

# BUCKSKIN BULLETIN



"The Stray Man" Bonham, Texas - photograph (May, 1908) by Erwin Evans Smith 1886-1947

Public Domain Photo from the Library of Congress





## CHAIRMAN'S GREETING

Greetings from the Home Ranch. Spring has sprung already and summer days are on their way. We've had deluges of rain and some hot, hot days already in Texas. As always Delinda King, WI Secretary and Treasurer, Lisa Jackson, WI Assistant, and I continue our work, and the WI calendar and seasonal activities continue.

We thank all of you who have sent in your dues and your contact information for the May 1 deadline! Knowing how to reach you and knowing your current officers is so important to us!

And we thank all of you who sent in submissions for this year's award cycle. As the announcement elsewhere in the Bulletin notes, submissions will be read over the summer and winners will be notified by Aug 1. Awards will be given out at the WONDERFUL upcoming WI Gather in Hot Springs, SD, hosted by **Cal Larive** and **The Jedidiah Smith Corral**. See announcement here in the Bulletin!

Please note that, because corrals and posses generally elect officers early in the calendar year and because some corrals haven't yet sent in their contact information, the Home Ranch may well not yet have your up-to-date contact information for officers. To be sure this beautiful Bulletin reaches your corral or posse, I will email it to both sheriffs and reps, with the expectation that it can be emailed out to your members from there.

### TAKE NOTE: BIG NEWS ON THE HOME RANCH FRONT!

Last but not least, I have a separate notice in this Bulletin explaining a couple of changes but want to put the gist of it here on the first page, too. We have a **NEW HOME RANCH MAILING ADDRESS AND A NEW EMAIL ADDRESS**:

The new Home Ranch email is:  
WesternersHomeRanch@gmail.com

The new Home Ranch mailing address is:  
Westerners International  
2200 4th Ave  
Box 309  
Canyon TX 79015

The Home Ranch phone number remains the same: 806-654-6920. It's been the same for the past few years, but we want to be sure you have it handy!

Finally – as always!! -- a special thanks goes out to **Ken Pirtle**, *Buckskin Bulletin* Editor and member of the **Palo Duro Corral** in Amarillo, TX, for formatting, producing, and editing yet another great issue of the Bulletin – full of good news on events and activities in our corrals and posses!

*Happy Trails!*

**Bonney MacDonald**

Chairman, Westerners International

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### REMINDER TO ALL SHERIFFS AND MEMBERS!

**Sheriffs:** Please remember to email the *Buckskin Bulletin* to all of your corral or posse members. And please keep us up to date on your contact information – we want to stay in touch and we always appreciate all of your updates, newsletters, and publications!

**All Members:** Please be sure that your corral and posse sheriffs have your current email address so they can forward the *Buckskin Bulletin* to you when they get it from us! We want to be sure you're in the loop!

The *Buckskin Bulletin* comes out four times a year. It's emailed to all sheriffs so that they can forward it by email to their posse or corral members. The current Bulletin is also always available on the front page of the Westerners website; back issues are accessible on the website through the *Buckskin Bulletin* link.



### WESTERNERS INTERNATIONAL AWARDS ENTRIES ARE IN AND WE THANK YOU!

Awards entry forms were sent out to corral reps by email, along with the dues and contact info sheets in late February. They were also posted on the WI website for downloading, in case that was more convenient to folks. There were due on May 15, 2025, and we've received a good number of entries for this year!

You are all working on interesting programs and publications, and we're so glad, every year, to hear about your events and your work! We want to spread the good word and award you all for your efforts!

Decisions on awards will be made this summer and winners will be notified by early August. Awards will be given out at this year's Gather – hosted by **Cal Larive** and **The Jedediah Smith Corral** in Deadwood, SD, Th Sept 18- Sat Sept 20 (with early registration available W afternoon, Sept 17). We hope you come for the festivities, fellowship, and great fun!! Please register early to help them plan their attendance and activities for all of us!

We **thank you** for sending in your award entries. Each year the number of entries grows, and that means that more and more Westerners are giving wonderful programs, writing important books, articles, and poems, and contributing to the overall good of this organization.

NEW**NEW CONTACT INFORMATION FOR WESTERNERS!!!****PLEASE NOTE:**

After May 31, we will have a new email address and USPS mailing address. Our complete contact information is below and includes this new information.

**NEW EMAIL FOR THE HOME RANCH:**

WesternersHomeRanch@gmail.com

**NEW MAILING ADDRESS:**

2200 4th Ave  
Box 309  
Canyon TX 79015

PHONE NUMBER (remains the same!) : 806-654-6920

This number gets you through to Delinda King, WI Secretary/Treasurer

Please note that my previous personal email – [bmacdonald@wtamu.edu](mailto:bmacdonald@wtamu.edu) – can no longer be used. Why? Because I'm retiring as of June 1! So please contact me through the above Home Ranch email. I'll miss the community, my students, and my colleagues but will have more time for my horses and dogs here on the ranch, and more time for Westerners!

