

Buckskin Bulletin

VOL. XXXX No. 3

NEWSLETTER OF WESTERNERS INTERNATIONAL ISSUE 3, 2007(2nd Edition)

<http://www.Westerners-International.org>

REPORT ON WHA MEETING

(Editor's Note: *Dr. Robert Chandler of the San Francisco Corral attended the recent WHA Meeting in Oklahoma City. He wrote a report on the experience for his Corral publication and has given permission an abstract of this to be duplicated for the bulletin.*)

By Dr. Robert Chandler

About 800 gathered for the **Western History Association** conference October 3-6, 2007, in Oklahoma City. Westerners (led by WI Treasurer **John Marshall**) essentially organized, planned and arranged the whole shindig.

Conference papers tend to be deadly, but camaraderie remained high, and tours enticing. Seeing **Richard Olson**, noted historian of the University of Oklahoma Press, and past Sheriff of our corral, was a highlight.

Eateries in **Bricktown**, a former warehouse district across the Santa Fe Railroad tracks a block from the hotel, were superb. The Renaissance, the Convention Hotel, had a superb, cheerful, helpful, knowledgeable, and efficient staff, with delicious food in the restaurant. In summary, Sue and I enjoyed ourselves.

Thursday, October 4, two buses drove over the flat, wooded, Oklahoma Terrain to **Fort Sill**. From far distant California, Sue is still looking for the Oklahoma trees to turn color. The old limestone structure post, founded in 1869, is a National Historic Monument. It features parade ground gun drills with gleaming brass Civil War era 6-pounder guns and 12 pound mountain



Bobby Weaver, museum scholar, makes a point during the WI Session "Gushers, Dry Holes, and the Oil & Gas...Bidness" arranged by WI President Jo Bloom, far right. Also on the panel were Diana Hinton University of Texas, Permian Basin; Brian Frehner, Oklahoma State University; Larry Nichols, CEO, Devon Energy. (Photo, Fred Marvel)

horse-drawn World War I French 75s, such as my father used at Fort Sill in the late 1930s still appear when the Half-Section performs at special military ceremonies and other events. The Post Commander occupies the Sherman House, where hostile Indians nearly killed General William Tecumseh Sherman, May 27, 1871.

Curator **Towana D. Spivey** is a wondrous man, rightly continually at war with the Army to preserve the heritage of Fort Sill, and amazingly in tune with the Indian tribes. He melds family histories with the Army's. Himself of Chickasaw heritage, he sponsors cook-offs of "Sollie [Soldier] Bread," each family having its own secret recipe, based on the Post-baked bread distributed in times of need.

Uniquely to the Fort, the Federal Government established three Apache burial grounds, and out of a legal dispute, Spivey wrote the US Government burial regulations No. Preston Bush, father of President George Herbert Walker Bush

did not steal the skull of Geronimo. It still remains under a red rock pyramid.

Similarly entralling was **Michael Bruce's** performance on the Saturday excursion to **Guthrie**, the Territorial and first state capitol of Oklahoma. It blossomed in the 1889 Land Run. Still a town of 10,000 people it has 44 tree-lined blocks of residences and downtown as a historic district. Bruce is just as impatient with bureaucracy and equally as adamant as Spivey in preserving the heritage of Oklahoma for all. Adjoining his museum is the beautifully-restored, wood-paneled 1903 domed Carnegie Library where the last Territorial and first Oklahoma governors took their oaths of office.

Westerners President **Jo Tice Bloom** presided over a large crowd at the annual WI Breakfast and book auction where awards are presented to those who placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the Awards Contest.

(Continued on Page 7)

FROM THE EDITOR

From The President

It was a real treat to have the WHA meeting in Oklahoma City last October. And thanks to a number of WI members it was a great success. Leading the pack was **John Marshall**, treasurer of WI and a member of the **Indian Territory Posse**, who has been working on getting the meeting to Oklahoma in our Centennial Statehood Year for a long, long time.

