

BUCKSKIN BULLETIN



"POINT GUARD" BY MIKE MAHON WRANGLING CATTLE IS A DIRTY JOB FOR A CLEAN LIVING MAN. DUST CLOUDS. MUSCLE AND MOTION —DECISIONS MADE IN AN INSTANT. THIS SCENE CAPTURES WESTERN WORK AT FULL SPEED — WHERE INSTINCT AND EXPERIENCE TAKE OVER.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON MIKE MAHON ART: [HTTPS://MIKEMAHONART.COM](https://mikemahonart.com)



WI Chairman, Bonney MacDonald
Photo by Rik Anderson, WTAMU



CHAIRMAN'S GREETING

I start my greeting to you all with comments on the weather; that's what we're interested in, among other things, out west of the 100th meridian!. During this long, hot summer, many of our members have endured wildfires, updates on containment, even evacuation and some loss. Others, also under the heat dome have endured soaring, sustained temperatures. So, I'm sure you join me in searching for signs of autumn and the coolness it brings.

On the organizational front, folks at the Spokane Corral in Washington state are hard at work on our behalf. As you'll know from the previous Bulletin and from announcements inside this one, the Spokane Corral is hosting the Westerners Gather in September of next year (2027). We hope you'll all consider making the trip; the Gather is going to be filled with fellowship, history, and FUN!

Delinda King/Secretary-Treasurer, Lisa Jackson/ WI Assistant, and I have continued our work over the last season. As you'll see elsewhere in the Bulletin, the 2026 dues invoices, awards forms, and contact information sheets are being sent out, and the Home Ranch is making preparations for the new season.

In case you need it all in one place, here's our contact information:

The Home Ranch email:

WesternersHomeRanch@gmail.com

The Home Ranch mailing address:

**Westerners International
2200 4th Ave
Box 309
Canyon TX 79015**

The Home Ranch phone number : **806-654-6920.**

Happy Trails for all!

Bonney

Bonney MacDonald
Chairman, Westerners International

Inside this Issue:

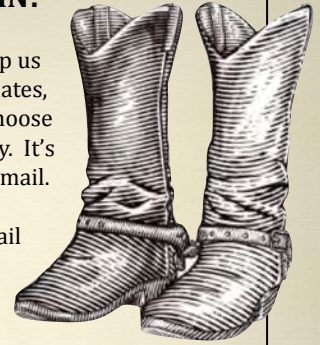
Chairman's Greetings
Home Ranch News
The Spokane Gather
Corral News
Awards

pg. 2
pg. 3
pg. 4
pg. 5, 6
pg. 7

Westerner News pg. 8-10
In Memory pg. 11, 12
Belle Starr by Jim Jennings pg. 13-16
The Mercantile pg. 17
Book News pg. 18
Publications pg. 19

REMINDER TO ALL SHERIFFS AND MEMBERS ABOUT SENDING THE BULLETIN!

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! Please do this by returning the contact sheets that you get in the mail – or you can choose to download/print the copies we email you or even get them from the WI website. Please send them in hard copy. It's much easier for us to keep track of than if you send us contact info by email.



All Members: *** Please be sure that your corral and posse sheriffs/representatives 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!

All Corrals 'n' Poses: If you have sent in your 2026 contact sheets, THANK YOU! If you haven't sent them, please, please do! If we have only your old contact sheets, we cannot get the *Buckskin Bulletin* to the right sheriff. And if we can't do that, there's no one to send the Bulletin to your membership. Again, if you've sent them, fabulous and thank you! If not, please send them to us.

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.

YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS ONE!!!
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!! 2027 WESTERNERS GATHER WILL BE IN
Spokane WASHINGTON, FALL 2027

Maggie Crabtree, who attended the 2025 Gather in South Dakota, and fellow corral member, Dick Jensen, Sheriff, will be hosting the next Westerners, International Gather in Spokane, WA in Fall 2027. The Gathers are held every other year, which gives corrals and posses time to plan and coordinate. Although, by the looks of things, Maggie, Dick Jensen/Sheriff, and fellow corral members are well on their way to planning outings, speakers, historical programs and more! See the announcement in this *Buckskin Bulletin* for details on the Gather in Spokane! You won't want to miss the fun at this one!

Thank you in advance to the Spokane Corral!!

HEY Y'ALL!

KEEP US POSTED

SEND NEWS OF YOUR ACTIVITIES FOR THE CORRAL & POSSE HIGHLIGHTS!!

Sheriffs and Reps:

We love -- yes, we love -- hearing about what programs you are hosting in your corrals and posses! Many of you send us listings of your events and we sure appreciate it, because we can post them in our "Corral and Posse Highlights." If you're already doing that, thank you so much! It adds to the community spirit of Westerners; and seeing your titles and ideas for programs gives other corrals and posses good ideas for their events. If you don't do so already, could you please do one of the following so that we can publish your exciting programs in the Bulletin's "Corral and Posse Highlights" for all to enjoy?

You can either

Email the Home Ranch : WesternersHomeRanch@gmail.com

OR

Email Kenneth Pirtle, *Buckskin Bulletin*: kenneth.pirtle@icloud.com

THANK YOU! We look forward to hearing from you!

Gather At The River: **All Roads Lead To Spokane!**



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Westerners International History Gather

September 16-18, 2027

Davenport Centennial Hotel • Spokane, Washington

Keep an eye on our website for updates: westernersspokane.org

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!

The **Cochise County Corral** of **Westerners** met at Schieffelin Hall this summer to hear Ranch Hand **Craig McEwan**, editor of the *Cochise County Historical Journal*, on "Murder Spree: The Tragic Lives of Mark and Effie Lamb." The Lambs were married in Kentucky. Later, they resided in Pearce, Bisbee, Douglas, and Globe, Arizona. What role did the first Governor of Arizona play in this tragic story? Craig related their fascinating story of love, murder, prison, and murder.

In July, The **Cochise County Corral** participated in Tombstone's "National Day of the Cowboy Parade", Saturday, July 25. The Corral dressed for the occasion by donning their finest cowboy, western and 19th century duds. The Corral made Tombstone, **Cochise County** and **Westerners**, **International** very proud!



