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MARFA AFTER JUDD

by Sasha Watson

When Minimalist artist Donald Judd moved from New York City to the small ranching town of Marfa in 1972, he set in motion a slow process of change that continues today. The freestanding concrete boxes visible from Hwy. 67, the great, light-filled buildings of the Chinati Foundation and the 15 living and working spaces maintained by the Judd Foundation throughout the town have all had a profound effect on contemporary art. But the effect on the town of Marfa is another kind of legacy, one that has grown out of and away from Judd as a central figure. Over the years, Marfa has gone from being a sleepy ranching town to a unique cultural community, where a constantly shifting group of artists, writers and musicians mingle with the local workers and ranchers from Texas and Mexico.

If Judd was drawn to West Texas for its open spaces, its mountains and its sense of privacy, that was what he got in the early 70s. “He wanted to be in the middle of nowhere,” says Marianne Stockebrand, Chinati’s director from 1994 to 2010. “He wanted to be away, in pure landscape.” Those who recall Marfa at that time recall a town that was close to extinction. When Robert and Rosario Halpern, co-owners and, respectively, editor and CFO of the *Big Bend Sentinel*, moved to Marfa in 1988, Robert remembers that, “stores were closing, banks were closing, things were just closing. The town was at an economic standstill.”

The military base, where Chinati now stands, was known first as Camp Albert, then as Camp Marfa and finally as Fort D.A. Russell. As a base, it had brought people and commerce to Marfa beginning in 1911, when it served as a Cavalry post and field base for military biplanes. During World War II, it was the setting for officer training exercises. When the fort was shut down in 1946, Marfa became the quiet place that Halpern remembers from the late 80s.

It was seven years after Judd’s arrival that ground was broken on what would become the Chinati Foundation, a contemporary art museum made to house



Photo by Dallas Baxter

Visible from Hwy. 67, what was once a pasture and part of Fort D.A. Russell, the great light-filled buildings of the Chinati Foundation reflect what Donald Judd believed to be of utmost importance: the relationship between an artwork and its surroundings, “an example of what the art and its context were meant to be.”

specific works. Judd believed that the relationship between an artwork and its surroundings was of utmost importance, and he created the museum as “an example of what the art and its context were meant to be.” With the help of the Dia Art Foundation, Judd bought 340 acres of the former Fort Russell to house his own large-scale sculptures as well as works by a limited number of other artists, including Dan Flavin, John Chamberlain and Carl André. The foundation was opened in 1986, and it is flourishing today, bringing artists-in-residence to work and exhibit in Marfa, restoring important works by Judd and promoting his work internationally.

Meanwhile, the Judd Foundation preserves a number of Judd’s other buildings in Marfa, while opening some of the buildings to public tours.

The early years saw changes at Chinati but, for a time at least, the life of the town was not greatly changed. Cecilia Thompson, author of the two-volume *History of Marfa and Presidio County*, who is currently at work on a third volume with her co-author, Louise O’Connor, lived on the former military base at the time. “There was activity out at the fort,” she recalls. “But it didn’t affect the town much at that time.”

And yet, quietly, the changes had begun. Patrick Lannan, president of the

Lannan Foundation, whose prestigious writers residency program is located in Marfa, recalls coming to Marfa for the first time: “I knew Donald Judd’s art and writing so I went down there around ’93,” he says. “I had this idea of West Texas from *The Last Picture Show*, and when I got there, I was just really impressed with what I saw. It’s incredibly beautiful.” The foundation began buying and renovating houses for the residency program soon after.

After Judd’s death in 1994, Stockebrand took over as director of

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1 Cavalry Row
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432 729 4362

www.chinati.org
information@chinati.org

The Chinati Foundation is a contemporary art museum in Marfa, Texas with permanent, large-scale installations by a limited number of artists including work by John Chamberlain, Dan Flavin and Donald Judd.

The collection is open by guided tour Wednesday through Sunday. Reservations are recommended. For a full tour schedule and reservations visit www.chinati.org or call the museum at 432 729 4362. The museum is closed Monday and Tuesday.

Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and seniors, and free to Chinati members, residents of Presidio, Brewster and Jeff Davis counties and children twelve years and under.

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SRSU CONCERT CHOIR and
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Thursday, March 3, 7:30 pm

GUEST ARTIST RECITAL:

Justin Badgerow, piano and
Sarah Daughtrey, mezzo-soprano
Monday, March 7, 7:30 pm

SRSU WIND ENSEMBLE and
MARIACHI ENSEMBLE

Thursday, March 10, 7:30 pm

FACULTY RECITAL:

Donald Freed, Tenor and Lana Potts, Piano
Monday, March 28, 7:30 pm

BACH'S LUNCH RECITAL

Friday, April 1, 12:00 pm

SRSU MUSIC FUND RAISER: DINNER &
DANCE with the JAZZ ENSEMBLE

"The Power of Music in War and in Peace"
Friday, April 8, 8:00 pm

SRSU WIND ENSEMBLE and
CONCERT CHOIR

Thursday, May 5, 7:30 pm

SRSU FINE ARTS GALLERY

January 31-February 11 *Jeff Bray*

February 14-25 *Alissandria Munoz*

February 28-March 11 *Antonio Gonzales*

March 14-April 1 *The Annual Ceramics
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April 4th-April 15 *SRSU Annual Student
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*Written by Chris Perkins, words and music by
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Saturday, March 5, 2:00 p.m.

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April 29 - May 1, 8:15 p.m.

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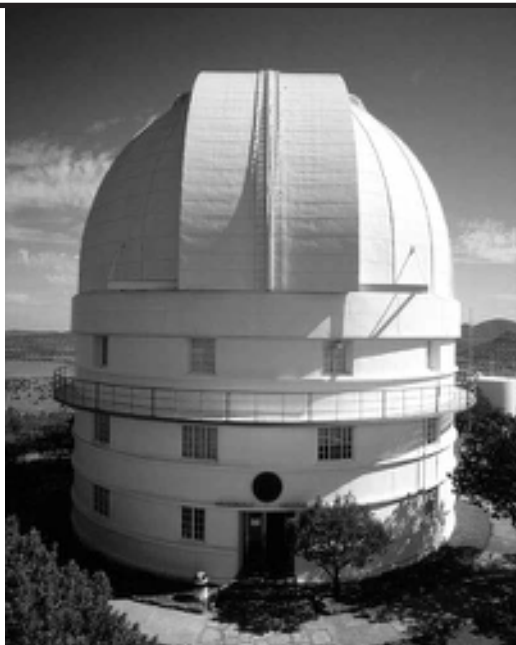
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Editor's Notes



A brown winter, sometimes a snowy winter, sometimes a wildflower-filled early spring. This is the time of year in the Big Bend when everyone says "nothing happens." But you don't have to go far to find places to hike, concerts and readings to enjoy and always the beautiful sky, day and night. Shop the businesses you find in our pages. And if you're visiting, explore not only the beauty of the land but the culture and people you'll meet.