**2025 DUES and CONTACT INFO SHEETS WERE DUE May 1, 2025**

If your corral or posse hasn't sent in your 2025 dues, here's a reminder of the details:

At the Home Ranch we want to do all we can to support and encourage corrals and posses. A couple of sheriffs have reported that their membership declined this year. We understand! As was the case last year, we know you can only do so much. So for the corrals and posses that have continued on Zoom or in person, and find themselves able to send in dues, **we thank you!**

However, if your corral or posse is not in that position, you may send in 50% of the dues. And if that's not possible now, we will work with it! Our main concern is that we all stay healthy, meet as you can, and keep the Westerners spirit alive. Do what you can, and we'll support you in whatever way possible!

And please, even if you're not sending in dues yet, **please return the contact information sheet asap to the address indicated on the form.** We need that information so we can send the *Bulletin* to the right place (your members deserve it!), and so we have current email and mailing information for your officers.

**Thank you!**





### UPDATE ON THE HOME RANCH OFFICE

As you all know, our Home Ranch office is located in the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum on the campus of West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas.

Recently, the university had Canyon fire officials conduct a safety inspection. The report that came back noted problems with the sprinkler system and with proper exits in the building. As a result of that, the museum has been temporarily closed.

Of course, we at Home Ranch were concerned and took appropriate action. We were informed that the closing was to be temporary, but we didn't want to take any chances. So, Delinda (WI Secretary/Treasurer) and Lisa Jackson (WI Assistant) cleared out all files that we will be needing – Thank you to Delinda and Lisa!!!

The keepsakes in the office, along with the books, of course, remain safe and protected – just as the rest of the museum's collection does. All is remaining safe and in place. And most of our business, in this 21st century, is conducted online. So, nothing will change in terms of how we operate and all is well! We have all the records and files we need from the Home Ranch office and are moving along just as we always do. But we did want to keep you all in the loop.

As noted, the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum collection all remains intact and unchanged, and the Museum continues with minimum staff but is physically closed, for now, to visitors. Limited staff remain onsite. It is doing a good bit of public outreach with community and school programs; so much of its mission continues.

Again, information you will see here is also announced elsewhere in the Bulletin.

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**PHONE NUMBER** (remains the same!) : 806-654-6920

This number gets you through to **Delinda King**, WI Secretary/Treasurer





## Hear ye, Hear ye!

**The 2025 Westerners International Gather will be held**

**THURSDAY, SEPT 18 - SATURDAY, SEPT 20**

**(With early registration available Wed afternoon, Sept 17)**

**For lots of helpful information**

**check out the Corral's website at: [www.jscorral.com](http://www.jscorral.com)**

**Hosted by Cal Larive, Sheriff, and members of the Jedediah Smith Corral**



*in beautiful and historic*

## **Hot Springs, South Dakota**

So hitch up y'er wagons, git y'erself a mule or pony, and travel to South Dakota this fall!! You won't want to miss it! Cal is planning fascinating programs on Western history in the area, a trip to Mt. Rushmore and Deadwood with historical presentations, and a Saturday banquet complete with fun music. You won't want to miss the fellowship, learning, and fun! Watch the next Bulletin for registration details; registration will be available online as well as in downloadable forms that you can fill out and mail in!

Contact Cal Larive, Sheriff, Jedediah Smith Corral for questions/information. He's excited about planning the event and would be delighted to hear from you!

605-891-3144 or [callarive@yahoo.com](mailto:callarive@yahoo.com)





## WESTERNERS INTERNATIONAL LIVING LEGENDS

For more than fifty years outstanding members of Westerners International have been singled out for recognition by their peers. Individuals who have contributed to WI through long service, leadership, recruitment, publication, lecturing, problem-solving and in other ways both in the United States and abroad have been honored as **Living Legends**. Each was nominated by his or her fellow WI members of their own corral or posse, and each nomination was approved by the WI Home Ranch prior to conferral of the honorific award. The list of all **Westerners International Living Legends**, in chronological order, follows:

No.	Year	Name	Corral / Posse Affiliation(s)
70	2025	Brian Dervin Dillon	Los Angeles
69	2024	Jim Jennings	Palo Duro Corral
68	2023	Fred Veil	Prescott Corral
67	2022	Roger L. Nichols	Adobe and Potomac Corrals
66	2019	Robert A. Clark	LA, Huntington, Spokane, & Cross Timbers
65	2018	Harvey Pratt	Indian Territory Posse
64	2018	Robert J. Chandler	LA & San Francisco
63	2018	Jerome R. Selmer	Los Angeles
62	2017	Gary D. Turner	Los Angeles
61	2016	Abraham Hoffman	Los Angeles
60	2016	Francis J. Weber	Los Angeles
59	2015	Burnis Argo	Chisholm Trail
58	2014	Ester J. Murray	Pahaska
57	2013	Fred Egloff	Chicago & SW Vaqueros
56	2011	Bob Ihlen	San Dimas
55	2011	John Creech	San Dimas
54	2010	Vern Erickson	Fort Abraham Lincoln
53	2010	John W. Robinson	LA & San Dimas
52	2010	Edward J. Fraughton	Utah
51	2009	Watson Parker	Black Hills
50	2009	John Ellingson	Spokane
49	2007	Bruce Fee	Prescott
48	2003	William G. Bell	Potomac
47	2003	Glen Dawson	Los Angeles
46	2003	Richard H. Dillon	LA & San Francisco
45	2002	Joe S. Sando	Albuquerque
44	2002	Alvin G. Davis	Llano Estacado
43	2001	Robert J. Utley	Yale
42	2001	John Marohn	Tucson
41	2001	Albert W. Bork	Prescott
40	1999	David Dary	Kaw Valley
39	1999	Randall Johnson	Spokane
38	1998	Wallace E. Clayton	Tucson
37	1998	John Willard	Yellowstone
36	1998	José Cisneros	El Paso
35	1997	Ormy Gumfudgin	Los Angeles
34	1997	Al Shumate	San Francisco
33	1994	Jim Murphy	Tucson
32	1993	Bob Lee	Black Hills
31	1992	Merrill J. Mattes	Chicago, Denver, Omaha, San Francisco
30	1991	Harrison Doyle	San Diego
29	1989	Jeff Dykes	Potomac
28	1988	Otis H. Chidester	Tucson
27	1985	Leland D. Case	Tucson, Stockton and Chicago
26	1984	Donald R. Ornduff	Kansas City
25	1983	Dick Dunlop	Chicago
24	1983	C.L. Sonnichsen	El Paso and Tucson
23	1982	Harry Blair	Black Hills
22	1981	Peter J. Powell	Chicago
21	1981	Harold Shunk	Black Hills
20	1980	Donald E. Worcester	Fort Worth
19	1980	Ernest L. Reedstrom	Chicago
18	1979	Gerald F. MacMullen	San Diego
17	1979	John R. Bethke	Chicago
16	1978	Jerome Peltier	Spokane
15	1978	Charlie Evans	Buffalo Bill
14	1978	George Virgines	Chicago
13	1977	Joseph Rosa	English Westerners
12	1975	Nellie S. Yost	Buffalo Bill
11	1975	Richard Coke Wood	Stockton
10	1974	Iron Eyes Cody	Los Angeles
9	1974	Frank Thomson	Black Hills
8	1974	Fred Hackett	Chicago
7	1973	John F. McDermott	St. Louis
6	1973	Nolie Mumey	Denver
5	1972	Don Russell	Chicago
4	1972	George B. Eckhardt	Tucson
3	1971	Peter Decker	New York
2	1971	Arthur Woodward	Los Angeles
1	1970	John G. Neihardt	Chicago

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Compiled by Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D., Los Angeles Corral, 2022



# CORRAL NEWS



## CALL FOR CORRAL AND POSSE UPDATES

Please send us your notices and announcements on upcoming or past corral and posse programs and events. We love to spread the good news to other corrals and posses about the activities of their fellow Westerners!

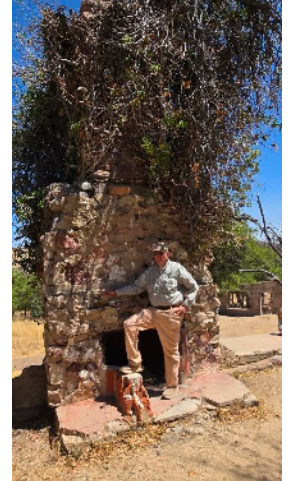
## *of particular interest for those attending the upcoming Gather*

Our Westerner friends of the **Jedediah Smith Corral** are working hard to put together a wonderful Rendezvous and Gather in Hot Springs, SD in September. Westerners who are planning to come to Hot Springs, SD should know that the Leland Case Library, Black Hills State University, Spearfish, SD, contains the original founding papers of Westerners International as well as Leland Case's many papers. An opening statement in these papers content this description:

*The Westerners grew out of a February 25, 1944 meeting in Winnetka, Illinois of fourteen men interested in the history of the West. They were friends of Leland Case and heard a presentation that night on the history of Calamity Jane. The group has grown and opened chapters (corrals) over the years. There were 131 such groups (including one in the Black Hills area) in 1994. The Westerners continue to hold programs to learn more about the history of the West Leland Case had a major role for many years with the group. From 1967-81, the Westerners was the main focus of his life. Case got the group to move its office near his Tucson home, played a major role in the "Buckskin Bulletin", the Westerners' newsletter and served as president and then as president emeritus. Case got the organization to function year-round in its office. The Westerners was people, history and the group to Case. Case got an awards program started and money for prizes for papers presented to corrals of the Westerners.*



*The Cochise County Corral*



**The Cochise County Corral** of Westerners report in their latest **Fremont Street Mail** publication that the May 5 Trail Ride to Carr Canyon and Reef Townsite was a great success. The road was fine and people seen up there driving Mercedes and Cadillacs. There was a huge wedding and the local Search & Destroy (Rescue) people were out practicing nearby.

The Corral learned that there were three folks surnamed Carr in the area in the 1880s. Jimmy Carr bought a sawmill and Carr Canyon is named for him. John Carr was mayor of Tombstone and Eugene Carr commanded the 6th Cavalry; somewhat interesting to our group.

(photo upper right) Gary stands by the chimney of the Carr home which burned down three times and was once a two-story and at another time was a Spanish colonial structure. Reports are that there may even have been a dance floor and public dances. Additionally there were even the remains of a swimming pool.