The **Los Angeles Corral** has much to be proud! One of their most unique and talented Corral members, **Frank Brito** has completed extensive family research. His work led to a plaque being dedicated to Frank's grandfather and namesake, who was one of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders.

The new plaque has been added to The Buckey O'Neill Monument, also known as the Rough Rider Monument. This monument, located in Prescott, Arizona, honors their group of men who gallantly served their country during the Spanish-American War.

Unfortunately Frank's name somehow got left off the original monument list, raised to them in Prescott, Arizona. Frank Brito spent many years researching his family history, and, as in this example, corrected many long-standing historical omissions.



One of the **Los Angeles Corral**'s newest members, **Albert Knight** brought a presentation at the Campo de Cahuenga Museum in Studio City, California. This engaging presentation describes the important contribution made by Native Americans during the conquest of California during the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848. Albert is a professional archaeologist with more than 40 years of experience in California archaeology, ethnography, and history. He earned his BA in Anthropology from the University of California.

The **Palo Duro Corral**, Amarillo, Texas met this summer on the rim of Palo Duro Canyon at the Sad Monkey Mercantile. Chris Larson, local historian and amateur archeologist presented on the Battle of Lyman's Wagon Train. This Battle was a five-day armed engagement between combined forces of the Comanche and Kiowa tribes and a wagon train, led by Captain Wyllis Lyman, on its way to Camp Supply in September 1874 near present-day Canadian, Texas. Chris displayed an impressive array of artifacts found at the site. Sheriff of the **Palo Duro Corral** is **Bary Nusz**.



The **Ft Worth Corral** reports that, in June, Dr. Richard McCaslin spoke on "An Unexpected Triumph: Bernardo de Galvez in the American Revolution." In July, the Corral invited members to a Zoom presentation for the Cattle Trails Showcase, at which B.B. Hudspeth told of how he developed one of the most significant private collections of authentic Hollywood Western artifacts in the country. It all began with Michael Landon's original boots from "Bonanza." Hudspeth's collection has been featured in *True West Magazine*, *Guns of the Old West*, *Cowboys & Indians Magazine*, and more. He presented on how his collection will be touring Kansas and can be viewed in person during 2027. Also in July, **Michael Grauer** gave a Zoom program entitled "Kansas City Stockyards." The August program was presented by Matthew Babcock, Ph.D., who spoke on "The Apache Adaption to Hispanic Culture." Also in August, the corral hosted a free Zoom

program on West Texas and New Mexico Rock Art. And **Phil Williams** reported that, in September, Tom Ashmore presented a program on the annual event at the historic Horsehead Crossing on the Pecos River. The title for his talk was "The Horsehead Crossing Celebration."

more

CORRAL NEWS

Bill Ellinger and Linda Mazur of the Huntington Corral report that their June program featured Luke Leuschner, who spoke on "Germans in the Desert: Beyond Amerikanismus in the American Southwest: 1914-1934." The corral also reported that in October, it will host speaker, Leslie Ziff, who will speak on "the Life of Pancho Barnes," the pioneer aviator and founder of the first movie-stunts union. In 1930, Barnes broke Amelia Earhart's speed record and, later, was the owner of the renowned Happy Bottom Riding Club, a bar and restaurant in the Mojave Desert. That sounds like quite a life!



The **Pikes Peak Posse** reports that, in their July program, Lela Davis Witherow, Curator of History for the Colorado Springs Pioneer Museum, spoke on "What's New and Old." In August the posse had an exciting Rendezvous event on the campus the Colorado Springs private school, The Fountain Valley School. Members heard a presentation from longtime faculty and staff member, Jake Emery, received a tour of the campus, and enjoyed lunch in the picturesque Santa Fe-style courtyard. In September, the posse heard a presentation at the Colorado Springs Shrine Club on "The Last Stand of Ruth Banning Lewis," who, with her husband, owned the prominent and former Banning Lewis Ranch in Colorado Springs.

The Flagstaff Corral of Westerners International has been busy with great meetings this summer!

January 2026: Past Sheriff **Karen Malis-Clark** shared her appreciation and respect for the diversity of landscape, culture, and history of the National Forests of Arizona and New Mexico. As a long time USFS professional, Karen took us from the region's iconic cactus forests to the largest expanse of ponderosa pine forest to our highest alpine peaks. Karen told the story of Smokey Bear as well as creating craters for Apollo astronaut training.

March 2026: Wayne Ranney presented "*80 days in Grand Canyon: The 1923 Birdseye Expedition*". In 1923, the United States Geological Survey undertook an 80-day river trip from Lee's Ferry through the whole of Grand Canyon and on to Needles, California to survey the hydrology of the Colorado River and assess potential dam sites. Led by USGS topographic engineer Claude Birdseye, the expedition identified 29 dam sites. The trip was notable for many "firsts," including the first accurate topographic maps of the river corridor and the first accurate survey of the river's elevation drop - an extraordinary feat from oar-powered boats.

May 2026: In honor of the centennial birthday of Route 66, Kevin Schindler presented "*Road to the Stars: Route 66 and its Space Heritage*". Kevin led a virtual trip along the "Mother Road" and explored this space heritage. Route 66 is one of the most storied roadways in North America, known for its roadside diners, historic hotels and quirky attractions. But it also boasts an extraordinary space heritage. Along its course lies the birthplaces of space pioneers, centers of space exploration and discovery and training grounds for Moon-bound astronauts. Also the best-preserved asteroid impact site in the world, a famous UFO sighting, and museums celebrating these cosmic connections. Kevin Schindler is the historian and public information officer at Lowell Observatory.

June 2026: The June program was presented by Don McDonald, "A History of Family Sawmills in Central Arizona". Don is a third generation Arizonan whose family, beginning in the 1880s, built and operated four sawmills in remote areas of the state that were, in the words of his Dad, "50 miles from anywhere." The McDonald clan's DNA must have been programmed for inventiveness and dedication. Their four sawmills - near Pine, Pivot Rock, Stoneman Lake, and Jones Mountain, had to be successful regardless of location and power source. From steam power to Holt gas engines to modern diesel engines, all were carved out of the wilderness and made to work within the resources of the land.



