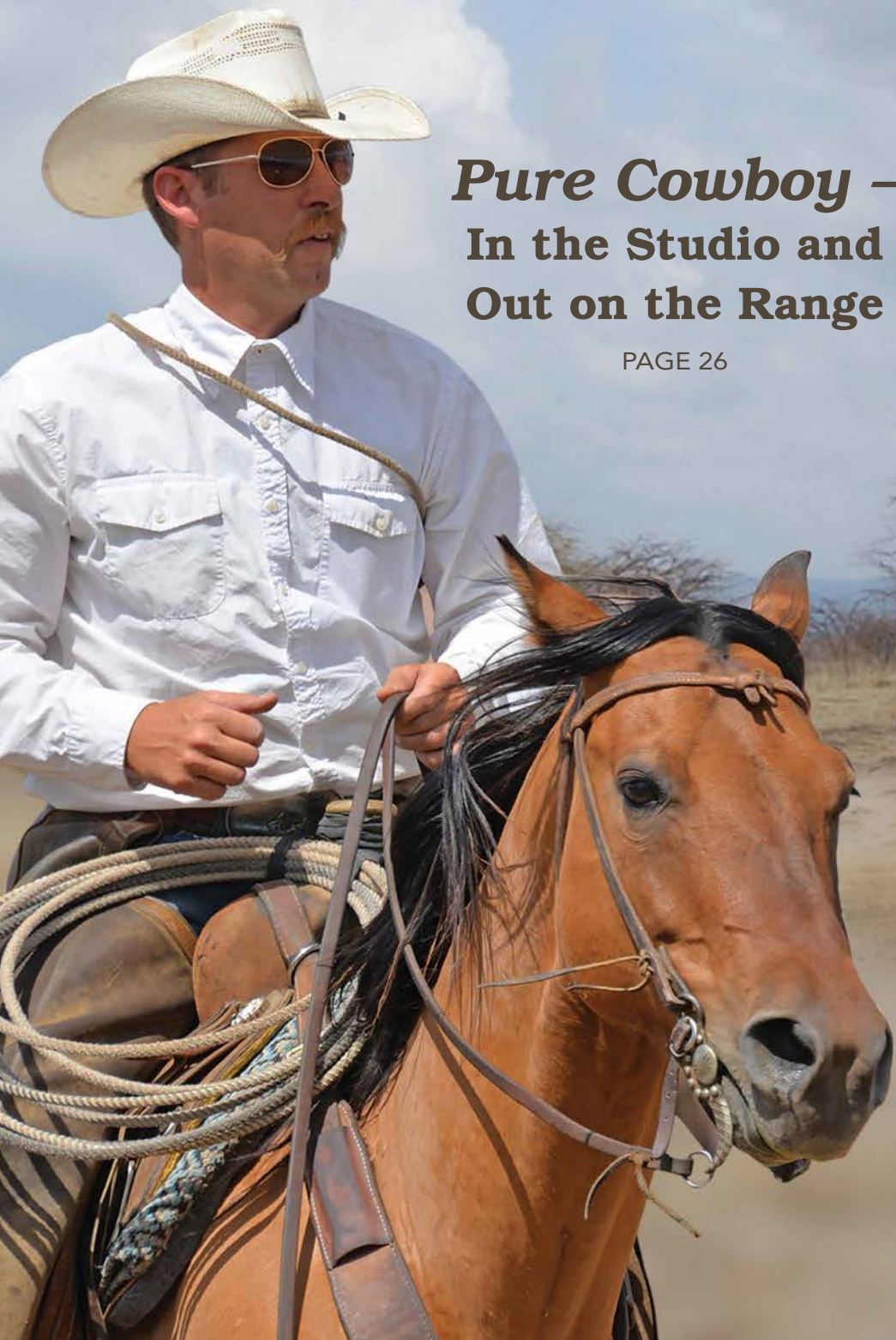


THE WESTERN WAY

The Official Publication of the Western Music Association



Pure Cowboy – In the Studio and Out on the Range

PAGE 26

COWBOYS IN CHICAGO

BY DON CUSIC

PAGE 8



Johnny Western

Receives
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PAGE 16



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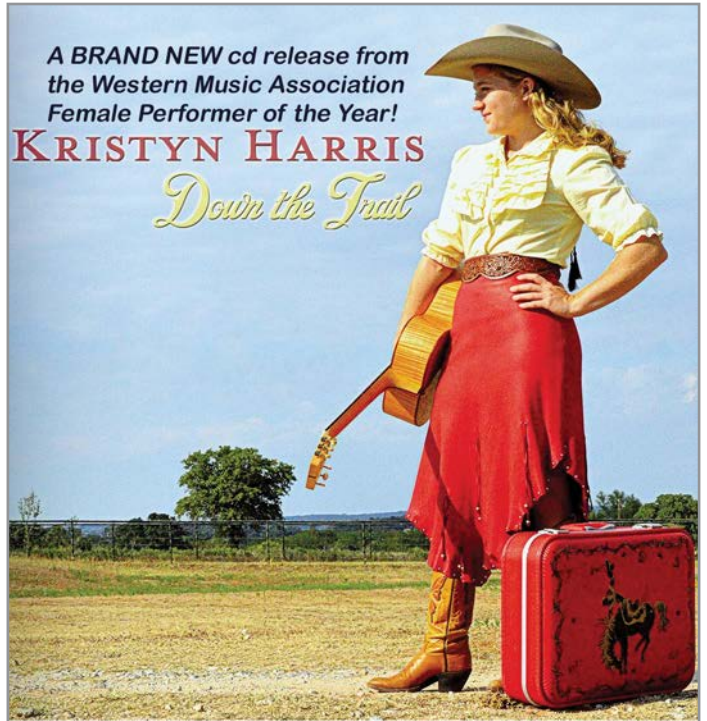


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From The President...



Steve Taylor
WMA President

Howdy all:

I have an addition to add to my letter in the last issue. "AMBASSADORS!" You can request additional complimentary copies of the Western Way from Marsha Short, WMA Executive Director. Do you go places that have a waiting room and find outdated reading material? With permission, place some copies of the WW in places where people sit, wait and look for something new and refreshing to read. It is a very subtle way to boost membership and get the word out about the WMA.

We are all about the membership and the networking that goes into it to support the music and poetry of the American West. The office has been busy sending out additional issues of the WW and we have seen new members added to our ranks from all of us being "AMBASSADORS." Keep up the good work.

Do not forget our Web site www.westernmusic.org. This is the place that you or anyone will find the most current information about the WMA.

By now you have received and returned your nominations ballot. I would encourage all of you to complete and return your ballot. It is your nomination/vote that determines the category award recipients.

We have some great workshops that are lining up for the Convention this year and fantastic music and poetry for your listening and enjoyment.

Thank you all for your continued support and remember to mark your calendar for the 2015 WMA CONVENTION - NOVEMBER 11-15 IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO.

Hope to see you there.

Steve Taylor, President
Western Music Association



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WMA member, Daron Little, is cowboy from his hat to his boots and in the music he writes and the songs that he sings.

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



Theresa O'Dell

When meeting and talking with successful people, I've noticed common buzz words woven throughout their response to "How did you become so successful?" Words like focused, hard work, motivated, passionate, enthusiastic, etc., pop-up frequently. They all seem to be forward thinking and to have worked toward a distant goal or mission throughout their careers. They have been creative thinkers; to have made sacrifices along the way; and, to have taken the "path

less trodden" at times to reach the pinnacle.

It was easy for me to translate these thoughts in "our mission" for the WMA. Those who have made an impact of any significance are those who make investments in themselves. They have set goals and worked hard to reach each one. They are motivated, focused, passionate, and enthusiastic. And, it's not only performers...I see this in the WMA board members, our Executive Director, most of the chapter presidents and officers, and the fans! And, yes, even those who work hard to put one of the best marketing tools for the organization into your hands every quarter – the Western Way crew! Crew, you

say? Yep –it takes a lot of hands and hours to give you this marketing tool! There are regular writers who take time to "tell the stories", those who do product reviews (any idea of the hours dedicated to listening to CDs and reading books?), those who create and submit charts and statistics (very time consuming), a full-service production house and graphic designer (many hours, deadlines and dealing with a sometimes cranky editor!), a sales director who works to help you and others "sell" yourself and your wares and works to expand circulation, and yes, there's me. I'm the funnel for all the "stuff" and the decision maker on how best to create a new and fresh tool each quarter that can be used by you to further the mission of preservation of the western culture to which we have all subscribed. All of this goes on behind the scenes between each issue...not just the week before publication!

Nope –the Western Way is NOT a "newsletter," despite what I've had some tell me. It's a magazine and it has a purpose – to be a face and voice for the Western Music Association. To let the world know that we are committed to preserve the life, lyrics and lore of the west – past and present. There are some who want to make a living while doing this, but others are just truly committed to the cause and want to do whatever to keep it going. Both motives are admirable; both have a place in the organization. As Editor of this publication, I want to provide a tool that can be used by all to help reach YOUR goal...whatever that is. Until next issue...

For all things western,
Theresa



Western Music Association

Founded in 1988 by western music performers and fans, the WMA supports and promotes the historic, traditional and contemporary music of the American West and the American Cowboy. A non-profit organization, the Western Music Association strives to bring ideals embodied in the "Code of the West" to everyone living in today's society. The American Cowboy represents honor, integrity, respect and a love for mankind and the world in which he lives and works.

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From The Executive Director...




Marsha Short
Executive Director

One of the really great things about being WMA's Executive Director is being able to watch the steady growth of membership and hear first-hand reports about the exciting things going on in Western Music.

Western Music and Poetry gatherings are happening from coast to coast and border to border. The Western Way is being distributed at those gatherings, as well as in museums, stores, and various business around the country. Thanks to all of you who are spreading the word. Telling folks about the WMA and sharing complimentary copies of the magazine is paying dividends with new memberships being received each month.

I hope that many of you are making plans to be at the WMA Convention in Albuquerque this year. This "family reunion" is a wonderful way to be with people who just enjoy being together. Sleep? Take a nap before you get there because it's jamming and visiting all night, every night.

Based on popular demand, we're kicking off with another Chuck Wagon Extravaganza on Wednesday night and this year, we're including a brisket dinner. Thursday night's Crisis Fund Dinner will include "A Cowboy Celebration!!" created especially for WMA. It will feature stellar mariachi performers, dancers and starring the charismatic recording artist/preservationist Antonio Reyna. And the Thursday night Pajama Showcase is back with a pajama contest!

Watch the WMA Web site for details as plans for this year's Convention continue to be finalized. Make your reservations at the Marriott and we'll see you all in November! 





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Cowboys in Chicago



By Don Cusic

No radio station is more important in the history of cowboys and country music than WLS in Chicago. During the first half of the Twentieth Century, the station featured a number of western singers during its time on the air, particularly on The National Barn Dance, which broadcast on NBC during the 1930s and 1940s and which lasted until the 1960s. On WLS and the National Barn Dance were Gene Autry, Max Terhune, Pat Buttram, Patsy Montana, Girls of the Golden West, Louise Massey and the Westerners, Little Georgie Gobel, Rex Allen, Bob Atcher and others who dressed western and sang cowboy songs.

The station went on the air in 1923 when Sears, Roebuck and Company received a license for a 500 watt radio station; on Saturday night, April 12, 1924, WLS ("World's Largest Store") debuted from the Sherman Hotel at Randolph and Clark Streets. The following Saturday, April 19, 1924, saw the debut of "The National Barn Dance."

On October 1, 1928, Sears sold the station to the Prairie Farmer magazine, owned by Burrige D. Butler who "conceived of the National Barn Dance as a big, wholesome country party...[this] fit Butler's view of life in the country, a view which most owners of stations rejected as "out of date." Butler insisted on a moral, uplifting program and would not allow songs about drinking or marital infidelity.

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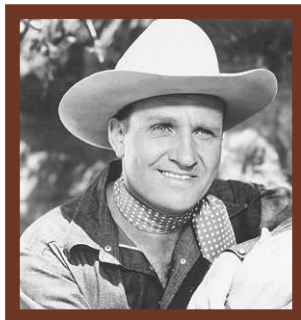
WLS 1938 BARN DANCE

By the end of 1931, WLS and its Barn Dance was the biggest, most important stage for country music.

The first cowboy star on WLS was Gene Autry who debuted on that station on December 1, 1931 on "Tower Topics," an early morning radio show hosted by Anne Williams and Sue Roberts, and sponsored by Sears. A segment of that show, "Conqueror Records Time," was where Autry sang his songs, billed as "Oklahoma Yodeler." This was the first step for cowboys in Chicago; by the end of World War II, Chicago was not only a center for country music, but a major source of talent for singing cowboys in the movies, and played a major role in cowboys replacing hillbillies or mountaineers as the dominant image in country music.

When Gene Autry arrived at WLS in Chicago he was in the place at the right time with the right talent. The station had become a 50,000 watt clear-channel station earlier that year, which allowed Autry to reach a large audience throughout the mid-west known as "Chicagoland."

Gene Autry had been heard in the Chicago market since around 1930 when he began broadcasting over WJJD, located in Aurora, Illinois, 40 miles west of Chicago. That station was owned by the Moose Club and Autry did a 15-minute program twice a day. During his time in Aurora, Autry joined a local group, the Buckle Busters, which also broadcast from WJJD.



Autry's recording of "That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine" had been released around the time that Autry arrived in Chicago; it was advertised in the Sears, Roebuck catalog, and sold a reported 30,000 copies during its first month out. Autry performed the song regularly and it soon became a favorite with listeners. Since Autry was billed as a "cowboy," he began to dress like one—getting his first cowboy outfits from Sears. Before this time, Autry had worn street clothes when he sang.

The National Barn Dance moved to Chicago's Eighth Street Theater on March 19, 1932. The Eighth Street Theater was located at Eighth Street and Wabash Avenue on the south edge of Chicago's Loop. The theater seated 1,200 and there were two shows: 7 to 9:30 p.m. and 9:45 to 12 midnight. Admission was 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children during the first few months, then rose to 75 and 35 cents. Every seat was filled and there was a waiting list to buy tickets to the performances. The National Barn Dance

remained at the Eighth Street Theater for twenty-six years.

In addition to the Barn Dance on Saturday nights, WLS created several traveling units which featured Barn Dance acts. The traveling acts became an integral part of WLS and the Barn Dance reaching out beyond Chicago. The traveling groups stayed in Chicago during the winter, then toured in the spring.

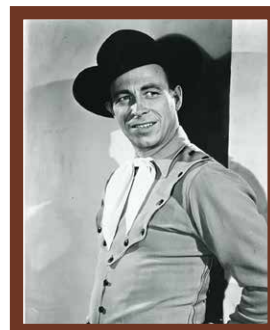
In mid-May 1932, the WLS National Barn Dance began broadcasting the last half hour of the show on NBC sponsored by Alka-Seltzer.

When Dollie and Millie Good, known as the Girls of the Golden West, joined WLS in 1933, they joined an impressive cast that became a "who's who" in western and country music during the coming years. With a bio that stated they came from "Muleshoe, Texas"—although they actually grew up in East St. Louis—the Girls of the Golden West dressed western and sang western-themed songs as well as more sentimental fare such as "There's a Silver Moon on the Golden Gate." The songs they recorded were about two-thirds western-type numbers and the rest folk-oriented songs or sentimental numbers.

Patsy Montana joined WLS in the summer of 1933 after she met the Girls of the Golden West who told her that the Prairie Ramblers were looking for a girl singer. Patsy auditioned and got the job. The Prairie Ramblers were previously known as the Kentucky Ramblers but changed their name because of the popularity of western songs and western groups on WLS. Patsy had a strong background in western music; she had previously sung with Stuart Hamblen on his top-rated western show in Los Angeles. In 1935, Patsy recorded "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," the first country million seller by a female.



The popularity of western music and western entertainment led WLS and the National Barn Dance to hire Louise Massey and the Westerners in September, 1933, the same month that The National Barn Dance went full time on the NBC network on Saturday nights. In addition to the Westerners, WLS had a host of other western performers.



Eddie Dean, born Edgar Dean Glossup, wanted to be a gospel singer; he moved to Chicago in 1926 and in 1933 he and his brother, Jimmy, became part of the cast of The National Barn Dance. Jimmy had been on radio stations in Shenandoah, Iowa and Yankton, South Dakota, and was an early

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Cowboys in Chicago

Continued from page 9

member of Foy Willing and the Riders of the Purple Sage.

The Dean Brothers remained on WLS until 1936 and then Eddie moved to Hollywood in 1938 where he appeared in small roles in several Republic Films, then landed singing roles in Hopalong Cassidy films. In 1942, Eddie and Jimmy Dean joined Johnny Bond as Gene Autry's back-up trio on his "Melody Ranch" radio show; the Deans were later replaced by the Cass County Boys and Eddie landed a role on Judy Canova's radio show as a featured singer.