### **Palo Duro Corral**

**Ken Pirtle** and wife hosted the **Palo Duro Corral** at their May gathering to hear the violent and scandalous story of the feud between the powerful Boyce, Sneed and Snyder families of 1912 Amarillo. All three families, originally close friends, were the elite of the young community having profited from the Texas cattle industry. The story includes infidelity, murder, revenge and eventual acquittals. 29 were in attendance at the Pirtle home and enjoyed traditional smoked brisket and homestyle fellowship.

# CORRAL NEWS

## Los Angeles Corral

According to the latest LA Corral *The Branding Iron* at the March meeting of the **Los Angeles Corral** of Westerners welcomed as its guest Mark Barbour, the director and curator of the International Printing Museum in the "culturally significant" city of Carson. Barbour delivered a hot-off-the-press presentation on the history of California printing presses and the people who used them.

The **Ft. Worth Westerners** have done a good deal of advance planning and have lined out presentations for the coming months. In May, they hosted a program from Dr. Richard McCaslin, on "Texan in Blue: Capt. Francis A. Vaughan of the First Texas Cavalry, USA." For June, they will feature Gary Pinkerton, speaking on "Bridles and Biscuits: Contraband Culture in Spanish East Texas." In mid-summer, on July 15, they will host Doug Hocking from the Cochise County Corral in Arizona, who will speak on "The Exploits of the High Five Gang." In late summer, on Aug 19, William E. Moore will present a program on "The Texas Calaboose and Other Forgotten Jails." On September 16, they plan a presentation from Peter Martinez on "Fort Worth Mexican American History," and they will host Ray Sumner on October 21, who will speak on "The Sand Creek Massacre."



The **Pikes Peak Posse** had a program on April 14 entitled "Murder in the Shadow of Pikes Peak," and on May 12, at the Colorado Springs Masonic Center, they hosted a program on "The Old West and the Code of the West." **Kansas City Westerners** On April 8, Mary Conrad spoke on "The Archaeology of John Dougherty's Multnomah Mansion, Liberty, Missouri." On May 13,, the Posse hosted **George Pettigrew**, who spoke on "The First Kansas Colored Infantry and Isaac Johnson's Enlistment in the Army." On June 10, they have a program planned from Gene T. Chavez, Ed.D, on the "Santa Fe Trail and the Hispano Capitalistas.." And in July, they plan a program from **John A. Dillingham** on "Kansas City Stockyards History."

**Linda Mazur** of the **Huntington Corral** reports that, on April 5, the corral had a program from Marc Wanamaker, who specializes on the history of the motion picture industry in the United States; he presented on "Cowgirl Actresses in Early Motion Pictures." The following month, on May 3, the **Huntington Westerners** heard from **Stacey Ravel Abarbanel** on "My Grandfather and Pancho Villa," with a film screening and question and answer period included. In June, the corral plans a presentation on "A Machine to Move Ocean and Earth: The Making of the Port of Los Angeles," from speaker James Tenani.



## Dr. William Ator Sansing

September 28, 1938 — April 10, 2025

Dr. William Ator Sansing was born on September 28, 1938, in Crockett, Texas, to William Benjamin Sansing and Melba Jocelyn Ator. He lived a life grounded in faith, family, and service, and his impact will be felt for generations to come.

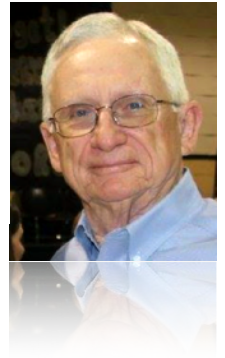
Memorial service were April 15, 2025 at First Baptist Church, 1208 S. Tyler. Bill began his education at Amarillo College and continued on to Texas Tech University. He graduated from the University of Houston's School of Optometry, where he was a proud member of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity. After several years of practicing optometry in Amarillo, Bill met the love of his life, Betty Ann Troutman Eppinette. It was he who lovingly created the nickname "BA." The two were married on September 12, 1970, and together they raised five children. In 1972, they began introducing their family to the ranching lifestyle, a passion that brought Bill great joy. He found deep purpose in stewarding the land and working alongside his family.

Bill dedicated over 50 years to his profession, becoming a partner in what is now Advanced Eye Care in Amarillo. A man of deep faith, Bill was a long-standing member of First Baptist Church of Amarillo. He also served on the Board of Regents for Clarendon College, reflecting his commitment to education and community service. Bill also held leadership roles in numerous organizations, including serving as a board member for both the Panhandle Optometric Society and the Texas Optometric Association. He was a former president of the Will Rogers Range Riders and an active member of the Palo Duro Corral of Westerners International.





Jim Jennings grew up in Sweetwater, Texas and graduated from Texas A&M University. Jim and his wife Mavis reside in Amarillo, Texas. He is a member of the Palo Duro Corral and serves the Corral as Keeper of the Chips. Jim is a renowned western writer and a long-time western historian. Jim is retired as Executive Director of Publications for the American Quarter Horse Association and continues to write and is currently writing the scripts for Red Steagall's television show "Somewhere West of Wall Street."