July 2026: In July, **Sheriff Janet Sands** provided the program "VISIONS OF THE WEST 2.0-How artists shape our vision of the West, record its history, and help to preserve it". Beginning with Western Masters Frederick Remington and Charley Russell, Janet spoke of the first American school of art to be internationally recognized, the Taos Society of Artists. Janet shared images of work by the Cowboy Artists of America (founded in a Sedona bar and still going strong); Native American artists like Tony Abeyta and Shonto Begay (who lives in Flagstaff); and Mian Situ—who portrays the Chinese experience in America like no one else. Janet showed the art of Arizona artists Bruce Aiken, Curt Walters, and Bill Anton—and concluded with Modern Masters like Maynard Dixon, Georgia O'Keeffe and Ed Mell.

2025 WESTERNERS AWARDS (awarded Fall 2026)



Congratulations to all of this year's winners.

Hearty thanks to the many members who submitted award entries! We had high numbers of entries in many of the categories, so decisions were challenging!

We hope you're looking at your corral's or posse's 2026 accomplishments for submission in early 2027!! Awards will be handed out at the Sept 17-21 Gather in Spokane, Washington. All awards that are not picked up in person will be sent by US mail to the recipients.

Co-Founders Best Book Award

First Place: Tie

Paul Andrew Hutton

The Undiscovered Country: Triumph, Tragedy and the Shaping of the American West
Dutton 2025
Pahaska Corral

Paul Hedren

Sitting Bull's War: The Battle of the Little Big Horn and the Fight for Freedom on the Plains
Pegasus Books 2025
Omaha Corral

Second Place

Jan Cleere

100 Western Women: The Gold, Brave, Gutsy Women of Arizona's Past
Wheatmark 2025
Adobe Corral

Third Place

Jeff Broome

Plain Tales of the Plains
Pueblo Historical Society 2025
Denver Posse

"Coke" Wood Award for Historical Monograph or Published Article

First Place

Janolyn G. Lo Vecchio, "An Institution Like No Other in the United States: The Pima County Preventorium"
Journal of Arizona History Spring 2025
Tucson Corral and Adobe Corral

Second Place

Gerald Ahnert, "Fort Yuma Quartermaster Depot on the Southern Overland Trail"
Desert Tracks June 2025
Cochise County Corral

Third Place

Brian Dervin Dillon, "Fightin' Bob Heads West, 1860"
The Branding Iron Summer 2025
Los Angeles Corral

Phillip A. Danielson Award for Best Presentation or Program
(award goes to the hosting corral or posse)

First Place

Denver Posse

For program by Katy Ordway, "Sordid History! Cocaine, Child Brides, and Rat Schools in Two Historical Jeffersons County Preservation Projects"

Second Place

Los Angeles Corral

For a presentation by Brian Dervin Dillon, "Lost in the Sixties: Coming of Age in Hippie San Francisco"

Third Place

Pahaska Corral

For presentation by Eric Rossbaugh
"Zane Grey"

Heads Up Award, Larger Corral

The Huntington Corral
San Marino, California
Bill Ellinger, Sheriff

Heads Up Award, Smaller Corral

The Jedediah Smith Corral
Cal Larive, Sheriff
Hot Springs, South Dakota

Fred Olds Award for Cowboy Poetry

First Place

Rod Miller

"Leftovers," "Nowhere Rodeo," and "Bronc Rider"
Buckoffs and Broken Barriers
Speaking Volumes 2025
Utah Westerners, Salt Lake City, UT

Second Place

Bob Spahl, "2,000 Miles Through Hell"
Hot Iron, 2025
Cochise County Corral, Tombstone, AZ

Third Place

Tim Heflin

"Lily the Leppy," 2025
Garden of the Sun Corral, Fresno, CA



More Fall 2027 Gather News

Gather At The River: All Roads Lead To Spokane!

Westerners, International biennial conference will highlight the multi-faceted history of the Pacific Northwest and the people who made that history. Three days of tours and presentations bringing our Northwest history to life.

Thursday, September 16- Saturday September 18, 2027.
Come to Spokane via International Airport, Amtrak, Greyhound and I-90.

Official Convention Hotel: Davenport Centennial Hotel in downtown Spokane. Pricing and registration will open November 1, 2026

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! Keep an eye on our website for updates: <https://westernersspokane.org>



According a mailing from the **National Pony Express Association** in Frankfort, Kansas, a life-size bronze statue, depicting a Pony Express rider galloping on horseback was recently installed. It will pay tribute to the daring young men who braved treacherous terrain to deliver mail across the American frontier in the 1860's. Nebraska artist Linda Egle was commissioned to bring this dream into reality in 2024 and has worked tirelessly to complete the project for 2025. The horse measures about 7 feet, 6 inches, and the sculpture weighs about 1,500 pounds.

The project, which has been in the works for over 20 years was made possible through a combination of local fundraising, private and corporate donations, and a grant from the Gothenburg Tourism Committee. The statue will be situated next to the town's existing Pony Express Station Museum, one of the few remaining original stations on the Pony Express Trail. Gothenburg is in central Nebraska.

Tombstone Territory Rendezvous Annual Symposium October 21-25, 2026

In historic Schieffelin Hall, Tombstone, Arizona



“Gunbattle on Fremont Street,
The “O.K. Corral” Gunfight,
from questionable justice to legendary heroes”

If you would like to speak at the symposium,
we invite you to submit a proposal.
For information about the Symposium

Call for Papers

visit tombstoneterritoryrendezvous.com

Tombstone Territory Rendezvous is an organization devoted to studying and promoting the history of Tombstone, Arizona, and the borderlands.

Editor's note.

Dr. Walter Wendler, the president of West Texas A&M University, Canyon, Texas, announced the closure of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in March of 2025 due to serious fire and life safety concerns identified during a state inspection. The museum remains closed as plans for addressing these issues are developed.



The PPHM facility has provided space for the **Westerners, International Home Ranch** office. With this closing, the Home Ranch has adjusted by way of remote working by Dr. Bonney McDonald and the WI staff. In this *Buckskin Bulletin* and others, the new address and contact information has been communicated in Bonney's greetings and other places.