Eddie Dean starred in 18 westerns, beginning with Song of Old Wyoming in 1945 and ending with The Tioga Kid in 1948 for PRC. He wrote "One Has My Name, the Other Has My Heart" which became a hit for Jimmy Wakely in 1948, and "I Dreamed of a Hillbilly Heaven" which became a hit for Tex Ritter in 1961.

Gene Autry hired Smiley Burnette as an accordion player at the end of 1932. Burnette proved to be a premier comic sidekick for Autry in Chicago and then in Hollywood where he appeared in a number of Autry's movies. In Chicago, Burnette toured with Autry and appeared with him on The National Barn Dance. An excellent musician and songwriter, Burnette provided Autry with a number of songs through the years, including the classic "Ridin' Down the Canyon."

Pat Buttram was a humorist on WLS before he became the cowboy sidekick of Roy Rogers and Gene Autry. Maxwell Emmett "Pat" Buttram was born in Addison, Alabama, the son of a Methodist preacher. Although he usually played an unlettered hick cowboy with Autry, in real life he was a graduate of Birmingham Southern College.

Buttram was on WSGN in Birmingham before he moved to Chicago; there he had an on-the-air audition doing man-on-the-street interviews. He began work at WLS on the same day that Patsy Montana began. Buttram remained at WLS in Chicago for 13 years; he appeared regularly on the National Barn Dance and had his own show, Pat Buttram's Radio School for Beginners Jes' Startin'. This show featured Pat and the Oshkosh Overall Boys.

In 1943, Buttram appeared in his first movie, The National

Barn Dance, along with Lulu Belle and Scotty and the Hoosier Hot Shots. Buttram moved to Hollywood and came to the attention of Roy Rogers, who put him on his radio shows occasionally beginning in 1946. Buttram then appeared on Phil Harris' radio show. This brought him to the attention of Gene Autry, who booked him on his radio show, "Melody Ranch," which led to him appearing in Autry's movies as a sidekick since Smiley Burnett, Autry's original sidekick, was unavailable due to contracts with Republic Pictures and Columbia to appear in other movies.

Buttram soon became Autry's regular sidekick in movies and on his TV show until an accident while filming put him in the hospital (a cannon blew up and seriously injured Buttram) and Smiley Burnett appeared as Autry's sidekick for his final movies.

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Max Terhune was not a "western" performer on WLS but became a western movie star after he went to Hollywood in 1936. Terhune began his career doing bird calls, then became a ventriloquist; his first dummy was named "Skully," then "Elmer." Terhune first went to Hollywood in 1924 with the Hicksville Follies, then toured vaudeville as a ventriloquist and magician until he joined the National Barn Dance in 1932, where he performed with his dummy "Elmer." In 1936, Gene Autry brought him to Hollywood to appear

in Autry's movie Ride, Ranger Ride. He was signed by Republic Pictures and starred as "Lullaby Joslin" in "The Three Mesquiteers" series. He joined Monogram Pictures where he appeared in the 24 films of the "Range Busters" series; at the end of the 1940 he became Johnny Mack Brown's partner at Monogram. In 1956, Terhune appeared in Giant with James Dean.

After WLS in Chicago became known for their "western" performers, led by Gene Autry, other acts soon began wearing western clothing and singing western songs. John Lair disliked the "cowboy" image and wanted a "down home" program for country performers. Music Director Lair feared the cowboy music trend was removing country music too far from its folk roots, so, Lair, Red Foley and Whitey Ford (The Duke of Paducah) left WLS with the Cumberland Ridge

Continued on page 12

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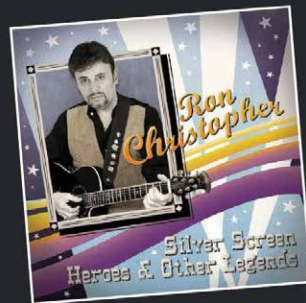
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Cowboys in Chicago

Continued from page 10

Runners and began "The Renfro Valley Barn Dance" in 1937.

Three future western stars had a connection to Chicago, although they were never part of the National Barn Dance.

Tex Ritter almost became a lawyer in Chicago before he left to pursue his singing career. Ritter went on the road as a member of the chorus of the play, *Maryland, My Maryland*; this production went to New York and then to Chicago, where, during an extended run, Ritter enrolled at Northwestern Law School to complete his law degree; however Ritter went back to New York where he had a role in the musical, *Green Grow the Lilacs*, which was the forerunner to the musical *Oklahoma!*



Dale Evans was not on WLS but the future "Queen of the West" moved to Chicago in 1939 as a Big Band singer.



Dale sang with the Jay Mills' Orchestra at the Edgewater Beach Hotel, then obtained a job with the Anson Weeks Orchestra and toured throughout the Midwest and West Coast. In 1940, Dale was back in Chicago where she sang on WWBM Radio and on network shows for NBC and CBS. She also had her own show, "That Gal From Texas," broadcast over CBS. In 1940, Dale went to Hollywood

for a screen test and was signed by Twentieth Century Fox, so she moved to Hollywood and she began her movie career.

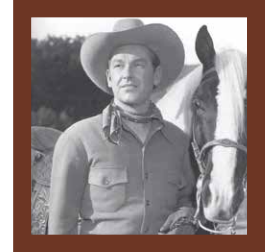
Frankie Laine never performed as a member of the National Barn Dance on WLS but he was born in Chicago and sang in the Merry Garden Ballroom before touring with the Merry Garden Company, working dance marathons during the Great Depression. Laine was a pop singer but his hits included "Mule Train" (number one for six weeks in 1949) and "Theme from High Noon (Do Not Forsake Me)" in 1952. Laine also sang the title song for western movies *Man Without a Star* (1955), *Gunfight at The OK Corral*, (1957), *3:10 to Yuma* (1957), *Bullwhip* (1958) and *Blazing Saddles* (1974), as well as the theme for the TV western "Rawhide."

George Gobel was a western star on WLS before he moved to Hollywood and became a well-known TV and comedy star--without any connections to the west.

In July, 1940, the Sons of the Pioneers began a national tour that ended in Chicago where they became regulars on the "Uncle Ezra" program on NBC. "Uncle Ezra" was Pat

Barrett who made his character famous on *The National Barn Dance*. "Uncle Ezra's Radio Station" was on NBC on Saturday nights.

The Sons of the Pioneers and their families lived in Chicago during the time they were on "Uncle Ezra's Radio Show." While in Chicago, they recorded almost 200 songs with NBC's Orthacoustic Recording Division for a transcription series, which was completed in August, 1940 and released as "Symphonies of the Sage." Members of the Sons of the Pioneers during this time were Tim Spencer, Bob Nolan and Lloyd Perryman on vocals, Karl and Hugh Farr on guitar and fiddle, respectively, and Pat Brady on bass. In September, 1941, they returned to California.



Rex Allen was the biggest star on WLS 1945-1949 before he went west to Hollywood, signed with Republic Pictures and became the last singing cowboy star.

Bob Atcher was the last major star on WLS who projected the western image. Atcher joined WLS in 1948 after he starred on three daily CBS-network radio shows on Chicago's WBBM Radio.

Bob Atcher began recording in 1939 and recorded country songs, although on his first session he recorded "I Found My Cowgirl Sweetheart" and a year later recorded "Cool Water."

During the next few years after Atcher joined the Barn Dance, the station allowed Patsy Montana and the Prairie Ramblers, Mac and Bob, and former Cumberland Ridge Runner Doc Hopkins to all leave. By 1944, thirty performers on WLS had gone to Hollywood and become part of the movies. WLS and the National Barn Dance continued on the air and made a few improvements along the way; they finally installed air conditioning in the Eighth Street Theater, which caused attendance to increase for a while, but then in 1957 they closed the theater.

In the early 1960s, the National Barn Dance was on television but that did not last long. By the time the show ended, the top performers were Bob Atcher and an accordion and clarinet group led by Tom Fouts and known as "Captain Stubby and the Buccaneers." Although the show actually died on WGN-TV in 1971, its symbolic death may be said to have occurred in May of 1960, when Prairie Farmer sold WLS to ABC. Without warning, one early morning the radios on which rural Midwesterners had listened to WLS in their barns while they were doing chores, suddenly began playing rock and roll.

Why were cowboys so successful in Chicago? The answers must include the charisma and talents of Gene Autry;

Continued on page 14

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FROM the TRAIL

WMA SWAP SHOP has New Name!

Swap Shop is now WMA Western Consignment

For eight years, the Swap Shop has offered a very unique and lucrative opportunity to WMA members and annual convention visitors, by selling their consigned western items. From a percentage of all sales of the quality used or new items consigned, it has raised thousands of dollars for the WMA. In keeping with the WMA credos of Excellence, Creativity and Professionalism, the renamed **WMA Western Consignment** announces it will be adding some very exciting changes and added features for the 2015 Convention.

First, there is the opportunity for a few select volunteers to assist production manager, Shannon Wrango, in month to month activities and the annual convention sale. To provide an excellent, profitable experience for the WMA and all involved, a few committed, motivated folks are encouraged to contact Shannon. **Second**, several very creative features to increase visibility and sales are in the works. **Lastly**, the quality of items and consignment fees will be realigned.

This shopping venue has become very, very popular and provided positive returns for both the WMA and consigners, and these new changes promise to make the 2015 sale the best yet! All WMA participants: be collecting your quality new or very gently used western clothing, instruments and stage props or stage décor items now. A complete list of acceptable consignment items will be published in the future issues of the Western Way and on the WMA Web site.

Any committed volunteers interested in lending their expertise and time as assistant producers for the WMA Western Consignment are encouraged to call Shannon Wrango at 316.621.0600 or email to wrangoshannon@gmail.com. Thank you!

~ Shannon Wrango

I received the magazine today and it looks wonderful. Thank you so much! I am pleased to have my article in The Western Way.

~ June

Editor's Note: June Johnston is a freelance writer who contributed the article on Thatch Elmer published in the Spring 2015 issue. 🐾

Cowboys in Chicago

Continued from page 12

simply put, he was a star and had star appeal. After Autry's appeal was established, WLS added western artists such as Patsy Montana and Louise Massey and the Westerners. But cowboys had long been popular in America. From the dime novels of Ned Buntline and others that made heroes of Buffalo Bill Cody and Wild Bill Hickok to the early movies with stars such as William Holden and Tom Mix, Americans loved the cowboy hero.

Why did Chicago no longer be known as the national center of country and western music? First, there was the rise of Hollywood and Nashville. The West—Hollywood—was the home of the movie industry and the singing cowboy movies of Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, Tex Ritter and others meant that those stars settled in California. Further, Chicago was not the South or the West and the coldness was not something just in the air.

There's never just one reason to explain something like Chicago's loss of its entertainment industry to Los Angeles and Nashville, but trying to imagine cowboys and country music today in Chicago, other than concerts by current country stars, will cause most Chicagoans to scratch their head. During the 1920s and 1930s and even at the beginning of the 1940s, there was a connection between cowboys, country music and Chicago because that city was a center for agricultural enterprises, from the stockyards to the slaughter houses and meat packing plants to the vast farm lands that surrounded Chicagoland. But by the end of the 20th Century, that was no longer the case.

In short, cowboys and country music just didn't fit Chicago anymore because the great metropolis of Chicago had grown and left them behind. 🐾

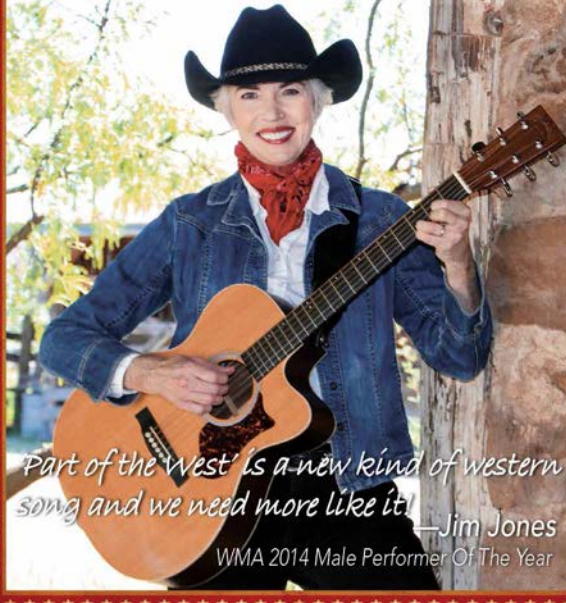


Did you know that B-Western cowboy singing star George Houston (The Lone Rider) was preparing to travel to Europe with his own opera company when he suddenly died of a heart attack at age 48?



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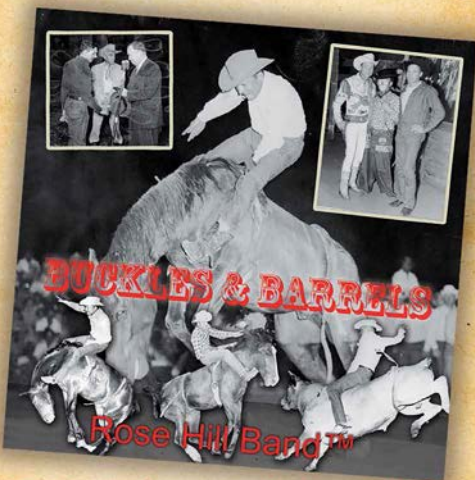
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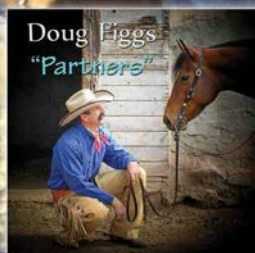
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PROUD MEMBER OF THE WESTERN MUSIC ASSOCIATION

Editor's Note: It is always an honor to read about those who have made an indelible mark on the historical pages of this western genre that we cherish. It's a privilege to give homage to one of our own, Johnny Western, who was recently recognized by the Arizona Music & Entertainment Hall of Fame where he was inducted for his lifetime contribution to western music. It's a great honor for this editor to call him a friend! Congratulations, Johnny (and Jo, too! Without a good wife standing by in a musician's life...well, you know the rest!), we are very proud of your well-deserved recognition!

JOHNNY WESTERN

Written by B. Rhyan Cole

Printed in the Arizona Music & Entertainment Hall of Fame Program for the Induction Ceremony, April 17, 2015. Reprinted by permission.

After seeing the movie *Gun & Guitars*, 5 year old Johnny Westerlund decided that when he grew up he was going to be a cowboy, ride horses, play guitar and sing like his hero, Gene Autry.

He set out early on to attain his goal and fate seemed to be on his side. Johnny learned to play guitar at age 12. When he was 14, now billed as Johnny Western, he had his own 1 hour radio show airing 6 days a week on KDHL in Faribault, MN. At age 16, he was signed by local label, J.O.C.O. Records and was recording his own songs. His first release, "The Violet and the Rose", has become a country standard.

Johnny toured with the Sons of the Pioneers when he was 17. After graduating from high school, he moved to Austin, MN where he hosted a "kids" TV program that ran western movies. He managed to talk many of the cowboy stars of the day into appearing on his show. They included Tex Ritter, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans and Rex Allen.



WMA members Jim & Jeanne Martin, Johnny Western, Gary Johnson & Marshall Trimble.

In 1956, Gene Autry heard Johnny perform and hired him for his band. He was 22 years old. Autry also helped launch Johnny's successful acting career. It was after an appearance on "Have Gun, Will Travel" that Johnny wrote, "The Ballad of Paladin".

Shortly after returning to Los Angeles, Johnny received a call from Johnny Cash. He worked with Cash for 3 nights, then 16 nights and finally played his last concert with the "man in black" 1 month shy of 40 years later.

Johnny met Waylon Jennings in 1963 at J.D.'s in Tempe, AZ. It was Jennings who introduced Johnny to his wife, Jo. The couple will soon be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.

From 1966 to 1986, Johnny and his family lived in Scottsdale, AZ. Johnny was on the road over 200 days a year during this time, which included performing with his own band, The Arizona Rangers. The band included Michael Hounshell on drums, Ronnie Dorossett, lead guitar and Gary Clemmons, band leader and bass guitar.

In 1985, Johnny Western had been on the road almost

30 years. When he was offered a chance to join KFDI in Wichita, KS, a major country market radio station, the timing was perfect. The station even agreed to have a DJ on standby to fill in for Johnny when he was playing concerts with Johnny Cash or Waylon Jennings. The stories he shared with his radio audience kept the station's ratings high and listeners returning for more.




Jim West, emcee, Gary Clemmons, co-producer, Johnny Western, Jon Iger, AMEHOF events chairman and Gary Johnson.

Johnny Western's achievements are among the most impressive in the industry. He recorded 16 singles and 7 albums of his own and played guitar on 71 Johnny Cash singles and 5 albums. He appeared in 5 movies and 32 TV series episodes. He is the only country singer to play the prestigious Carnegie Hall 3 times and the Hollywood Bowl twice.

In 2006, he, Rex Allen, Jr. and the Prairie Rose Wranglers became the first performers allowed to perform on the Great Wall of China in over 2000 years.

