Western Lifestyle Writer / Photographer

Shannon is a freelance writer and a former contributor to Real American Cowboy Magazine. She currently resides in Oakhurst, CA.



TUNE YOURSELF

Shoulder Exercises for (String) Musicians

Samantha Meyer Gallegos

As musicians, we are much like elite athletes—our ability to give our best performance rests on the health and strength of our bodies. And like athletes, we repeatedly perform movements that aren't natural for the human body. This results in pain that may hamper our ability to play, and nobody wants that!

As in our last article covering exercises for the hand and wrist for guitar players, these exercises are for a specific part of the body—the shoulder. Shoulder pain often becomes a problem for instruments that require specific positions, such as the fiddle. With your shoulders elevated and in unnatural positions, it doesn't take much for those muscles to become tight and painful! Thankfully, these exercises can help reduce and relieve that tightness and pain.

As with our last article, visiting the doctor should always be your first course of action when you feel pain. And if you feel any pain during an exercise, stop—it is your body telling you you are stretching too far. Go only to the point of mild discomfort. If tingling, numbness, or pain continues or increases, decrease the range of motion until your shoulder feels better. If the symptoms persist, stop the exercise because you may injure yourself further, then contact a doctor.

As a last note, you will get the best results from these exercises if you repeat them daily. However, doing the exercises every other day will be sufficient if daily repetition is too much or unfeasible.

1. Exercise: Pectoral Stretch

How to Do It: Find a narrow doorway or corner so you can stretch. Bend your elbows at 90 degrees and place your palms against both sides of the door frame or wall. Your elbows should be at shoulder level. Gaze forward and gently lean your upper body forward until you feel a gentle stretch—do not rotate your torso.

Note: This movement is for the pectoral muscles. You should feel the stretch across both sides of the chest. If you can't find a corner or narrow doorway, you can exercise one shoulder at a time—just make sure you do not rotate your torso.

Repeat: Hold for 30 seconds, working up to 60 seconds, as tolerated and without pain, repeating 2-3 times every day, if possible.

2. Upper Trapezius Stretch

How to Do It: Sit on a flat, firm surface with no back.

Clasp your arms behind you, then pull your arms gently to the right while tilting your head in the same direction until you feel a gentle stretch along the back of the left neck and down the shoulder. Repeat on the left side.

Note: The key is to keep your shoulders down while stretching—they should not rise.

Repeat: Hold for 30 seconds, working up to 60 seconds, as tolerated and pain free, repeating 2-3 times every day, if possible.

3. Rowing Exercise

How to Do It: Standing and facing forward with hands at your side, grasp a resistance band or cable pulley in each hand and bend your elbows to 90 degrees. Pull your arms straight back while focusing on squeezing your shoulder blades together, then slowly return to the starting position.

Note: This exercise strengthens the muscles that pull the shoulder blades together to help improve posture and positioning. It requires a resistance band at home or a cable pulley with light resistance at the gym. You can slowly increase the resistance of the band or pulleys as tolerated.

Repeat: Repeat 10 times, 2-3 sets, as tolerated and pain free, every day.

4. Push-Ups

How to Do It: This is a regular push-up and you should keep your elbows and arms at 90 degrees. Lower yourself slowly as far as you can without pain, making sure you squeeze your shoulder blades at the lowest point. If traditional push-ups from the floor are too difficult and/or cause pain, you can try to push up from a counter top or table top, which is an easier starting position.

Note: Make sure your shoulders do not go lower than your hands, and your body remains in a straight line.

Repeat: Repeat 10 times, or as many times as possible, every day.

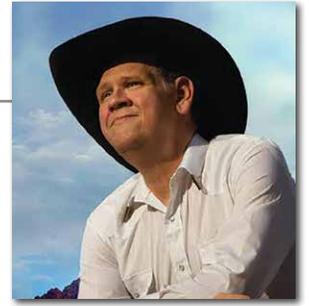
The above stretches can be an excellent part of your routine to keep your shoulders in tip-top shape and you in perfect playing order! Please keep in mind, these exercises should not be taken as medical advice. Please consult your physician before beginning any exercise regimen.

A very large and special thank you to Amy Martinez PT, DPT for her help and information!





GOLDEN NUGGETS



by Buck Helton

Little Old Sod Shanty On My Claim

Howdy friends and neighbors!

Ok, y'all grab your picks as we dig into the rich musical mountain once again and knock lose another golden nugget. This time we are looking into a song from our homesteading era, which started in 1862 with the Homestead Act by President Lincoln. This little ditty is called my little old sod shanty on my claim. The lyrics, so far as I have been able to trace them go all the way back to 1880 by a gent named Oliver Murray in what is today South Dakota. (In 1880 N. & S. Dakota were part of the Dakota territory, and not admitted to the Union until November of 1889.) The song tells of the joys and hardships of homesteading on the Great Plains. It was sung to the melody of Will Hayes song little old log cabin in de' lane. This was a popular composition of the time, and the tune was borrowed for many other songs as I've mentioned previously in past columns including the hymn lily of the valley, and little Joe the wrangler. The song began to be adapted almost as

soon as it was published, including such take offs as the Railroaders version the little red caboose behind the train, my little German home across the sea, the double breasted mansion on the square and my little' dobe casa among many others.

It has been published in many Western songbooks, by such authors a J.V.Allen, Lomax, Thorp, and White. It was first recorded by Chubby Baker on Silvertone record #25103 in 1927. The lonesome Cowboy John I. White, Jules Verne Allen and others covered it in 1929, and it was covered fairly widely throughout the 1930's. A 1936 recording by Slim Wilson is part of the American Folk life archive of the Library of Congress. Those who sing it today probably learned it as I did from Elton Britt's 1959 ABC / Paramount LP the wandering Cowboy. Only two verses are given there, but I've rounded up some of the many variants here for y'all as well. This is a delightful tune, and sure to tickle your audience both with its imagery and rich history

LITTLE OLD SOD SHANTY

(Oliver E. Murray)

*I am looking rather seedy now while holding down my claim
And my victuals are not always served the best
And the mice play shyly round me as I nestle down to rest
In my little old sod shanty on my claim*

*Chorus: The hinges are of leather and the windows have no glass
And the board roof lets the howling blizzards in
And I hear the hungry coyote as he slinks up through the grass
Round the little old sod shanty on my claim*

*But I rather like the novelty of living in this way
Though my bill-of-fare is often rather tame
And I'm happy as a clam on the land of Uncle Sam
In my little old sod shanty on my claim*

*My clothes are plastered o'er with dough, I'm looking like a fright
And everything is scattered round the room
Still I wouldn't give the freedom that I have out in the West
For the table of the old man's eastern home*

Chorus

*Still I wish some kind-hearted girl would pity on me take
And relieve me from the mess that I am in*

*The angel, how I'd bless her if this her home would make
In the little old sod shanty on my claim*

*We would make our fortunes on the prairies of the West
Just as happy as two lovers we'd remain
We'd forget the trials and troubles we endured at the first
In the little old sod shanty on our claim*

Chorus

*And if fate would bless us with now and then an heir
To cheer our hearts with honest pride and fame
Oh then we'd be contented for the toil we had spent
In the little old sod shanty we call home*

Chorus

That's about all the ore we can haul this time folks, but we'll be back soon with more musical meanderings and your suggestions are always welcome. Drop them to me at Buck@buckhelton.com.

'til next time.
Happy Trails!



Georgie Sicking



Much loved cowboy and National Corwifl Museum and Hall of Fame inductee Georgie Sicking passed away at the age of 95 on Nov 6, 2016. Georgie is claimed to be the only female cowboy to draw pay on Arizona's ORO Ranch, where she worked during WWII. In her words, "Some people had the idea that all you

had to do to be a cowgirl was put on a pretty dress and a pair of boots and a big hat and get a faraway look in your eyes... and you're a cowgirl. They've been kind of hard to educate."

Georgie grew up in the cowboy lifestyle and became one of the first women to gather wild cattle and horses in Arizona, soon becoming a legend in the area, riding, roping, branding mavericks and promoting the western way of life.

Georgie attended Elko's first Western Folklife Center National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in 1985, and appeared there and at many other gatherings over the years, into her nineties.

Hal Swift

(Reprinted by permission from cowboypoetry.com)



I am deeply saddened to learn of the passing of poet and writer Hal Swift on August 31, 2016. Hal, 88, was a long-time friend, active participant, and great supporter of CowboyPoetry.com.

Hal was an accomplished musician and played with Marty Robbins in their early days. He was inducted into the Nevada Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame in, 2005, recognized for

his professional broadcasting career of 40 years.

Hal Swift made many recordings of his poetry, which he liked to call "heritage poetry." His novel, "Ballad of a Small Town," is about 1864 Drytown, Utah Territory.