Until there is a resolution of the physical plant problems, please know that your Home Ranch is operational and eager to serve your Westerner needs.

The PPHM Board recently provided the following news release, below, regarding a place for displays and artifacts in downtown Amarillo.

July 2026
www.panhandleplains.org

PPHM CONNECT*A message from The PPHS Board:*

Over the past year, many of you have shared your concerns, frustrations, and hopes regarding the 2025 closure of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum. As Board members, we share that frustration. We are disappointed that the collection has been inaccessible to the public.

Today, I am pleased to share an important step forward. The Panhandle-Plains Historical Society has signed a non-binding letter of intent with CLI Capital to develop a satellite exhibition space in downtown Amarillo. The location at 905 S. Polk is across from the historic Santa Fe Building. Our plan is to build out and occupy approximately 14,000 square feet across the first two floors, providing a place to display PPHM's art collection while discussions continue about the future of the museum facility in Canyon. Primarily, the planned space will showcase our internationally significant art collection, with opportunities for events, community gatherings, and occasional rotating exhibits from other parts of PPHM. Build-out will begin soon, supported by a multi-phase fundraising effort, with an anticipated opening in 2027.

I want to be clear about what this project is and what it is not: This is not a replacement for the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum or a permanent move away from Canyon. It also does not represent a decision about the long-term future of our facility on the WTAMU campus. Those unresolved conversations are still taking place with the State of Texas, the Texas A&M System, and other stakeholders, and will shape our path forward. We are not content to simply wait, so the PPHS Board remains focused on what we can do today. We own this collection, we are responsible for its care, and we are committed to sharing it with the public. We view this downtown exhibition space as a bridge to the future and a way to reconnect our communities with our collection. It also provides an opportunity to introduce the museum and its treasures to new audiences in the heart of Amarillo. In the months ahead, we will share additional details about fundraising, naming opportunities, and other ways members can become involved. We look forward to keeping you informed.

Thank you for your continued support, encouragement, and belief in the mission of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society. Together, we will continue finding ways to preserve and share the history of the Panhandle-Plains region for future generations.

Ellen Jones, President
Suzanne Wheeler, President Elect
Panhandle-Plains Historical Society



John Dennis Shea, 1950-2026

John Shea was born in South Gate, Los Angeles County, California. He grew up there and in South Los Angeles, in the Manchester/Vermont neighborhood, and also near Downtown in the Broadway and Main area. John went to Mother of Sorrows grammar school in South Los Angeles, and then to Mount Carmel Catholic High School. He moved on to Los Angeles City College and then to Cal State Los Angeles, where he earned his Bachelor's Degree. Determined to become a professional librarian, John earned his Masters Degree in Library Science from California State University, Fullerton. While still a student he worked part-time at the Los Angeles Public Library, and then, after being awarded his M.A., worked at the Union Bank Headquarters in Los Angeles as its Corporate Librarian.

John was devout all his life, and a very active member of the Knights of Columbus, taking a leadership role in various local, state, and national chapters of this organization for more than 43 years. He was a 4th Degree Knight, and was a Grand Knight of Council 4039 in Paramount, California, a Faithful Navigator for St. John Bosco Assembly 72, the former District Deputy and former President of the Southern California Chapter. Along with his devoted wife Ann Shea, John also served as a board member and the Curator of the Knights of Columbus Emilio B. Moure Museum for more than 17 years. John Shea passed away in Visalia, California, the night before the Knights of Columbus State Convention for 2026 was to begin: his fellow Knights provided a memorable and moving send-off for him at his well-attended funeral.

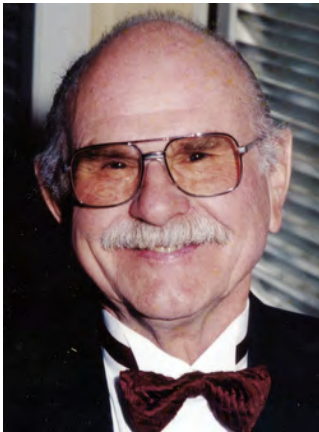
In his off-hours from Union Bank, John also was a member of the SLA—the Special Libraries Association—composed of those professionals who didn't quite "fit the mold" of the stereotypical school or public librarian. In that organization fellow members were this writer's own father and then, much later, my own wife, which provided a Dillon family connection with the Sheas long before we discovered each other through the Los Angeles Corral of the Westerners. And, to continue this serendipitous strain, John and Ann Shea were both active in the Friends of the Library, focused upon the LAPL—Los Angeles Public Library—where my own wife worked for many years, and where other Los Angeles Corral members like Frank Brito and Abe Hoffman also worked, way back when Eisenhower was in the White House.

John loved baseball, and in his younger days played on local school teams, then in later life on the Union Bank company softball team. With advancing age, he moved from the bullpen to management, and ran that team composed mostly of Bankers as the lone Librarian. A committed Dodgers Fan, John would follow the Boys in Blue throughout the year, by radio, TV, and frequently in person. His wife Ann noted that whenever the couple traveled during baseball season: *if they had a ballpark, then John was there...*

John had two brothers and one sister, and spent most of his adult life with his loving wife Ann: the two, both Librarians, were inseparable. John and Ann Shea joined the Los Angeles Corral of Westerners International together in 2009, and had one of the very best attendance records of any married couple for the monthly Round-ups and special events of our organization. And, unique within our 80-year history, and possibly within Westerners International as a whole, John and Ann were both Deputy Sheriffs and Sheriffs of our Corral. The Sheas imparted a cheerful stability to our group during some of the darkest days of the Covid Epidemic, and guided us on the long path towards complete recovery afterwards.

John Shea was kind, generous, upbeat, and well-adjusted. He was a loyal Westerner who always had the best interests of our Corral foremost in his mind. All of his many friends and admirers of the Los Angeles Corral have a very hard time imagining a world without him, but we are supremely grateful for the time John spent with us. RIP John, and God Bless.