He has been inducted into 12 Halls of Fame and in January, 2015, Johnny was notified by "American Cowboy Magazine" that, by popular vote, The Ballad of Paladin has been named the "#1 TV Series Theme Song of All Time".

Johnny Western's experiences and achievements have far surpassed the dreams of that 5 year old boy from Minnesota who wanted to be a cowboy.

(Inducted into the Arizona Music & Entertainment Hall of Fame April 17, 2015) 



Belinda Gail, Jim & Jeanne Martin, Johnny, Marshall Trimble (Arizona's Official State Historian), Gary Johnson and Gary Clemmons.

ALMEDA

Here's what TOM RUSSELL has to say....."Great version of Hallie Lonnigan!

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I look forward to the whole record. Adios, Tom R."

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Do you have something to say?

The Western Way is always looking for your input. What about taking time to email two or three "short 'n' sweet" sentences that focus on the magazine to include in the "From the Trail" feature? Or, maybe you consider yourself a writer and have something a little more pithy to say that warrants larger space in a future issue? Send your comments/articles to wweditor1@gmail.com for review and consideration. Here are some points to remember when writing:

- There is no financial remuneration for contributed materials.
- The *WW* reserves the right to edit as needed.
- Articles must be G-rated and content must be considered appropriate for the western readership.
- Length should not exceed 400 words – shorter is just fine!

We make no promises about publication, but every submission will be given consideration. You will be notified if your article is selected for a future issue. Look forward to hearing from you!



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Did you know that B-Western cowboy singing star George Houston (The Lone Rider) received two degrees, one in Voice and one in Teaching Music, from Juilliard Music School?

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



WRAPPIN' IT UP

COWBOY MUSIC FESTIVAL, TUCSON, AZ

By Yvonne Mayer

The Arizona Chapter and Old Tucson (Studios) have produced another successful Western Music Festival! On March 28 and 29, the Chapter was pleased to host a stellar lineup including Kristin Harris, Juni Fisher, Miss Devon and the Outlaw, Bill Barwick, Bill Ganz, Jon Messenger and David Rychener. Entertainers performed on three stages throughout the two days. And, Tucson has been hop-pin' with western music this spring. On May 2 and 3, Old Tucson was home to showcase local Arizona performers including Bill Ganz, David Rychener, Jon Messenger, 43 Miles North (Sherry Walker and John Paulson), Buck Helton, Janice Deardorff and Dennis Knill.



Kristin Harris and Maria McArthur Old Tucson Studios March 28 Photo by Ev Shaw

Old Tucson Studios is a movie studio and theme park just west of Tucson, Arizona, adjacent to the Tucson Mountains and close to the western portion of Saguaro National Park. Built in 1939 for the movie *Arizona*, it has been used for the filming of several movies and television westerns since then, such as *Gunfight at the*

O.K. Corral and *Little House on the Prairie*. It was opened to the public in 1960, and historical tours are offered about the movies filmed there, along with live cast entertainment featuring stunt shows and shootouts.



Old Tucson



David Rychener Old Tucson Studios Local Performer Showcase May 2 Photo by Bob Levline

WRAPPIN' IT UP

THE WHOLE WEST AT THE SANTA CLARITA COWBOY FESTIVAL

Photos Courtesy Jack Hummel

After 21 years at the Melody Ranch Motion Picture Studio, the City of Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival set up camp this year in Historic Old Town Newhall and William S. Hart Park. With numerous stages in Old Town and more in the park, so much activity was going on, it was impossible to absorb it all. The sounds heard throughout the park included traditional and contemporary cowboy, authentic music of a Union Civil War brass band, intertribal Native American and Hispanic songs and dances, bluegrass, Americana, folk, swing, rockabilly and alternative country music, as well as poetry and storytelling. Even the boom of a Civil War cannon echoed around the festival.

There were camps of Buffalo Soldiers, Civil War Reenactors, Native American Villages, blacksmiths' shop and pioneer living areas. Attendees were able to experience archery, hatchet throwing, roping, and quick draw or simply enjoy eating cowboy cobbler sitting under the hundred year old trees that shade the park. The Buckaroo Bookshop, hosted by Jim and Bobbie Jean Bell (Vice-President of the WMA California Chapter) from Outwest, held western-themed talks and interviews with western authors.



10-Year-Old Ella Gibson on stage.

There were plenty of Western Music Association members and activities at the Festival. Opening night saw 2014 WMA Female and Male Performers of the Year, Kristyn Harris and Jim Jones in SCVTV Presents The Outwest Concert Series performance. WMA Hall of Fame member, Don Edwards, was in concert at the Rancho Camulos National Historic Landmark and the Canyon Guild Stage. Center stage bustled with the sounds of WMA Hall of Famers Sons of the San Joaquin and Ian Tyson; Dave Stamey, WMA Entertainer of the Year; and Crescendo Award winner Mikki Daniel.

Two bronze saddles set in terrazzo tile were unveiled this year on the prestigious Walk of Western Stars, both to WMA members. Diamond Farnsworth and



The Sons of the San Joaquin @ the Canyon Guild Theater.

Clarita Cowboy Festival.

At the top of the hill in the park is the William S. Hart Mansion where WMA members, fresh from their 2014 induction into the Western Swing Hall of Fame, the remarkable group Cow Bop performed for the benefit concert on Friday night.



Diamond Farnsworth with the Santa Clarita City Council, the Mayor, and his grandchildren.

Performing at the park stages were Gary Allegretto and Ian Espinoza, songwriters and harmonica and guitar virtuosos; Joe Harrington, poet and storyteller extraordinaire; new WMA members Carolyn Sills Combo from Santa Cruz; and spotted adding his amazing fiddle sounds in the group Sons & Brothers, was 2013 WMA Instrumentalist of the Year, Johnny Neil.

The Western Music Association California Chapter was honored to be provided a stage in the Heritage Junction portion of the park on the porch of the historic Saugus Train Station. President Gency Brown held down the fort (or in this case, the train station) throughout the weekend. Performing chapter members came from as far away as Porterville and San Diego, California, and



SCVTV Presents the Outwest Concert Series Opening Concert of the Festival (l to r: Kristyn Harris, Jim Bell, Jim Jones, Marilyn Tuttle, and Bobbie Jean Bell.)



Waddie Mitchell with his saddle.

Waddie Mitchell. Diamond, stuntman and stunt coordinator, worked on such classic Westerns TV shows as "The Virginian," "Bonanza," and "How the West Was Won," as well as movies including "Paint Your Wagon" and "Pale Rider." Waddie Mitchell, multi-award winning cowboy poet, holds three WMA Poet of the Year Awards. Waddie is credited with being one of the major organizers of the Elko Cowboy Poetry Gathering which became the inspiration for the Santa

Clarita Cowboy Festival. At the top of the hill in the park is the William S. Hart Mansion where WMA members, fresh from their 2014 induction into the Western Swing Hall of Fame, the remarkable group Cow Bop performed for the benefit concert on Friday night.

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Continued on page 28

In The Spotlight...

by Marvin O'Dell

...**Johnny Western** was inducted into the Arizona Music & Entertainment Hall of Fame in April. The event was held at the Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West in Old Town Scottsdale. **Gary Marshall** and **Jim & Jeanne Martin** performed for the occasion. Those who purchased tickets were treated to a tour of the museum's galleries.

...Tate Publishing began their nationwide promotion of "On the Outskirts of CRAZY", written by **Brenda Libby**, in April. Brenda shares the mysterious challenges of living with a spouse who, when diagnosed with Glioblastoma, is informed of yet another medical issue. Brenda spoke to the Camdenton (MO) Class of 1965 at their 50 Year Reunion and was featured on the Celebrity Sightings page in LO Profile magazine. Her new release is available on the internet and all bookstores.

...**Buck Helton** has released his first album in four years. "On the Trail to Where I Am (The Best of Buck Helton)" debuted in February and contains nine of the best songs from his previous albums, plus an unreleased track of Cowboy Poetry and two new bonus songs. He has also been hired as the resident cowboy singer at historic Old Tucson. The CD is available at www.buckhelton.com.

...**Allen & Jill Kirkham** won the 12th Annual Cowboy Idol Musician Competition at the Columbia River Cowboy Gathering in Kennewick, WA in April. They are working now on their first Western Christmas CD to be titled "Colorado Cowboy Christmas," featuring Allen's original title song and their favorite traditional western Christmas songs.

...**Randy Huston** and **Hannah Huston** received their first Wrangler Awards in March from the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Randy and Hannah received the award for Outstanding Traditional Western Music Album for their album "Cowboys & Girls." Hannah also received the New Horizon Award.

...**Bob Marshall** rose to #2 in March in REVERBNATION's country music chart with his latest album "Horses That Run Away." With over 14,000 country artists listed, #2 is quite an accomplishment. The album was just released in January.

...Santa Fe songwriter **Paul Kelly** came in second in the bluegrass category of the Chris Austin Songwriting Contest at the Merlefest in Wilkesboro, NC. It is his fourth time as a finalist. He also won "Bluegrass Song of the Year" for the second consecutive year at the New Mexico Music Awards with his song "Deeper."

...**Larry W Jones**, aka Kingwood Kowboy, invites all WMA members to have their music broadcast worldwide on "King-

wood KowboyKountryKorral" Radio. The Web site is: <http://kingwoodkowboykountrykorral.playtheradio.com/>. For details, e-mail Larry at lwj001@hotmail.com

...**Greg Hager** was pretty thrilled when **Royal Wade Kimes** recorded and released his song "Cowboy Dreaming" (from Greg's album "In the Valley Below") on Kimes' recently-released album "Shadows of Time."

...The new lead guitar player for the **Red Hot Rhythm Rustlers** is Dan McCorison. Dan was under contract with MCA records at one time and has recorded a solo project on the label. He is a Nashville veteran who now lives in the Phoenix, AZ, area.

...With the departure of Mark Jackson, **Sidewinder** has decided to go forward as a trio with Ken Wilcox, Bruce Huntington, and Tom Wolverton. There will be a greater concentration on western and old-time music and more originals by Bruce and Tom.

..."Race with the Wind," the latest album from **Jim Jones**, was released in March. Jim is now represented by Peter Holmstedt of the Hemifran agency in Sweden. He also just signed a management/promotion deal with Charlie Stewart's Handshake Management in Austin, TX.

...**GT Hurley** performed on Veterans Day at the Nam Jam in Huntsville, Utah, to help raise funds for a Vietnam War memorial replica.

...Due in June is the new release from **Almeda** titled "Lovers, Wives and Mothers: A Western Woman's Voice." Almeda also welcomed her second granddaughter, Hazel Virginia Walstad, into the world on Mother's Day. And her oldest daughter, Linda Givens, will marry former marine and Boston University graduate Dan Brooks in July.

...**Bill McCallie** and the In Cahoots Trio are starting their 23rd year on the Southern Belle River Boat dinner cruises. They invite all to stop in while visiting Port of Chattanooga, TN.

...While promoting the Kamloops Cowboy Festival on CFJC TV7's "Mid Day Show," **Mag Mawhinney** recited one of her poems. Also, the Audie Murphy American Legend YouTube channel complimented reciter **Gary Brace** on his presentation of Mag's song "Audie Murphy Was His Name," saying they would contact the Murphy family about it.

...Joe Texas, aka **R.W. Vandygriff**, recently performed six concerts with the San Antonio Symphony in San Antonio, having a total attendance of 10,200.

...“Old Houses, Horses, Dogs, and Friends,” the latest album from **Richard Martin**, was nominated for four New Mexico Music Awards, including Best Western Song. Awards were given at the annual banquet in May.

...Beth Malone, daughter of WMA member **Peggy Malone**, was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role in a Musical. The Tonys aired June 7th on CBS, after this publication went to print.

...**Juni Fisher** has had three songs from her CD “Listen...to the Horse” (“Listen,” “Fly Without Leaving the Ground” and “Ride With Your Heart Open”) in two different film soundtracks. One song from the same album has been named the official song of the Cowboy Dressage Association and is used in their promotional videos. Juni was hired recently to write promotional lyrics for a horse health care company.

...**Gary Allegretto** has been focusing on the future of Western Music...our youth. Just this year, he has taught thousands of school kids in eight western states and in BC, Canada. In Gary’s “Cowboy Harmonica In Public Schools” (CHIPS) program, each child is entertained, taught fascinating western history, and gifted a Hohner harmonica on which they quickly learn to accurately play four songs.

...**Royal Wade Kimes**, “The Gentleman Outlaw”, is releasing a novel titled Where Outlaws Roam that goes hand in hand with his new record “Shadows Of Time.” In doing so the two titles bring attention to each other. This will be Kimes’ sixth published novel, four of those in audio and two in paperback.

...Watch for a new Gospel CD from **Lynn Anderson** to be released in June. Featured on the album will be a gospel version of Mentor Williams’ classis song “Drift Away.” Mentor is Lynn’s husband, or “other half” as she puts it.

...The Jared Delaney trilogy of western novels, written by **Jim Jones**, have been accepted for large print publication by Five Star Publishing in Maine, and Rustler’s Moon will be coming out in September.

...**Prairie Moon** is currently mixing and mastering their 5th album. The CD should be out in July. Titled “Under Western Skies”, it will contain five new originals as well as seven tunes from other writers.

...Brush Poppers is the new book from **Dale Page**, to be released in July. The compilation of 30 original works were chosen from five decades of rhymed and metered stories. Included are the first cowboy poem Dale wrote in 1976 and his latest one, written in January this year. Dale’s new Web site is www.Okie-CowboyPoet.com.

...The Lake George Steamboat Company (Lake George, NY) has a new adventure cruise on one of their steamboats, the Mochican. The event is named Western Wednesday and is a dinner

cruise with cowboy entertainment (www.lakegeorgesteamboat.com). The cruises take place June 17th-Sept. 3rd, and the entertainment is provided by **Ernie Sites**.

...**Bodie Dominguez** reports that he’s slowed down on touring and club work and has bought five acres near the Blues by Anatone, WA. He’s thinking about moving his recording studio to the cabin there next door to his kids and grandkids.

...**The Hanson Family** was awarded Western Music Duo/Group of the Year by the Academy of Western Artists in March. Other winners were **Belinda Gail** (Western Music Female Artist of the Year), Barry Ward (Western Music Male Artists of the Year), **LeeLee Robert** (Western Music Album/CD of the Year for “Jewel of the West”), and **Doug Figgs** (Western Music Song of the Year for “Socios”).

...**Cowboy Joe and the Babcocks** performed at the Grand Ole Opry House on June 14 as part of the Sunday Mornin’ Country show during the CMA Music Festival. Cowboy Joe has a new western swing album coming out soon called “Trail Jazz.”

...**Horse Crazy Cowgirl Band** will perform at the Nevada Governor’s mansion in August. The governor has been invited! Oregon Cowboy Poet **Tom Swearingen** has teamed up with the girls for some exciting shows. Also, Judy Coder and Jennifer Epps of the trio are moonlighting. Their new duo, known as **Notable Exceptions**, is already touring the US. Look for a duo album release in the coming months.

...**Kristyn Harris** will be appearing with fiddler **Brook Wallace** on an episode of The Penny Gilley Show that aired on RFD-TV on June 18. Also Kristyn has a new CD coming out in June titled “Down the Trail.”

...“Charlie and Evangeline”, co-written by **Doug Figgs** and **Todd Carter** of the Broken Chair Band, won the 2015 Spur Award for Best Western Song. They will accept the award given by the Western Writers of America in Lubbock, TX, on June 27. At the New Mexico Music Awards banquet in May, Doug and his producer, **Mariam Funke**, received the Best Western Song award for their collaboration “Running With the Wind.” Other Top Five finalists were **Sid Hausman & Washtub Jerry** and the **Curio Cowboys**.

...**Riders In The Sky** take a thrilling ride to yesteryear as they salute iconic western movie, music, and TV star, **Roy Rogers**. “King of the Cowboys: Riders In The Sky Salute Roy Rogers” features family-friendly favorites from Roy’s long career that include “Don’t Fence Me In,” “Pecos Bill,” “Happy Trails” and more.

...“Best of America by Horseback”, the RFD-TV travelogue hosted by **Del Shields**, is celebrating their 10th year of being on the air.





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.

Abide

By Almeda Bradshaw – @2009

The prairie surface seems alive, the wind's out of the west.
The grass, in cadence like a dance, keeps rhythm without rest.
I hear a lonely tune it sings; a longing in my heart it brings
For when I rode those range lands far and wide.

Those days of old are memories, now cobwebs in my mind.
They weave a web of tales to tell, a history that binds
My cowboy life to days long past.
My mind drifts back to hold them fast.
I must not lose them with the changing tide.

Abide with me, I have a tale to tell;
Abide with me, come on and sit a spell.
I am old and past my glory but my life is worth a story.
Take time.
Abide.

I know you're rushed. Your days are full with all there is to do.
I know it's hard to take the time, but let me share with you
A life from which there's much to learn, more than in an hour
you'd earn.
So with this old cowboy sit and abide.