He is featured on "The BAR-D Roundup", reciting "Bill's in Trouble," by James Barton Adams on Volume Three and Volume Ten, and Charles Badger Clark Jr.'s "Jeff Hart" on Volume Five.

Read some of Hal Swift's poetry and more about him at www.cowboypoetry.com/halswift.htm.

Hal had a fall a week and a half ago and never recovered from surgery. He and his wife Carol had just moved into an assisted living facility a few days before his fall.

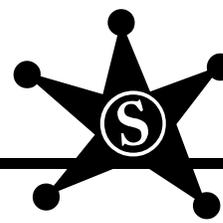
Mentor Williams



Mentor Williams, a music producer and songwriter who penned the hit "Drift Away," died Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2016, in Taos, New Mexico. He was 70. His brother, the singer-songwriter Paul Williams, reported that he died after battling lung cancer.

Mentor Williams' song "Drift Away," recorded by singer Dobie Gray, reached No. 5 on the Billboard charts in 1973. A version of the song, performed by Uncle Cracker, reached No. 9 on the Billboard charts 30 years later, in 2003. Williams also rewrote part of the song for his longtime partner, country music singer Lynn Anderson, who recorded a gospel version for her final album before she died in 2015. Mentor and Lynn attended a number of our WMA Conventions and in 2007 he and Lynn performed his most famous song "Drift Away" ("giveme the beat boys and free my soul...I wanta get lost in your rock and roll and drift away"). He also wrote "When We Make Love" for Alabama and "A Few Old Country Boys" for George Jones & Randy Travis.

Rick Huff reports that Mentor told he and Mary Ryland that one of his proudest moments was getting to ride in the New Mexico State Fair Parade where he and Lynn rode on horseback with the WMA entry that year. 🐾

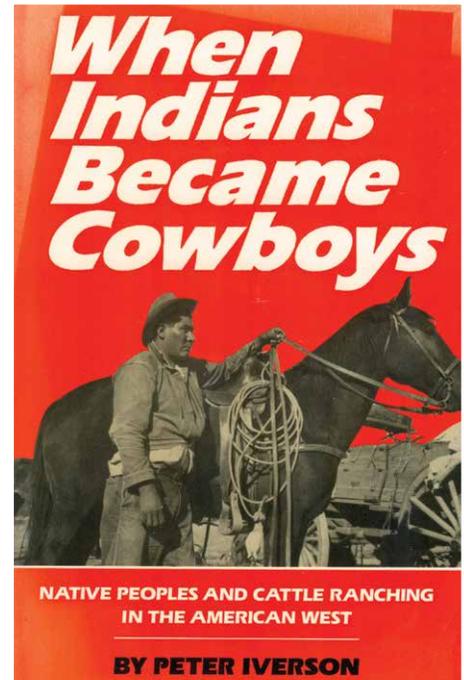


Western Music is most often acoustic in its core instrumentation. Its lyrics are typically about the lives, loves, lore, locales, legends and legacy of the old and new West, its peoples or Cowboying worldwide.

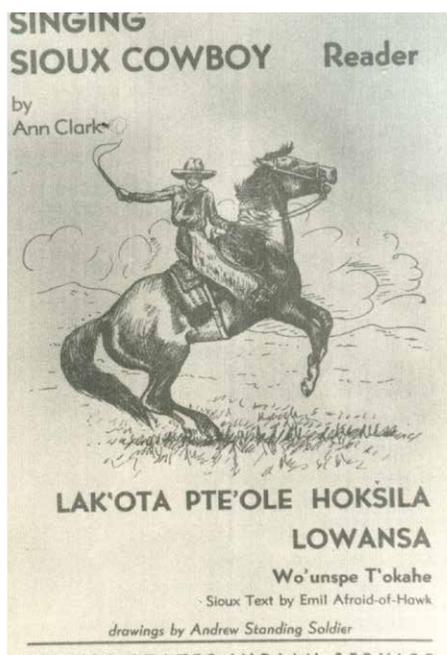
Tips? Comments? Ideas for the column, send to: Rick Huff, P.O. Box 8442, Albuquerque, NM 87198-8442 or bestofthewestswcp.com

Y'know how some things you experience will trigger other memories? That's how it was with me recently. For the Fall 2016 Western Way I reviewed the soundtrack from the annual Gathering of Nations Powwow, stating in that review that the Western story most assuredly includes the Indian story. That triggered the memory! I recalled a book I had owned, and lost, but was able to acquire online in time for this column! It's an out-of-print 1994 book from the University of Oklahoma Press: Peter Iverson's eye-opening "When Indians Became Cowboys!" It's subtitled "Native Peoples and Cattle Ranching In The American West." If ever there were any further proof needed to support my argument...read on!

In this scholarly yet enjoyable read, Iverson delves into little known facts. In adapting to the living realities of the time, many Indians adopted the cowboy way because the cowboy culture and values more closely resonated with their own than did the general way of the Anglo invaders. Try this one out! Indian "cowboys" were already running cattle operations by the late 1700s! Decades before the famed Texas cattle drives to the Kansas railhead, Indian nations (notably the Choctaw and Creek) were already selling beef products to markets as far distant as the Caribbean! Even Iverson's chapter titles say a lot. He covers Indian Cattle Ranching In The Northern Plains, Oklahoma and the Southwest. He hits the New Deal Years on up through the latter part of the 20th Century. But here's the part of all this that may be of the most immediate interest to the WMA. The Indian cattle and rodeo cultures produced, and continue to produce, both Indian Cowboy Poetry and Indian Cowboy



and Rodeo songs! You will hear an example of the latter in a very special showcase planned for next November's WMA Convention that I strongly encourage you to attend. In better fulfilling the directives of the WMA Mission Statement, we need to celebrate Cowboy Culture wherever it exists...in particular two on the North American continent that have been all but overlooked in the past...the Indian Cowboy Culture and the Florida Cracker Culture. Both still thrive! Thanks to efforts in the past decade from artists like Patty Clayton, the long entrenched Hawaiian Paniolo has begun to receive proper recognition. We will explore other Cowboy Cultures, and their music will be presented in full Western arrangements during the 2017 Showcase entitled "The Western World Revealed!" In addition to American Indian and Florida Cracker songs we will present songs from the Cowboy Cultures of Hawaii, Mexico, Australia, Canada, Tuva and Ireland with Cowboy salutes from Japan, England, Germany, China and Luxembourg!! The showcase is designed to further open our eyes, minds and arms to the wider Western World that truly exists out there. The great songs of the Golden Age of the singing cowboy have transcended away from the B-Western context because they are worthy songs on their own. The B-Western does not carry the weight of reality that the songs do. Accepting and celebrating the reality of the Cowboy worldwide will further help us distinguish Western's true identity and lineage, separating it from Country and the various Americana genres with which Western invariably becomes confused and entangled. This, people, is a good thing!!



TWW: How did you come up with the idea for that song?

CJB: When I first came to Nashville, I noticed how muddy and dirty the old Cumberland River was. I thought, “You could wash all day in that water and never get clean.” The rivers and streams out west are a lot cleaner, especially the ones coming off the mountains. So, I made a song out of that idea. When the boys came over to the office and said, “Joe, we just cut a hit song of yours”, I asked, “Which one is that?” When they told me it was “Muddy Water”, I said, “Well, I can write a hundred of those in the next two months.” Been trying ever since. Elvis recorded that song, too, you know.

TWW: We think our readers would find a book about your life to be very interesting. Have you ever thought about putting it all down in print?

CJB: I have and have started it but have never got it organized into a regular book. I would like to do it but just stay so busy that it never happens.

TWW: Let’s talk a little bit about a television show that you were involved in for a few years – something called “Hee-Haw.” Did you have any idea when you started with that show that it would last as long as it did?

CJB: No we didn’t, and New York and all the big wigs panned it as another hay baler. Now it’s been on since 1968, counting the reruns.



At home on the ranch

TWW: We sure do; that one was always good for a laugh. Before we wrap up our time together, we want to ask you what made you decide to go back into the studio after all these years to record your very successful album “Trail Jazz?” After your western and gospel works, this seems to be quite a shift in your musical direction.

CJB: I have always loved western swing and had a few cuts in the can of that kind of music. So, I finally got around to cutting a few more and put it all into “Trail Jazz.” It’s been 20 years in the making. That’s why I put a young picture on the cover. That’s what I looked like when I started the album.



Cowboy Joe and The Babcocks

TWW: Were Buck Owens and Roy Clark easy to work with? Or could they get demanding at times?

CJB: Buck and Roy were both easy to get along with and were very good to us. It was actually like a big family, and it was a blessing to be part of that show. We took the folks away from their troubles every Saturday night for a little while to a place called Cornfield County, where the girls were all pretty, the boys were funny, and where we laughed at our troubles. “Gloom, despar, and agony on me.” Remember that song?