## “His hat was thrown back and his spurs was *a-jinglin’*”



**I**n certain parts of the country, spurs on a pair of boots are as common as is the hat on a cowboy's head. In probably most of the small towns in the western United States, it's not unusual at all to see someone sitting in a restaurant with a pair of spurs on his boots, or in the grocery store or even in the post office. The reason is that cowboys normally have a pair of boots they wear with their spurs and those spurs are never taken off those boots. If those are the boots they have

on when they go to town, the spurs go with them. And it's not necessarily just the small towns. In the Fort Worth, Texas, area, with close to a million people within less than 30 miles, seeing someone with spurs on his boots is a common occurrence. No one even gives it a second look.

Among cowboys, there are few items of attire that are more distinctive and of which they are more proud – with the possible exception of their saddle – than their spurs. When a new man joins the roundup

crew on a ranch, almost certainly, before the first day is over, someone will ask, “Who made your spurs?”

And the maker might be as important as the look or the design. There are a handful of spur makers in this country, who are alive today, who have attained legendary status, and to wear a pair of spurs made by one of them is a mark of distinction. But to order a pair from one of them could mean a wait of up to a year or longer, and an expenditure of up to a thousand dollars or more.

Spurs on a horseman's feet are nothing new. As a matter of fact, they've been around for centuries. Spurs have been found in Greek and Middle Eastern tombs dating as far back as 700 B.C., and during the age of chivalry, spurs became an emblem of rank. In early England, when a valet became an esquire, or an esquire was knighted, he was fitted with new spurs during a special ceremony. Thus came the expression, "earned his spurs."

Gold or gilded spurs were only worn by knights or royalty. Esquires' spurs were silver, and those of a page were made from tin. The caste system was very important at that time, and one could tell the rank of the wearer by his spurs, even if his armor or clothing gave no clue.

At that time, spurs were usually buried with their owners, which explains why there are very few of those spurs on exhibit today.

Spurs were also used by the Celts in the 5th century B.C., and iron or bronze spurs were used throughout the Roman Empire and in the medieval Arab world.

The first spurs had a single sharp point, called a prick, which was riveted to the heel band. Rowels probably originated in France or Spain in the 10th Century A.D., but the first rowel of record in England showed up on the first seal of Henry III and on some monuments of the 13th century. The earliest rowels did not revolve or spin, but were fixed, and did not come into general use until the 14th century.

The prick design never died out entirely, but instead became a thicker, shorter neck with a dulled end, such as used in the modern Price of Wales design commonly seen in English riding.

In the 15th century, spurs became an art form in both decoration and design, with elaborate engraving, long shanks and large rowels. Spur designs in Spain and colonial Mexico were particularly elaborate. The spurs of the Spanish Conquistadors were sometimes called *Espuela Grande*, or the grand spur, and could have rowels as large as six inches.

The popularity of the large rowels died off rather quickly in Europe, but the style persisted much longer in

the Americas. The Conquistadors, in their travels through what is now the Southwestern United States,



wore spurs with large rowels, although usually not as large as six inches. The large-roweled spurs looked truly *grande* when the wearer was mounted, but proved to be very awkward when the horseman stepped down from his horse. However, archeological sites in both Texas and New Mexico have yielded remnants of spurs of this type that were used by Coronado's expedition through the Southwest in his search for the fabled Seven Cities of Gold.

Also during the transition from the large rowels, the formerly used six- or eight-pointed rowels were replaced by round ones with serrated edges, but the elaborate designs persisted. Often the Conquistador spurs were inlaid with silver or brass, or even gold. However, most Spanish caballeros and lower ranking soldiers used a more common spur that was somewhat crudely constructed and resembled those of the higher ranking officers only in shape.

Changes in spur design were gradual, and usually only one element of a spur might be changed at a time. It often took a century or more for a new style to become widely adopted, but by the 18th century, the rowels were smaller and the overall ornamentation on the heel bands and the shanks was less.

In the Southwest, Mexican spurs were the most frequently used during the early part of the 19th century.





They were brought to the area by vaqueros who herded the cattle and by Spanish – and then Mexican – soldiers who manned the colonial missions up until the 1830s. Cowboys on the early cattle drives in the 1870s often used Mexican spurs that they called “Chihuahuas” because they came from the trade fairs in Chihuahua, Mexico. However, they were probably made farther down in Mexico.

Many cowboys at this time wore Mexican spurs with what they called jingle bobs attached. These were little pear-shaped metal pendants that hung from the rowel pin and jingled as the cowboy rode or walked. And sometimes the cowboy accented the sound even more by loosening his spur straps into what was called the “town notch” so that the spur’s rowels would ring as they made contact with the sidewalk or floor as the cowboy walked.

Toward the end of the 19th century, blacksmiths in Texas started building spurs, but the first mass produced spur was made by August Buermann in New Jersey, who produced what he called the OK spur. The OK spur has become legendary, made famous by both poetry and song, but it was actually a cheap spur that Buermann sold for about 50 cents a pair. He shipped thousands of them to the Southwest before cowboys started requesting custom-made spurs.