I am old, I rock upon a porch
Who will know,
my heart's a burning torch
For I may not be with you long.
My western way and cowboy song
Will cross o'er with me to the other side

Abide with me. I have a tale to tell.
Abide with me. Sit down and listen well.
I am old and past my glory,
But my life is worth a story.
Take time.
Abide.



Almeda Bradshaw is a singer, songwriter, poet and musician from Montana. She has journaled and written poetry and songs since her teen years and has performed at cowboy gatherings throughout the west for nearly two decades. A three-time National Cowboy Poetry Rodeo competitor, Almeda finished in the money each year. Her album *A Way of Heart: The Big Sandy Years* received a 2012 nomination from the Academy of Western Artists for Poetry CD of the Year. Her 2010 album *Voices From the Range* preserved the poetry of Rhoda Sivell in song and her newest collection of original songs, *Lovers, Wives & Mothers: A Western Woman's Voice*, will be released in 2015. Almeda lives in Huntley, MT, where she owns and operates the M2B Ranch Bed & Breakfast and helps train AQHA performance horses with her husband, former Marlboro Man, Merritt Bradshaw.

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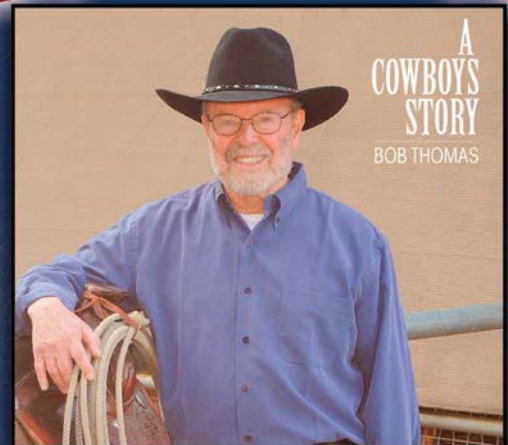
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BUFFHAM'S BUFFOONERY

by Les Buffham



VISITIN' WITH BILL

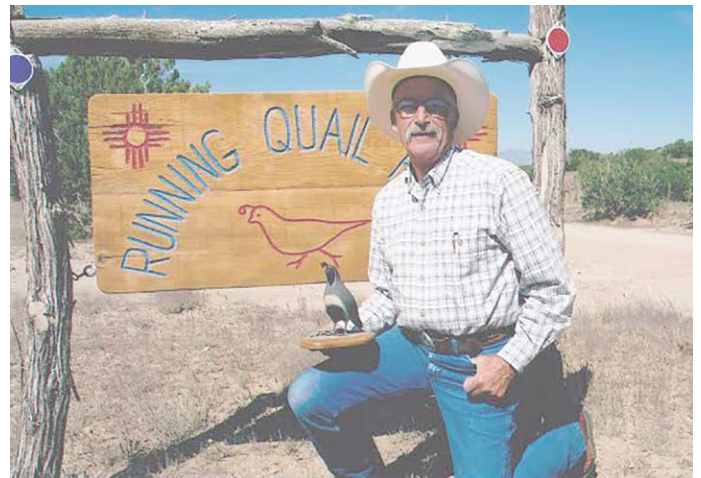
A couple of years ago in November I shared a room in Albuquerque during the WMA with an old podner of mine, Bill Strickler. Bill is a notoriously famous wood carver who miraculously still has all of his fingers. He is also one of those strange people that go stumbelin' around out in the bushes with binoculars glued to their face watchin' birds. His sculptures, therefore, lean to the world of birds. I got to watch him work and he has the patience of old Job. Some of his finished pieces look like if you reached out to touch them, they would fly away.

Bill didn't snore all that much and his feet didn't smell any worse than mine, so when he invited me to stay at his place up the road a ways from where they were having the Cowboy Christmas Show in Wickenburg, Arizona, I went. He has a fine home north of town a few miles, and he turned out to be a most gracious host. When I got there and ask him where I could throw my bedroll down, he showed me into his guest room. It already had a bed in it and a bathroom across the hall with runnin' water even! That bed got to feelin so good I was thinkin' after a while I just might stay a few days extra after the show was over.

One evenin' Bill said he wanted to take us out to dinner, so we hopped in his DDD (Dodge Diesel Dually) and headed to town. He said he was takin' me to the subway and seein as I'd never rode in one of them underground trains, I was kinda lookin' forward to that. I wondered how a little town like Wickenburg could afford one of those.

That all cleared up for me when old Bill pulls in the parkin' lot where there was a big sign advertisin' a Subway SANDWICH! We went in and he showed me how

to order up a custom made, foot-long with all kinds of things on it. It was purty good, too. Place didn't have no beer tho. While we were there, I began to realize how well old Bill was acquainted in and around the village. Seemed like he was shakin hands so much with folks



Bill Strickler with one of his quail. Looks about good enough to eat, huh? Used by permission.

comin' in and out that he didn't have time to eat. I finished my sandwich and was kinda eyeballin' his, wonderin' if I was going to have to help him out when there was a lull in the traffic and he got 'er gobbled down. He introduced me to the mother and brother of Cody Custer, world champion bull rider and roper, and a few other folks. I was beginning to feel like it was alright hangin' out with a celebrated wood carver after all.

Later on we went to the Cowboy Christmas Show and I gotta say it was a doozie. I'm goin' back again and would advise you to be there, too.



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In the **CROSSHAIRS**

Daron Little



Photo courtesy Paul Harris.

The Western Way: It's a lot of fun to interview the artists who write about and sing about cowboys and the western way of life. But oftentimes, the artists are writing more from a historic, literary, or romantic point of reference than having actually lived the life. Today we are talking to a real-life, working cowboy. Daron Little, it's good to visit with you today.

Daron Little: (smiles) Thank you very much. I surely appreciate the time and (most likely) undeserved attention!

TWW: Oh, no! We believe you are the very kind of person our readers would like to hear from. And your music certainly deserves attention. Does it bother you that someone might write a song about the cowboy life who has never ridden a horse or mucked out a stall?

DL: (laughs) Boy, the million dollar question right off the bat! I don't know that it bothers me that "they" do. I mean there are LOTS of fans and promoters (I have learned) that could care less about authenticity. I think there are FAR better musicians and singers than me that SHOULD play this type of music, if it blows their skirt up. But, what does bother me is folks that perform and try to get one over on the unsuspecting

populous that THEY are "cowboy." I have spent too many days in the snow and the cold doctoring sick calves, and have broken bones and have had friends that have lost their lives cowboying for it not to (bother me). The THING that really gets me is for folks to dress up in cowboy clothes (or what they consider to be) and make the cowboy look like a jester. I, as well as my family and many, many other ranch families, give up a lot to live this oftentimes underappreciated way of life. And when I see folks taking that for granted, it does get on my last nerve. Conversely, I think it is cool for non-rural folk to feel a connection to this

life of independence and freedom. As long as folks try to be genuine and do their homework to "get the subject matter right," I don't have a problem with it. I daresay Roy and Gene never drew a paycheck punching cows in their life, but look how good they did. Grown men and women to this day still think they are, or were, the real deal. And they were actors!

TWW: How do you find time to work a ranch and writesuch wonderfulsongs, too? There are writers who

talk about how it takes years for some of their songs to come together. It seems to us that you can't afford to take years for a song to come together with everything else you have to do as a rancher.



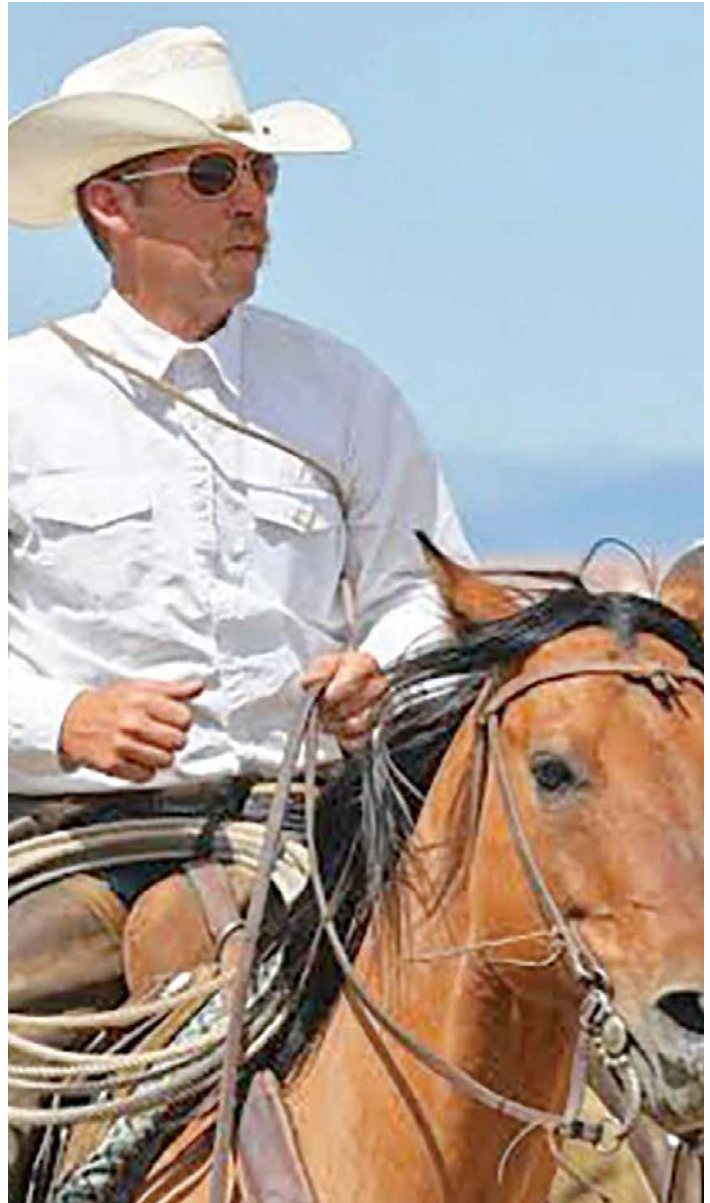
DL: Thanks for the compliment on my writing; I try hard to be original. But I'm not a "rancher" ~ that's the guy that pays the bills and gets the big check. I am a cowboy. I calve in the spring, then brand and kick them out to summer pasture, irrigate, put up some hay in the summer, wean them in the fall, help load them on the truck, and then feed cows in the winter with my team of horses. As far as writing, I don't watch much TV. I write at night after the kids and wife are asleep. I use friends and past acquaintances for inspiration as well as thoughts I have during the course of my day. Some people send me ideas from time to time or songs, and if I feel a connection, I try to wallow it around until it is something I can play and sing.

TWW: What made you want to start writing songs about cowboy life?

DL: It is just in you (writing songs). If I was a fly fisherman, I would write those songs...If I played baseball, I would write those songs (I have always wanted to be a pro baseball player, but that didn't work out, so I started cowboying) (smiles).

TWW: Do you think folks who have never lived on a ranch have any trouble "getting" your songs? Has anyone ever expressed that to you?

DL: Yes, I have had friends (fellow performers) tell me that it might not hurt to "generalize" my lyric for a bit more appeal. They sure mean well and are trying to help me. And sometimes I do just that. But mostly I don't. It seems that the seven people who really like my music (laughs) understand it is for the ranch folk. And that is ok. Mike Beck told me to "Do what you do - don't try to be anything other than what you are musically." And he is a cool cat, and I have always admired his playing and lyric. He is, in my opinion, the MOST underappreciated cowboy singer there is. I get likened to "a Cowboy Bob Dylan", but Beck, he is MILES ahead of everyone else out there...and he is

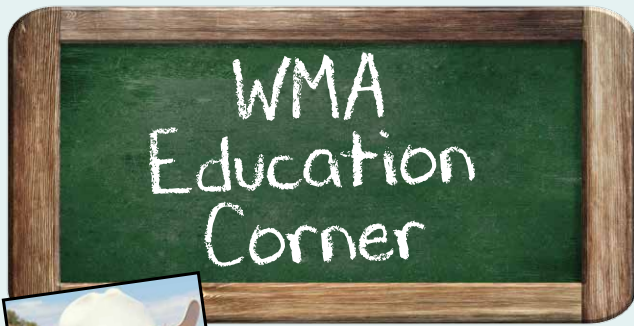


also the only other guy I have met (besides me) that is as geeked out about guitars as me!

TWW: On your latest album, you have a song called "The Outside Circle." Can you explain "the outside circle" to the non-cowboys who might buy your CD?

DL: The Outside Circle is the guy that makes a lot of tracks during a gather of cattle. He sees a lot of country during the day, and everyone has to work in unison to make sure that no one gets ahead of each other and lets cattle back. The song is about the guys that cowboy and how hard it is to be a good one. "There ain't no short cuts to anywhere worth going." I also feel that the working cowboy is the one on the outside circle of today's society. There are those that would have us believe that food comes from the grocery store. And that couldn't be further from the truth.





By Judy James

I had a discussion recently with a WMA performer about approaching schools about doing education programs. This person is a seasoned performer and is in high demand for Western programming, but has not been doing education shows. The following is the conversation – more or less.

JJ – Have you thought about doing education programs?

WMA Performer (WMA) – Yes, but I don't know how to get started and what I need to include in the program.

JJ – You sing many songs about history so you can embellish the history on each of those songs.

WMA – Tell about the history of the song? I already do.

JJ – Right, just embellish. Tell more about the background without talking down to the younger students. For instance, if you sing a song about the Goodnight-Loving Trail, talk about who Goodnight and Loving were, the need to take cattle to market, where they went and why. Make your songs sequential with the history.

WMA – But I don't know all of the educational terms you talk about.

JJ – You don't have to. Keep the audience engaged, as you always do, and they will love it as well as learn something. The most important thing is to talk to the teachers and know what they are teaching at the time you will be making your presentation, and make sure of your facts. Also, go to your state's education Web site and find out what the requirements are for the grade level(s). Remember, these students are visual so if you have photos, this will help them connect. Be careful to not let the visuals take over your presentation. Additionally, find out the length of your time slot. There are other things you need to know, but this is a good start. If you need any help, let me know. I will be glad to help you find the information.

Remember: If we miss a generation, our Western History is gone! If you have any questions, our committee has the resources provide answers to most of them!

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

In Memoriam

Pete Kobal

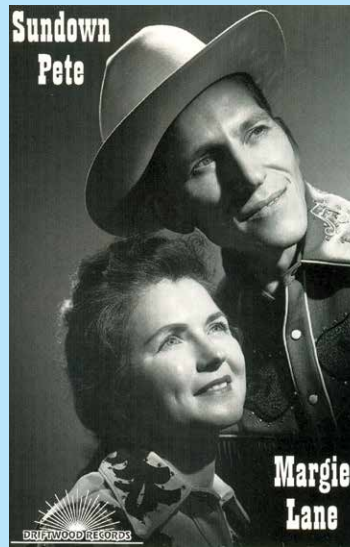


Photo by Bruno of Hollywood Used by permission.

"Sundown Pete" Kobal's performance history dates back to when Western Music was commonly heard as part of movie soundtracks and on the radio. Pete and Margie Lane, his longtime performance partner and wife of 44 years, met in New Jersey when both were performing with other musical acts. But Pete had other musical aspirations and headed for the west coast. In California he won first place in the Rocket To

Stardom TV talent contest singing "Ghost Riders In The Sky" and subsequently began touring nationally. As luck would have it, he again connected with Margie back east and this time they cemented their partnership. They worked with notable performers of the time such as Elton Britt, Shorty Warren, Roy Acuff and Kenny Roberts. They also caught the attention of Hank Snow, who signed them to record for his Silver Star label. Pete and Margie were early supporters of the WMA and, in later years, following Margie's passing in 2007, Pete reconnected with the organization to help champion the use of Mariachi musicians in Western, as he did in a number of his recordings. During the 2014 general membership meeting in Albuquerque, attendees may recall his proposing the musical cross-pollination as one the WMA might pursue in its educational outreach. He would have been very gratified to see that occurring as part of our 2015 WMA Convention in November. Hopefully, he is singing once again with his beloved Margie.

Wrappin' It Up – Santa Clarita

Continued from page 19

even Montana. These were: Jerry Hall & Trick Shot, Sidewinder, Alameda Bradshaw, Rodger Maxwell, and John Bergstrom. A very special treat was 10 year old Ella Gibson from Santa Ana who played her guitar and sang original western songs written by her family.

There was so much going on at this year's amazing festival it is impossible to describe it all. The best advice would be just put it on your calendar for next year and see for yourself.