On the Hee-Haw set

TWW: Well, congratulations, Joe, on all your success in life and in your music and songwriting. And we can’t tell you how much we appreciate you taking the time to share a little bit about your life with us.

CJB: It’s been a pleasure, and I so enjoyed meeting a lot of the folks out in Albuquerque. The WMA is a wonderful organization, and I was so encouraged to see the young musicians coming up and doing our kind of music. 🐾



BUFFHAM'S BUFFOONERY

by Les Buffham



Table Linen

Some of us old bachelors I reckon have some undiscerning ways and we worry about what is practical rather than what's pretty.

For example, once in a while I'll use an old newspaper for a tablecloth. They are supposed to be sanitary and it sure does save on clean up and the wash.

That brings to mind a visit I had a while back when I was poundin' the pavement a lot. I stopped in to see an old cowpuncher friend of mine in Washington. (That's Washington without the DC -- don't have any friends there.) He was glad to see me as I was him and we went right in to gabbin' as we had a lot to ketch up on. His last name was Mitchell and everybody just called him Mitch. I'd worked with him in a California feedlot for a time a few years back and he was a good hand. He rode some good horses of his own rather than the company's. He could tell what a cow critter was thinkin' before it thunk it and I learned a lot from him. He could work a lame or sick steer out of a pen of three hundred and never stir them up. That was quite a feat sometimes 'cause you had to watch the open gate

at the same time to keep the whole bunch from spillin' out.

He was also a great cook if you weren't thinkin' something fancy, but his cowhand's dream meal like good biscuits, steak and beans deserved a five-star rating. He put on a bait of grub (as us ol' timers say) and we did some more ketchin' up while we ate. After we had filled our bellies I was helpin' him to clean up. He was using a newspaper for a tablecloth and as it was looking well used and kinda grungy, I wadded it up and went lookin' for the trash and another newspaper. When he saw what I was doin' he had a "double ring tailed" fit. Well, you'd thought I'd killed his best dog or sat on his hat! He hollers, "What the h--- did you do that for?!" I told him it didn't look too appetizin' and maybe it could stand changin'. He jerked it out of my hand and put it back on the table and started smoothin' the wrinkles out with his palm. I was kinda dumbfounded. He calmed down a little and I asked him, "Mitch, why's it such a big deal?" He gave me a kinda blank look and said, "I wasn't done readin' it yet."



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In The Spotlight...

by Marvin O'Dell

...In the fall of 2015, **Patty Clayton** was contacted by Maelstrom LLC, an independent film company out of Los Angeles, CA, requesting the use of her original song "Happy Trails To You" and her recording of that song as source music in a scene for the upcoming movie *The Spearhead Effect*. The film is not a western but rather a psychological thriller "that will have you sitting at the edge of your seat!" The trailer and more details about the movie can be viewed at www.thespearheadeffect.com. There is no official release date yet, but Patty is hoping it will hit the big screen in 2017.

...Two full length movies have been presented at the International Equus Film Festival - a documentary titled *V... The Legacy of Sheila Varian*, a finalist in the full length film division, and *Out of the Wild* another full length award-winning film - that have something in common. Both feature music written by **Juni Fisher**. Also - *True West* magazine has named Juni "Best Solo Western Musician" for their 2017 Best of the West Awards.

...**Mikki Daniel** recently completed her first semester at McLennen College. In addition to school and her regular performance schedule, she also had the honor of filming for a new series for RIDE TV called "Unbridled Song," a new television show about singer/songwriters who have been influenced by their equestrian backgrounds. A one-hour episode about Mikki will air in 2017 on RIDE's Dish Network. Mikki has also been selected to perform her western/western swing music for a new family movie, "Texas Honky Tonk Nights", to be filmed in 2017.

...The latest release from the **Broken Chair Band** (Todd, Melinda, and Dani Sue Carter) is titled "Second Chances." The high-energy project (called "Americowboyfolkgrass"

by the Carters) contains seven original songs, two co-writes with award-winning songwriter **Doug Figgs**, and a fiddle tune ("Old Joe Clark") featuring Dani Sue on the vocal.

...In January, **Andy Hedges** released a new album of cowboy poems written by poets other than himself. It's his first cowboy poetry album in 15 years and is titled *Cowboy Recitations*. Andy also launched a podcast in January. Called *Cowboy Crossroads with Andy Hedges*, each monthly episode features a conversation with a special guest from the cowboy poetry and music world and beyond.

...**The Cowboy Way** (Jim Jones, Doug Figgs and Mariam Funke) released a brand new self-titled album in November. The three prime performers have been working together consistently for over a year.

...**Eli Barsi** is performing a 25-date tour in Germany through January and February, presenting her brand of western music, making new fans, and connecting with radio and TV. John Cunningham has joined her as bass player, tour manager, and driver. As a bonus, Eli's tour agent scheduled several meetings with record companies and festival talent buyers.

...In December, **Ron Christopher** released a new CD of original songs titled *Borderline Career*. Not a cowboy album, the CD, a mixture of rockabilly, country, blues, and Americana songs, reflects Ron's interest in other forms of music. However, he does have a new Western-themed CD titled *Outside the Fence* due to be released soon. A single, titled "Dakota", has been released as a fund-raiser for the Standing Rock Indian tribe.

...**Royal Wade Kimes** the Gentleman Outlaw, has a new album coming soon titled *Love of a Cowboy*. He is also announcing that the Pro Cowboy Country Artist Association award show will be held on October 14th in Fort Smith, AR.

... **Pioneer Pepper & The Sunset Pioneers** have released a new Christmas album, *Christmas Songs Cowboy Style*, a collection of traditional Christmas tunes done in the style of the old singing cowboys. Check it out along with their latest western release, *Wagon Load of Western Songs*, at www.sunsetpioneers.com. They were also heard on ESPN's Monday Night Football in October for the Sights and Sounds of Arizona feature. One of Pepper's original cowboy songs, "Sunset Farewell," was heard in the segment.

... While appearing at the Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival this upcoming April, **Jon Chandler** has been asked to a special performance on Friday, April 20, at the California Fiesta De Rancho Camulos National Historic Landmark. All proceeds will benefit the nonprofit museum's mission of historical preservation and education

... **Almeda Bradshaw** released her fourth project, *Tribute*, in December. The two-song project pays tribute to law enforcement men and women, specifically America's Sheriff, Larry Dever, and to our great American icon of the west, the Cowboy. Almeda also performed recently during the WNFR in Las Vegas, where she played for Reba McEntire, Red Steagall, Moe Bandy, Lacy J Dalton, and over 900 rodeo dignitaries at the World of Rodeo Reunion & Gold Card Gathering held at The Orleans Hotel and Casino.

...**Bill McCallie** recently celebrated 23 years of broadcasting the Cowboy Jubilee Radio show by doing a special live performance that raised \$1300 for the Hunter Worley Foundation.

...**Sam DeLeeuw** is working on an aggressive project

of a CD and book combo. It is currently titled *Ladies, Horses, and Cowboys*. Watch for a Spring of 2017 release.

...The fourth novel by **Jim Jones**, titled *The Big Empty*, was released in December. The book was released by Five Star Publishing.

...**The Carolyn Sills Combo** released a new holiday single in December: Ghost Reindeer in the Sky! An original arrangement that combines the classic "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" with the timeless Stan Jones tune "Ghost Riders in the Sky", the song created quite a buzz over the holidays.

...**Horse Crazy Cowgirl Band** will give their final performance in March "with hearts filled with gratitude" for 17 wonderful years of harmony. Lauralee Northcutt, Virginia Bennett, and Emele Clothier began the group in 1999. In 2015, they were voted the Western Music Association Group of the Year. The ladies will play music nonstop through March before wrapping things up.

...**Notable Exceptions** recently recorded a children's song written by new WMA member **Sherry Diamond**. With this recording as a template, there are plans for a children's book, an interactive web site, and even a movie short.

...Colorado artist **Lynne Belle Lewis** has released a new CD titled "Thru My Horse's Ears" featuring 16 songs, two of which she wrote. **Marilyn Kroeker** joins her on the **Juni Fisher** tune "The Same River" and on "Western Moon", written by Nadine Van Hees. Gary Cook of the **Bar D Wranglers** provides harmony vocals.

...The children of WMA's **Peggy Malone** are making headlines in the movie industry. Her son, Brian, won another Emmy for a documentary called "Reengineering Sam" (about an Indy race car driver paralyzed from a racing accident). And her daughter, Beth, plays an angel in the upcoming Robert DeNiro film "The Comedian." 🐾

MOVIE REVIEW

By J.P. Devine,

A Waterville writer and former stage and screen actor.

(Submitted by Gary McMahan. Reprinted by permission.)