Donald Judd came to a sleepy little village on the Marfa Plateau in 1972. Would he recognize Marfa today? The town has become a whole new place since then, largely because of what he started. Read Sasha Watson's account of Marfa after Judd.

Jean Hardy Pittman reviews Bill MacLeod's life and his legacy of an outstanding series of books on the geology of the area he loved. Now Bill will guide future generations through the geology of the Trans-Pecos and beyond. Thank you, Bill.

Among the many activities of winter and early spring in the Big Bend is the Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering, a weekend of songs, socializing and poetry held on the Sul Ross campus. Never gone? Phyllis Dunham tells you why you should. Go every year? Read all about what's in store this time.

If you're down south and it's time to hit the Rio Grande, find out what it's like to kayak down the river. With luck, you'll get a ride as exciting as the one Charlie Angell recounts.

Three outstanding Big Bend women are Jim Glendinning's "Voices of the Big Bend" this time

around.

I wonder if there's any single place that inspires more poetry than the Trans-Pecos. April is National Poetry Month. Looking ahead to that, learn how Larry Thomas, Texas 2008 poet laureate, and his publisher, Clarence Wolfshohl, have put together several books of poetry. They are getting ready for yet another; preview new poems, enjoy an old one.

Not all of the area's wonders are on top of a mountain. Underground springs, cold and hot, have been returning people to health for centuries. Gene Fowler leads us through the healing properties of spas, springs and inhalatoriums.

Sul Ross State University's photography club presents three outstanding student images for our photo essay, and three outstanding poets share their observations on the local scene.

Everyone is from somewhere, and often the somewhere is not here. What if you're from Iowa? And you live in Terlingua? Culture shock? Mark Kneeskern shares his experience.

Fort Peña Colorado. You know it as Marathon's Post Park. Learn its history from Bob Miles as he takes us behind the scenes of those Texas state historical markers.

Enjoy!

Correction: the photo captioned "a candelilla smuggler" in the third quarter 2010 issue is incorrect. The correct caption should have read: "A Trader Bringing Chino Grass to Market" by W.D. Smithers, and the photo should not have been used with the story.



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CENIZO JOURNAL STAFF

PUBLISHER/EDITOR/ADVERTIZING

Dallas Baxter
editor@cenizojournal.com

BUSINESS MANAGER
Martha Latta
business@cenizojournal.com

WEB MANAGER
Jennifer Turner
webmaster@cenizojournal.com

GRAPHICS
Katherine Shaughnessy
graphics@cenizojournal.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Art, photographic and literary works may be e-mailed to the Editor.
For advertising rates or to place an ad, contact: advertising@cenizojournal.com

Cenizo Journal

Volume 3 Number 1

CONTRIBUTORS

Charles Angell lives near Ruidosa. Exploring the Big Bend area is both his hobby and his occupation. *e-mail: charles@angellexpeditions.com*

Carol Archer lives in Houston with two cats, Ike and Phoebe, where she grows vegetables badly, trains people from around the world in cross cultural communication and returns to West Texas as often as possible. *Web: www.culturebump.com*

Rachel Barrett is currently a freshman equine science major at Sul Ross. She was home-schooled throughout high school and plans to combine photography and equine studies while at Sul Ross. *e-mail: rbarrett@sulross.edu*

Mary Baxter paints the quiet moments of light and life in the Big Bend. A Lubbock native, Mary's degree in business and expertise in print making inform her painting. Find her at Baxter Gallery on the main street in Marathon. *e-mail: mary@baxtergallery.com*

Adam Bork creates multimedia installations that combine recycled technology, appropriated imagery, photography and sound. He's also a musician and foodie who co-owns the Marfa-based, nationally noted Food Shark with his wife Krista. *Web: foodsharkmarfa.com*

George Bristol is founder of the Texas Coalition for Conservation and past member of the National Park Foundation. He has received the lifetime achievement award from Texas Nature Conservancy and the national Pugsley Medal for parkland advocacy. *e-mail: gbristol1@aol.com*

Avram Dumitrescu's art has been featured in the *Southern Review*, *Gastronomica*, *MFK Fisher among the Pots and Pans* and *Drawing Inspiration: Visual Artists at Work*. *Web: onlineavram.com*

Phyllis Dunham writes on music, food, travel and adventure. A transplanted Austinite with family roots in the area, she spends weekends hiking and exploring the Big Bend. *e-mail: phyllis_dunham@yahoo.com*

Jana Ercilla is a freshman art major at Sul Ross and a graduate of Alpine High School. She purchased her first camera, a Nikon D90, about three years ago. *e-mail: jana.ercilla@yahoo.com*

Gene Fowler is the author of *Mavericks - A Gallery of Texas Characters* (UT Press, Austin). A book on Texas outlaws is in the works. He writes for *Texas Highways*, *North Texas Star* and other publications. *e-mail: genfo@email.com*

Jim Glendinning was born on a Scottish farm and educated at Oxford University. Widely traveled, he hosts trips to Scotland and Ireland and writes local travel guides. *e-mail: jimglenn2@sbcglobal.net*

Miguel Angel Grageda is a graduate student in the range and wildlife management program in Sul Ross. He is also a member of the SRSU photography club. *Web: gragedawildlife.blogspot.com*

Mark Kneeskern's art takes many forms: illustration, photography/photo manipulation, graphic design, painting and sculpture. He lives in a bus in the desert outside Terlingua and has a studio in the Terlingua Ghost Town. *e-mail: muchorelax@gmail.com*

Bob Miles is a third-generation native of the Davis Mountains area and a retired Texas Parks and Wildlife Department park superintendent. *e-mail: rmilessr@yahoo.com*

Jean Hardy Pittman owns Front Street Books in Alpine and Marathon. She edited books for Shearer Publishing for 13 years and has worked as a writer, editor and photographer for several Texas publications. *e-mail: jhardy@fsbooks.com*

Barbara Richerson was student publications advisor and photojournalist at Sul Ross State University for 26 years. Her work has been in numerous Texas publications. *e-mail: b_richerson@sbcglobal.net*

Larry D. Thomas, 2008 Texas poet laureate, has published 13 collections of poetry, most recently *The Skin of Light* (Dalton Publishing Austin, 2010). Forthcoming, *A Murder of Crows* (Virtual Artists Collective, 2011). *e-mail: poetldt@sbcglobal.net*

Sasha Watson is a writer and translator currently living near Boston. Her first novel for young adults, *Vidalia in Paris*, was published by Viking Press in 2008. *e-mail: sasha_watson@yahoo.com*

K.B. Whitley was born and raised in southwest Louisiana. He retired to Marfa in 1998. He writes a few lyrics and short stories and takes short walks and long naps. *e-mail: texace@sbcglobal.net*

Clarence Wolfshohl has published in many small press journals, recently *Houston Literary Review*. His latest poetry chapbook is *Season of Mangos* (Adastra Press, 2009). *e-mail: wolfshohl@hotmail.com*

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Occasional art: Avram Dumitrescu ~ "Modes of Transportation."