Probably the first person to market handmade Texas-type spurs was J.R. McChesney of Pauls Valley, Oklahoma. McChesney began making spurs in 1889 as a 21-year-old. He founded the McChesney Spur and Bit

Company, which at one time had more than 50 employees, and its catalog offered 120 patterns of spurs. McChesney originated the idea of hand-forging a spur out of one piece of steel. Most McChesney spurs are unmarked, but collectors have no

problem recognizing them. McChesney died in 1928, and his wife sold all his equipment to Mrs. Enid Justin, who owned Nocona Boot Company in Nocona, Texas. Nocona then continued to make the McChesney line of spurs until 1940.

Although there were a number of great spur makers around the turn of the 20th century, one of those who became famous for his hand-made spurs was J.O. Bass, who first had a shop in Quitaque, Texas, and then moved to Tulia, Texas.

Bass’ career as a spur maker began in 1897 in Quitaque when he was only 18 years old. Some of his first customers were the cowboys on the nearby Matador Ranch, and then, as his reputation spread, various Texas Rangers began to order spurs from him. The early Bass spurs had a long shank, a squared off narrow heel band and swinging buttons. They were numbered according to their style, and on one side of the shank Bass stamped his name. He stamped his hometown on the other side. However, it wasn’t long before he changed and started putting his name and hometown on the inside of the heel band, usually on the right spur, although sometimes he stamped both spurs.

Bass made spurs to order. He sweated or soldered on silver initials and brands, or sometimes he used a mixture of silver and copper decorations, some

of which were sweated on and some were inlayed. On many of his spurs, he used a half-silver, half-copper, heart-shaped button on the outside of each spur, which became a Bass tradition.

Bass' spurs were all one piece. Each spur was hammered out at the forge and anvil, and carefully filed and hand-buffed to a smooth finish. No spurs left his shop without passing close inspection, and if he was not happy with his work, he would pitch them into a reject barrel that he kept near his work bench.

J.O. Bass stopped making spurs in 1924, due to poor health, although he actually lived another 26 years. Today, a replica of his shop is in the Swisher County Museum in Tulia. However, the traditions of his work were carried on through a number of well-known spur makers. Among them was Adolph Bayers of Gilliland, Texas.

Bayers made his first pair of spurs about 1930. His first tools were salvaged from the junk yard and rigged to suit his needs. But in about 1955, he was able to buy McChesney's equipment from a junk man who had bought it from the Nocona Boot Company when they quit making spurs. Much of it was worn out, but Bayers got it all working and through the years he made hundreds of spurs. In his shop were file cards and loose leaf notebooks full of bit and spur designs numbering up to almost 500. The odd

numbers were bits and the even numbers were spurs. A sketch of each new style ordered was numbered and put in the book.

With the McChesney equipment, along with what Bayers made himself, he was set up to do much of his job mechanically, like shaping the slots for sloping buttons and stamping out rowels, but his spur making was basically all handwork.

Bayers died of cancer in 1978 at the age of 69. Much of his equipment, including some that had been McChesney's, is in the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum in Canyon, Texas, but his spurs are in great demand by collectors today.

There are a number of well-known contemporary spur makers in business today, and one of those until recently was Billy Klapper of Pampa, Texas, who died earlier this year. Billy was influenced in his work by Adolph Bayers, and he would sometimes visit Bayers in his shop. However, Bayers was very secretive with his work and never taught Billy anything. Billy did, however, buy some of Bayers' equipment from Bayers' widow after he died.

So next time you see someone in the restaurant with his spurs on, ask him who made them. I assure you, he will know.





from the  
**Westerner International Mercantile**  
 your store just got a little bigger with more merchandise!

Look what's new!

#### New items, left

- Five Panel Twill Cap, adjustable.....\$25.00
- 7x9" Rawhide Portfolio with stamped logo.....\$38.00
- Notepads w/Western logo..... \$4.00

#### Items, right & below

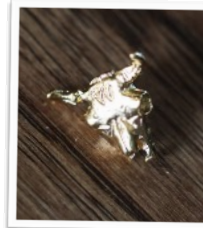
- Lapel pin with pin clasp..... \$13.00
- "Past Sheriff" lapel pin..... \$13.00
- Bolo Tie with leather band..... \$25.00
- Lucite paper weight..... \$17.00
- T-Shirts/round or v-neck..... \$25.00
- Polo Shirt..... \$45.00
- Bandanas..... \$7.00
- Decal 3"..... \$4.00
- Cap -adjustable size..... \$30.00

(Price includes free shipping!)  
 shirt sizes available in small,  
 medium, large and extra large

If you would like to place an order or send  
 payment, contact:

**Delinda King, WI Secretary,  
 Westerners International, Panhandle-  
 Plains Historical Museum,  
 2503 4th Ave., Canyon, TX 79015**