The first thing the eye is drawn to in Douglas Morrione's amazing film "Everything in the Song is True" is the startling beauty of the great American countryside that the young writer/director, a Winslow native, has painted of the plains, the mountains, arroyos and canyons. It's a panorama that even the great Frederic Remington would have envied.

You can hear the wind, the crush of stone beneath the hooves of horses, blending with the music of the guitars and voices, the music of the names, San Miguel, Lubbock, El Paso, Las Vegas, New Mexico.

EVERYTHING IN THE SONG IS TRUE

2014

Documentary, biography, music

Four iconic cowboys whose music, art and way of life sustain vital connection to the folk culture that defines the American frontier. As modern life continues to encroach on the wide open spaces, their stories take on a new relevance. Their songs and deeds speak to a powerful connection to the land, the animals and a way of life that is unique to the United States and revered around the world.

Length: 80 minutes

Director: Douglas Morrione

Writer: Douglas Morrione

Screens: Thursday, 6:30 p.m., Waterville Opera House; 3:30 p.m., Friday, Waterville Opera House.

For more information: www.MIFF.org.

photo-store

Search photos available for purchase: Photo Store

You almost expect that any moment Jimmy Stewart, Tommy Lee Jones and Bob Duval will ride into focus.

"Everything" is technically a documentary, but before long it's clear that this is film, clear and sweet, as real and evocative as any Sam Peckinpah or John Ford film. It has taste and texture. It is art.

We meet the new American cowboys here, men who do real things with horses, such as actually shoeing them, grooming and loving them, as the indispensable comrades they are.

This week at the 19th annual Maine International Film Festival, I met Morrione, the young man from Winslow, of all places, who came to town and introduced me to a few of the remaining genuine cowboys who do amazing things with a guitar, rope and horse sense.

Morrione, a son of Maine, and Nick Goldfarb, of New York, have put together a spectacular documentary.

"Everything in the Song is True" is about a group of modern American men who every year gather up on the Quinlan Ranch in the mountains near Chama, New Mexico, for a trail ride.

These are not just "weekend warriors" in a major photo op. This is nothing less than a posse of poets, song writers and guitar pluckers, as leathery as their saddles, as genuine as their Western accents, who for a piece of time step away from their daily lives, saddle up and ride back into time.

They are so real, these men, that without making an effort, they, by the grace of their talents and joy, take us with them.

Morrione came away from his travels with them with an incredible beautifully photographed feature-length documentary film about four iconic men and one woman, who, among a band of followers, have carved out a peaceful plateau of part-time pilgrims.

Our guide through the film is Gary McMahan, who narrates and is a renowned cowboy singer and poet, comic and champion yodeler. McMahan, a native of Greeley, Colorado, is the real thing.

He has made his living from cowboy-ing to guiding and performing. Gary can brand, calve, rope, ride broncs, fence, hay, shoe horses, pack and drive teams better than any movie Westerner.

We meet Brice Chapman, one of the world's most talented trick ropers and horse trainers, and a truly amazing iron sculptor who creates incredible art.

We're introduced to Yvonne Hollenbeck, a fourth-generation rancher, award-winning poet and quilt maker, who looks as though she stepped out of John Ford's "The Searchers."

Spanning the wide open spaces from Colorado to New Mexico to Texas and the Dakotas, filmmaker Morrione "rode shotgun" with these characters for nearly two years to capture the sights and songs that are unique to the American experience. The result is one of the most beautifully filmed documentaries ever made about the real modern West and its working balladeers.

"Everything in the Song is True" is everything that's good about America, and young American filmmakers like Morrione, a son of Maine who rediscovered the West.





O.J. Sikes

O.J. Sikes

Reviews



A Musical Note From OJ...

ATTENTION PERFORMERS: *One of the staff members of the British Archive of Country Music (BACM) has a weekly radio show on Radio Caroline and would welcome new Western CD releases for play on his show. Performers, please add this address to your mailing list: British Archive of Country Music, 451 Folkestone Road, Dover, Kent, CT 17 9JX, UK.*

All of **Gene Autry's** films &TV episodes have been restored and released on DVD (you can find them via GeneAutry.com), but it's still fun to see the old movies on TV, once in a while. And to know that one is coming on at a particular day / time is especially nice. Sometimes it's nice to have a little dependability in our lives. So it was a disappointment (to me, at least) when the Westerns Channel started showing Gene's movies at odd times on different days.

Now, that's changed (and I hope the change remains in place at least until this issue goes to press). As I write, a Gene Autry double feature now plays on the Westerns Channel every Sunday, roughly from 11:00am till 1:30pm (Eastern). And sometimes there's a double feature on Saturdays at the same time, perhaps an Autry followed by an **Eddie Dean** film. Yep, four different movies each weekend, so you can plan your day accordingly, or you can use whatever device your TV service provider offers, to capture the movie(s) you're most interested in for viewing at a more convenient hour.

So Gene Autry fans are set! But there's so much more good material in the singing cowboy movie genre, it's a real shame that we can't enjoy that, too, on TV. It might take a little work to locate good, uncut prints of many of **Roy Rogers'** films, but it would be worth the effort. When the original prints were cut to fit the one-hour TV time slots in the early 1950's, the first footage to go was usually the music. After all these years, it's the music that we're usually looking for!

The new Warner Brothers Archive series of DVDs has released pristine prints of 15 **Jimmy Wakely** films in their *Monogram Cowboy Collection* series. This is important because good copies of Wakely's singing cowboy films had been well-nigh impossible to find before this DVD series came out. For years, lots of folks spent lots of money, hoping in vain to find prints that weren't washed out. But the image quality of these new releases is amazingly good! They're available online, but if you

have difficulty finding them, send me an e-mail.

Moving to a different subject, recently, I've read interesting new ideas, opinions and proposals regarding the definition of Western music. That has helped me form a few thoughts on what might be taken into account when formulating a definition (although I'll leave that formulation to someone else). In the last issue, Rick referred to a comment from **Don Edwards** about how they used to call it Country & Western. That's true, and there's a story about how the two became separated in the minds of many. But basically, the two have a lot of similarities. Both are essentially rural, although you'll find cities mentioned in both, at times, like Detroit City, Bakersfield, Tombstone and Dodge City. And both might be called "roots music," coming from the same "root system" that extends back to the British Isles, Africa and Mexico.

In both cases, the genre has changed over time, but thanks to recording technology, if the listener prefers a particular "age" or decade, they can go back and choose songs from that era and enjoy them exclusively. This is great for the listener, but it makes defining the music extremely challenging because we're talking about a genre, the changes in which span a number of years. We may have favorite eras or styles, but it's not a static genre.

And it gets more complicated when you find different styles being performed simultaneously in the same decade. For example, **Chris LeDoux** didn't sound anything like **The Reinsmen** or Don Edwards, but they

Continued on page 40

To submit your CD for review, send to:

O.J. Sikes, 327 Westview Avenue,
Leonia, NJ 07605-1811
Required: Album cost, S&H cost, Address, Phone
Number
Questions? You can email O.J. at osikes@nj.rr.com

were contemporaries in the late 1980's and early 90's. If you're looking for neat patterns of consistency, it's easy to get frustrated about this, but if you see the glass half full, you'll find that there's room for variety, i.e. each of these had/have loyal audiences and many fans enjoyed all three (and more).

There's a difference in ways people listen to music, and it has implications for formulating a definition. Listeners focus on the lyrics or they focus on the melody, instrumentation and arrangement. Everyone hears both, but listeners seem to differ when it comes to their focus. Many people are first drawn to the lyrics. That's likely to be true for poets, for example.

Personally, I automatically focus on the melody, instruments and arrangement, which is why I see the need for definitions to go beyond the lyrics. There are wonderful examples of Western imagery found in music

played without lyrics, e.g. Melachrino's "Northwest Trail" and "One-arm Bandit," Gilbert's "The Rifleman," Bernstein's "The Magnificent Seven" and Morricone's "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly," for example, and most of us don't need Adamson's lyrics to appreciate Grofe's "On the Trail" from his "Grand Canyon Suite."

Instrumentation may run from a single guitar to a symphony orchestra, but the key to understanding what you're listening to is how the instruments are played and arrangements are written. Remember how Gene Autry's steel guitarist, **Frankie Marvin**, developed a style, used later by many others, that clearly distinguishes between Western and Western swing or country music? In sum, there's a lot to consider when trying to establish a definition. There may be instances of overlap between country, Western and pop music, but if the genres are to remain identifiable as such, as Rick pointed out in his last column, we need to keep clarifying for new audiences, that each has its core, and that's what we don't want to lose. 🐾

CUSTER'S LAST BAND

By Elliot Johnson



We'd all agree that music has tremendous power. Young David played skillfully on the harp for King Saul whenever the king was depressed by an evil spirit. During the Civil War, both armies were led to battle by drums and fifes—

sometimes playing the same tunes. And one Civil War hero, who later became more famous for losing his life and his 7th Cavalry, retained his own personal band!