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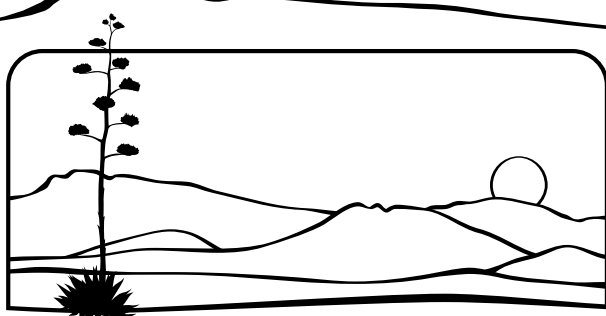
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like sae many road makers run daft.
They say it is to see how the world was made."*

— Sir Walter Scott, *St. Ronan's Well*, 1824



Photo courtesy Martha MacLeod

On Bill MacLeod

by Jean Hardy Pittman

Bill MacLeod first showed up at Front Street Books in 1998, not long after he and his wife, Martha, moved to Alpine from Houston. Bill would buy the local newspapers every Thursday, chat about the news and frequently ask me, "Well, how are things, Mrs. Hardy?" And if he didn't get a satisfactory response, he would press, "Well, and how *are* things?"

I learned he was teaching computer courses at the university part-time, that he was semi-retired and had been a business professional in Houston. Later, when he began asking if there was any market for a guidebook on the geology of the Big Bend, I perked up. That's when I learned he was a bona fide geologist, too. This man has something up his sleeve, I thought.

Indeed. Between 2003 and August 2010, MacLeod personally wrote, edited, published, distributed and promoted five books – two were expanded revisions of earlier works – on the geology of the Big Bend area. He also wrote a guidebook on Palo Duro Canyon in the Texas Panhandle.

William MacLeod was born July 5, 1938, at Strathnaver, in the sparsely populated northern reaches of Scotland. His parents, Daisy and Donald MacLeod, were crofters, raising sheep on a small farm. The boy did well in school and went to Aberdeen University to study geology, graduat-

ing in 1960.

MacLeod's first job took him to the newly independent state of Nigeria, where he worked in the oil and gas fields. During a vacation to Amsterdam, he met a young American woman, Val Pierpont, who became his wife.

After the couple wed in 1963, they returned to Nigeria. They lived there until the bloody Nigerian Civil War broke out. They fled the violence with their by-then two young children in 1966, Bill taking a job as a mining engineer near Johannesburg, South Africa, at the world's largest platinum-mining complex. But political unrest during South African anti-apartheid struggles caused them to return to the United States in 1969.

They settled in Boston, and Bill made a sharp career turn by taking a job as a computer programmer. The Scotsman soon sought and obtained American citizenship. In 1974, he applied to Harvard University and earned his MBA degree in 1976.

At 38, with his geology and fresh business credentials, MacLeod eyed Houston, where he went to work for several oil-related firms. In 1980 or so, he created his own business called Rosail Minerals (Rosail is a Scottish place name), importing and exporting minerals such as gypsum for large companies.

In 1986, Bill and Val's marriage ended in divorce. Some time later, Bill met Martha Klein through mutual friends. They married in 1992 and remained in Houston until 1998, when Bill retired. Tired of big city life, they moved to Alpine and into the heart of a geological wonderland.

Not one to be idle, Bill took the teaching job at Sul Ross and found a renewed interest in geology, and Martha, formerly a reading tutor, started graduate study at Sul Ross to become a certified speech therapist.

The same day Bill and Martha came to town, a young geologist named Blaine Hall arrived too. The two men also started teaching at Sul Ross on the same day, and they hit it off from the beginning.

Bill discovered that Hall knew the geology behind the scenery of Big Bend and was willing to share his knowledge. "Bill had not used his geology for some time, but he was a really good geologist," said Hall. "He and I went all over the area, and I showed him my favorite places and taught him what I knew."

It was not long before MacLeod's vision of geology guidebooks for the general public began to take shape. He studied every relevant geological paper he could get his hands on, Hall said. "He mastered the material."

Blaine Hall became a steady sounding board for Bill throughout the course of the next decade. He was closely involved in the research for Bill's first book, *Big Bend Vistas*, which ultimately covered the features along the major highways of the Big Bend area. MacLeod began the road log 22 miles south of Fort Stockton on Hwy. 385, at the Sierra Madera mountain range. This is where a traveler from the east, dropping down from Interstate 10, would first see a genuine mountain up close.

Then the traveler progresses south through the Glass Mountains and the Marathon Basin down to and through the national park and all its major roads and to points along the Rio Grande; back up Hwy. 118 to Alpine and north to Mitre Peak; thence back to Alpine and west to Marfa; and finally looping back to Fort Stockton along Hwy. 67 east of Alpine. The grand tour was complete, with all stops along the way accurately noted and all features described and photographed.

The book, and all others that were to follow, included a geologic time scale, numerous color photographs, a glossary of technical terms, a reading list and excellent maps illustrating some of the more complex geologic features.

Bill was a pragmatist. He understood that one of the major outlets for his book would be the national park. Mike Boren, director of the Big Bend Natural History Association, which handles book sales, knew Bill and his work and liked them both.

Big Bend Vistas: A Geological Exploration of the Big Bend was an immediate success in area bookstores. With favorable reviews, MacLeod was engaged to speak at bookstores, clubs and other venues. The book filled a gaping void: all this dramatic terrain and no accessible guidebook to help the curious to understand. That was over.

Bill was already planning his next book, *Davis Mountains Vistas: A Geological Exploration of the Davis Mountains* (Jan. 2006). It was a book much like his first, in the standard 6-by-9-inch format, with photos, maps, a glossary and reading list, written in language for the general reader. It, too, was successful.

But MacLeod was not satisfied. He began to think a larger format with bigger photographs and fewer words might communicate his subject more effectively. Just 18 months after the Davis Mountains book was published, he produced (through his Texas Geological Press imprint) *Palo Duro Vistas: A*



Photo courtesy Martha MacLeod

Martha MacLeod will continue to make Bill's books available.

Journey Through Palo Duro Canyon (July 2007).