John's hard work paid off but then he had gathered around him a good committee all of whom made sure all the I's were dotted and all the T's crossed. John and his group arranged for tours that would be of interest to the visitors and best of all **TWO** sessions by WI during the meeting. With the leadership of **Jo Tice Bloom**, current president of WI, a session on the Oil and Gas Industry was organized. **Mary Ellen Meredith**, former Executive Chair of WI, arranged for "An Address by **Chad Smith**," Principal Chief of the **Cherokee Nation**. Both proved very popular among those attending WHA. In addition, the opening night reception, on Wednesday, was held at the new **Oklahoma History Center** and the Thursday night dinner at the **National Cowboy and Western Heritage Center**. Both institutions have WI members "in high places." And the latter is where the Westerners International office is located.

As usual the WI Booth in the exhibit hall was a busy place. It was all the more busy when visitors discovered the chocolate candy generously donated to the WI booth (**John Marshall** again) by the **Chickasaw Nation**. It is the kind of chocolate that spoils a person for any other chocolate and it is made at the Tribe's factory in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma, <http://www.bedrechocolates.com/aboutus>. Many people were jotting that down for future reference.

Among those signing in at our booth were Westerners from a number of Corrals including **Durango, Santa Barbara, Bear Flag, South Canadian Cross-Timbers, Chisholm Trail, Pine Ridge, Scottsdale, Los Angeles, Huntington, St. Louis, Rio Bravo del Norte, Adobe, Pahaska, Fort Worth, Chicago, Potomac, Tucson** and **Kansas** and the **Indian Territory Posse, Pikes Peak Posse** and **Utah Westerners**. No doubt other WI groups were represented but they were not noted in our official WI Guest Book.

NEWS FROM THE HOME RANCH

As they say on TV—"There is some late-breaking news" which will partially explain the delay in your getting this bulletin. Our International President, **Jo Bloom**, has asked to be relieved of her duties so she can concentrate on regaining her health. She still plans to remain active in WI and has already set up the WI session for next fall's WHA in Salt Lake City.

Also retiring from "Active Duty" is **Revere Young** who has served the past several years as Chairman of the Executive Board, as Awards Chairman and as faithful volunteer in the WI Office. His leadership will be greatly missed. Taking his place is **Kent McInnis** who is also our web-master, recently retired from the work world and trying to familiarize himself with all that goes on at the **Home Ranch**. Another bulletin will be following close on the heels of this one with more information about our changes, and plans for the future. Stay tuned. We all soon will be back up to speed and working hard for WI and its members.

By Jo Bloom

Driving across the high plains of western Oklahoma on the way to the WHA meeting, I was impressed again by the vastness of our country. Having traveled all 50 states and all the territories and commonwealths other than American Samoa. I am awed by the incredible variety of people and landscapes that make up our union. As diverse as we are, we still manage to maintain courteous relationships with each other—and fascination with the American West.

The WHA meeting again demonstrated that fascination. The Indian dancers at the presidential luncheon, the speakers on the oil and gas industry at the Westerners session, **David Edmund's** presidential address—all demonstrated the wide variety of thoughts and research going on in the West. A real highlight was the address by **Chief Chad Smith**, Principal Chief of the **Cherokee Nation**. He was wonderful! Thanks go to **Mary Ellen Meredith** for bringing him to the WHA. Special thanks also go to **John Marshall** and the many Oklahoma Westerners who worked on local arrangements.

At the Westerners Breakfast on Saturday I was so proud to be a member of such a fine organization. Our members are not only fine people but they represent the best of western historians. Thanks for allowing me to be your president.

Do come to the WHA next year in Salt Lake City. Meanwhile, enjoy your local corral.

(Editor's Note: This will be Jo's final column as WI President. Thanks, Jo, for the great job you did these 2 years.)