In 1873, George Armstrong Custer and his wife Libbie attended a ball where Felix Vinatieri directed the band. The "Boy General," offered Felix a warrant officer's position as chief musician. Vinatieri proudly accepted and rode with the 7th Cavalry on the Yellowstone and Black Hills expeditions of 1873 and 1874.

Vinatieri was a classically-trained musician who had become a minor violin prodigy in Italy by age 10. At age 20, he had directed an Italian military band and played the coronet. In 1859, Vinatieri immigrated to Boston, where he taught music.

When the Civil War began, Felix enlisted as bandmaster with the Union forces. After the war, he was sent to Dakota Territory, where he settled in Yankton and married 16-year-old Anna Frances in 1871. Joseph Ward, a pastor who founded Yankton College, married the couple.

In 1876, Vinatieri's band led

Custer's 7th Cavalry to the Little Bighorn River in a futile attempt to return hostiles to the Indian agencies. But when Arikara scouts disrupted a concert with death songs, Custer confiscated the band's horses for more troops. He sent the musicians upriver on a steamboat named the Far West.

What a favor! A few days later, Vinatieri and his band on the Far West nursed 52 wounded survivors from Reno Hill. Custer and his entire unit had lost their lives at the Little Bighorn. His death left Felix without a cultural mentor and the musician resumed civilian life, giving music lessons, and conducting. He was the best classically-trained musician between the Mississippi and California until the 1890s. Vinatieri died of pneumonia on December 5, 1891.

The American west was so fond of classical music that a great musician could make a living in Dakota Territory. Interestingly, Indianapolis Colts' placekicker Adam Vinatieri, who was born in Yankton and has played in six Super Bowls, is the great-great-grandson of Custer's

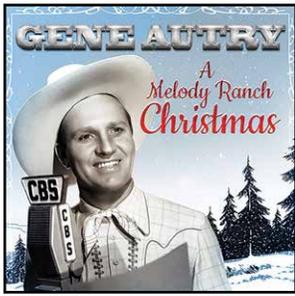
Continued on page 49

★ ★ ★

A MELODY RANCH CHRISTMAS

Gene Autry, The Cass County Boys, Pat Buttram

Varese Sarabande 302 067 457 8



“Everybody” knows Gene Autry was sometimes referred to as “The Christmas Cowboy.” This was because of his phenomenal success with his recordings of “Here Comes Santa Claus,” inspired when he heard the shouts of eager youngsters along the Christmas parade route, and “Rudolph the Red-Nosed

Reindeer,” a song he recorded in one take, almost as an afterthought, at the end of a session. These Christmas classics were recorded in 1947 & ’49, respectively.

But most folks tend to forget that Gene had been singing Christmas songs on his radio show, at least since 1942, when he sang “White Christmas” for the first time on Sergeant Gene Autry, the war time version of his Melody Ranch show. That was the year Bing Crosby recorded his classic version, and Gene, recognizing the importance of the song for the season, continued to sing it on the air every December until the Melody Ranch show ended in the 1950’s!

Following the success of “Rudolph,” Gene recorded a number of new Christmas songs over the next few years. When his office was putting together this collection of Christmas songs Gene sang on the radio, they were looking for songs Gene obviously liked to sing, and “White Christmas” topped the list. It was a surprising discovery, because Gene never recorded it commercially!

This new CD is made-up of Christmas songs, both sacred and secular, that Gene sang on the air, including his first performance of “White Christmas.” And you’ll hear the only known medley of “Here Comes Santa Claus” and “Rudolph” as well! Even if you have all of Gene Autry’s Christmas albums, you’ll find recordings here of songs you’ve never heard him sing. And you’ll enjoy the Cass County Boys, the Pinafores and Pat Buttram in the warm Melody Ranch setting as well, every Christmas for years to come. Widely available online or call The Autry Museum store at (888) 412-8879.

★ ★ ★

MERL LINDSAY & HIS OKLAHOMA NIGHT RIDERS, UNISSUED PERFORMANCES VOL 1

Merl Lindsay

BACM CD D 541



Merl Lindsay was working in California when Bob Wills suggested that he name his Western Swing band, the Oklahoma Night Riders. The name stuck, and they returned to Oklahoma City to record for a couple of labels in the late 40’s. There are other CDs around

with many of the band’s commercial recordings, but this album contains previously unissued performances from demos and radio broadcasts, recorded 1948-1962.

Lindsay’s “sound” doesn’t necessarily copy other greats in Western Swing, although there are some similarities. You can detect the Wills influence, at times, and you’ll hear several tunes associated with Wills. But you’ll also find Pee Wee King’s “Slow Poke,” Irving Berlin’s “Marie,” popularized by Tommy Dorsey, Woody Herman’s “Woodchoppers Ball” and it’s a pleasant surprise to hear his vocalist Wanda Jackson, solo on Jimmy C. Newman’s “Cry, Cry Darlin’,” a departure from the big-band emphasis. But there are still more songs associated with the big band era, like “In the Mood,” that are given the Lindsay treatment, much as Bob Wills had done with his big band fairly early in his career.

If you listened to this band on the radio way back then, this CD’s especially for you. If you didn’t, but you’re a fan of vintage

Western swing, you, too, will want a copy for your collection. Contact VenerableMusic.com, phone (678) 232- 0268. 

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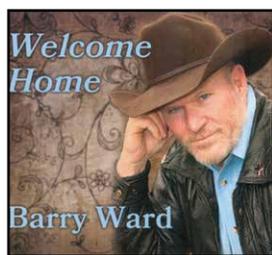
RICK HUFF'S BEST OF THE WEST REVIEWS

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

★ ★ ★

BARRY WARD

"Welcome Home"



Former WMA Male Performer Of The Year Barry Ward's newest release is one that

was obviously assigned a different mission than usual. There's less specific Western content here, but Bear's fans won't mind a bit.

The title track is a tough song about the cold shoulder accorded the Viet Nam-era vets when they returned from their war. And much of the CD is patriotic or religious in nature. Two of the cover songs offered are "North To Alaska" and John Denver's "Back Home Again," both considered to be Western (or close). One of the album picks is a Pony Express song from Dennis Goodwin & Jean Prescott called "Orphans Preferred." One of the Western picks from Barry's originals is "Lilacs In The Wind," but the power of some of his others is unarguable. Recommended. Fourteen tracks total.

CD: (available through www.BarryWardMusic.com)

★ ★ ★

BROKEN CHAIR BAND

"Second Chances"



Here are the latest examples of what this Southern Arizona band terms "Americowboyfolk grass!" Take

that, Spellcheck!

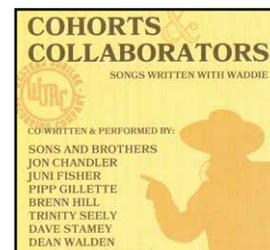
Located in the land of the chicken-scratch dance, the Broken Chair is the family ranch of the Family Carter: Todd, the dad (acoustic bass & lead vocals), Melinda, the mom (acoustic guitar with vocals & mandolin), daughter Danielle "Dani Sue" (fiddle and vocals) and drums & percussion guy Lonnie Ward (does he get his own key?!!) Fleshing things out are six session musicians all named "Wilson." What are the odds?!! It's engineer and multi-instrumentalist Andrew Wilson and his family providing support. The Western Writers Spur Award sticker on the CD cover refers to the presence of "Charlie & Evangeline," one of two co-writes Todd Carter did with New Mexico's Doug Figgs. The other here is "This World's Not Our Own." Fourteen tracks total.

CD: \$14.97 through [cdbaby](http://cdbaby.com) (\$9.99 download)

★ ★ ★

COHORTS & COLLABORATORS (SONGS WRITTEN WITH WADDIE)

(various artists)



Scott O'Malley's Western Jubilee Recording simply doesn't misfire. The company not only consistently

issues top quality releases, but their albums could usually be categorized as providing "important" material for the genre. Consider this one of those.

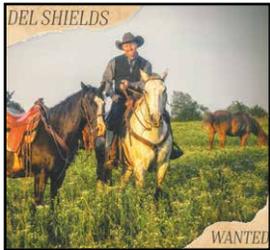
The collection's subtitle "Songs Written With Waddie" is gently inaccurate. "...With Waddie's Words" comes closer, as most of the artists here took his finished works and wonderfully set them to music. The rhymemeister himself makes the distinction in his notes, stating that Juni Fisher's songs with him ("It's Who They Are" and "Still There") are "the most collaborated of the album!" No matter. You'll just be glad they got done. Other featured performers (co-writers) include Sons & Brothers, Jon Chandler, Pipp Gillette (also The Gillette Brothers), Brenn Hill, Trinity Seely, Dave Stamey and Dean Walden. Several

songs here are award winners, and most will become standards in the Western repertoire. Highly recommended. Twelve tracks.