Palo Duro Vistas came out in a wider and slightly longer size that allowed for large, full-page photographs. He cut the amount of text in relation to the visuals, and the maps changed from black and white to color. "Bill was constantly evolving, upgrading, improving and adapting in order to reach his audience better," Blaine Hall said.

River Road Vistas: A Journey along the River Road (May, 2008) appeared just 10 months later. This guide covers a 230-mile scenic loop from Alpine south to Study Butte, turning west on FM 170 through Terlingua and Lajitas. It includes the 30-mile stretch between Lajitas and Presidio, considered the most spectacular scenic drive in Texas. The drive continues north from Presidio to Marfa and ends in Alpine. It requires a full day if you make the appropriate stops and read the text.

Astonishingly, MacLeod was not finished. The books just kept coming, closer and closer together. He took *Big Bend Vistas* and revised it, putting it into the new, larger format, cutting the text, expanding the art and changing the subtitle to "Journeys through Big Bend National Park." It came out in November 2008, just six months after *River Road Vistas*. This time the book focused exclusively on the park area. MacLeod added a won-

derful introductory section on dinosaurs, complete with photos of the big beasts.

Three months later, Bill published a thoroughly revised edition of *Davis Mountains Vistas* (February 2009), this one subtitled "Journeys through the Mountains."

Upon his death, Bill had virtually completed work on a book he planned to entitle *Marathon Basin Vistas*, the remarkable geology of that area having been removed from the *Big Bend Vistas* second edition. He also planned a book on Enchanted Rock and Texas Hill Country geology.

In producing the books, MacLeod went everywhere in the Big Bend, taking pictures of practically every noteworthy hill, mountain, mesa, fault, thrust, horst, graben, dike, dome and other important geological feature, especially those visible from a well-traveled highway or road. Over the years, he amassed a photographic collection of Big Bend geology that may well be unparalleled.

Not only do the photos fill his books, but they appear on postcards, in wall calendars, on DVDs and in beautiful small, matted prints neatly wrapped in crystal-clear plastic. Martha MacLeod is seeing to it that all of Bill's work continues to be available.

The books will long be remembered and appreciated. He translated the complexities of earth science into accessible language for the layperson, yet he never compromised accuracy. "I wrote (these books) for people who want to know why the Big Bend looks the way it does," he often said. He was writing for the tourist, the geology buff and the resident or visitor who wanted to know more about the stunning mountains and colorful rocks.

A geology colleague, Dr. Julius Dasch, said "he had the rare gift of being able to translate the complex information into an intermediate level that non-geologists can comprehend and appreciate. Bill has contributed a significant legacy to the region he loved."

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Photo by Barbara Richerson

Families are a big part of the Cowboy Poetry Gathering. Here Cody, Chuck and Hallie Milner entertain the crowd.

Keeping it Real at the Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering

by Phyllis Dunham

Sissy: "You a real cowboy?"

Bud: "Now that depends on what you think a real cowboy is."

That now-iconic exchange between actors Debra Winger and John Travolta in the 1980 movie *Urban Cowboy* says a mouthful, indeed. The founders and organizers of the Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering, held in Alpine at Sul Ross State University every February, certainly have their definition of what a real cowboy is and what a real cowboy poetry gathering is as well. Over the last 25 years they've established and honed a gathering whose performers are, in the organizers' opinion, the genuine article — people who live the lifestyle and bring authentic Western oral and musical tradition to the table.

Whenever and wherever real cowboys came together in the Old West, stories and gear were swapped, guitars and harmonicas and fiddles appeared and maybe a little dancing occurred. The songs, poems and tales performed at today's cowboy poetry gatherings were

Cowboy Poetry logistics

The Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering will be held Feb. 25 through 27 this year on the campus of Sul Ross State University in Alpine. Daytime sessions are free and open to the public. Chuck wagon breakfasts are available in Poets' Grove near Kokernot Park on Saturday and Sunday morning for a nominal fee. Tickets are available for special evening events. For a full schedule and information on lodging log onto www.texascowboypoetry.com.

born of those campfire get-togethers on the range and along the trails. The authentic cowboy oral tradition — a tradition that event organizer, Nelson Sager, believes is well worth preserving, has found a home and a voice in Alpine. Sager says the cowboy poets of yesteryear and those of today are all still saying the same thing in their different voices: "This is my life, and I like it."

A Sul Ross professor whose specialty is British literature, Sager initially became involved in the Alpine gathering because of his appreciation for cowboy poetry as a folk-art form — much the way the organizers of the first modern cow-

boy poetry gathering in Elko, Nevada began their event. Outsiders heard about the prototype get-together, organized by folklorists, and decided they wanted in on the action as spectators. A movement was born. Two years later, in 1987, the world's second modern cowboy poetry gathering was established in Alpine and has been going and growing ever since.

While the Elko event is now a week-long festival featuring merchandise, booths, workshops and performers of many cowboy-related ilk, the Alpine organizers pride themselves on the authenticity of their artists and perform-

ers. According to committee member Pam Cook (the organizers refer to themselves as a committee rather than a board), they want only performers who "love the cowboy life and live it every day." She admits that keeping the event so closely tied to the tradition has its cons, but the pros include having a less circus-like atmosphere, offering the daytime sessions free to the public and involving the local community — the cowboy way.

Community involvement comes in the form of individuals and hoteliers and their offers to make rooms available to the artists who gather from all over the western United States and Canada. And it includes the many locals who fund the various sessions and workshops. Community involvement is also inherent in the efforts to introduce younger audiences to cowboy music and poetry through a young poets' competition in local schools. Sul Ross students participate, too. Committee member Ida Hoelscher, who works for student support services at the college, has been

known to give her students extra credit for attending. Most are first-generation college students and many are from inner city backgrounds. She urges them to, "just go," and when they do, she delights in the looks of awe on their faces and the fact that they often return the following year "on purpose." They tell her that they "didn't know cowboys could be funny."

Nor did they know there would be so much music. Pam Cook estimates that music makes up more than 60 percent of the event, although poetry and storytelling still hold their own. And the music is superb – from the precise vocal harmonies of the Desert Sons to the spirited jigs of the Canadian group Cowboy Celtic, whose music is, according to group founder David Wilkie, "what you'd hear if you pushed back the swinging doors of an Irish pub in Tombstone or Dodge City." Whew! Can you smell the stale whiskey?

While music brought me to my first cowboy poetry gathering (I wasn't sure that cowboy poetry was much more than hoakum and Pecos Bill tales), it was a recitation by Grammy-nominated poet Joel Nelson that set me on my ear and made me a believer in the art form. His rendition of Frank Desprez's "Lasca," a poem about a cowboy and his Mexican sweetheart caught in a stampede, was for me the "gotcha" moment that almost everyone seems to experience at their first cowboy poetry

gathering.