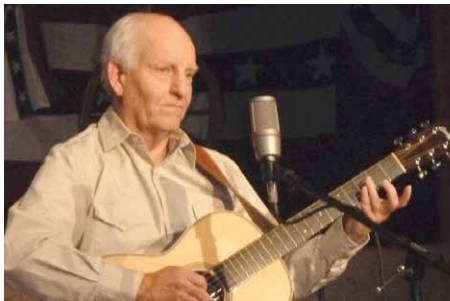
Chapter Update



ARIZONA CHAPTER

President: Yvonne Mayer
steidl-mayer@msn.com

Spring is always a busy time in the West, and the Arizona chapter is a good example. In March we moved into our new "home," the newly renovated Arizona Theater at Old Tucson (Studios). The first featured performer was locally well-known 18-string guitar virtuoso, Johnny Bencomo. On March 28 and 29 we joined with Old Tucson (Studios) to present the "Cowboy Arts and Music Festival." On May 2 and 3 we again joined with Old Tucson (Studios) to present a showcase of Arizona Chapter performers. [Check out the article in "Wrappin' It Up" in this issue for a line-up of performers at these events.] Our April meeting was held at the Blazin' M Ranch in Cottonwood, with



*Bob Levline at the May Meeting.
Photo courtesy Lourdes Fernandez.*

Jim and Jeanne Martin as our hosts. We met old friends and made many new ones. The May meeting included a review of past-year projects and a discussion of plans for the coming year. While we do not hold meetings in June, July and August, we will be busy "behind the scenes" working on upcoming projects and performances.

Yvonne Mayer and Sherry Walker were recently invited to meet with Mike Fox, Executive Director of the newly opened Museum of the West in Scottsdale <http://scottsdalemuseumofthewest.org> and Mary Brown. The Museum is interested in engaging Chapter performers to entertain at the gallery! June was a month of house

concerts featuring artists Kristyn Harris, Brook Wallace, Miss Devon and the Outlaw and the Mountain Saddle Band. The Chapter will host a WMA information table at the



*Rowdy & Miss T at May Meeting.
Photo courtesy Lourdes Fernandez.*

Prescott Gathering on August 6, 7 and 8. This is the first year we will have a presence in Prescott and we are looking forward to the opportunity to tell folks about the WMA and the AZ Chapter.

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

President: Gency Brown
gncbrown2009@live.com

Audience and performer participation continues to grow for our Western Music Association Showcases at The Autry National Center and El Trocadero Steakhouse each month. The SCVTV Presents the OutWest Concert Series kicked off the Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival with Krystin Harris and Jim Jones in concert. During the festival WMACC provided Western music all day both days on a stage provided by The Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society. Large audiences of festival goers enjoyed Rodger Maxwell, Sidewinder, Ella Gibson, John Bergstrom, Almeda Bradshaw and Jerry Hall and Trick Shot from our stage. In May, WMACC was proud to co-sponsor with OutWest, Susie Glaze and the Hilonesome Band in concert and are looking forward to Miss Devon and The Outlaw, Krystin Harris and Brooke Wallace in June. Also in June we return to Cody's Viva Cantina in Burbank presenting Rodger Maxwell and the Nomads. Visit us at www.westernmusiccalifornia.org and on Facebook.

COLORADO CHAPTER

President: Floyd Beard
fibeard@yahoo.com

On May 23, 2015, this chapter's officers voted to institute a TOP HAND AWARD to the WMA-CO member who has done the

most to promote, assist, and participate in any way that benefits this chapter. The award will be a custom made trophy buckle paid for by the WMA-CO Treasury. The winner will be announced during the 2015 WMA Convention at the WMA Colorado "Branded Western" meeting (TBD). For more information on how YOU can be eligible to win this award, visit www.wmacolorado.org or contact the chapter's secretary, Susie Knight, at lassothecowgirl@yahoo.com or (303) 495-4869. Our first WMA-CO Showcase/Jam held in Greeley, Colorado on 4/18/15 filled the VFW Hall with fans of western entertainment thanks to the promotional efforts of chapter members, Vic Anderson, Ray Delgado, and Julian "Westy" Oliver. Newest WMA-CO member, 16-year old Tyler Dill, made his performance debut with a few Marty Robbins tunes. 2014 WMA Finalist for Instrumentalist of the Year, Ernie Martinez, joined in to accompany Tyler, jam session-style. The Mancos Showcase/Jam on 5/14/15 was well-attended too despite the rainy weather. The folks of southwestern Colorado are hoping we'll return again soon with more great western music and cowboy poetry. The upcoming showcases include Steamboat Springs on 6/6/15 and Florissant on 8/8/15. Visit www.wmacolorado.org for more information. Another brand new event is the WMA-CO Pikes Peak Cowboy Gathering on Thursday, July 9th, 2015 at the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame. Visit www.pikespeakcowboygathering.com for all the details.

COLUMBIA CHAPTER

President: Lauralee Northcott
lauraleenorthcott@gmail.com

Columbia Chapter WMA members met in Winthrop, Washington on May 9th. The town celebrates 49er Days with a town parade, then Packer Rendezvous in the park. Entertainment was provided all day by cowboy entertainers from our Chapter and elsewhere! What a treat. Horse Crazy Cowgirl Band opened the parade with the National Anthem. Chapter Members Tom Swearingen, Lynn Kopelke, performed along with other cowboy poets and singers from around the state. Duane and Lori Nelson are working on our next gathering planned for The Dalles, Oregon, with details to be announced. Like most other chapters we represent a huge geographical area and collecting members is a challenge, but, hey, we love this stuff!

Continued on page 30

Chapter Update

Continued from page 29

EAST COAST CHAPTER

President: Aspen Black

aspen@cowgirlstothecross.com

The WMAECC members have been busy taking the chapter mission "to the streets." Without fireworks or names in lights, cowboy-hatted emissaries slip into restaurants, coffeehouses, libraries, festivals, retail outlets, and other places where the general non-western public gather, and bring them something new; something they have never heard – cowboy music & poetry! We have recently sold books, CD's, and received the most complimentary comments from the most unlikely people – those who don't fit the western demographic at all! Although many of us are not as visible to the bulk of members and audiences in the geographic west, we are working hard, travelling many miles and spending many hours, bringing western music & poetry to everyone who will listen. There is a lot of talent in the WMAECC, spanning styles old



WMAECC president, Aspen Black, playing a guest spot with WMAECC members, the Rocky River Cowboys, at the Milo Holt Western Film Festival in Siler City, NC.

& new, and I urge folks to seek out the work of our members, give it a listen or read, and lend your support. On the business end, our chapter membership is growing; we continue to network and perform together; and follow up on leads to create a major WMAECC festival east of the Mississippi.

KANSAS CHAPTER

President: Jeff Davidson

jeff@jeffdavidsonmusic.com

It's been a busy spring for Kansas WMA members. The state Cowboy Poetry "qualifying rounds" are two thirds complete with one round yet to be at the Flint Hills rodeo June 6. "We had excellent competitions at our first two regional contests in Ellsworth and Benton," said poetry contest chair Ron Wilson. Contestants presented original work in two divisions: serious and humorous poetry. The top three qualifiers in each contest advance to the state finals which will be June 12 at Volland Store in Wabaunsee County. Hosts for the contests were the Drivers Hall of Fame at Ellsworth and the Prairie Rose

Chuckwagon Supper at Benton.

Western Days at the Prairie Rose Chuckwagon Supper featured programs, musical entertainment and the WMA cowboy poetry contest. The first day of the 3-day event is devoted to school children. Manager Orin Friesen reports it was the largest turn-out at the event since its inception. WMA-KS had a staffed display throughout the weekend. The quarterly meeting in April featured John Birdeno for the lunch n' learn presentation of the many



Pictured jammin' Orin Friesen, Stan Greer, Jim Farrell, Jeff Davidson

western artifacts he has on display at Prairie Rose, an excellent jam by chapter members and lively discussion of upcoming events. Ron Wilson and Jeff Davidson conducted a class at a state wide 4-H event, Discovery Days, entitled Rhymes and Rhythms of the Range. There were 25 4-H youth who attended, ranging in age from 13 through 17. It was great to see some budding artists, two who were already writing songs, one who plans to go into Ag journalism, and one who will join a collegiate singing group. All of them had the start of a poem at the end of the class. The KS chapter supports and encourages the artistic development of Kansas youth.

The chapter hosted a Western Night jam session at the Emma Chase music hall in Cottonwood Falls. It was open to all, with jam artists presenting western music. WMA members led off the jamming with lively classic western tunes. WMA-KS staffed a display table promoting Western Music.

MONTANA-DAKOTAS CHAPTER

President: Linda Hausler

openrange@wispwest.net

The WMA Mon-Daks Chapter presented a WMA Showcase in Billings, Montana on Sunday, May 17th at the Yellowstone Valley Brewery in Downtown Billings. Chapter Members from Montana, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Idaho performed for an enthusiastic crowd for over 3 hours. Chapter Performing Members included Open Range with Linda Hausler and Ric Steinke, Almeda Bradshaw, Allen & Jill Kirkham, Miss "V" the Gypsy Cowbelle, Lee Lee Robert, and the Panhandle Cowboys with Farmer Dave Fulfs and John "J.B." Barber. We held our annual Chapter Meeting after the

showcase. In the first order of business, new officers were nominated and elected. 2015-2016 WMA Mon-Daks Officers elected are President Linda Hausler, Vice President Allen Kirkham, Secretary Miss "V" Gypsy Cowbelle, and Treasurer Ric Steinke. Ideas were brainstormed on possible venues for future showcases to promote western music and cowboy poetry in Montana and the Dakotas to include the Black Hills and Billings.

Catching up on chapter members' news, Allen & Jill Kirkham won the 2015 Cowboy Idol Musician competition at the Columbia River Cowboy Gathering in Kennewick, WA in April! This summer they are in their 3rd season performing with the Circle B Cowboys Chuckwagon Band in Hill City, SD. The Panhandle Cowboys won the Open Mic People's Choice Award at the Columbia River Cowboy Gathering in April! LeeLee Robert's CD, "Jewel of the West" won the Will Rogers Award for Best Western Album of the Year by the Academy of Western Artists! Greg Hager received notice that his new CD "In the Valley Below," released in March, was selected by the Rural Roots Music Commission as their "Country & Western CD of the Year." The award will be presented over Labor Day Weekend. His original song "Cowboy Dreaming" was recorded and released by Royal Wade Kimes on his new CD "Shadows of Time." Almeda Bradshaw is super busy wrapping up production of her new album LOVERS, WIVES & MOTHERS: A WESTERN WOMAN'S VOICE, due for release in June. She's looking forward to sharing with the WMA and beyond, her songwriting on themes of middle-age marital bliss, unrequited cross-cultural love, the evils of social intolerance, child abduction and, on a lighter note, her answer to all of life's woes! GT Hurley started a new radio promotion with Bill Wence Promotions in Nashville for his CD "War Horse" produced by Brenn Hill. It will be played on NPR, Americana and Independent Country Radio Nationwide. He also performed at a fund raiser in Huntsville, UT, on May 16th to raise funds for a Vietnam War Memorial 80% Replica of the Wall in Washington, DC. Jarle Kvale just released a new CD entitled "Custom Made," featuring 14 original poems. Ric Steinke of Open Range played for Justin Timberlake's birthday party at Lone Mountain Ranch in Big Sky, MT this winter! We hope to see you at this year's WMA Convention in Albuquerque November 11th-15th! See you down the trail!

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

President: Joe Brown

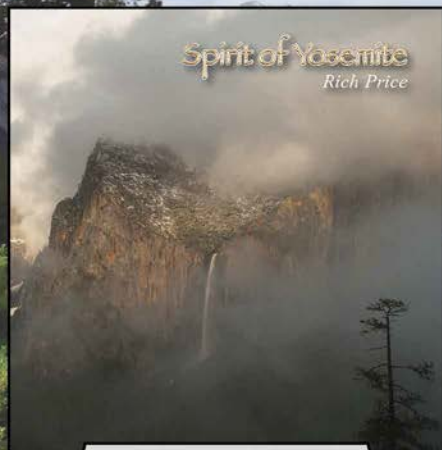
jbrown2452@yahoo.com

The second quarter is always our ramp-up period each year. Typically this is when we have our first concerts kicking off the "Summer Concert Series" we have each year at the Arte de Placitas Gallery in Placitas, NM.

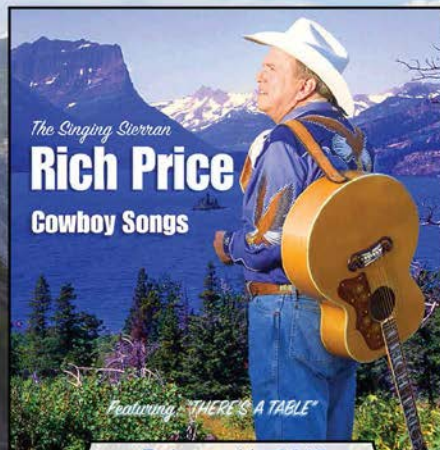
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Adonda Records Completes Production of Rich's Third Album "Western Songs"

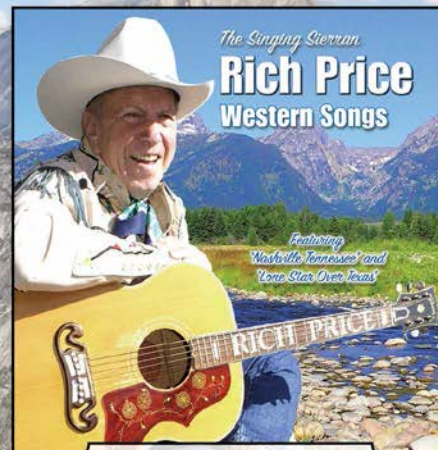
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Pictured: James F. Walker Nelson (1920-1993) in the late 1970s, farrier and father of poet Andy Nelson and Jim Nelson, co-hosts of Clear Out West (C.O.W.) Radio. Photo courtesy of the Nelson family. This image is selected as the 2015 cover art for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

www.CowboyPoetry.com



GOLDEN NUGGETS



by Buck Helton

Howdy, Pard!

Once again it's time to light our lamps, shoulder our picks, and go in search of musical treasure. This time around we are going to delve into the history of a ballad enormously popular amongst the Irish and Scots who began to arrive in the U.S. in great numbers in the 1840's. The song is Brennan on the Moor, and tells the story of a highwayman named Willy Brennan who was Ireland's version of Robin Hood. Brennan was a real person, a road agent in County Limerick based in and around the Kilworth Mountains. He was said to have never once shed blood during any of his numerous robberies, targeting the wealthy and important (*often government officials*) and sharing the booty with the poor of the area. As might be imagined, this made him very popular with the citizenry and very unpopular with those whose purses he lightened. Brennan was, according to legend, betrayed by a young woman who wet the powder in the pan of his trademark blunderbuss and then led him into an ambush. There are conflicting reports of his demise, as there was more than one highwayman with the surname of Brennan, but according to most sources he was hanged at the Conmel Jail in County Cork in 1804.

The first American publication of the ballad in North America was in 1863 by Beadle & Adams in the *Russian Bear Song Book No. 3* (as "*Brennon On The Moor*"). John McElroy heard it in 1864 in Andersonville, the infamous Confederate prison camp. The tune had already been sung here for at least two decades previously before its first appearance in print on these shores. The original melody is scarcely ever used today, it has been supplanted by a tune borrowed from the Revolutionary War ballad "*The Saratoga Song*" aka "*Song for the Redcoats*" written by an unknown American patriot shortly after the battle of Saratoga in 1777. It is this melody which was used in some of the earliest transcription in American songbooks during the folk revival following World War II.

The earliest recording I have been able to trace is William Jacob Morgan in 1946. Burl Ives recorded the song on a 1949 LP for Stinson, "*Wayfaring Stranger*," and most famously the Clancy Brothers recorded it in 1961 with guest artist Tommy Makem. This abbreviated version of five verses has become the standard. It was learned by Patrick Clancy "from his father's mother, a tall woman who wore a big, black cloak and hood and was known throughout the neighborhood for her fine singing. Brennan, the bold highwayman, was executed in Clonmel, which is twelve miles from where the Clancy's lived [...]" Paddy has shortened and adapted the song from the way he learned it, but the heart of this tale of a 'brave and undaunted' highwayman who was 'betrayed by a false-hearted woman' remains intact" (from the *liner notes to Tradition LP-1042*).

The tune has spawned many alternate place/name variants including "*Bracey on the Shore*" and "*Charlie Quantrell*" which was collected by John & Alan Lomax in 1938 in Texas (Lomax 1938, p. 144 - 146, also Lomax 1960, p. 347/8). One of their informants reported that she "had learned this song from my mother, who learned it from her boy friend fifty years ago. He learned it 'out West'."

Brennan on the Moor was said to have been extremely popular amongst the working Cowboys of the 1870's and 1880's. Folklorist, historian, and western author, Louis L'Amour, had several of his characters perform the song in his novel "*How the West Was Won*."

Space prevents the publication of all 12 original verses here, but the following arrangement has become traditional.

Brennan On The Moor

'Tis of a brave young highwayman this story I will tell.
His name was Willie Brennan and in Ireland he did dwell.
It was on the Kilwood Mountain he commenced his wild career.
And many a wealthy nobleman before him shook with fear.

[Refrain]

It was Brennan on the moor, Brennan on the moor
Bold, brave and undaunted was young Brennan on the moor

One day upon the highway as Willie he went down,
He met the mayor of Cashiell a mile outside of town,
The mayor he knew his features and he said, young man, said he,
Your name is Willie Brennan, you must come along with me.