WI Living Legend

No. 49 in a Series

[“I would like to nominate one of the **Prescott Corral** members for consideration as one of your ‘Living Legends’,” Al Bates of the Corral e-mailed recently. We agree he has nominated a worthy Westerner to receive this honor.]

By Al Bates

The person I would like to nominate is **Bruce Fee**, the last active of our Corral's charter members (Charter #18, dated March 1, 1962). He was corral sheriff in 1966 and is a painter, photographer, and student of Arizona history.

Bruce has consistently been one of the most popular of our monthly meeting presenters over the years (at least 17 times), and was awarded First Place in the 2004 **Philip A. Danielson Award** competition for a talk on George Phippen a famed western painter and a founding member of the Cowboy Artists of America.

His art career got its start at Arizona State College at Flagstaff (now NAU) after service in the US submarine service during WWII.

After college graduation he pursued sales jobs in the appliance and auto industries, but his passion for art drove him from those fields in order to make more time for his photography and painting. For a time he ran an art gallery in the same building occupied by the famous **Palace Bar** on Prescott's famed **Whiskey Row**.

Then he turned to a 17-year episode as a school bus driver between town and the outlying ranches. He lived on the ORO ranch (part of the famous Baca Float). There he bunked with the cowboys and worked on refining

his painting techniques. After delivery of the children to school each morning Bruce had the rest of the day to work on his projects until it was time to take the children back out Williamson Valley road to the outlying ranches.

As part of his effort to save the western heritage of **Yavapai County** he completed a series of paintings that documented all of the mostly abandoned Forest Service Ranger Stations in the Prescott National Forest.

Between his paintings and photographs he has documented ranch life in the 20th century in the central Arizona highlands. He's also done considerable research in the Territorial era wagon roads and has documented in paintings and on film the key remote spots on those abandoned and almost-forgotten roads.

Bruce continues to photograph and paint and most recently has sketched Hopi ceremonies and has begun a series of paintings on their ritual dances based on those sketches.

For many years Bruce was an active member of Prescott's **Smoki People**, now defunct, who recreated the ceremonies of the indigenous people of Arizona at a time when it was feared that those traditions were disappearing. Their performances were staged with emphasis on authenticity and respect for the native traditions. In this, Bruce followed both his father and mother as an active Smoki. He was active in the Annual Smoki performances and had a lead role in event staging.

With the passage of time, the Smoki, once a Prescott institution, faded into history when a new generation of residents were unwilling to commit themselves to the time and effort required to stage their dances. Bruce, the Smoki Chief in

1966 has worked hard to preserve the history of an event that was a cultural and financially important part of Prescott for some 70 years.

Though he is now past 80, Bruce still goes out on jaunts to see new (to him) Arizona places and old trails and he remains a very active member of the corral's posse, providing “institutional memory” as our historian. He continues to record all our monthly programs on video tape for placement in the **Sharlot Hall Museum** archives.

He's been an active participant in our corral's study group and provided sketches used in our **“Territorial Times”** publication.

And finally, he was instrumental in our location of the 1863 location of the first mining claims in Arizona Territory north of the Gila River (on Forest Service land on the upper reaches of the Hassayampa River some six miles south of Prescott).

“We are working to get permission from the Forest Service to locate a historical monument on this locally important site,” said Bates.



Bruce Fee

(Is there a Living Legend in your corral or posse? If so, let the Home Ranch know about it.)



S C E N E S

Oklahoma City Westerners arrived early to get their booth set up, left to right, Ann Marshall, Burnis Argo, Mary Marvel, Marcene Nelson and Don Reeves. Thanks to the Chickasaw Nation's generous contribution of an ample supply of the top-quality chocolate candy produced in their factory in Pauls Valley, OK, this booth was extremely popular among those visiting the exhibit hall.