CD: (available through www.WesternJubilee.com)

DEL SHIELDS

"Wanted"



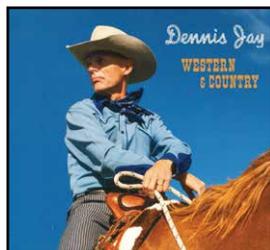
Singer/songwriter and TV host Del Shields arrives with a new CD, and it has the customary high production values to host his strong vocals!

There are ten Shields originals in the collection, with picks being the dour "Chasin' Strays," "Walking In The Shadows," "A Wanted Man" and the derivative song "Ghost of El Paso," in which Shields takes on the part of the first cowboy shot in Marty's classic song! I'm also partial to "Livin' The Dream," an album bonus track (whatever that often used term means) that was written for his son's wedding. Covers include Ian Tyson's "Four Strong Winds" and a duet with Stephanie Layne on Tyson's "Somewhere In The Rubies." Layne also harmonizes on David Wilkie's "Wind In The Wire" and Shields' "Sweet Sierra," "El Cerrito," "The Faded Flyer" and "A Wanted Man" to their benefit. Nice one, and it's recommended. Twelve tracks.

CD: \$15 + \$4.95 s/h from www.delshieldsmusic.com also through iTunes & cdbaby

DENNIS JAY

"Western & Country"



It's just what the title says... Western and Country... but a good deal of that Country is

still Western-friendly to boot.

The very presence of lauded producer and multi-instrumentalist Lloyd Maines immediately signals a project that's worth an ear! Jay's solid baritone, with that edge of trail-wary experience in it as if he might have seen too much, is an effect that supports the words in songs like "Right Up To The Edge" or "The Lights Of Deadwood." But Jay swings too, on "A Picture In My Wallet," "My Baby's Arms" and the semi-instrumental "Texas Skies Shining In A Cowgirl's Eyes" Other songs like "The Gamble" and "A Cowboy's Tune" use the Cowboy framework to get some other jobs done. An interesting take on "Streets Of Laredo" closes it. Recommended. Thirteen tracks.

CD: (info not furnished but like-ly Google artist & title)

ED WAHL

"Keeping The West Alive"



This CD was issued a bit further back than we usually reach, but it serves to introduce a new WMA

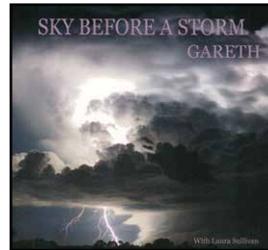
member to many of you!

Ed Wahl is not what you'd call a crooner, but the notes are hit accurately in what I feel is a perfect blend of rustic and session-perfect. On fellow Canadian Ian Tyson's "MC Horses" he is solid in his presentation. The title track is a work from the late Canadian poet and festival organizer Mike Puhallo, set to music by Bud Webb. Other CD picks include "Old Cowpoke," "My Cowgirl," "Cariboo Trail" and "Listen Close." I've chosen these partly because I hadn't heard other versions of them. I confess that I too often compare cover performances to originals I know. If you lean toward "real" cowboy singing done "real" well, try Mr. Wahl. Fourteen tracks.

CD: (info through wahlcountry@gmail.com)

GARETH

"Sky Before a Storm"



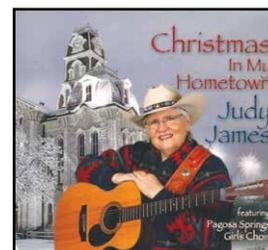
Only eight tracks appear on this superb young Indian flute player's CD, but somehow I doubt you'll feel cheated!

Gareth (Laffely) and twelve fine Tennessee session musicians have produced a little gem. The album features a perfect blend of the traditional Indian flute with (variously) piano, guitar, cello and percussion. The moods are varied too, from the rousing "Spirit Horse" and the haunting "Steal The Moon" to the impressive title track, which features Gareth in an effective vocal performance (he should do more)! Not to be overlooked is the artist's showpiece called "Flutitude!" For the WMA's Awards Show at the KiMo Theater in Albuquerque, Gareth provided a poignant and well-received instrumental rendering of The National Anthem. Nice touch, and this album will provide a nice spice-up for your collection. Highly recommended.

CD: (available through www.GarethMusic.com)

JUDY JAMES

"Christmas In My Hometown"



Singer and award-winning radio host Judy James has thankfully brought forth one of those

holiday albums with fresh "holi" in it!

Michael Martin Murphey & Rob Quist's "Christmas Cowboy Style," David John's title track "Christmas In My Hometown," "The Littlest Angel" from Mack David &

Continued on page 44

Simon Rad, "One More Christmas Day" by David Sawyer and Mason Young and Rita MacNeil's "This Season Will Never Grow Old" are nice additions to the more expected annual fare. Adding "America The Beautiful" in this context was an uplifting choice, and her album notes provide an interesting data bit. Did you realize that "Do You Hear What I Hear" was written by Noel Regney (with Gloria Shayne Baker) as a plea for peace during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962? 'Learned something new! Thirteen tracks total.

CD: (info available by emailing judy@judyjames.com



LIZ MASTERSON (W/MICHAEL DOWLING & FRIENDS)
"Linger Awhile"



The concept here was to provide a gentle, straightforward acoustic mounting, then let the jewel of

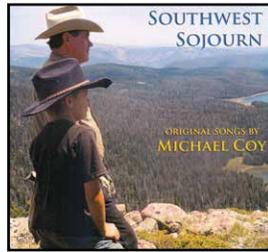
Liz Masterson sparkle. That works on many levels!

The simple combo sound Mike Dowling & Friends provide (guitars, mandolin, accordion and bass) lets the Masterson stylistic virtuosity come through in jazzy swingers like the title track, "Don't Be Blue" and "Texas Echo" or a gentle lope like "Along The Navajo Trail." Included are a pair of fine Cindy Walker songs (if it isn't redundant to say "fine" and "Cindy Walker songs" together) "Salt River Valley" and the bouncy, bluesy "Ridin' On Down." Also the combo gets to flex on the instrumental "Mountain Glide." And a very interesting song to be brought out now...Woody Guthrie & Martin Hoffman's "Deportee"... is here, which unfortunately may represent a forthcoming West. Recommended. Fourteen tracks total.

CD: (inquire through liz@liz-masterson.com)



MICHAEL COY
"Southwest Sojourn"



He comes from a ranching background, but he's also lived the city-bound cowboy life. Michael Coy is

a vocalist pretty much cut from the Norman Blake or even Bob Dylan cloth. His songs are personal, some extraordinarily so ("Home Sung Hero" or "Keeper Of The Fire," a CD pick). I will confess to being partial to the vocal blend achieved with wife Donna on the four tracks she graces (particularly "Leave Me Alone In The Saddle"). "Rocky Mountain Cowboy" is a nice tribute song for the Powell, Wyoming radio entertainer who inspired Coy the boy on early morning broadcasts. A good message is delivered in "I Love America Too" (a flag-bedecked Humvee doth not the patriot make...if you love your country you love those who share it with you). Good session players enhance the project as well. Fourteen tracks total.

CD: \$15 ppd by emailing MFOLKMUSIC@gmail.com



MISS DEVON & THE OUTLAW AND FRIENDS
"City of Dreams"



(Miss) Devon (Osbourne) Dawson got together with brother Jerry (Osbourne) to write the City Song for Port

Townsend, Washington. But, not unlike another song written simply to provide a radio theme for Roy & Dale, this song sings (and in this case swings) just fine on its own!

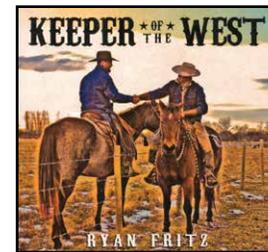
Shoring up the release of "City

Of Dreams" on this album are previously released tracks from from Miss Devon and her current partner The Outlaw, her one-shot (so far) with Rich O'Brien and Kristyn Harris as Badger & The Belles and the fondly remembered Texas Trailhands. Devon solos on "Ballad of Mr. Elmer" and "Play 'Faded Love' I Gotta Go Home." It's all danceable as it swings, waltzes and two-steps its way along. You just might dance, too! Recommended. Nineteen tracks total.

CD: (info not furnished but likely through Miss Devon & The Outlaw's site)



RYAN FRITZ
"Keeper of the West"



Ryan Fritz arrives with his newest album. It's 100% Western, recorded and produced by Eli Barsi and

John Cunningham. Both of them provide musical support on the songs as well. Top session talent has also been employed, which is all to the good, on this contemporary collection.