Now Brennan's wife had gone to town provisions for to buy,
And when she saw her Willie she commenced to weep and cry,
Said, hand to me that tenpenny, as soon as Willie spoke,
She handed him a blunderbuss from underneath her cloak.

Now with this loaded blunderbuss, the truth I will unfold,
He made the mayor to tremble and he robbed him of his gold.
One hundred pounds was offered for his apprehension there,
So he, with horse and saddle to the mountains did repair.

Now Brennan being an outlaw upon the mountains high,
With cavalry and infantry to take him they did try,
He laughed at them with scorn until at last 'twas said.
By a false-hearted woman he was cruelly betrayed.

Burl Ives also included a different ending verse, which is sometimes added by modern troubadours.
They hanged Brennan at the crossroads, in chains he hung
and dried
But still they say that, in the night, some do see him ride
They see him with his blunderbuss, all in the midnight chill
Along, along the King's highway rides Willie Brennan still!

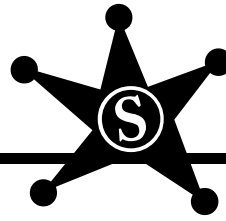
There was even a 1913 silent film by the Solax Company titled *Brennan of the Moor* that is based (rather loosely) on the ballad, albeit with the obligatory happy ending.

There you have it friends and neighbors, one of the earliest and most enduring outlaw ballads which were the forefathers of our own beloved gunfighter songs.

Your suggestions for future columns are always welcome. Send them to Buck@Buckhelton.com.

Until next time, Happy Trails!





Western Air

by Rick Huff

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

Chapter Three: “We Have A Definition!!” I guess that’s what it could be called, were the last two columns and this one parts of a book! With three now devoted to the subject, at least we should be coming close to that length in word count! The emails since our last publication have been in solid agreement that our efforts to create a concise definition of Western Music may have paid off. You will recall (I hope) that the proposed wording would be committed to memory, and would allow an easy differentiation between Western and other genres with which it has been confused. The definition you seem to agree might answer the questions “What is Western Music?” and “How is Western different from Country?” goes as follows:

“Musically Western is most often acoustic at its core. Its lyrics deal with the lives, loves, lore, locale and legacy of the Westerner, the West and Cowboying worldwide.”

There was another column subject, of course. “Let’s Promote Our Music Overseas!!” I’ve veritably yelled it from the rooftops. More recently I have begun saying we should be focusing our principal attention on it and forget the American media jungle. Beyond the Cowboy being that storied admirable character the world adores, folks outside our borders appear more likely to “get” this Western thing or accept it as fact when they hear it. My belief is rooted in my firsthand knowledge of some things. Like the fact that the international historical exploration society called “The Westerners” has its largest “corral” (chapter) in West Germany. Try the national veneration in Australia for the late Slim Dusty and other contemporary “bush balladeers” who sing of the stockmen (cowboys) and stations (ranches). Or Lynn Anderson’s popularity in Norway (and topping of their charts) with her “Cowgirl” releases of the last decade which resulted in tours there. Or the outpouring of love and shouts of “Cowboy!” from the non-English speakers in Beijing when Western performers went there in a cultural exchange? How about the Cowboy subject releases from Japan, Luxembourg, South Africa and other locales? And you just might have noticed the country of origin of the Western Way Spring Issue’s cover boy!! England’s Clint Bradley emailed and said he read “with great interest” the last two columns dealing with succinctly defining our music, separating it from other genres and promoting it to fresh, aware audiences. With his kind permission, I’ve excerpted parts of it for your consideration. He writes:

“I think you have definitely hit a very large nail squarely on the

head! I firmly believe that Western Music’s purity and acoustic format is one of its major strengths, and most definitely reinforces its credibility around the world. Here in Europe the intense over-promotion of the whole Pop Nashville movement has created a lot of confusion, so to the floating music fan (who is totally unaware of pure Western Music), anything in a Stetson hat is preconceived to be another (product) off the Nashville conveyor belt. Therefore I think you are very wise to steer the association away from amalgamating with (the Country) movement, your independence will bring future strength.

“I myself have been asked ‘THE QUESTION’ many times over the last few months since my album came out. On nearly all the mainstream radio interviews that I’ve done in the UK and Europe, they have asked ‘What is the difference between Western Music and Country music?’ The interesting thing is that my album has found its way onto shows that would never normally go near Country music, but have picked up on the fact that what I’m doing is different. It’s quite a thing to hear one of my tracks played in between Elton John & U2. I have spoken many times about the WMA and encouraged people to look and discover the difference for themselves. I’ve even been invited to bring in some of my favourite albums and play them on air. Things like some of the lesser known “Marty Robbins Gun Fighter Ballads” and the “Sons of the Pioneers” which I know are standard listening to long time Western music fans, but have never been heard before on a daytime BBC regional show that musically covers everything in between the news and weather. The reaction is always very favourable, they say WOW I really like that, it’s not at all what I expected!

“If you look at what has happened here in recent years with the Folk Music scene, you can see parallels. The emergence of new stripped down and enthusiastic performers who’ve brought Folk music back into mass awareness, have encouraged a curious and more credible seeking kind of audience to look deeper into the genre. I believe that handled correctly, the same could be done with Western Music. It’s acoustic

base and quality of songs and lyrical content, as you so rightly say of the Lives, Loves, Lore, Locale and legacy of westerners makes such a credible base to work from. I wear my love for ‘Western music’ proudly upon my chest for all to see, and try to promote awareness of the genre everywhere I go. With so much amazing new talent emerging on the scene it could well be on the verge of Greatness!”

Take it to heart, folks...take it to heart!



In The Crosshairs – Daron Little

Continued from page 27

TWW: *If you could encourage young songwriters to do one thing that would make western music better, what would it be?*

DL: Oh, that is easy...get out and live life. Get some dirt under your finger nails. Get your heart broke a time or two. Go work for some ornery old-timer that was punching cows when Buck was a calf. You can't write good cowboy music from watching old westerns off of TV.

TWW: *Do you feel that there is room in western music for more than one sound? In other words, do you think there is a musical "style" to which western music should adhere, or are you of the opinion that western lyrics can fit into many different sounds?*

DL: No. Everyone should sound just like the Sons of the Pioneers or Roy Rogers and yodeling is a MUST. JUUUUUUST KIDDING! Western music is music. I don't really listen to a lot of it myself, ironically. The original cowboys and drovers played music that they had heard in the Delta or in the Appalachians and contrived lyrics to fit with the experiences they were having then. So I think for it to be vibrant and to evolve, people should be open-minded to different facets of it.

TWW: *When did you realize you were not content just being a cowboy but needed to be a singing cowboy?*

DL: Oh, I have always played music throughout my life. Which is a shame I don't play guitar better than I do (laughs). The singing cowboy deal is funny. I didn't mean to be one. I used to think I was a cowboy that played music, but I have come to realize I am a musician that just happens to have a day job as a cowboy.

TWW: *Are there some individuals that you consider to be musical influences in your life?*

DL: Yeah, for sure. Monroe Sharp was a neighbor that helped in getting me going as a kid. He played old country and would come and play on our front porch back in Louisiana. Cowboy music wise, it would be (Mike) Beck, Gail Steiger...Juni Fisher has always been kind in believing in my songwriting. But I listen to a LOT of music...Ed Sheeran, Bob Dylan, Mumford and Sons, Foo Fighters, a lot of contemporary Folk Music, etc.

TWW: *We have to believe that full-time cowboying limits*

your ability to tour with your music. Do you see that as keeping you from getting the recognition you feel you deserve?

DL: I really don't look for recognition in this. I just want to write and play songs that folks can relate to and maybe help give people fruition to feelings that they need to voice.



TWW: *Who among western singers with whom you're acquainted do you feel deserves more recognition for their work?*

DL: Gail Steiger, Randy Huston, and Mike Beck for sure. Justin Reichert, Caitlyn Taussig and Shandee Allen should get recognition. Trinity Seely is starting to get it and it is well-deserved.

TWW: *You recorded a duet with Trinity Seely last year. Any chance that you two will collaborate again in the near future?*

DL: Oh, I don't know. I would guess if the right song came along I would be happy to!

TWW: *Well, we're not ashamed to admit to being huge Daron Little fans here. We hope to see more recordings soon. And we want to wish you good luck and lots of added fans as people become more aware of your writing and your music.*

DL: Thank you very much. That is very kind. I just released an acoustic EP, "Dos Amigos", and I have a live show in the can to be released at a later date. It has some old songs I have played as well as some rearranged covers such as Bob McDill's "Coyotes" and "I Ride an Old Paint" and The Allman's "Midnight Rider." It was a good show recorded in Tooele, Utah at the Western Songwriter Series put on by Tyler Davis. Butch Hause played with me there. He is a cool, cool cat as well. As far as fans...I like the term "friends." I like to play music for my friends. 🐾

All photos provided by DL and used by permission.





O.J. Sikes

Reviews



A Musical Note From OJ...

O.J. Sikes

In the last issue I suggested some ways we might grow our membership. We lose some normally, due to attrition (for lack of a better word), and we add others each year, but we really need to grow! Now that warmer weather is here, travelers will be visiting those majestic out-of-doors setting across the West, in droves. At least I hope they will. The West is full of national treasures, and the more folks see them first-hand, the more they will want to celebrate them in many ways, including in song. Now's our chance to "meet that need!"

Over the years, we've heard lots of talk about the need to define Western music, some even suggesting that a definition would be necessary for growing our audience. Arriving at a definition is surely a noble goal, but it's clearly not an easy one to attain. Otherwise, we would have done it many years ago. The music has continued to grow without a definition. I almost said "evolve" instead of grow, but that would imply that the body of music we love has turned into something that is almost foreign to the music that was being composed and performed commercially in the 1930's, 40's & 50's. That wouldn't be accurate.


We still perform the classics because they have proven their ability to survive all these years. Audiences still respond to them, even if they've never heard them before. At the same time, the Rockies are still here, as are the deserts, coyotes and plains, and excellent new songs have been composed about them in every decade since the 50's, adding to the growing body of music we call Western. Which brings me back to the elusive search for a definition.

I've heard people say that Western music must have lyrics to make it recognizable. But look at all the Western instrumental albums by The Boston Pops, Melachrino Strings, Geoff Love, 50 Guitars of Tommy Garrett, Al Caiola, etc. and think of the great movie and TV themes that are instantly recognizable as Western, albeit without lyrics. OK, I realize that some people have an ear for melody while others are drawn more to lyrics, but I'll stick to my position. I don't think it's impossible for melodies and arrangements to describe

Western scenes.

In years past, some people have said that Western music has to be played without drums. If that were the case, we would have to eliminate a sizeable chunk of our LP/CD library, including a huge number of Sons of the Pioneers recordings from the 40's, 50's & 60's, which had a large number of drummers among session personnel, including on several occasions, the legendary Muddy Berry. Scott Vaughn was an outstanding drummer (as well as singer and Western composer) with the Flying W Wranglers for years. To be sure, these guys didn't dominate, they complimented, and I think that's the point. The instrument has to be played appropriately. A fiddler who plays over everyone else in the band, including the vocalist, misses the point and ruins the performance. Same goes for the drummer. Neither has to be eliminated, just "adjusted."

Someone told me once that she had never heard of trumpets in Western music. Marty Robbins must have turned over in his grave! Others have said that Western music has to be acoustic. If you've read this far, I don't think I need to say much about that. I won't submit a definition here, but I would like to make a suggestion: perhaps we need to think more in terms of inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness. The genre is growing and we need to grow with it, expanding in a direction that is true to the music's roots while accepting innovative, new songs that are clearly Western songs, both in melodies/arrangements and lyrics.

And we shouldn't forget something Tom T. Hall once said: "I love music, when it's good." Lots of people feel that way, so we have to keep it "good." If we do, and if we stay focused, we will do more than survive; we'll thrive. 

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

REX ALLEN JR

Love Songs: Garage Songs VI



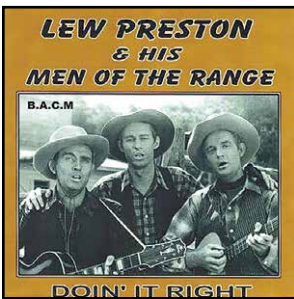
Rex chose the material for this album from several musical genres. The selections, all ballads, range from “Cry Me a River” to “Since I Fell for You,” to “Sweet Dreams” to “Horses in the Road,” to “Softly, as I Leave You.” There are 12 in all, each with sparse accompaniment, allowing the listener to

focus entirely on Rex’s voice. I won’t go into more detail since I encouraged readers to buy it last time (it’s still available from CDBaby.com and iTunes). This one should have broad appeal. By the way, those beautiful children on the cover are Rex’s grandkids!

LEW PRESTON & HIS MEN OF THE RANGE

Doin’ It Right

B.A.C.M. CD D 479



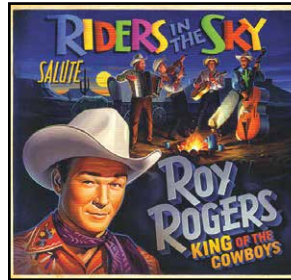
Here’s a CD of very rare material that will be especially interesting to fans of Foy Willing & the Riders of the Purple Sage. This band was important to Foy’s early career, i.e. he wrote for the band and he sang with it early on. You’ll find six of his compositions on this disc. One of them,

“Arizona in the Morning,” was recorded in 1949 by Lew Preston backed by Foy Willing & the Riders of the Purple Sage! This one, and another Willing composition, “I’ve Got the Blues in My Heart” (from 1940), are my favorites on this CD, but there are 29 Western and Western swing tracks from various stages in Lew Preston’s career with excellent liner notes by Kevin Coffey. Available from VenerableMusic.Com, phone; 678 232-0268, or Amazon.com.

RIDERS IN THE SKY

Salute Roy Rogers, King Of The Cowboys

Riders Radio Records RRR1005



The first song on this 2015 release is “A Gay Ranchero,” a reworking of a Mexican folk song. When you hear Too Slim count it off in French, you know you’re in for a fun ride, as only the Riders can provide! The Riders had the opportunity to work with Roy

Rogers on several occasions, and photos from those days illustrate the CD’s liner. They were eager to put together this special salute to him. Their friend Roy Rogers, Jr. (“Dusty”) joined them on the album’s last song, “Happy Trails” (of course).

The music selected for this project was associated with Roy’s long career, starting with “Hadie Brown (My Little Lady),” the song Roy sang when auditioning for a position as a singing cowboy movie star with Republic Studios in 1937. It’s a yodel showpiece, and Woody Paul does a fine job on the solo, his first recorded solo yodel in 37 years! Each of the Riders solos on more than one of the songs, e.g. Joey on “Roll on Texas Moon” & “Yellow Rose of Texas,” Woody on “Don’t Fence Me In,” Ranger Doug on “My Adobe Hacienda” & “Along the Navajo Trail” and Too Slim on “Hawaiian Cowboy” and, as “Side Meat, the Sidekick’s Sidekick,” he recites his own, “Let Us Now Praise Gabby Hayes.”

There’s more, 14 entries in all, with lots of beautiful Western harmony and interesting liner notes and illustrations. Another Riders album that should be in everyone’s musical library! Contact RidersInTheSky.com, or if there’s a concert coming up in your area soon, purchase a copy when you see them “in person.”

Did you know that B-Western cowboy singing star George Houston (The Lone Rider) was raised in New Jersey by a blind father who became a Presbyterian minister known as “The Blind Evangelist?”

★ ★ ★

TEXAS JIM ROBERTSON

Down On The Texas Range, Vol 3

B.A.C.M. CD D485



For some, Texas Jim Robertson's rich baritone may be an acquired taste. But in the 1930's - 50's, a huge number of people acquired that taste and made him a nationally popular Western artist on radio, records and television, even though he was based in the NY area. This new release

is the third in a series of this native Texan's music, and it is set up much as one of his radio shows might have been, with his radio intro and outro opening and closing the CD. If you're interested in lost musical "gems," the real attraction here will be titles you may not have heard, e.g. "The Texas Cowboy," "Curley Joe," "Headin' for the Great Divide," "Down on the Texas Range," "In the West Where Skies are Blue," "Lone Cowpuncher" & "The Old Gruyo." Available from VenerableMusic.Com, phone 678-232-0268, or Amazon.com.

★ ★ ★

CARSON ROBISON & HIS PIONEERS

Radio Shows from the 1930's, Vol. 1

B.A.C.M. CD D481



Carson Jay Robison, from Kansas, began performing on radio in the early 1920's when radio itself was in its infancy. He took on legendary status with his compositions, most notably the Western classic, "Carry Me Back to the Lone Prairie," and his decades of popularity on American radio.