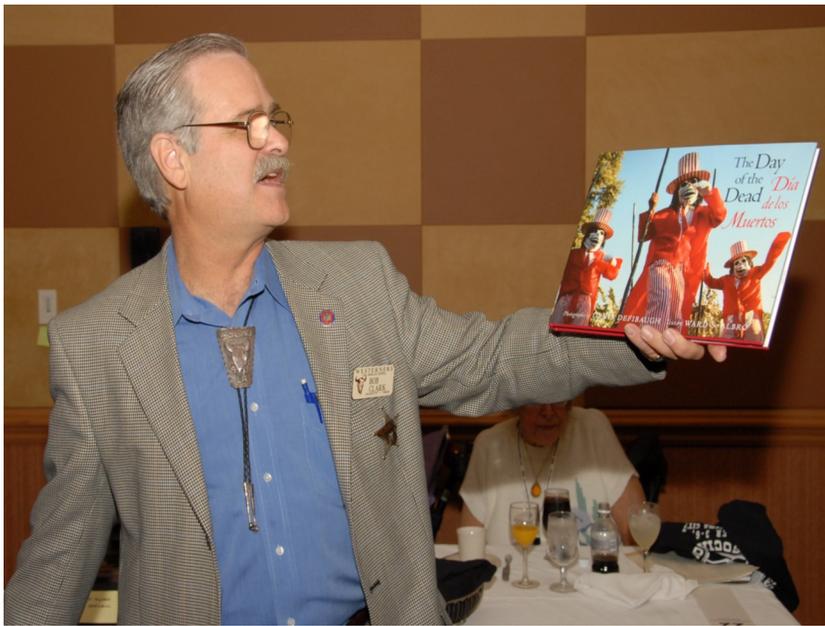
FROM

WHA 2007



Jo Tice Bloom, WI President, and member of the Rio Bravo del Norte Corral, Las Cruces, NM, presents awards to Gary Turner, Los Angeles Corral, above, who received 1st place in the Fred Olds Poetry section, and Jeremy Johnston, right, Pahaska Corral, Cody, Wyoming, first place winner in the Philip A. Danielson competition.





Bob Clark, a former WI President, and member of the South Canadian Cross-Timbers Corral, does a masterful job of raffling off the books donated for the book auction. Thanks to his hard work and the generosity of assembled group, over \$800 was raised to support the WI scholarship and awards programs.

**Conference Photographs
By Fred W. Marvel of the
Chisholm Trail Corral**



Don Reeves, left, secretary of Westerners International, presents John Marshall (both of the Indian Territory Posse) some items of appreciation from all the local members in appreciation of the job he did bringing WHA to Oklahoma City and in arranging the tours and the two WI Sessions. Above, Byron Price, South Canadian Cross-Timbers Corral, tries leading the early morning crowd in the special song created by Mary Ellen Meredith and Samonia Meredith to mark the occasion—“Marshall John Marshall” to the tune of “Oklahoma!”



TWO CORRALS REPORT ACTIVITIES

Occasionally here at the **Home Ranch** we get a nice surprise in the mail or by e-mail in the form of a "report on activities" by a member of one of the corrals or posses. This is welcomed by us as it usually is a more personal report than the monthly meeting notices we get.

In the last couple of months we have received two pieces of correspondence, one from **Vern Gorzitze** of the **Utah Westerners** (who was wondering what possessed him to write in the first place) and another from **C.J. "Jarvis" Harriman** of the **Tucson Corral**. He keeps us up-to-date on his group from time to time and in this instance also did some reporting on the **Prescott Corral**. Vern's letter was especially timely because the 2008 **WHA** meeting is going to be held in October in Salt Lake. So here is what's been happening in **Utah** and **Arizona**.

"It has been some time since **Utah Westerners** (#32) has submitted an activity report. We would like to let everyone know we are alive and well here in **Salt Lake City, Utah**—The Crossroads of the West. We have a full compliment of 75 Regular members as allowed by our by-laws, with 11 Emeritus and 7 Corresponding members. We still hold our monthly meetings at the prestigious Alta Club, having done so with few exceptions since 1967.