Brian Dervin Dillon



Laron Bruce “Terry” Terrell, 1930-2026

Terry Terrell was born in the Granny Smith Maternity Hospital of Altadena, California, and spent his earliest childhood years in Pasadena. His family moved to the Antelope Valley when Terry was 11. He began his high school education in Lancaster, but his family moved again when he was 16, to Modesto in Central California. As a teenager, Terry was a great fan of 1940s Big Band music, and became an accomplished saxophone player himself. His other interests were horses and hot rods, not necessarily in that order. Shortly after graduating from high school Terry served a hitch in the peacetime Navy, mainly to “see the world,” but decided that a career in uniform was not for him.

As a Depression-era kid, Terry worked odd jobs, often simply as a ditch-digger, and then, as a young U.S. Navy veteran, became an employee of the Leslie Speaker Company, formerly Electro Music, in Pasadena. This job was logical, given Terry’s musical inclination. Over the years he rose up through the ranks of this pioneering company, from the assembly line to management, and was gratified to see such prominent musicians as the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix use the Leslie Speakers he was so proud of producing.

Terry developed many different past-times during his long life, from “Mountaineering” in his isolated cabin tucked away in Big Santa Anita Canyon, to photography, to R-V-ing—driving to and through most of the lower 48 states and into northern Mexico as well. International travel supplemented his behind-the-steering wheel journeying, and Terry eventually made flying visits to Europe, Russia, China, South America, Australia and New Zealand. The “travel bug” that bit him was caught from his longtime companion and paramour Peggy Lee Hartwell. Terry often said: If not for Peggy, I never would have gotten any farther than Burbank... Terry’s lingering fascination with the hot rods of his youth matured into his devotion to the Studebaker Avanti, the first production fiberglass-bodied sedan of the mid-1960s. He owned a succession of them and belonged to several Avanti associations. He also joined the Elks and became a Director in that organization during many years of service.

Terry Terrell joined the Los Angeles Corral of Westerners International in 2002, and was one of its more active members for two dozen years. He contributed to both of the reasons for our organizations creation and continued existence: he presented public lectures of historical nature, and contributed historico-biographical writings to its quarterly **Branding Iron**, on topics as diverse as hot rods, to Big Band music, to California earthquakes. Terry’s unique sense of humor and innate humanity always shone through when he was behind the podium, and in his publications. Terry was the father of two sons, three grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. He was also the friend of all who knew him, and his big smile and irrepressible enthusiasm will be missed by all of his many admirers in the Los Angeles Corral.

Brian Dervin Dillon



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."

Belle Starr



When I tell you that our story today is on a woman named Myra Maybelle Shirley, probably most of you are thinking, "Who's that?" However, when I tell you that Myra Maybelle Shirley became Belle Starr, known as the Bandit Queen and who was probably the most famous female outlaw that ever lived in the West, you'll say, "Oh, yeah."

Now, according to the legend, Belle Starr was a lovely lady who ruled outlaw gangs with her guns, her will and her personal favors. She was alleged to have associated often with the James boys and the Youngers, both famous outlaw bands, and she supposedly had Cole Younger's illegitimate child. Her marriage to bandit Jim Reed was said to have been performed on horseback by another member of the gang. She has been credited with stealing from the rich and giving to the poor, cleaning out crooked poker games with her six-shooters, and galloping down city streets with pistols blazing.

Actually, none of that was true. Belle's life was one without glamour. She was an unfortunate woman hardened by her times and associates. In her later years, she really was a companion to known thieves and felons, but it is doubtful she ever did more than steal horses and provide a haven for fugitives.

But let's go back to the beginning. Myra Maybelle Shirley, who was called May by her family, was born February 5, 1848, probably near Carthage, Missouri. Her father was John Shirley, who was from a well-to-do Virginia family. He moved west to Indiana, where he was married and divorced twice. His third wife was Eliza Pennington, who was from the Hatfield side of the feuding Hatfield and McCoy families. John Shirley moved his family to southwest Missouri in 1839, and they prospered there by raising wheat, corn, hogs and blooded horses.

In 1856, John Shirley sold his land and moved into the town of Carthage, the growing and developing county seat of



Jasper County. The money from the sale of their land was used to purchase city lots and to build a wayside inn, where the family lived, but he also built a tavern, a livery stable and a blacksmith shop. The 1860 census estimated the worth of John Shirley's holdings at \$10,000, which was a significant sum in those days.

John's daughter May attended the Carthage Female Academy, where she was educated as a lady. But she loved the outdoors, and spent many hours roaming the countryside with her older brother John Allison Shirley, who the family called Bud. Bud taught her to be a competent rider and how to handle guns.

But good times in Carthage became troubled times with the advent of the Civil War. Jasper County saw both armies pass through from time to time, and residents were forced to take sides. Bands of jayhawkers, in support of the Union, laid waste to many Missouri communities, and guerrillas and

continued

bushwhackers led by 'Bloody Bill' Anderson and William Clarke Quantrill retaliated with death and destruction in Kansas.

John Shirley, like many of his neighbors from the South, admired Quantrill and was happy when son Bud joined Quantrill's bushwhackers. One of May's childhood friends was Cole Younger, who also joined up with Quantrill, and May, using her many social contacts, reported positions of the Union Army to her friends in the Confederacy.

Bud was killed by Federal militia in 1864. By this time, John Shirley's business was ruined by the war, and the death of his son was the final straw. He sold his property in Missouri, and set out for Texas, settling near Scyene, a small settlement southeast of Dallas. The family lived in a dugout at first but soon constructed a four-room clapboard house that was, at that time and in that locale, like a mansion. It is likely that about this time is when May's friends started calling her Belle.

Times were difficult for Southern sympathizers right after the war. The news of the day dealt largely with bank robberies and train holdups accredited to Jesse and Frank James, the Youngers and others who had ridden with Quantrill and Bloody Bill Anderson. One of these outlaw bands, seeking refuge, stayed at the Shirley house one night. Belle later stated that it was there that she became reacquainted with the first man she ever loved. His name was Jim Reed, and she had first met him back in Missouri, where the Reed and Shirley families had been friends. The romance blossomed in Texas, and Belle and Jim married in 1866.