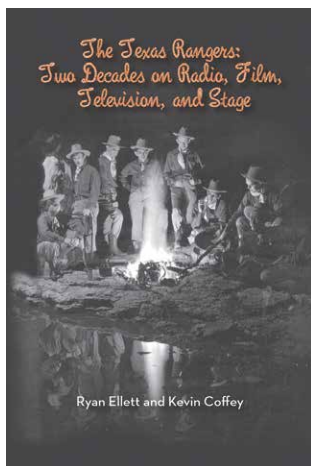
And he had the wisdom to carry his popular and talented performing troupe to England where they received a very warm welcome. In the 1930's, he recorded a series of radio broadcasts in England, and those shows have been remarkably well-preserved. B.A.C.M. recently put four of them on this CD, plus five bonus "singles" recorded in NY and London. Listening to these shows, you can get a good taste of what 30's radio was like and, spoiler alert, it was FUN! Those folks really knew how to entertain, and it comes through in these broadcasts. Excellent audio fidelity, first-rate period entertainment, interesting liner notes by Bryan Chalker. Highly recommended. Available from VenerableMusic.Com, phone 678-232-0268, or Amazon.com.

★ ★ ★

RYAN ELLETT AND KEVIN COFFEY

The Texas Rangers: Two Decades on Radio, Film, Television and Stage

Bunkhouse Press - 2 CD Set



Were it not for this 2014 publication, The Texas Rangers band might have been only a footnote in Western music and movie history. But thanks to detailed research by Ryan Ellett and noted historian Kevin Coffey, the band's work has finally been thoroughly documented. They were the first band to work with Gene Autry when he launched his Melody Ranch radio show, appearing on 22

episodes of that weekly program during its first season (1940). They also appeared in two of Gene Autry's films, Colorado Sunset in 1939 and The Last Round-up in 1947, and in six Johnny Mack Brown films, two of which also featured singing cowboy Bob Baker, and one each with Judy Canova and the Hoosier Hot Shots.

They had a sound that today recalls many of those movies of the 30's, but they were different from all the rest. They used 4-part harmony rather than 3-part Western harmony and they were based in a Kansas radio station! Their first recordings for Decca (1934-36) were made in Chicago at the time the Sons of the Pioneers began recording for the same label in Los Angeles. The B.A.C.M. label released some of their recordings in 2012.

The Rangers were talented musicians and song writers, featuring virtuoso guitarist Herb Kratoska, Tex Owens (composer of "Cattle Call"), singer Ozie Waters and accordionist Paul Sells, who subsequently worked with Gene Autry for many years. The group lasted through the War years, albeit with personnel changes. But before you get to these details and many others in the book, in the Introduction you'll find a fascinating history of the earliest years of commercial Western music, with names you'll recognize, e.g. Carson J. Robison, who began singing cowboy songs on radio in 1922, and some important facts and names you might not have heard before. 345 pages with Index, Bibliography, Recording Sessions, Filmography and more. Highly recommended! Contact BearManorMedia.com or call 443-903-9899 to order.

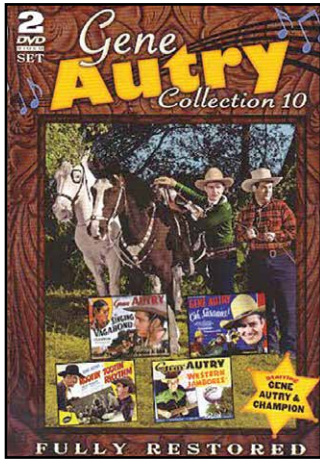
Continued on page 38

★ ★ ★ DVD REVIEW

GENE AUTRY, CHAMPION, SMILEY BURNETTE, FRANKIE MARVIN, ETC.

Gene Autry Collection No. 10

Gene Autry, Champion, Smiley Burnette, Frankie Marvin, etc.




This new entry in the excellent series of Gene Autry's film releases on DVD, brings us four more full-length, digitally restored films from the 1930's, when there was plenty of good music as well as the action the "front row kids" loved to watch. None of these has ever been issued on DVD in restored form, and if you've ever seen a film from this series, you know how

important good restoration is! Cheaper versions I've seen elsewhere don't hold up. The DVDs in this series are not expensive and they are top quality! These are the ones to buy!

When B-Western films first started appearing for sale on video tape decades ago, the first titles I looked for were those I'd seen on the big screen as a boy. I found some, but remembered few details. Still, it was a nostalgia trip. Nothing wrong with that, but I soon discovered that there was a whole other world of terrific films I'd never seen that had been made before I was born! Once I learned how much fun they were to watch, I was hooked. It was no longer a nostalgia trip. I just enjoyed good old Western films! There are plenty of today's youngsters for whom this is a new genre. But once they are exposed to it, beautifully restored, they find themselves glued to the screen as they watch these exciting adventures of yesteryear.

The earliest feature in this new release goes back to "before my time." It's *The Singing Vagabond (1935)*, and it's a real treat to watch, with a very young Gene in plenty of action scenes and Smiley Burnette's composition, "Wagon Train," among other musical numbers. Some might say *Oh Susana (1936)* is even better. If you're a musician, you'll probably agree. The songs are especially enjoyable. Included among others, "I'll Go Ridin' Down that Old Texas Trail," "Dear Old Western Skies," "Water Wheel" and "Ride On, Vaquero," one of three performed by the legendary Western swing band, The Light Crust Doughboys!

Rootin' Tootin' Rhythm (1937) features lots of good music including "Mexicali Rose" & "I Hate to Say Goodbye to the Prairie" and a prominent role for Al Clauser & his Oklahoma Outlaws. Often, regional bands were invited to appear in Autry's films, and Clauser appeared in this one. In addition to having a good band, Al gave Patti Page her start in radio! In *Western Jamboree (1938)*, songs include "The Cowboy's Dream," "Cielito Lindo" (the first song Gene ever sang in Spanish on screen), "When the Bloom is on the Sage" & Johnny Marvin's "Old November Moon." This was the first of many films Eddie Dean appeared in before he became a star.

For collectors and most others, the bonus features are worth the price of admission. There are rare photos and lobby cards, and Gene swaps yarns with Pat Buttram on four *Melody Ranch Theater* color TV shows with guests Jackie Autry, Alex Gordon, Ann Rutherford & George Sherman. Each guest has fascinating stories to tell and the DVDs are programmed so you can watch the complete interviews with minimal interruption. There are four *Melody Ranch* radio shows from 1946-47, each with stories and outstanding music, e.g. "Out California Way," "Adobe Hacienda," a gorgeous "On the Sunny Side of the Rockies," the rare "My Gal of the Rio Grande," "Oklahoma City," "It's a Lonely Trail," "I'm Gonna Lasso a Dream" & "You Stole My Heart," among others. Available for \$16.98 from the Museum of the American West Store via GeneAutry.com or call 1 (323) 667-2000. 





★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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.

★ ★ ★

JACK TREY ALLEN (WITH SHANDEE ALLEN & GEFF DAWSON)

A Remnant Gather



First I should say I found the performances and writing of this predominantly Cowboy Poetry CD to be first rate. Pithy entries like “Lost & Never Found” and “A Story With Several Morals” keep you alert and guessing while fresh takes on old Cowboy themes like those found in “As Close As You Can Get” or “Roughstock Toast” keep it authentic. Please know I do like this album very much. But now I really have to address the packaging.

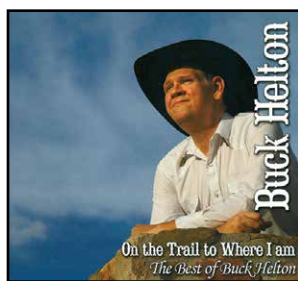
Believe it or not, nowhere on the surface, spine or label of the CD itself are the performers’ names to be found!! I had to scan the fairly fine print inside. The contents are laid out in such a way that the sealed CD reveals only the final six tracks, concealing ten more within! And nowhere is there a copyright or publishing protection. Despite the problems, it’s worth your time and trouble to seek out. Sixteen tracks total.

CD: Information from treyalen44@gmail.com or Shandee Allen at slallen247@gmail.com or writing to them at 15601 Hannagan Rd., Manhattan, KS 66502.

★ ★ ★

BUCK HELTON

On The Trail To Where I Am



Mostly made up of re-releases from the past fifteen years or so, this congenial collection of originals and

covers is delivered with baritone-bass authority by Mr. Helton.

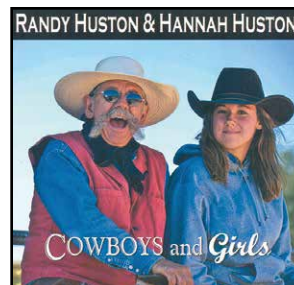
Picks include Cindy Walker’s infrequently covered “Jim I Wore A Tie Today” and the old classic “Aura Lee.” Also of interest are medley arrangements of Western standards combined with their “source” songs. Cases in point: “Bard of Armagh/ Streets Of Laredo,” “My Bonnie Lies Over The Ocean/Cowboy’s Dream” and the somewhat puzzling (to me) “Bury Me Not In The Deep Blue Sea/I’m Going To Leave Old Texas Now.” For them Helton uses the more familiar melody from Carson Robison’s answer song “Carry Me Back To The Lone Prairie.” I had always heard the melody for the previous pair to be the dirge used by Tex Ritter in his recorded version of “Bury Me Not On The Lone Prairie!” Hmmmm...a puzzler...

Three Helton originals are religious and a poem “Keeper Of The Fire” rather supports his reasons for doing his “Golden Nuggets” column! Ten tracks. Ordering information at www.BuckHelton.com.

★ ★ ★

RANDY HUSTON & HANNAH HUSTON

Cowboys and Girls



Some of Randy Huston’s most requested songs are reprised and plenty of new material is present in this Wrangler Award winning CD. For 2014, the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum saw fit to award it top honors for its portrayal of things Cowboy, so who the heck am I to argue??!

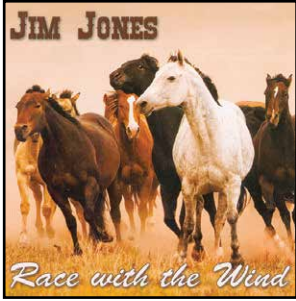
Fan favorites include the header-heeler anthem “Hole In Daddy’s Rope,” “Lucky” and “Day Of The Cowboy.” The collection is made up of originals and co-writes (with Ted Hoffman and Paul Harris) and is very well produced. The subjects range from serious and heartfelt to lighted-hearted and comic. “Cowboy Magazine” is sort of a latter day Western answer to “Cover Of The Rolling Stone,” “Lucky” is a song of Cowboy optimism pushed to the max and “Got In It For The Romance” says it all! Daughter Hannah takes the lead on “Guardian Angel,” “Rides Like A Girl” and “Thanks For Today.” She’s not just here ‘cuz she knew somebody, either. She’s got legit chops!

Huston’s talent for making fresh observations and ten additional support musicians keep this one sparkling. Recommended! Thirteen tracks.

Continued on page 40

★★★
JIM JONES

Race With The Wind



The newest Jones release is intended to present the WMA's 2014 Male Vocalist of the Year to new domestic and international audiences. Therefore, the CD contains some fresh mountings of previously released songs...a couple of them on their third go 'round!!

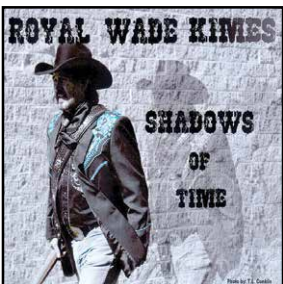
There are some discoveries to be made, such as the Jim Jones/Andrea Renfree song "Common Ground," "On The Wings Of The Wind" and "True Texas Treasure." The Jones collaborators who have been deemed worthy (Bruce Huntington, Alan Chapman & Randy Huston) are represented with Jones & Chapman's "Smoke Of The Branding Fire," Jones & Huntington's "Race With The Wind" and Jones, Chapman & Huston's "You Can't Get There From Here."

Due in large part to the efforts of engineer and multi-instrumentalist Mariam Funke, this album stands as the Jones showpiece of the last ten years. Thirteen tracks.

CD: \$12.97 through www.cd-baby.com for the disc or \$9.99 for the MP3 download and \$.99 per song download.

★★★
ROYAL WADE KIMES

Shadows Of Time



One thing is a given. Kimes & Company know how to put out a quality album. The production and the performances are top notch. That makes "Shadows of Time" that much more gratifying, since this

one is the long-awaited all-Western release!

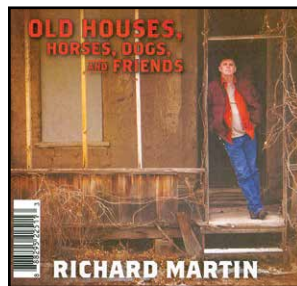
Most of the songs are Kimes originals. There are some of the expected contemporary-styled explorations ("I'm A Hand," "Come Here Boy" and the Jerry Lee-like boogie "Making Hay"). The song "Turn Back" could be an alternate universe follow-up to "The Cowboy Rides Away!" There is a good strong saga song in "Back In Tombstone" and his superb cover of the Herb Newman/Stan Lebowitz classic "Wayward Wind" not only gets the big west treatment... it also features a Kimes vocal treatment that puts the very howl of that wind into the phrasing of the lyrics. Superior thinking went into it.

Enjoyable and contemporary. This one deserves and should get plenty of air time! Twelve tracks total. Eleven tracks. Recommended.

CD: Ordering information through www.royalwadekimes.com or www.wondermentrecords.com.

★★★
RICHARD MARTIN

Old Houses, Horses, Dogs and Friends



The brothers Richard and Glenn Martin have apparently found an audience for their direct and

very literal lyric writing, or maybe it's the production values that sell it. Regardless, they're back for Round 7 and the formula is in place.

Stylistically the content of their newest is again a mix of Western, Folk and Country. The point is made through songs like "Horse Power" (stating we have horse power from cars and horses), "Old Houses" (plus Horses, Dogs and Friends are things we should appreciate) and "Spit Me Out" (saying "you may chew me up, but I'll bet you"...get the idea).

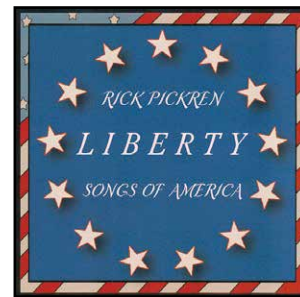
The support musicians add a lot to the project. They include Edna Martin (vocals/rhythm guitar), Blane Sloan (bass/electric & acoustic guitar/mandolin/harmony), George Langston (acoustic & electric guitar), Frank Howard (pedal

steel), Susan Clark (harmonies/keyboards), Roger Baker (keyboard), Lee Taylor (saxophone), Kurt Baumer (fiddle) and Wayne Shrubsall (banjo) with Wayne Moore (bass/guitar/dobro/mandolin on the track "Daddy Juan"). Twelve tracks.

CD: \$15 ppd from Glenn Martin, 4979 Country Road 250, Durango, CO 81301-8620. Also through amazon, iTunes or cd.baby.com/cd/richardmartin.

★★★
RICK PICKREN

Liberty (Songs of America)



While not Western by subject, much of this material regularly finds its way into the sets of Western performers.

Preservationist Rick Pickren's performances are joyfully expressive and the acoustic treatments add to the whole-cloth character of the piece. Part of the fun lies in all the lesser known verses of the songs being included. This may cause exclamations such as "those words are part of it too??!" Did you know "Stars & Stripes Forever" has lyrics by Sousa?? Beyond the four guest musicians on steel, dobro and other instruments, the versatile Pickren (vocals/guitars/banjo/bazouki/mandolin/harmonica/melodic/keyboard and percussion) does most of the heavy lifting! He also produced, recorded and designed the packaging. And get this! All the composer credits and dates of origin are in place. Even "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," "My Country Tis Of Thee" and "Battle Hymn Of The Republic!" No easy-outs of "PD" here, folks!

As with all the other Rick Pickren releases, this one is very highly recommended.

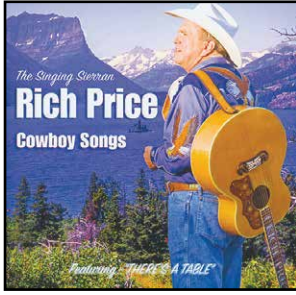
Thirteen tracks.

CD: \$15 ppd from Big Strike Music, 122 Ashland Ave., River Forest, IL 60305. Also through cdbaby, amazon & iTunes. Site: www.big-strikemusic.com.

★ ★ ★

RICH PRICE

Cowboy Songs



As it was on "The Singing Sierran's" previous release, the instrumental and vocal arrangements by

Harold Bradley and Michael Black respectively along with the rich production values ride to the rescue. The mounting would have been suitable for anything a Johnny Horton or the Sons of the Pioneers could have wanted. Rich Price writes from personal experience (with co-writers Harrison Tyner and Bristow Hopper). Vocally I would place him in the same basic "Tubb" with Ernest (who gets a mention in Price's tribute song "Texas"). Price's pitch and phrasing anomalies are more frequently evident this time around, so I would lead the CD's pick tracks with "A Cowboy's Face," since it is largely spoken. Also worthy of a listen are "There's A Table" (there's a music video of it), "Texas," and "Cowboy & His Wife." For air use, a problem lies in the contents not being printed on the CD's back, just on the internal booklet. Twelve tracks.