"Our program committee has arranged for outstanding after dinner speakers who have provided interesting and provocative talks with interesting titles such as: 'Left to Rot on the Hillside: Death on the Frontier' by **W. Paul Reeve**, 'Tenting tonight by the Salt Lake: The Grand Army Encampment of 1909' by **Ardis Parshall** 'On the Way Some-

Where Else' by **Mike Horner**, 'From the City of Saints to the City of the Angels' by **Edward Leo Lyman**, and 'The Irish in Utah' by **Gerald McDonough**.

"Because of the fine, high quality presentations, we are proud of the fact we have 72 percent member attendance rate, this despite the high cost of food, drink and room rental. We are a tight fist group of curmudgeons who know the value of a dollar. The moths in our wallets have become family, but we gladly loosen the purse strings to dole out the fee once each month with just a little muttering under our collective breaths.

"Our yearly summer two or three-day field trips by van or bus are supported and well attended, generally by 25 to 35 Westerners. **Best, Vern Gorzitze"**

The November meeting of the **Tucson Corral** (No. 6) included a great talk by **Stan Brown** (member of the **Prescott Corral**) on the subject of his new *Smoke Signal*, 'The Butterfield Trail Revisited.' Using his *Smoke Signal* as a base, he elaborated on various aspects of the Butterfield Overland Mail (1858-1861) in a fascinating talk. Stan is a retired Methodist clergyman, and he knows how to hold an audience! He described the usual type of coach used by the Mail which differed significantly from the Concord model most often associated with the term 'state coach;' and told stories of some of the men whose names were linked with many of the 27 stations in the Arizona segment of the line.

'**Pat Marohn**, widow of our long-time treasurer **John Marohn**, has given us many books from John's fine Western history library

At this meeting some 20 of them went on silent auction, and bidding for many of the books was brisk! Many thanks, Pat.

"The **Tucson Corral** now meets every first Monday from September to June at the Viscount Suites Hotel. Taking reservations is **Chuck Brumfield**, 520-885-9144. (Westerners who might be visiting Tucson take note).

"It is good to note that the **Prescott Corral** has published their first volume of what we can hope will be a long-running series called '*Territorial Times*,' Vol. 1, No. 1 contains three articles—'Bloody Tanks Revisited' by **Al Bates** on the 1864 battle between Tonto Apaches and Prescott miners; 'Law and Justice in 10th Century Arizona Territory' by **Fred Veil**; and 'C.E. Cooley, A Virginian Among Apaches' by **Eldon Bowman**.

"Good Luck to the **Prescott Corral!**
Very Best Regards, Jarvis"

Spokane Corral

Frank Peltier from the **Spokane Corral** writes to say this group has had two "Living Legends," the late **Randal Johnson** and late **Jerome Peltier** and amazingly enough still have two charter members still living **James P. McGoldrick**, who is 90 years old, and **Louis Livingston** who was 107 last September 10.

"I thought it might be nice to have Louis mentioned in the *Buckskin Bulletin*," says **Peltier**.

Livingston, a former teacher, has now spent more time in retirement than the 40 years he taught in high school.

This corral (#11) was founded on St. Patrick's Day in 1955.

WI AWARDS CONTEST WINNERS FOR 2006

Co-Founders Best Book Award

1st Place: **Albert L. Hurtado, South Canadian
Cross-Timbers Corral**

John Sutter: A Life on the North American Frontier
University of Oklahoma Press

2nd Place: **Jerry Keenan, Boulder County Corral**
The Life of Yellowstone Kelly
University of New Mexico Press

3rd Place: **Lawrence R. Reno, Denver Posse**
The Life and Times of Nathaniel Hale Pryor
Turkey Creek Publishing