Nelson is regarded by many of his peers as a "cowboy poet's poet." Both his Grammy nomination for the CD *Breaker in the Pen* and his 2009 National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts are validation of the growing acceptance of cowboy poetry as the art form its practitioners and fans believe it to be. He admits that those were proud moments and that he is astonished at where cowboy poetry has taken him in terms of the honors as well as the travel. He's performed in scores of locales including Hawaii and London, but he does it he says, "because I have to. I can't help myself."

I heard the same words from many of the cowboy artists. The braided themes of the cowboy life, the ties to the land, the ties to something greater and vaster than oneself and a joy in language bring them to Alpine annually to practice and share their passion with those of us who were lucky enough to be hip to it from the beginning, as well as those of us who stumbled in late in the game.

Expect a packed schedule. Expect to scurry from room to room (nine or 10 sessions are scheduled concurrently) to catch that Apache Adams performance that someone tells you at the chuck wagon breakfast that morning not to miss. Try not to be disappointed if Apache's session conflicts with Michael and Dawn Moon's, the one you want to see because their kids perform with them. And for that matter,

bring your own kids. A little exposure to cowboy values and literature could only do some good.

Just as Ida Hoelscher's students have discovered, cowboys can be funny, and they can, on occasion, be hokey or visceral, tough, romantic, tragic and even transcendent. Don't be surprised if one of these performances actually brings you to tears. This ain't *Hee-Haw*. This ain't Nashville. At its very best, it's art. Seriously. No less a tenable and uniquely American art form as jazz or blues. And it has been polished to a diamond fineness in the hands of craftsmen like headliner Red Steagall who slip handily between the spoken word and melody to tell of a life that was, and is, and, if these folks have anything to do with it, always will be.

And in the end it doesn't matter that the magic takes place in a fluorescent-lit room rather than by campfire light or the glow of a neon Lone Star sign, it is still, quite unlike Bud in *Urban Cowboy*, the real deal. When you live your art it's like the late cowboy poet Buck Ramsey put it in his classic poem, "Anthem":

"And as I ride out on the morning

Before the bird, before the dawn,



Cowboy Poetry Van Horn Style

The Texas Crossroads Gathering held in Van Horn Feb. 3 through 6 this year is smaller, looser and more free-wheeling than its older sister in Alpine, and therein lies its charm. It bills itself as the poetry gathering "where the entertainers invite themselves," and for the most part that's true. It's much easier to earn a place in the lineup at Crossroads than at just about any other poetry gathering. Poets just starting out are enthusiastically encouraged to come. The atmosphere is roll-your-own spontaneity with a heaping helping of informality, and while it draws a lot of newbies, it also draws some pretty well-known poets who happen to like it that way.

Performers from Oklahoma, New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado, Kansas, California and, of course, Texas are on deck this year and include Buck Helton, who will emcee, Darrell Staedtler, whose songs have been covered by George Strait, and Tony Argento, who calls his work "twisted cowboy poetry." And as always, founder Bob Kinford will be the ringmaster. For information on attending or participating, log onto www.texascrossroadscowboypoehty.org

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RIDING THE RIO



Photo by Charles Angell

With the flow of the Rio Grande higher than any time since the flood in 2008, a kayaker starts the journey downriver from Colorado Canyon.

by Charles Angell

We woke up just before dawn on the banks of the Rio Grande, covered in dew. To save time we'd camped in the open without tents, and the river's banks are among the few places in this desert with enough moisture in the air to dampen you.

It was a day in mid-September, and Robert, Tim, David and I were excited about our river-running trip. The water level and current flow were higher than they had been at any time since the flood of the Rio Grande in 2008. We have all logged many hours floating the river, and we knew this trip would be a rare treat. We would be able to cover as many miles in a single day as it would normally take a three- to four-day trip to traverse.

Our plan was to start here, at our campsite in Big Bend Ranch State Park at the Grassy Banks put-in and take out in Big Bend National Park at the Santa Elena Canyon exit, a trip of about 27 miles. Our vessels would be inflatable kayaks, also known as "duckies," which are easily maneuverable and the most fun crafts in which to run the river.

Within minutes we were flying down the river, slamming through Fresno Rapids and passing by the Contrabando movie set, which from the water at sunrise looks picturesque and realistic enough that you expect to see an abuela sweeping off her front steps while chickens patter through the dust.

Soon we were cruising by the old rock house on the River Road and then past Lajitas and

the traditional river crossing that takes you to the village of Paso Lajitas, which is situated just up the riverbank from Lajitas on the Mexican side.

A calm stretch of river with a swift current carried us along for the next 3 miles, floating us past the Lajitas golf course, with its now-defunct 18th hole on the Mexican side – a victim of the big flood and Sept. 11.

Our first challenge approached not long after the golf course: Matadero Rapids. The river here makes a series of turbulent drops for approximately 150 yards and then abruptly turns a hard right, and the rapids sucked us close to a sharp limestone ledge on the Texas side. One after another, in close succession, we successfully negotiated the whitewater and grouped afterward, all

grins, proud of how professional we looked. I leaned around to congratulate everyone behind me with a hi-five – and splash! I fell out of the kayak into the cold morning water, first to bathe and first to wipe out – and in a calm stretch of water no less. Robert, consummate professional that he is, chuckled and shook his head, grinning at my lack of balance as he paddled by.

Robert has by far the most experience of us all, and we consider him the wise sage of river-running, even though David and I are each a decade-plus older than he is. David is the newest to the Rio, but he has compiled an impressive amount of time on water and a strong set of skills in the last year, and after any river trip it's great to have a few beers at the

bar in Terlingua where he works.

Tim and I have worked together guiding trips for the last couple years and try to get on the water as often as possible when not working. By the way, is there a better name for a river guide than Tim Rowe?

The next several miles were fast and smooth, no paddling needed, just steering and positioning. Several ducks splashed off the river and flew downstream several hundred yards, a process that repeated itself each time we caught up to them, until finally they figured it out and flew behind us, upstream.

The terrain became more impressive during this stretch, the limestone and red magma cliffs getting closer and closer to the water and growing in

height, the sun streaking diagonally before us as it rose toward its midday position. Soon we reached the entrance rapids to Santa Elena Canyon, just past Arroyo San Antonio, which is a slot canyon that snakes in from the Mexican side with clear spring water flowing into the Rio. The entrance rapids are a series of long drops, alternately hooking to the left and then right, culminating in the canyon entrance rapids that push you straight into the 700-foot cliff wall and then force you downstream right.

Gutzon Borglum sculpted the presidents' faces into Mount Rushmore back in the 1930s and visited our area in 1935. A discussion with the National Park Service occurred during his visit regarding the possibility of carving faces into the walls of Santa Elena Canyon, but no solid plans were ever presented. I can only imagine how interesting this might have looked. But should a beautiful slice of nature be altered in this way? We'll never know what Borglum's work here might have looked like, but it would have increased tourism – have any South Dakota residents complained about their sculpture?