Many writers have portrayed that Belle's parents objected to the union and that the young couple eloped with a band of desperados. Actually, the Shirleys had no objection to Reed, who was not yet a wanted man. Jim moved into the Shirley household near Scyene and shared the farm chores. Later, he became a salesman for a Dallas saddle and bridle maker. By late 1867, though, he and Belle were living on the Reed homestead back in Missouri. Early in September 1868, Belle gave birth to her first child, Rosie Lee. Belle adored the baby and referred to her as her 'Pearl.' The nickname stuck.

Jim Reed spent little time at home. Farming was not his chosen profession. He raced horses and fell in with a

murderous Cherokee named Tom Starr. After the Civil War, Tom Starr and his sons built a thriving business selling whiskey and rustling cattle and horses. Jim Reed participated in their illegal activities and then killed a man to avenge the

death of his older brother Scott Reed, who had been gunned down. A writ was issued against Reed for murder and for bringing whiskey into Indian Territory—he was now a full-fledged fugitive. This, coupled with threats from friends of the man he had slain, caused him to seek a healthier climate, and he, Belle and Pearl headed for California early in 1869.

Belle gave birth to their second child, James Edwin, on February 22, 1871, while the Reeds were still in California. In late March 1871, Jim was accused of passing counterfeit

money. The subsequent investigation disclosed that he was wanted for murder, and the authorities set out after him. He fled for Texas on horseback, sending his family back via stagecoach. Cole Younger then assisted in getting the young Reeds set up on a farm outside Scyene.

However, soon livestock were missing from the area, and a number of unsavory characters began to hang around the Reed place. Later, in 1873, Jim and his friends were involved in two cold-blooded murders, and rewards were offered for their apprehension. Jim escaped to Indian Territory, taking Belle with him, but leaving the two children with her parents in Scyene.

On November 19, 1873, in the Choctaw Nation, Reed and two others robbed the Watt Grayson family of \$30,000. The Reeds then returned to Texas, but Belle left her husband, moving in with her parents. She objected not only to his life of crime but also to the fact he had taken up with another woman—Rosa McCommas. Belle and Jim had been together a little more than seven years.

In August 1874, Reed was killed by a former friend who had been deputized especially to capture Reed for the price on his head. But, Reed's death left Belle destitute. She had not profited from his ill-gotten gains. The next few years of her life are somewhat of a mystery. It is known that her father died in 1876 and that her mother sold the farm and moved to Dallas. Belle also sold the farm she and Reed had, and she then apparently spent a lot of time at the Reed home in Missouri. Some authors have tried to fill in the gaps in Belle's story by suggesting she was involved in such activities as burning down a store; robbing a bank; being jailed for horse stealing; and then eloping with her jailer; robbing a poker game at gunpoint; and running a livery stable, then fencing stolen livestock.

None of that, however, is reflected in court records or newspaper accounts and is probably not true. Local gossip had it that Belle lived with Bruce Younger for a short time in Kansas. Bruce was an uncle of outlaw Cole Younger. In his book "Starr Tracks: Belle and Pearl Starr," author Phillip Steele says that Belle and Bruce were married in Chetopa, Kansas, on May 15, 1880. If Belle did marry Bruce Younger then, he wasn't the only man she married that year. Records show that three weeks later, on June 5, Belle married Sam Starr, the three-quarter Cherokee son of Tom Starr. The newlyweds cleared land and settled into a comfortable cabin at Younger's Bend, on the Canadian River about 70 miles southwest of Fort Smith, Arkansas. This was Indian Territory and outlaw country, and they were visited by many seeking refuge. But Belle did not encourage these activities. There is no evidence that Belle was the leader of any outlaw band. It was her hope, as expressed in one of her letters, 'to live out her time in peace.'

However, on July 31, 1882, Belle and Sam were charged with horse stealing. The four-day trial was held in 'Hanging Judge' Isaac C. Parker's District Court in Fort Smith, Arkansas, early in March 1883. Belle was found guilty on two counts and Sam on only one, since the court lacked jurisdiction

continued



in cases where one Indian committed a crime against another. Judge Parker sentenced Sam to 12 months and Belle to two 6-month terms in the House of Correction in Detroit. The judge explained his rare display of leniency by pointing out that this was the first conviction for both defendants and that he hoped they would decide to become decent citizens.

The Starrs were released after serving 9 months, and headed back to Younger's Bend. Old Tom Starr had kept the place up for them, and Belle and Sam soon busied themselves getting ready for spring planting. Belle had become plump and

the area. He and the Starrs planned his escape. Belle and Sam, along with daughter Pearl and son Eddie, were to take a trip. They were to depart with their saddle horses tied to their wagon, with Middleton hidden under canvas. At an opportune time, he was to take Pearl's horse and flee. A problem arose, however, while they were camped for the night. Middleton somehow offended Pearl, and she refused to let him use her mount. Belle, likewise, would not part with her favorite horse. The next day, Belle and Eddie purchased a sorry mare for Middleton, who then departed with Pearl's saddle and Belle's



dowdy while in prison, but she still rode and danced gracefully. She often adorned herself in a black velvet riding habit and rode sidesaddle, carrying her six-shooter, which is how she was often portrayed in pictures. She also liked to read and play a piano she had purchased.

Just before Christmas 1884, John Middleton, who had probably met Belle earlier in Arkansas, and who was on the run for horse theft and murder, showed up at the Starr's home. A pursuing posse had lost his trail in the vicinity of Younger's Bend. The fugitive hid out in the neighborhood for the next few months.

But, early in the spring of 1885, the treasuries of the Seminole and Creek Indians were robbed. The Starrs and Middleton were suspected, but there was no evidence. A posse raided the Starr home that spring, but found only Belle. However, the raid caused Middleton to reconsider remaining in

Colt .45.

Several days later, the mare was spotted, muddied and with Pearl's saddle on its back. A search turned up the body of John Middleton, who had apparently drowned while crossing a swollen river. When the Starrs got the news, they also learned that the person who had sold them the mare had not been the owner. Belle headed for home certain that she would be charged with larceny. She was correct. A writ was issued for her arrest in January 1886. She surrendered to the U.S. marshal at Fort Smith and was indicted, with trial set for September.