You can also email her at  
[dlking1@buffs.wtamu](mailto:dlking1@buffs.wtamu) or call the office at  
 806-651-5247



lapel pin



past sheriff's pin pin



bolo tie



lucite paper weight



tee shirt



white v-neck



3" Decals



Westerner cap



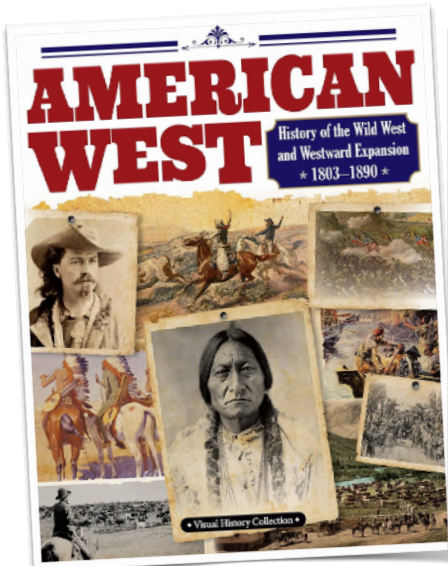
Polo shirt



white bandana

# BOOK NEWS

OF INTEREST TO WESTERNERS



## **American West: History of the Wild West and Westward Expansion 1803-1890**

*Lewis and Clark, Billy the Kid, Wyatt Earp, FJ Turner, Andrew Jackson, The Oregon Trail, and more*

Paperback – March 28, 2023,

Fox Chapel Publishing or Amazon Books

by Alice Barnes-Brown price \$25.00

Fascinating and educational account of the history of 19th century America and its expansion into the west. Expertly written articles detailing important historical events, including the journey of Lewis and Clark, the accidental discovery of gold in California, the Indian Removal Act, the Homestead Acts, and more. Stunning illustrations, graphics, timelines, and an insightful visual history of the American west from 1865-1890.

Profiles of the time's most notable players, including Billy the Kid, Wyatt Earp, F.J. Turner, President Andrew Jackson, and others.

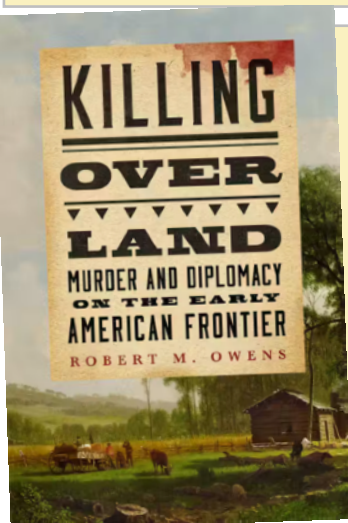
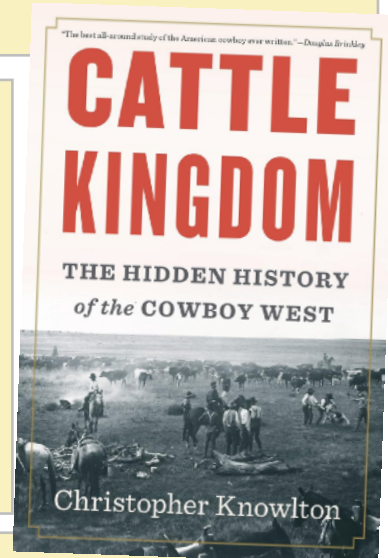
As the American Revolution drew to a close and the colonies claimed independence from Britain, the United States' gaze turned west to the vast expanse of land that was seemingly ripe for the taking. After all, according to their Manifest

## **Cattle Kingdom: The Hidden History of the Cowboy** West Paperback – June 5, 2018

by Christopher Knowlton paperback \$12.99 Amazon Books

*The open-range cattle era lasted barely a quarter century, but it left America irrevocably changed. Cattle Kingdom reveals how the West rose and fell, and how its legacy defines us today. The tale takes us from dust-choked cattle drives to the unlikely splendors of boomtowns like Abilene, Kansas, and Cheyenne, Wyoming. We meet a diverse cast, from cowboy Teddy Blue to failed rancher and future president Teddy Roosevelt. This is a revolutionary new appraisal of the Old West and the America it made.*

*"The best all-around study of the American cowboy ever written. Every page crackles with keen analysis and vivid prose about the Old West. A must-read!" — Douglas Brinkley, author of **The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America***



## **Killing over Land**

**Murder and Diplomacy on the Early American Frontier** By Robert M. Owens

266 PAGES | 6 X 9 | 1 MAP - Hardcover \$45.00 - FEBRUARY 2024

In early America, interracial homicide—whites killing Native Americans, Native Americans killing whites—might result in a massive war on the frontier; or, if properly mediated, it might actually facilitate diplomatic relations, at least for a time. In **Killing over Land**, Robert M. Owens explores why and how such murders once played a key role in Indian affairs and how this role changed over time.