Picks include the title track, the sad portrait "Frank Chief Calf," "Jingle Up," "Teach Me Something Old," "Give A Boy A Rope" and "War Horse." Ryan Fritz is the real deal. He performs with honest cowboy conviction, which leads me to ask a question. Am I hearing touches of digital pitch correction here? I mean the kind that's absolutely necessary to use on questionable Country people, but changes the blood in the voice to an electronic parody of itself? Nothing in Fritz's earlier releases suggests that was needed. Unless he was having a bad day, knock it off!! Recommended. Fourteen tracks.

CD: (visit www.ryanfritz.net and available through iTunes also for download)

SONS OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN
"One Last Ride"



The title song was chosen on purpose. This release will draw the final curtain on the remarkable musical journey of the Sons Of The San Joaquin.

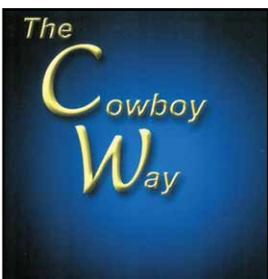
Jack, Joe & Lon Hannah have led charmed professional lives, traveling the world, singing with symphonies, and their efforts have given us classic recordings. From the fertile brain of Jack sprang several modern standards of our repertoire. Theirs was one of the first contemporary acts chosen for induction into the Western Music Hall of Fame.

These previously unreleased recordings are from 1996 and 2010 sessions, mastered in 2016. Those famous harmonies are featured on "One More Ride," "How Great Thou Art" and "The Searchers." A haunting solo from Jack on "Don't Ride Away" and the classic Hannah big west song construction of "Down Where The Saguaro Grow" are among the the collection's high points.

Now Joe is turning 85, Jack is 83 and Lon turned 60!! The Sons have served Western well, and will stand as one of the greatest of its trios. Happy Trails, Gentlemen. Recommended. Twelve tracks.

CD: (available through www.WesternJubilee.com)

THE COWBOY WAY
(self-titled)



So here's a premier album from a couple of very proven entities! I believe that could be called "stacking the deck,"

but if so, it's definitely in your favor!

With a truckload of Song Of The Year, Male Performer Of The Year and other awards between them from a mix of organizations, solo artists Jim Jones and Doug Figgs teamed up with the extraordinary producer/multi-instrumentalist and singer Mariam Funke (once and for all it's pronounced Mah'reeum Fun'-keh!) to perform as The Cowboy Way. People are loving the result. The group's debut recording has the inspired crackle of pure enthusiasm for the doing and the telling. It's particularly apparent on tracks like "Don't Look Back," "The Wheel Fell Off The Wagon" or "Take Me Back To Texas When I Die." Superior stuff throughout. Highly recommended. Twelve tracks total.

CD: \$15 +\$3 s/h through www.cowboywaymusic.com also through cdbaby & iTunes

THE WESTERN FLYERS
"Wild Blue Yonder"



The Western Flyers are accurately named! They surely do!

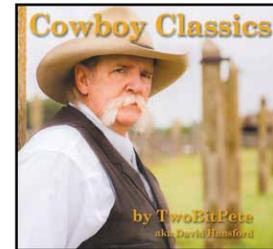
With the same tightness (and swiftness)

he employed with The Quebe Sisters, vocalist and archtop guitar wonder Joey McKenzie guns the accelerator here, and trio mates Katie Glassman (fiddle & vocals) and Gavin Kelso (bass & harmonies) fly along. Even slow-tempo isn't all-that slow. There are opportunities throughout for each member of this technically accomplished trio to be spotlighted. This release will truly keep you up as they tear through tracks like "You're From Texas," "I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter," "Old Fashioned Love" and "I'll See You In My Dreams." Rippin' fast instrumentals include "Carroll County Blues," "Sweet

Georgia Brown," Texas Fiddle Medley" and "The Wild Dog" (okay, they slow down suddenly in the middle...musta misplaced their keys)! Danceable by the heartiest and youngest among us! Recommended. Thirteen tracks total.

CD: (available through www.thewesternflyers.com)

TWO BIT PETE
"Cowboy Classics"



Here's a debut album that really showcases its subject and performer to the fullest!

Tremendously artistic style and intelligence (kudos to Aarom Meador) went into the production of this one. Predominantly David Hansford (a.k.a. "Two Bit Pete") is a reciter, although a nice poem of his own is included here ("Rusty The Cowdog"). With clever effects and music applied in just the right moments and degree, our scene is set. Two Bit Pete dramatically regales the boys with tales around the crackling cook fire. And storytelling is how it plays, with three poems of S. Omar Barker, two from Larry McWhorter ("The Confrontation" and "Fear"), two by Carlos Ashley ("The Widder" and "Aunt Cordie") and others from Sunny Hancock, Bruce Kiskaddon and Gail T. Burton.

When someone speaks, there is a gentle shift in voice and perspective in the stereo mix. That's caring about what you're doing! Highly recommended. Thirteen tracks + introduction.

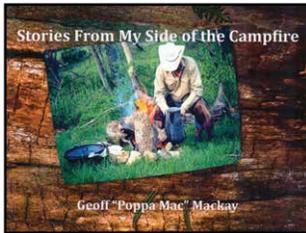
CD: (info not furnished, but google artist and title)



BOOK REVIEWS

GEOFF (POPPA MAC) MACKAY

“Stories From My Side of the Campfire”
Red Dashboard Publishing
ISBN 978-1519178893



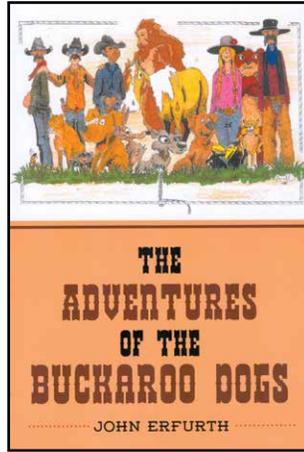
As one old saying goes, everything in the bible is true...and some of it

actually happened! If we're to take this book's biographical notes verbatim, Poppa Mac occasionally looks at his poetic subject matter that way! What he has to say about cowboying does (and should) ring true enough, though. He's bull-fought as a rodeo clown saving lives, and spent countless hours ahorse in cowboy pursuits. His book is profusely illustrated with photos from Laine Smith Photography and others. You'll find many of the familiar themes of Cowboy Poetry to be present, but Poppa Mac's takes on them will illicit chuckles, smiles, snorts of recognition and a few stout pinches on your irony nerve, if you've got one! Forty-eight poems on one hundred-two pages.

Softcover Book: (info through www.reddashboard.com)

JOHN ERFURTH

“The Adventures of the Buckaroo Dogs”
ISBN 978-1-68409-241-3



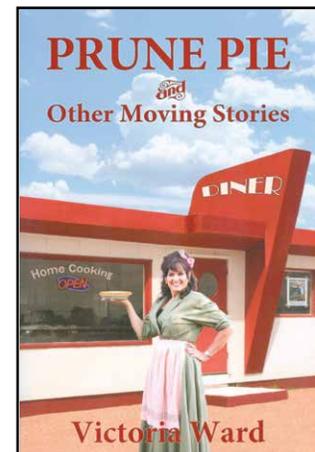
Rancher and Western radio host John Erfurth wondered what his real life ranch dogs were thinking and “saying” as they meandered through their days. This book, conceived with his late friend Jay Pierce, is the result.

It's not a lesson in animal husbandry, unless you buy a coyote grabbing a chicken so she'll lay eggs for him! But he is named “Trickster,” I'll admit. In fact the chapters, called “episodes” here, are a bit like the Indian Coyote Trickster parables, with dialog between species. It's a nice idea that could have been expanded upon even more. Sadly there's a technical problem. I don't know if Page Publishing doesn't believe in proofreading, but obviously none was done. Typos and omissions occur in nearly every paragraph. One sentence begins three times, slightly altered! The flow is hindered dramatically. In my humble opinion, Page Publishing, what you've done to your author/client is criminal. One hundred twelve pages.

Softcover Book: \$14.95 on BarnesandNoble.com & amazon

VICTORIA WARD

“Prune Pie (& Other Moving Stories)”
ISBN 978-1-943829-00-2



Originating from a blog, this book contains stories of the Wards, on and off the music trail.

You'll meet Barry as

husband, father, performer and “victim” of Victoria, wife, mom and feisty prankster along with kids B.J., Hunter and Sierra at all ages and stages. Happily for the reader, Victoria writes skillfully as she draws sharp and entertaining pictures with clever timing and apt turns of phrase. Each story is brief enough so the book can easily be a bedside reader (or some other side...it is prune pie, after all). She was encouraged by her blog audience (“blogience?”) to assemble her stories on paper between covers with a spine, so she did...in a fun little volume. Plenty of laughs, and soulful moments, fill the plate. You won't go away hungry. Fifty-five tales on two hundred thirty-seven pages.