Meanwhile, Sam began having his own problems. He and two others were charged with the holdup of a U.S. mail hack. The case never came to court, but additional charges were filed against him for the robbery of a store and a U.S. post office. Sam went into hiding, becoming a fugitive just like the late John Middleton. Sam still made intermittent visits home, though; his

continued

friends and relatives made it easy for him to stay a step ahead of the law.

Several farm settlements were robbed in February 1886 by three bandits, one of whom was supposedly a woman dressed as a man. In April, a warrant for Belle's arrest was issued. One evening in mid-May, two officers approached the Bend. Belle returned with the officers to Fort Smith, where she entered a not guilty plea. After making bail, she spent several days shopping and socializing, and she had her photo taken with a convicted murderer named Blue Duck. She did it at the request of Blue Duck's attorney, who apparently thought it would help his client in his pending appeal of a death sentence. This was the first and last time Belle ever saw Blue Duck. The picture, however, gave biographers fuel for yet another legend. Many portray her as having been Blue Duck's mistress long before their meeting in Fort Smith, which, of course, wasn't true.

Belle's trial for the alleged February robberies was held in June 1886. None of the witnesses could identify her. Most witnesses, in fact, said that the three bandits had been 'good sized men.' She was discharged on June 29. Three months later, Belle returned to Fort Smith to stand trial for horse theft. On September 30, a jury handed down a 'not guilty' verdict. When she got home, she learned that Sam had been badly wounded.

A posse of Indian police had spotted Sam in a cornfield and opened fire, killing his horse and wounding him. After regaining consciousness, he had snatched the gun of one of his guards and fled to his brother's home. Belle found him there and nursed his wounds. She begged him to turn himself in to the U.S. marshal, pointing out that a federal court would be easier on him than the tribal council.

Sam turned himself in on October 4, 1886. He was indicted and released on bail. His case was not scheduled to be heard until February 1887. However, instead of returning to Younger's Bend right away, he and Belle stayed at Fort Smith, hoping to help his father, old Tom Starr, who was on trial for introducing whiskey into the Territory. Tom was found guilty and sentenced to a year in prison.

The Starrs were attending a friend's Christmas party on December 17, 1886, when Sam encountered an old enemy, Frank West. He threw down on West and shot him dead, but not before being fatally wounded himself. Belle, who was now a widow, returned to Younger's Bend and took Jack Spaniard, a notorious outlaw, to her bed almost before Sam's body was cold. However, Belle's new arrangement was cut short when Spaniard was arrested, tried for murder, found guilty and hanged.

The Cherokee authorities maintained that Belle's claim to her land at Younger's Bend ended with Sam Starr's death. However, this problem was easily solved. Belle took up with an adopted son of old Tom Starr, 24-year-old Bill July, who was also called Jim Starr, and who was a Creek Indian. July

moved in with Belle, thereby resolving the claim to the land; he was her last husband.

In June 1887, Belle's new husband was arrested, indicted and released on bail for horse stealing. Then in July 1888, her son Eddie was charged with horse theft, giving him something in common with his stepfather.

Then another problem arose. Edgar A. Watson and his wife had arrived seeking land to rent. Belle agreed to rental arrangements and accepted payment in advance. Later, as she became better acquainted with Mrs. Watson, she learned that Edgar Watson was wanted for murder in Florida. Remembering the tribal council's threat to expel her from her land if she were caught harboring fugitives again, she attempted to back out of the deal with Watson. However, Watson insisted that he would farm the land for which he had paid. Finally, in a face-to-face confrontation, she chided him with a comment that Florida authorities might be interested in his whereabouts. That did it. Watson was furious, but he accepted refund of his rent money and rode away.

On Saturday morning, February 2, 1889, Belle was headed home after visiting some friends. She never made it. As Belle turned onto the river lane, a shotgun blast blew her from the saddle. She attempted to raise herself from the roadway, but a second shot boomed out, striking her in the face and shoulder. She was discovered by a youth returning home. Pearl and neighbors arrived at Belle's side before she died, but she was unable to utter any last words.

Investigations of the scene revealed tracks leading toward the Watson cabin, but the trail petered out within a hundred yards or so of the building. The footprints were Watson's size, and Watson owned a double-barreled shotgun. July accused Watson of the slaying, as did Eddie. Watson was arrested but subsequently acquitted, since all the evidence against him was circumstantial.

No other attempt was ever made to identify Belle's slayer. There were several other potential suspects besides Watson, including July himself. But the most likely slayer was Watson, who had the motive and opportunity and was already a known murderer. He eventually returned to Florida, where he was killed in a shootout with a posse.

Belle, in summarizing her life for a Fort Smith Elevator reporter about a year before her death, said, "I regard myself as a woman who has seen much of life." She certainly had seen her share of Civil War guerrillas, postwar outlaw friends and acquaintances on the run. Her grave site is near Eufair Lake, southeast of Porum, Oklahoma. A horse was engraved on her tombstone, along with these words:

***Shed not for her the bitter tear,
Nor give the heart to vain regret
Tis but the casket that lies here,
The gem that filled it sparkles yet.***



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

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

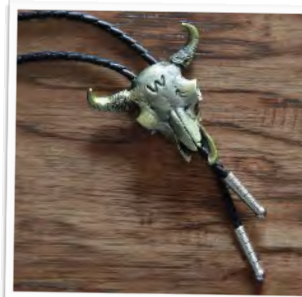
If you would like to place an order or send payment, contact:
 Delinda King, WI Secretary,
 Westerners International
 at delinda.king70@gmail.com or call at
 806-654-6920



lapel pin



past sheriff's pin pin



bolo tie



lucite paper weight



3" Decals



Westerner cap



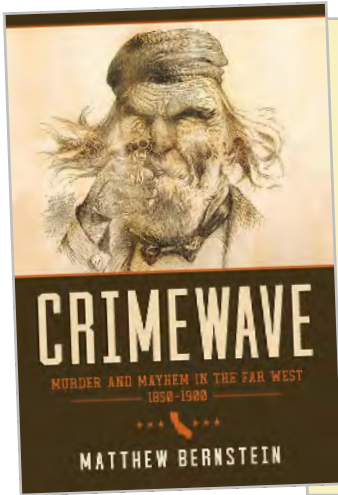
Polo shirt



white bandana

BOOK NEWS

OF INTEREST TO WESTERNERS



Crimewave - Murder & Mayhem in the Far West, 1850-1900

by **MATTHEW BERNSTEIN**

Bernstein has a passion for the West. He teaches English at Los Angeles City College and Harris Newmark High School and is the author of *George Hearst: Silver King of the Gilded Age*; *Hanging Charley Flinn*; and *Team of Giants: The Making of the Spanish-American War*. He also serves as editor of the *Wild West History Association Journal*. He lives in Los Angeles and can commonly be found hiking the California wilderness.