Suddenly Tim shrieked – an alligator gar had leaped from the water and into his kayak, flopping around his legs. Seconds later it found its way back into the water and not a moment too soon, as Tim was about to jump out himself. We got a good laugh out of it. I'm just glad a prehistoric fish with needle-sharp teeth didn't end up in my lap.

Soon we approached the infamous Rock Slide, the most feared and revered of the river's rapids. Giant boulders the size of cars and houses have peeled off the upper reaches of the canyon walls, falling into the river and creating a pachinko-machine obstacle course for boats. We got out to scout the rapids on the Mexican side, which is the only good vantage point to get a full view of the waterway. No trees or other obstacles blocked our route, so we clambered back

into our kayaks and charged ahead, the strong current pulling us through the water-sculpted rocks with a will of its own.

I approached a narrow slot through two huge boulders, and as I entered, my kayak jerked to halt, almost throwing me out. I looked behind and realized my tow-line had fallen out and snagged on a tree branch jutting out of the water. I leaned over and struggled to free the line, but it didn't give, and in rapid succession the other three were rushing toward me. Within seconds Robert plowed into me and then Tim and David into him. We suddenly had a kayak log-jam, with the river pouring over the sides of our vessels with increasingly stronger hydraulics.

Panic started to set in our faces – people have died boating on the Rio Grande, and the Rock Slide has taken its share. Our kayaks began twisting and swamping from the water rushing over us, and, just when I thought we would all fall over, I popped free and shot out of the slot, with the rest following suit. I looked back to see Robert resheathing the knife he keeps on his life jacket – and remembered I too had one on my jacket. Thankfully, he had kept his cool and cut my tow-line – floating out of these rapids without a vessel would not be fun or safe. Tim, David and I laughed with relief as we cruised on, while Robert gave a smirk that conveyed business as usual.

Now we were really moving as we shot out of the Rock Slide, the canyon narrowing and the flow rate increasing. I looked around at the crew – everyone had a grin as they focused on the increasingly faster turns in the river.

We passed Fern Canyon on the Mexican side, a beautiful slot canyon with crystal-clear, cold spring water issuing out year round, recently declared off-limits by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, another casualty of 9-11. The decision to no longer allow access to this high-light of the river saddens me –

it is virtually inaccessible from the Mexican side, so the possibility of smuggling contraband or terrorists through here is nil. Hopefully this decision will be reconsidered in the near future and the ban lifted, but today it's a moot point – we're moving along too fast to even float into it or give it a sideways glance.


The limestone strata in the canyon walls here reach their greatest upstream tilt, creating the illusion that one is sliding down a chute, but this also signals that the end is near. Within minutes I could see the canyon exit where the river meets Terlingua Creek and glimpsed the first slice of blue sky not directly overhead since we had entered the canyon. Our trip was ending, setting new personal records for us all: four hours and 45 minutes total.

My father passed away in 2001, and I spread his ashes on my newly acquired land in the desert, as was his wish. I think I will request my own ashes be put in the Rio Grande in Colorado Canyon, affording me one last river trip in the Big Bend. I'll make it through Santa Elena, the Great Unknown, Mariscal and Boquillas canyons and then the Lower Canyons. Soon I'll be in Lake Amistad and course through the dam, eventually making my way into the Gulf of Mexico. I expect the Gulf Stream to take over from there, and its massive current will carry me past Cuba, Florida, the East Coast of America and then all the way to the United Kingdom. I will become an international traveler and continue my journey to sail the Seven Seas. Until then, I'll keep floating the Rio Grande, riding the international boundary, where there is always more to explore.




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Voices of the BIG BEND

Jim Glendinning recreates some of his popular radio interviews from "Voices of the Big Bend," an original production of KRTS, Marfa Public Radio, which is broadcast throughout the region at 93.5 FM.

by Jim Glendinning

KRISTA BORK

"Krista's food adds substantially to the Lannan Foundation's Reading Program," says Douglas Humble, Lannan's Marfa residency manager. He was referring to the regular readings by Lannan residency fellows, which are always followed by a superb buffet prepared by Food Shark, of which Krista and her husband Adam are partners. Newspaper accounts across the country have also extolled the Marfa success that is Food Shark.

Krista Hubbard was born on Feb. 10, 1971 in Lubbock, Texas, the younger daughter of Mike and Geri Hubbard. Her mother remarried Les Craver four years later, and the family moved to Taos, then to Austin. Krista describes her stepfather as a fearless entrepreneur. Sadly he didn't live to see Food Shark take off.

Teen years for Krista were not happy ones at Huntington-Surrey High School in Austin. She was anxious to get on with life. Things improved at the University of Texas, where she enrolled in 1989 in film production and criticism, a subject she loved. She graduated in 1994 with a B.A. in radio, television and film.

She married Olen Steinhauer, whom she met in Austin, in 1995. The couple moved to Boston, where Olen pursued graduate studies at Emerson College. Here, working in a specialty store, Krista developed a love for food, in particular cheese. "I adore cheese, particularly Basque cheeses," she exclaims. At the same time, she learned commercial food production as a prep cook.

In 1999 Olen was offered a Fulbright Scholarship to Romania, where the couple spent 11 months. Olen researched a



Photo by Adam Bork

KRISTA BORK
Marfa

book, and Krista learned about seasonal produce, great soups and Balkan food, which she loved. In 2001, she enrolled in a 12-month fine arts program in photography in Florence, staying on a further two years, discovering how simple Tuscan cooking really was. Her marriage to Olen ended during this period.

Returning to Austin in 2004 due to her mother's health, she met Liz Lambert, owner of the trend-setting Hotel San Jose. She worked briefly at the San Jose, where she met Adam Bork, a musician, photographer and filmmaker. The couple took a job at Lambert's new project, the Thunderbird Hotel in Marfa, which opened in January 2005.

By 2006 they were ready for a change. Someone noticed a 1974 deliv-



Photo by Jim Glendinning

LINDA HEDGES
Fort Davis

ery truck for sale. On impulse they bought it, installed cooking equipment and hand painted the name Food Shark on the side. The timing was right, and success followed.

The daily menu is served from the truck by the tracks in Marfa over lunchtime Tuesday through Friday. The Mediterranean-based and mainly vegetarian menu offers sandwiches and plates from diverse origins in addition to daily specials. The Marfalafel, incorporating nine items, including fried falafel balls in a tortilla, is the best known. Krista cooks, and Adam serves. In addition, the two do custom catering around the region.