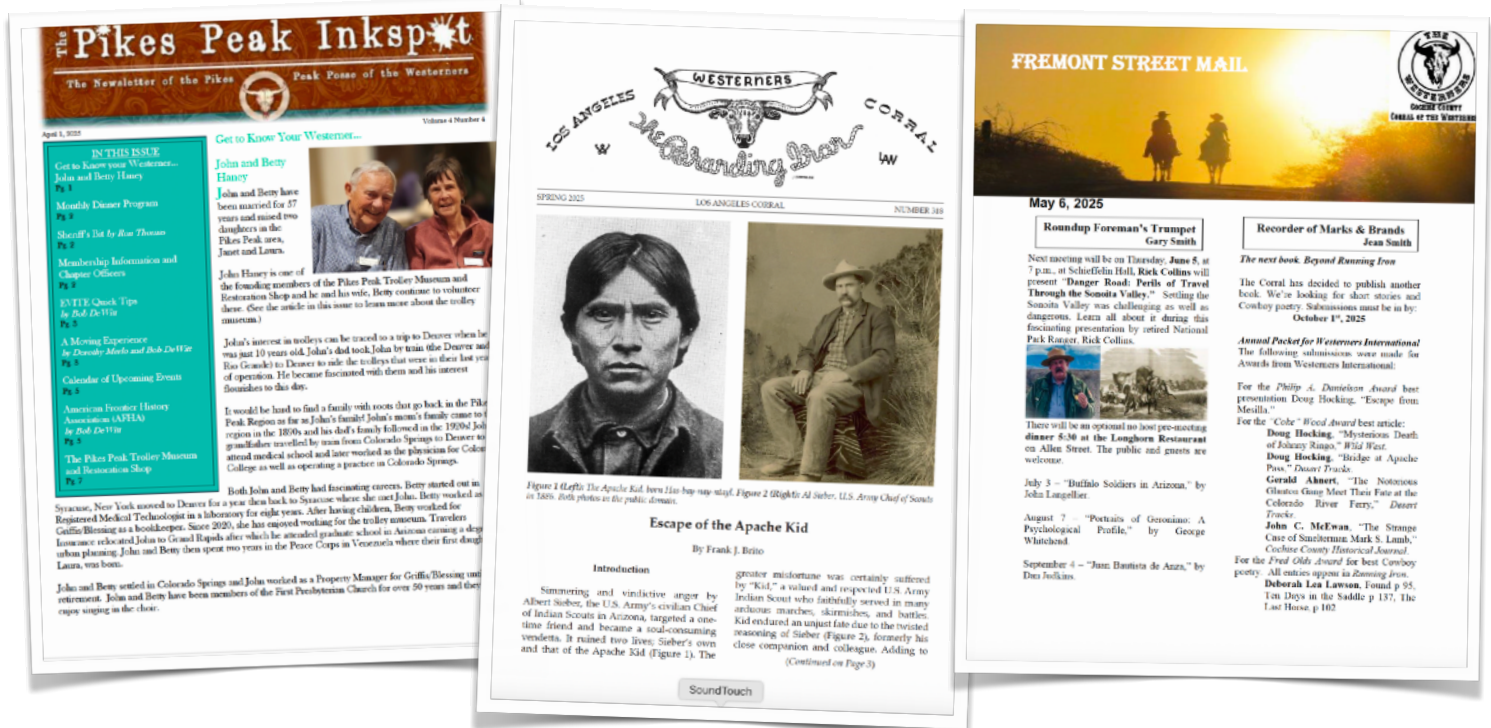
from the The University of Oklahoma Press

If you've read a particularly fascinating book that you think might be of interest to other Westerners, please share it with your Buckskin Bulletin inkslinger at: [kenneth.pirtle@me.com](mailto:kenneth.pirtle@me.com) so I can add it to the Book News section of the next BB.



# BOOK & PUBLICATION NEWS

## OF INTEREST TO WESTERNERS

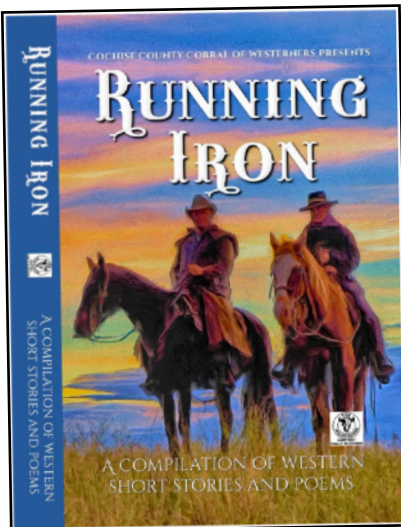


The Home Ranch is pleased to receive great publications from various Corrals and Poses. If your Corral or Posse produces a newsletter such as these, please don't hesitate to share with the WI Home Ranch.

(left) The **Pikes Peak Posse** produces the **Pikes Peak Inkspot**. Inkslinger **Merrilee Ellis** has once again, produced another great issue. Thanks to Posse Wrangler **Bob DeWitt** for his great contributions and for sharing. The **Inkspot** highlights Posse members **John and Betty Haney** and John's involvement in trolley cars in the Pikes Peak area.

(center) The **Los Angeles Corral** continues their tradition of producing another outstanding **The Branding Iron** edited by **John Dillon**. **Frank J. Brito** leads off with a stirring account of the "Escape of the Apache Kid". Also included is useful news for upcoming meetings and events for all of the Corral membership. Thanks **Dr. Brian Dillon** for sending the latest "**The Branding Iron**" along.

(right) The **Fremont Street Mail** is the impressive newsletter for the **Cochise County Corral of the Westerners**. Included is lots of Corral news, photos, information on past and future Corral activities. Well done!



**The Cochise County Corral of the Westerners has published a book! Running Iron, a compilation of western short stories and poems by the Corral membership.**

**Get your copy today!**

**Available on Amazon for \$16**