When on May 12, 1848, Sam Brannan walked down San Francisco's Market Street, holding high a bottle of gold dust and shouting, "Gold! Gold! Gold from the American River!" he initiated the great California Gold Rush. As prospectors flooded into California, they also caused a surge in crime. In *Crimewave* author Matt Bernstein presents twenty-four of the most audacious and chaotic incidents in the Far West, bringing to light stories from frontier California that have too long remained hidden.

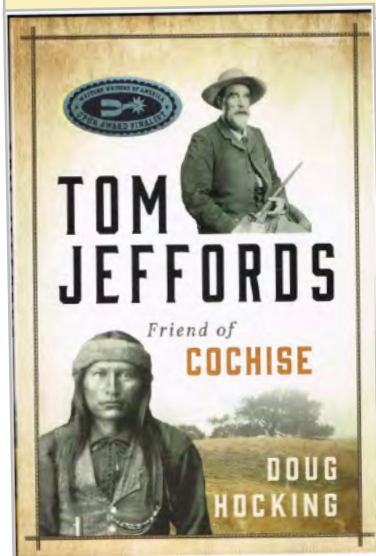
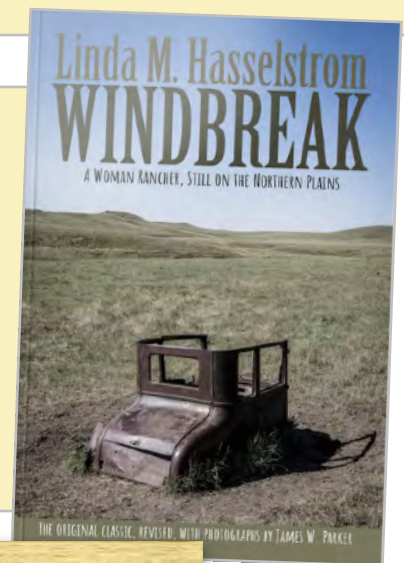
Westerners International
is proud to recognize
books by Westerners

"Windbreak: A Woman Rancher, Still on the Northern Plains"

by **Linda M. Hasselstrom** edited and revised, with photographs by James W. Parker.

Originally published in 1987, Hasselstrom's account of ranch life on the western edge of South Dakota covers a year of hard work, in beastly cold and unbearably hot temperatures, haying in the summer, moving cattle in the fall, and calving in the spring. In between, she finds time to write and to meditate with her poetry. Her style is intimate and detailed. She describes the terror of a prairie fire, the struggles to bring calves into the world, and the daily drudgery of feeding the cattle in the winter. Her drama comes with the cycles of nature; with the endless absorption in birth and death; with the lives of neighbors and friends; and with the weather, which is a character in the story of her life.

Now available at Amazon.com or <https://lamejohnnypress.com/product/windbreak-revised-edition>



Tom Jeffords: Friend of Cochise

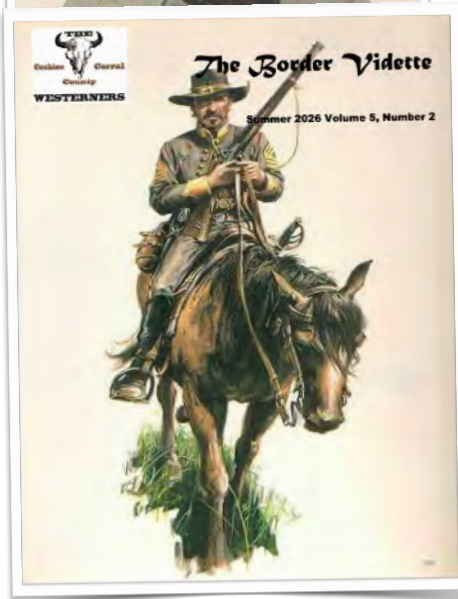
\$16.95 by **Doug Hocking**

Winner of a Spur Award from Western Writers of America and a Co-Founders Award from Westerners International. *True West Magazine* named this book an instant Classic. The first full-length biography of the Western legend Tom Jeffords, immortalized by Jimmy Stewart in 1950's *Broken Arrow*. This book tells the true story of a man who headed West drawn by the lure of the Pike's Peak Gold Rush in 1858; made a life for himself over a decade as he scouted for the army, prospected, became a business man; then rode alone into Cochise's camp in order to negotiate the peace.

available at <https://doughocking.com>

Westerners International
is proud to recognize
books by Westerners

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 so I can add it to the Book News section of the next BB.



Congratulations to the Los Angeles Corral for another outstanding quarterly, *The Branding Iron*, number 323, edited by John Dillon. Sheriff for the LA Corral is Jim Olds.



Figure 7: Betty Davis promotional clinic from *Dark Victory* (1938). Copyright United Artists.

By Albert Knight

The "Bette Davis Estate" is located across Riverside Drive, the street that I live on, close-by the western tip of the City of Glendale, California. Most of the people that live in Glendale, I recently learned, are not aware that the city includes two officially designated equestrian districts: the Glendale Riverside Ranch District, where I live, and

the Arroyo Village Equestrian Historic District, down-river about three miles. In addition, the *Barbark Ranches*, where many people also have horses, is located immediately to our west, and the *City of Los Angeles Equestrian Center* is wedged in-between west Glendale and southeast Burbank (all four areas are located in the San Gabriel River).