Coke Wood Award for Monographs and Articles

1st Place: **Jeremy Johnston, Pahaska Corral**

2nd Place: **Patricia Etter, Scottsdale Corral**

3rd Place: **Doris Woodward, Spokane Corral**

Philip A. Danielson Award for Best Programs

1st Place: **Erik Berg, Scottsdale Corral**

2nd Place: **Juti Winchester, Pahaska Corral**

3rd Place: **Ed & Nancy Bathke, Ted & George Krieger
Denver Posse**

Fred Olds Western Poetry Award

1st Place: **Gary Turner, Los Angeles Corral**

2nd Place: **Bernice Landers, Jedediah Smith Corral**

Heads Up Award

For Corrals organized prior to 1973

Los Angeles Corral
Dee Dee Ruhlow, sheriff

For Corrals organized 1973 and later

Ft. Abraham Lincoln Corral, Bismarck, ND
Darlene Turitto, sheriff

Overseas Corrals

Indian Corral, Czech Republic
Marek 'Cankute' Kōstāk, sheriff

WHA REPORT

Auctioneer **Bob Clark** provided expertise and humor to bring in over \$800, while what would a Westerners breakfast be without **T. Lindsey Baker**? This tall, distinguished, balding Texas professor transforms into a shaggy-haired, SMELLY, 1874 buffalo skinner. Besides passing out books, this time he played 'Spin the (ketchup) Bottle' with gift certificates as the prize.

For a fun time go to a WHA Conference!

BUCKSKIN BULLETIN

Issued quarterly by Westerners International, a Foundation to stimulate interest and research in frontier history. A special purpose is to serve The Westerners, founded by Leland D. Case and Elmo Scott Watson in a Chicago suburb, February 24, 1944.

Buckskin Bulletin is mailed to members of individual Corrals or Posses (local units). Individual subscriptions are \$5.00 per year.

All correspondence regarding the bulletin should be sent to:

Buckskin Bulletin

Westerners International
c/o National Cowboy & Western
Heritage Center
1700 NE 63rd St.

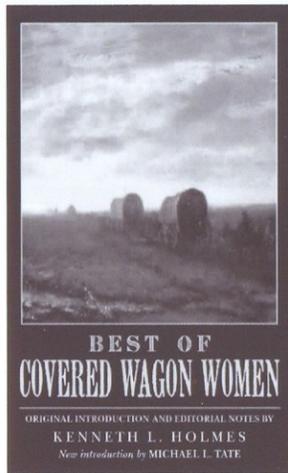
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The WI Home Ranch Bunch

Revere Young, Don Reeves, John Marshall, Leon Nelson, Bill Deupree, Noel Kruger, John & Melvena Heisch, Jerry Burson, Mary Marvel, Kent & Cheryl McInnis, Burnis Argo.



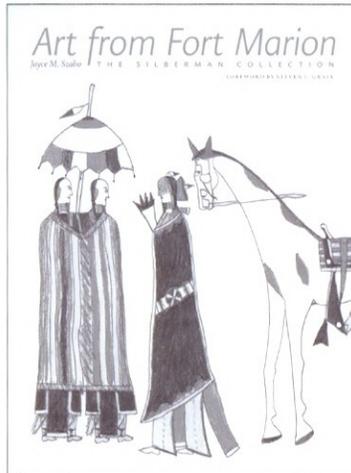
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Art from Fort Marion

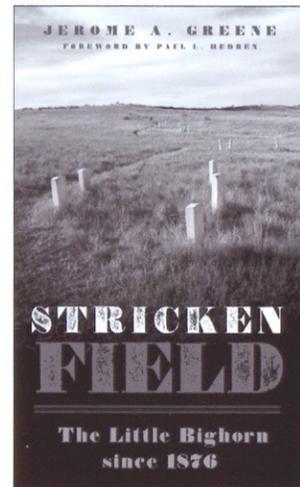
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By Joyce M. Szabo

Foreword by Steven L. Grafe

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By Jerome A. Greene

Foreword by Paul L. Hedren

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1700 NE 63rd St. Oklahoma City, OK 73111



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