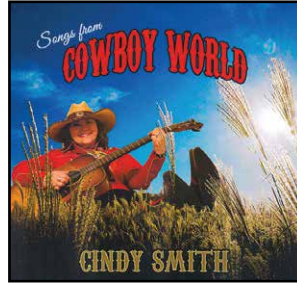
CD ordering information through www.HTiMusic.com.



★ ★ ★

CINDY SMITH

Songs From Cowboy World



Not to say she should remain exclusively in this niche, but the somewhat pixie-like tone of

Cindy Smith's voice certainly does lend itself to a project aimed at the younger set!

The Cowboy World shows Smith performs are aimed at giving school aged children an awareness and appreciation of their Western music heritage. Cute pieces like "Crickets On The Moon," "When I Grow Up (Cowboy World)" and the Lone Ranger tribute "Who Was That Masked Man Anyway" are geared to spark imaginations. But at the same time the CD doesn't shy away from a bit of love interest in songs like "Cowboy Kisses," the Cindy Smith-Dennis Knill duet "Moonlight Ride" or even what must be the only love song ever inspired by comic B-Western sidekick "Fuzzy Q" Jones! (She has a Jones look-alike onstage in the shows!)

The performances are solid and production values are high, making it that much more of an enjoyable little romp. Ten tracks total.

CD: \$10.99 + \$3.99 s/h from www.cowboyworldatlanta.com and also through www.amazon.com.

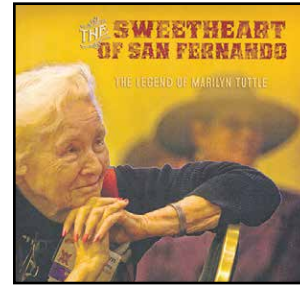


★ ★ ★

LARRY WILDER

The Sweetheart of San Fernando

(The Legend of Marilyn Tuttle)



Normally I don't review single releases but, considering the subject, this time I'll make an exception.

Larry Wilder's swinging, nicely rendered tribute to our beloved Marilyn Tuttle includes support musicians Paula Sinclair (vocals), Kian Dye (fiddle), Cliff Ashmon (harmonica), Harley James (steel guitar) and Jon Lindahl (bass) who also engineered the recording at Fresh Tracks Studio in Portland, Oregon. In addition to her own performance history, Marilyn has advised and guided many of our better performers in the arts of harmony and stage presence. She was a cofounder of the WMA and serves on its Board of Advisors. In fact, depending on what you think of my contributions to the WMA Board, she's the one to either thank or blame...because back in 2005 it was she who nominated me to serve. My own mentor in the genre (WMA Hall of Famer Hi Busse) often spoke lovingly of his time performing with and knowing Wesley and Marilyn Tuttle. On the occasion of her 90th birthday, we might each find our own ways of paying a tribute. I can assure you, the very sound we produce in western music would be nowhere near as rich were it not for her.

CD Single: Information through www.LarryWilderMusic.com. 🐾



Chapter Update

Continued from page 30

We also usually have a few house concerts in the homes of our chapter members. This year we have added a whole new dimension to our activities by creating a public jam session at a local pizza parlor/brew pub. Syd Masters and the Swing Riders kicked off the summer concert series on Memorial Day with a rousing evening typical of Syd and the band. On June 28th, "The Tumbleweeds" continue the series and we are off to a great start with three more concerts to come. Ray and Bonnie Rutherford opened up their home to concerts with Open Range and Eddy Harrison in April and May. Each crowd was a nice mixture of WMA members and visitors. It is always great to see new people become fans of western music. The chapter also started our 2015 support of the City of Albuquerque in providing entertainment in the Plaza at Old Town Albuquerque on May 30th. Cowboy Way (Jim Jones, Doug Figs and Mariam) put on a fabulous show to a very large and enthusiastic group. People from as far away as Europe were captivated by the music and stayed for the entire two hours. The new activity is a jam session/performance at the Blue Grasshopper Brew Pub in Rio Rancho, NM. Twice monthly the chapter provides performers to entertain their patrons. Typically four to eight performers provide the entertainment and this allows the chapter to not only share the music but discuss the WMA to a whole new set of people. The pub owners include a luthier and they are very committed to having live music on as many nights as possible. Good things continue to happen in the "Land of Enchantment."

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

President: Susie Case
susieb.case@gmail.com
Howdy Y'all! The Oklahoma Chapter welcomes R.W. Hampton as our newest member. We held our quarterly Members' Meeting in May and are pleased to announce that Donnie Poindexter is our new chapter Vice President and Francine Robison is our returning Treasurer. We know they will be valuable assets to our chapter and we're looking forward to continuing our goal of recruiting and growing in 2015. Recent appearances by our chapter members: A Little Farther West performed at the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame's 2015 induction ceremonies (legacy act Otto Gray & his Oklahoma Cowboys were honored posthumously.) Francine Robison had a busy month of June: she represented Oklahoma at the "Echoes of the Trail Cowboy


Gathering" in Ft. Scott, KS, appeared at the Missouri Cowboy Poets' Association annual get-together near Neosho, MO, and performed at the Western Writers of America's 2015 Convention in Lubbock, TX. Donnie Poindexter also attended the Ft. Scott poetry competition. Some upcoming events featuring our members: Cowboy Jim Garling performs at the Jana Jae Fiddle Camp in Grove, OK September 4-6; and later at the Centennial Frontier Experience / The Great State Fair of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City, September 17-27. Donnie Poindexter appears at the National Cowboy Symposium and Celebration in Lubbock, TX, September 11 & 12. You also can catch Donnie and his trio, Steeldust, at the Sebastian County Fair in Greenwood, AR on August 25. The National Day of the Cowboy, Saturday, July 25, will be celebrated at a number of Oklahoma events. Notably, Oklahoma City's National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum will debut a new exhibit that day dedicated to the "paniolas," the cowboys of Hawaii, featuring live music, roping lessons, and the Miss Rodeo Oklahoma finalists. Pryor, OK will hold the "American Cowboy Trade Days & Celebration of the American Cowboy" July 24-26 featuring scores of Western merchandise vendors, period reenactments, stagecoach & buggy rides, and live entertainment. There's lots happening with the Oklahoma chapter of the WMA!

UTAH CHAPTER

President: Chris Mortensen
Cwmort61@gmail.com
The members of the Utah Chapter of the WMA have been very busy through the first months of 2015. The Cache Valley Cowboy Rendezvous was a big success, largely due to the participation of chapter performers and volunteers. Kudos to Dale and Dawna Major for once again presenting a first rate gathering of poets and musicians on the first weekend in March. The third weekend of March brought many Utah Chapter members to Hagerman, Idaho, to perform for the Magic Valley Cowboy Gathering. Again, the weekend was a huge success, with great evening shows and performances on two stages during the day. Jam sessions went well into the next morning! Ken and Emma Wellard were the driving force behind the Hagerman Gathering. April was a busy month for many Utah WMA performers. Cowboy Poetry Week in Weber County saw great participation from poets and musicians at various libraries all week long. St. Anthony Idaho was host town to their 28th Annual Cowboy Gathering on April 17th and 18th. Again, Utah WMA members made up a large portion of the entertainers, volunteers, and fans in eastern Idaho that

weekend. Many, many, many hours were volunteered by selfless WMA members so far this year. Many more will be donated before the year is through. By the time this goes to press, the 10th annual Cowboy Legends Cowboy Gathering will be history. Held on Memorial Day Weekend on Antelope Island, in the Great Salt Lake, this gathering raises thousands of dollars for the Huntsman Cancer Institute. The setting for Cowboy Legends is the historic Fielding Garr Ranch, a great place to visit anytime. Western music is flourishing in Utah! Great performers and great people! Proud to be a part of it!

WESTERN WORDSMITHS CHAPTER

President: Dale Page
okiecowboypoet@gmail.com
The WMA Western Wordsmiths Chapter is receiving applications now for the 2015 WMA-WW Cowboy Poetry Jackpot Contest that will be held Saturday, 11/14/15 in Albuquerque, NM, during the WMA Convention. Thanks to excellent suggestions by our WMA-WW members, there have been a few changes to the Rules as well as the Entry Fee info. You can visit www.westernwordsmiths.com and click on "Cowboy Poetry Jackpot" to locate the Rules and the Application which will include these revisions. Thanks to WMA-WW member, Almeda Bradshaw, for her excellent suggestion for a "People's Choice Award" given for one performer from both divisions (Novice and Professional) selected by the audience. The WMA-WW Board of Directors voted to approve this suggestion, and the 2015 WMA-WW Cowboy Poetry Jackpot People's Choice Award winner will be announced within a few minutes of the end of the Jackpot. The winner will receive in the mail a certificate suitable for framing within 2 weeks of the WMA Convention and possibly an additional prize (TBD). The winner will be announced at the WMA Awards Show at the Kimo Theater in Albuquerque that evening, and if present, will be asked to come into the stage to take a bow. Want to enter? Have questions? Contact Susie Knight, WMA-WW Secretary, at lassothecowgirl@yahoo.com or (303) 495-4869. WMA-WW members are encouraged to consider entering the 2015 National Cowboy Poetry Rodeo that has moved to its new home in Abilene, KS. This year's contest takes place 7/30/15-8/1/15. Contact Geff Dawson at geff@ranchcowboy.com or (785) 765-2357 to learn more and enter. 

JOIN US ONLINE!

www.westernmusic.org



Western Charts

TOP 30 COWBOY / WESTERN ALBUMS

1. Race With the Wind - Jim Jones
2. Horses That Run Far Away - Bob Marshall
3. Cowgirl Swing - Mikki Daniel
4. All I Need - Horse Crazy Cowgirl Band
5. From the Ranch to the Rodeo - Tony Lundervold
6. Night Rider - Marshal Allen Bailey & the Silver Bullets
7. This Cowboy - R.W. Hampton
8. Jewel of the West - LeeLee Robert
9. Granite Mountain - Belinda Gail
10. Riding After Midnight - Clint Bradley
11. Too Hot to Handle - Red Hot Rhythm Rustlers
12. Distant Furrows - Barry Ward
13. Forty Miles of Famous - Richard Elloyan & Steve Wade
14. Cowboys and Girls - Randy Huston & Hannah Huston
15. Old Houses, Horses, Dogs & Friends - Richard Martin
16. Selections - Nancy Elliott
17. Ghost Towns - Allen & Jil Kirkham
18. Part of the West - Janice Deardorf
19. Partners - Doug Figgs
20. Taking Back the West - Dust in My Coffee
21. Rope That Rhythm - The Hanson Family
22. Gatherin' Strays - Trails & Rails
23. Cowboy Ways - Lone Prairie (Texas)
24. Badger & the Belles - Devon Dawson, Kristyn Harris, Rich O'Brien
25. Spirit Rider - Brenn Hill
Shadows of Time - Royal Wade Kimes
27. Let Me Ride - Kristyn Harris
28. Traditions - Jean Prescott
29. Lonesome County Road - Barry Ward
30. Trail Dust and Teardrops - Eddy Harrison

TOP 10 WESTERN SWING ALBUMS

1. Cowgirl Swing - Mikki Daniel
2. A Platter of Brownies - Carolyn Martin
3. Legends - Coby Carter
4. Now Playing - Western Swing Authority
5. All I Need - Horse Crazy Cowgirl Band
6. Too Hot to Handle - Red Hot Rhythm Rustlers
7. Wiley - Wiley Randall
8. By Request - Billy Mata
9. Slippin' Around - Michael Dart
10. The Carolyn Sills Combo - Carolyn Sills Combo

10 MOST PLAYED POETRY ALBUMS

1. Rhyming the Range - Yvonne Hollenbeck
2. Baxter Black's NPR CD's - Baxter Black
3. Elko: A Cowboy Gathering - Various Artists
4. Invisibility - Aspen Black
5. One Hundred Years of Thunder - Doris Daley & Bruce Innis
Cowboy Poetry Classics - Various Artists
7. Bar D Roundup, 2014 - Various Artists
8. Bar D Roundup, 2012 - Various Artists
9. Reminisce - Slim McNaught
10. The First Go Round - Thatch Elmer

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

10 MOST PLAYED SONGS BY WESTERN MUSIC DJS

1. Wyoming: Jewel of the West - LeeLee Robert
2. It's a Sin to Tell a Lie - Mikki Daniel & Dave Alexander
Driftin' Cowboy - R.W. Hampton
4. Cowboy Man - LeeLee Robert & Marvin O'Dell
5. She Could Ride - Mikki Daniel
Race With the Wind - Jim Jones
7. Horses That Run Away - Bob Marshall
8. Swingtime Rocking Chair - Mikki Daniel
9. Socios - Doug Figgs
10. Call of the Faraway Hills - Clint Bradley

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 sent their playlists this quarter:

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

Michael Babiarz
KVMR Community Radio 89.5FM
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
www.hppr.org/wsot.html
1-800-678-7444

Bobbie Jean Bell
OutWest
22508 6th St.
Newhall, CA 91321
bobbijeanbell@gmail.com
661-255-7087

Butch Martin & Skip Bessonette
"Whittler's Corner"
KRRM, Rogue River, OR
KBNH, Burns, OR
1410 Kubli Rd.
Grants Pass, OR 97527
whittlerscornershow@gmail.com
www.krrm.com
www.earsradio.com

Art Bohman
KSUU – 91.1 FM
107 N. 1150 W.
Cedar City, UT 84720
435-586-8735
raboh2003@yahoo.com

Peter Bruce
Flagstaff Country FM 93.5/AM 930
KAFF Radio
1117 W. Route 66
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
928-556-2650
www.country935.com
peter.bruce@kaff.com

Chuckaroo the Buckaroo
Calling All Cowboys Radio
KPOV FM 88.9 FM,
22470 Rickard Rd.
Bend, OR 97702
541-388-2537
http://kprov-od.streamguys.us/calling_all_cowboys_new_56k.mp3
The Flying SL Ranch Radio Show
NFLY – No Fly Internet Radio
radio.spalding-labs.com
(prefers music be sent digitally)

Rockin' Therapy Radio
Miguel A. Diaz Gonzalez
avenida galtzaraborda nº47 2ªA
20100 renteria
Guipuzcoa
España
miguelbilly56@gmail.com
www.rockintherapyradio.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)

Steve Harrington
PO Box 803
Show Low, Az 85902
(928) 242-3367
steve47@gmail.com
www.mountainsaddleband.com/
old-west-chapel

Sam Harris
CVFM Country
4 Shadforth Close
Old Shotton Village
Peterlee
Co. Durham
SR8 2NG
England
www.cvfm.org.uk
samharris01@aol.com

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

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
120 Village Circle
Senoia, GA 30276
770-599-1923
unclerich@925fmthebear.com

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

Continues on page 45

Jarle Kvale
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

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

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

Marvin O'Dell
"Around the Campfire"
www.defendersoffreedomradio.com
KKRN (Redding, CA)
www.earsradio.com
meoteo@aol.com
3714 Eldorado Blvd.
Palm Springs, CA 92262
805-551-4649
www.musikode.com

Bob O'Donnell
"The Western Jukebox 2"
1028 N. Borner St. #119
Prescott, WI 54021
justbobswesternjukebox@gmail.com
651-925-7429

Barbara Richhart
Western Belle of KSJD
CowTrails Show
32229 CO RD P
Mancos, CO 81328
www.myspace.com/mancosbelle
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

Becca Salamone
Alabama Horse Talk Radio
PMB 144
60 Chelsea Corners
Chelsea, Alabama 35043
alabamahorsetalk@gmail.com
phone: 205-677-6070
http://alabamahorsetalk.com/radio
facebook: Alabama Horse Talk,
https://www.facebook.com/
AlabamaHorseTalk

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

Totsie Slover
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"

Leonard Werner
Country Routes
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In Memoriam ————— **Johnny Gimble (1926-2015)**

Western swing's most notable fiddle player, Johnny Gimble, passed away May 9th, just short of his 89th

birthday. Gimble was born in Tyler, Texas and began playing in a band with his brothers at age 12. In 1948 he joined Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys, with whom he toured for most of the next decade. With Wills, he played both fiddle and electric mandolin, and distinguished himself by using a five-string fiddle (most fiddles have four strings). He left Wills to form his own group in 1951, performing as the house band at Wills's club in Fort Worth and Oklahoma City, but rejoined in 1953 and continued to play with Wills until the early 1960s.

After moving to Nashville in 1968, he got steady work as a session musician with people like Merle Haggard, Conway Twitty, Connie Smith, Lefty Frizzell, Ray Price, Willie Nelson, Chet Atkins and others. He recorded ten solo albums; his biggest song was "Fiddln' Around," which has been performed by almost all fiddle players of note. In the Clint Eastwood film "Honky Tonk Man", Gimble played the role of Bob Wills. From 1979 to 1981, Gimble toured with Willie Nelson. His granddaughter, Emily, is a notable vocalist and keyboard player who currently plays with Asleep at the Wheel as keyboardist and vocalist.





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