Krista sees it as an art project, with Adam as the artist. Others credit her intuitive cooking and excellent presenta-



Photo by Jim Glendinning

ELIDIA POLANCO
Alpine

tion skills. They were married in December 2010 and honeymooned on Easter Island.

LINDA HEDGES

Growing up in leafy Independence, Mo. and sharing many youthful camping and hiking adventures with her father seems like an ideal start for someone who would later become one of Texas Parks and Wildlife's few interpretive specialists. Linda Heman was born on Nov. 18, 1958, in Independence, Mo., the first daughter of Leonard and Frances Heman. A second daughter, Frances, was born three years later. She is now a professor of biology in New York, while Linda's career has followed a more outdoor path.

Her dad took time off from his job with AT&T to introduce his daughters to local exploration. Linda's early memories are of always being outdoors, playing games, being in the woods or swimming. She had an early interest in sports, particularly volleyball, and by junior high school was also becoming interested in biology and journalism. She edited her high school's year book. She remembers around that time picking up *Golden's Field Guide to Birds* and the thrill of recognizing the indigo bunting.

In 1977, after graduating from Independence's William Chrisman High School, Linda made a decision, supported by her parents, neither of whom had college degrees, to take a job. She joined the Hartford Insurance Company and was soon promoted from receptionist to claims supervisor. While still working, she enrolled at the University of Missouri – Kansas City and graduated in 1987 with a B.A. in liberal arts.

An early marriage to her high school sweetheart, Mike George, ended in divorce in 1988. Linda's parents and the parents of David Hedges, who lived just across the state line in Lake Quivira, Kan., had long been friends. Linda and David married on Feb. 14, 1989 in Independence.

Dave took early retirement from AT&T at the end of 1990, and the couple took an extended honeymoon of three years, touring the United States in an RV, concentrating on national and state parks. Their itinerary included Davis Mountains State Park, where they participated in Kelly Bryan's bird-banding program. They were invited back in 1994.

The Fort Davis area felt like home, Linda recalls. Linda and David bought land in Limpia Crossing and built an adobe home. From 1995 to 1996 Linda worked at Sul Ross State University as a graduate assistant in the herbarium and later as department secretary, while studying under Dr. Michael Powell. She graduated from Sul Ross in 1997 with an M.S. in biology.

In 1997 she was hired by Kelly Bryan to do inventory work in Texas Parks and Wildlife's natural resources department. In 2002 a new Parks and Wildlife program for interpretive specialists was formed, and Linda was picked for the Big Bend region. She enjoys every day of work, believing deeply that helping make the public aware of our natural world is especially relevant and meaningful today.

Besides her professional job as the bright, active face of Texas Parks and Wildlife, Linda is usually busy elsewhere when not at work. She maintains a vegetable garden, is part of a supper club and a book discussion group, is a competitive Scrabble player and is now a keen cyclist.

ELIDIA POLANCO

Elidia Chavarria was born on Aug. 11, 1945 in Alpine. Her father, Cecilio, worked as a ranch hand, and her mother, Catalina, ran the home and also cleaned houses. A sister, Janie Lee, who lives in Alpine, and a brother, Bobbie, who is deceased, completed the family.

The family home was across from famous Green Café run by the Gallego family. It was Pete A. Gallego who instilled in young Elidia, and in other teenagers on Alpine's South Side, the need for an education. This was a time when segregation was still in force. She did not forget the message.

She went to the Centennial School, then switched to the high school for four years and graduated in 1965. Her interests tended towards sports, especially basketball. In the classroom, history teacher Mrs. Urango was her mentor. She worked part-time as a shampoo girl in a local beauty salon, giving her some income and a feel for that business.

In 1965, after a six-month beauticians training course in El Paso, she was ready, at age 20, and set up by her mother, to start her own business, Elidia's Beauty Shop. She continued giving beauty treatments long after retiring from teaching.

In 1966 she met Robert Lee

Polanco at a dance. They dated for two years and married on Aug. 17, 1968. Their daughter, Jo Cadena, is a teacher in Spring, Texas, and son Robert Lee Polanco Jr. works for the City of Alpine. Both are married with a total of seven children.

At Sul Ross Elidia earned a B.S. (in physical education, minor in Spanish) and later a M.A. in education. In 1976 she applied for a job at Alpine's elementary school, the start of 25 years teaching. Robert also graduated from Sul Ross and started on a parallel course of coaching and teaching in the elementary school. All in the family have Sul Ross degrees. Pete Gallego's advice was working.

One principle in particular guided Elidia's teaching career, which she states vigorously. "If you show respect, you get respect." There were no discipline problems. Teaching was fun and switching to the high school "a shot in the arm." Looking back on her teaching career, "It was wonderful," she exclaims.

Elidia retired in 2000 (and Robert one year later), but for a people person this was not a time for rest. Over 10 years she volunteered variously for the city's parks department, the Sul Ross alumni board, the Cinco de Mayo celebration and the Centennial School first reunion. Principally she gave her time to Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, where she did the accounts, helped in the gift shop and also headed up the organization of the annual retreat, ACTS, at Paisano Encampment. She sits on the parish council board.

Today she relishes being addressed as "Mrs. Polanco" by former students, bearing out her belief in respect. She and Robert have 42 years of happy marriage, "a team," she says, which even extends to a shared expertise in making funnel cakes.





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A FORTUITOUS COLLABORATION: A Poet and His Publisher

by Larry D. Thomas and Clarence Wolfshohl

Part One: The Poet - Larry D. Thomas

Although I have lived in Houston since 1967, I immediately say “West Texas” when asked where I am from. Four of my 10 published books of poetry are set predominantly on the West Texas dirt where I was born and raised. I grew up in Midland during the infamous “Dust Bowl” of the 1950s and early 1960s, and I vividly remember red dust storms so violent that I could extend an arm and not even see my hand.

I also remember the wide, endless skies and the baby horned lizards so plentiful in my backyard: tiny creatures I could fit on a dime, lay on their backs and coax asleep with my index finger. These are but a few of the countless West Texas images which stayed with me through the years and inspired a significant portion of my poems.

During our years in Midland, I and my family made so many weekend trips to the Balmorhea-Ft. Davis-Marfa-Alpine area that I consider it as much of a “homeland” as Midland itself.

The publisher of my first book of poetry and three of my subsequent books was Clarence Wolfshohl, publisher of the nationally respected Timberline Press in Fulton, Mo. *Stark Beauty*, the second of the four, was my first collection of poems set exclusively in far West Texas.

Ever since I first visited the Terlingua Cemetery 20 or so years ago, I have wanted to write a collection of poems about the Mexican miners buried there who had worked the quicksilver (mercury) mines in the early 1900s. Much of the literature I was able to locate about the mine focused on the business angle of the Chisos Mining Company; very little dealt with the lives of the miners themselves.