Softcover Book: \$15 through www.rhyolitepress.com



Western Charts

TOP 30 COWBOY / WESTERN ALBUMS

1. Welcome Home - Barry Ward
2. Living the Western Dream - Joyce Woodson
3. Ride a Wide Circle - Mary Kaye
4. Western Stories - Dave Stamey
5. A Cowboy Like Me - Doug Figgs
6. Mood Swings - Liz Masterson
7. How You Heal - Brenn Hill
8. Down the Trail - Kristyn Harris
9. One Boot in the Stirrup - Bernadette Ducharme
10. Lovers, Wives, and Mothers - Almeda Bradshaw
11. Heaven - Jared Rogerson
12. Cowboy to the Bone - R.J. Vandygriff
13. Keeping the West Alive - Ed Wahl
14. Keeper of the West - Ryan Fritz
15. San Miguel - Junction 5-12
16. This Cowboy - R.W. Hampton
17. Songs Of The High Country Cowboys - High Country Cowboys
18. Meadowlark - James Michael
19. Cowboy's Wage - Trinity Seely
20. Cowgirl Swing - Mikki Daniel
21. Under Blue Skies - Allan Chapman & Rodeo Kate
22. Too Hot to Handle - Red Hot Rhythm Rustlers
23. All I Need - Horse Crazy Cowgirl Band
24. Cowboy Songster 2 - Andy Hedges
25. Whoop It Up - Sourdough Slim
26. He's Just a Cowboy - Les Frick
27. Into the West - Ron Christopher
28. Midnight on the Trail - Hot Club of COWTOWN
29. Best Western - Sourdough Slim & Robert Armstrong
30. Cowboy Girl - Randy Huston & Hannah Huston

TOP 10 WESTERN SWING ALBUMS

1. Wild Blue Yonder - The Western Flyers
2. Trail Jazz - Cowboy Joe Babcock
3. Ain't Dead Yet - Hot Texas Swing Band
4. Midnight on the Trail - Hot Club of COWTOWN
5. Dime Stories, Vol. 2 - Carolyn Sills Combo
6. Somewhere There's Music - Swing Sisters
7. Legends - Coby Carter
8. Susie Blue & the Lonesome Fellas - Susie Blue
9. Now Playing - The Western Swing Authority
10. Rose of Old Pawnee - The Curio Cowboys

10 MOST PLAYED SONGS BY WESTERN MUSIC DJs

1. The Land Where Cedars Grow - Dave Stamey
2. Orphans Preferred - Barry Ward
3. Living the Western Dream - Joyce Woodson
4. Old New Mexico Moon - Doug Figgs
5. Cowboy to the Bone - R.J. Vandygriff
6. Grit, Grace, and Balin' Twine - Mary Kaye
7. Screamin' Jimmy - Eli Barsi
8. How You Heal - Brenn Hill
9. A Cowboy Like Me - Doug Figgs
10. Somewhere in the Rubies Tonight - Almeda Bradshaw

10 MOST PLAYED POETRY ALBUMS

1. Short Grass Country - Floyd Beard
2. Fillin' Tanks - Susie Knight
3. The Calf Book - Teresa Burleson
4. I Won - Andy Nelson
5. Rhyme 'em, Cowboy - Tom Swearingen
6. Rhyming the Range - Yvonne Hollenbeck
Passin' It On - Mag MaWhinney
That Old Yellow Horse - Dennis Russell
9. One Hundred Years of Thunder - Doris Daley & Bruce Innes
Cowboy Poet: the Poetry of Larry McWhorter - Various Artists

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

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

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

Western Playlists - Reporters

Here are the DJs who submitted their playlists this quarter:

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

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

Marshal Allen Bailey
High Plains Public Radio
210 N. 7th St.
Garden City, Kansas 67846
westswing@yahoo.com
<http://www.hprr.org/wsot.html>
1-800-678-7444

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

Skip Bessonette & His Pard Lucky
Rogue Valley Bound Show
2395 E. McAndrews Rd.
Medford, Oregon 97504
541-301-7649
www.earsradio.com
skipbessonette@gmail.com
Peter Bruce
Under Western Skies
KAFF Country Legends FM 93.5/AM
930
1117 W. Route 66
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
928-556-2650
www.kafflegends.com
peter.bruce@kaff.com

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

Bend, OR 97702
541-388-2537

KWC Ameriana Radio Station
Miguel A. Diaz Gonzalez
avenidagaltzaraborda n°47 2ªA
20100 renteria
Guipuzcoa
España
miguelbilly56@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

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

Tom Kerlin & Uncle Rich
Horsetown South Western Music
Show
WEKS
120 Village Circle
Senoia, GA 30276
770-599-1923
cutnfool@bellsouth.net

Al Krttil
"Early Morning Trails"
225 West 7th Street,
Ship Bottom, NJ 08008-4637
(609) 361-8277
alkrttil@yahoo.com
www.sudzincountry.com

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

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

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

WynMachon
5 Lowther Street
Oamaru 9400
New Zealand
New Zealand Country Music Radio
FM 107.3 (NZCMR)
whitestone.music@inbox.com

Butch and Christina Martin
"Whittler's Corner Show"
Earsradio.com
Ashland, OR, www.KSKQ.org
The Dalles, OR, Y102
1410 Kubli Road
Grants Pass, OR 97527
www.ButchMartinMusic.com
www.romancingthewest.org
(541) 218-2477

Continued on page 47

Dallas & P.J. McCord
30 Village Dr.
Creswell, OR 97426
KNND 1400AM Sunday's 1PM to 4PM
Cowboy Culture Corner
dallasmccord@yahoo.com

Marvin O'Dell
"Around the Campfire"
10430 W. Loma Blanca Dr.
Sun City, AZ 85351
805-551-4649
www.defendersoffreedomradio.com
KKRN (Redding, CA)
KZNO, Santa Clarita, CA)
www.earsradio.com
www.musikode.com
meoteo@aol.com

Bob O'Donnell
2091 Park Ave
#320
Riverton UT 84065
justbobswesternjukebox@gmail.com

Barbara Richhart
Western Belle of KSJD
CowTrails Show
32229 Road P

Mancos, CO 81328
Studio: Sundays 12:00-2: PM
Studio: 970-564-0808
Home: 970-882-1413
Cell: 970-739-8408
Streaming www.ksjd.org
bfbboston@fone.net
www.cowtrails.com

Del Shields
DelShieldsWesternWorld.com
On Betterhorsesnetwork.com
2475 90th Rd.
Humboldt, KS 66748
620-433-1819
Singingpoet_1@hotmail.com

O.J. Sikes
327 Westview Ave.
Leonia, NJ 07605
osikes@nj.rr.com
KKRN, Redding, CA
www.earsradio.com

TotsieSlover
Real West From The Old West
AM 1230 KOTS Radio
220 S. Gold Ave.
Deming, NM 88030

575-494-0899
realwestoldwest@live.com
www.realwestoldwest.com
www.demingradio.com
Facebook/totsieslover

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

Wayne & Kathy
Swing 'n' Country
KBOO 90.7 FM
20 SE 8th, Portland, OR 97214
wkjswingandcountry@comcast.net

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



CUSTER'S LAST BAND

Continued from page 40

bandmaster!

Harmony unites people. Bands, orchestras, armies, and churches know the unity that results from harmonious music. All of us are not created equal, though we are of equal value before God. Our musical talents vary. Some of us have none at all! But we can appreciate those who are blessed with musical skills. Some play skillfully on guitars, some play woodwind instruments, and some play percussion drums or cymbals. Some play banjos and fiddles.

Whatever your skill, beautiful music results when you perform in harmony with others. 

About the author: Dr. Elliot Johnson

Dr. Elliot Johnson coached for 40 years and is a member of three Halls of Fame, including the American Baseball Coaches' Association Hall of Fame. His college baseball teams won over 900 games and twelve conference, district, or national championships. Coach Johnson was named "Coach of the Year" eight times and has written over 30 athletic-related devotional books. Since retiring from coaching, he has published Trail Ride, a devotional Bible study directed to those who love the old west and the cowboy lifestyle. He also teaches horsemanship and firearm safety. Coach speaks around the country, using stories of the old west to communicate truth. Currently, seven publications of Trail Ride are available. Five are recorded as books on tape (CDs). For booking, call 405-323-7893. More information is available at the Winning Run Foundation Website (winrun.org).





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- Chapter Membership (each) Individual \$10
- Chapter Membership (each) Family* \$15
- Chapter Membership (each) Group* \$25

*One member may vote

FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT **WESTERNMUSIC.ORG**

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

- Performer/Musician Songwriter Producer
- Poet/Reciter Author Publisher
- Manager/Booking Agent Fan DeeJay/Radio Station
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Name _____

Address _____

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- AMEX Visa Mastercard Discover

Name on Card _____

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