I recently completed a chapbook of poems about the miners' lives and titled it *The Red, Candle-lit Darkness*. Although it is primarily a work of my creative imagination, much of its content is based upon factual historical research, which I trust will give the reader a powerful and authentic feel of what it was like to work the Terlingua mines.

I recently gifted Wolfshohl with a copy of the manuscript, and he serendipitously offered to publish it sometime in 2011 in a limited, handset letterpress edition with his original linocut illustrations.

Part Two: The Publisher - Clarence Wolfshohl

When Larry sent me the manuscript of *The Red, Candle-lit Darkness* with the parenthetical note under the title “(The Chisos Mining Company, Early 1900s, Terlingua, Texas),” I was excited to be back in West Texas with his poetry. We had travelled that territory with *Stark Beauty* (2005). Although he sent the manuscript as a gift, not a submission, after a few days with the poems, I wanted to publish *The Red, Candle-lit Darkness* as our fifth collaboration.

Stark Beauty was successful and was nominated for a number of national awards – 2007 Poets' Prize at West Chester University, 2006 Western Heritage Award at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum and the 2006 Spur Award from the Western Writers of America.

But I did not offer to publish the new chapbook for possible awards. Beyond the aesthetic considerations, I am drawn by the Big Bend landscape in the poems. Although I was born and raised in San Antonio, I got my bachelors at Sul Ross and began publishing when I lived in Mason, on what I consider the eastern frontier of West Texas. I feel at home in Larry's poetry.

Also, the poems' vivid imagery begs for illustration. I started publishing to practice the book arts and printmaking, as much as to practice literary dictatorship. Larry gave me a free rein in designing and producing the four previous books, so each is illustrated.

For example, *Stark Beauty* has a linocut on each of the four sectional title pages. Our most recent project, *Wolves* (2010), has four large linocuts with five poems. All of the books were printed by handset letterpress and stitched and bound by hand.

Stark Beauty is a poetic natural history of West Texas; *The Red, Candle-lit Darkness* is a poetic social history of a part of that vast territory.

The current project is still in gestation, but I envision three or four woodcuts and deep red to capture the cinnabar that runs in the lines of the poems as it did in the veins of the mines and the lives of the miners. The poems tell the miners' story powerfully. The book should add another aesthetic dimension to their story.



Linocut by Clarence Wolfshohl

The Faces

(Chisos Mining Company,
Early 1900s,
Terlingua, Texas)

of cinnabar
loom deep
within the thick,

palpable darkness
of the desert:
faces the miners

take their picks to:
faces feebly lit
by little candles

fastened to their hats:
faces crumbled
to fill wagons

for droplets of quick-
silver: wagons
the burros,

staggering, groaning,
and bleeding,
drag in sunlight.

Larry D. Thomas

The Miracle

(Chisos Mining Company,
Early 1900s,
Terlingua, Texas)

He labors all day
deep in the red,
candle-lit darkness
of the mine, musing

the five o'clock
miracle sure to come
when his wages
of Mexican silver pesos

will turn, right
before his eyes,
into water fit
for drinking, dried

corn tortillas, beans,
dried chili for seasoning,
a little candy, and even
a shaving or two of cheese.

Larry D. Thomas

Texas Mountain Laurel

(from *Stark Beauty*)

In early spring,
for a distance
of several feet,

it wafts the aroma
of the thick, sweet
juice of grapes.

Its branches creak
and sway, laden
with the cascading

clusters of blooms
teeming with bees
like monks in amber

robes, intoxicated
with contemplation,
humming their chants,

rapt in fragrant
monasteries
of lavender.

Larry D. Thomas

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HOT SPRINGS, HEALERS, INHALATORIIUMS 100 Years of Spas and Springs

by Gene Fowler

Few who visit the Trans-Pecos country will fail to observe that the salubrious atmosphere can prove a tonic for the mind, body and soul. Rancher A.G. Goynes certainly did. In the 1880s, Goynes coined a nifty slogan for Van Horn: "This Town Is So Healthy, We Had to Shoot a Man to Start a Cemetery." According to local legend, he soon proved his point, tragically. Even before the slogan went up on a banner in the Clark Hotel, Goynes lay dead, shot by his brother-in-law in a dispute over a watering hole.

Watering holes, of course, were very important. Not only did spring water sustain life for Native Americans, settlers and soldiers, but the water that spurted and gurgled from certain springs was said to possess uncommon medicinal properties. Like many who trekked to West Texas, malaria sufferer J.O. Langford sought a more healthful climate than that of his native Mississippi. While hunting for homestead acreage in 1909, Langford overheard two men in an Alpine hotel discussing mineral springs on the Rio Grande.

"They'll cure anything," insisted one of the men. "Stomach trouble, rheumatism, all sorts of skin diseases ... Indians were using them long before white men ever got out this way."

Langford filed on a riparian patch of borderland, moved his young family to the Rio Grande and soon restored his mortal frame with a course of baths and quaffs. The powerful waters weakened him at first, but as he continued the regimen, he brimmed with robust vitality. "Baths at Boquillas Hot Springs," Langford advertised in the *Alpine Avalanche* in 1912, "25 cents each or 21 for \$5.00."

Though Big Bend National Park employees blew up Langford's bathhouse with explosives in 1947, river trekkers soothe their sacroiliacs in the hot

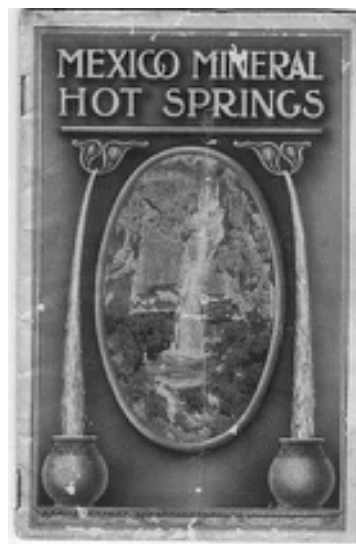


Photo courtesy of the author

springs today.

The balm of breathing pristine Trans-Pecos oxygen proved just as restorative for many pioneers. "Let a man travel six weeks in western Texas," proclaimed an 1871 issue of the *Overland Monthly*, "and if he is not cured ... of whatever ailment he has, it will be because there is no blood left in him."

One Walter B. Stevens praised both healthful elements after an 1880s tour through the Davis Mountains, noting that "there are springs all about which possess a whole apothecary ship of medical qualities." Touting the dry, high-country atmosphere, Stevens testified, "it tones up weak lungs and enables the asthmatic to whoop and enjoy life."

Battling tuberculosis with sunshine and air, consumptives whooped and enjoyed from San Antonio to El Paso. A tubercular named Rudolf Eickemeyer observed in 1894 that the plaza in El Paso was "daily filled with people" who shared his hopes of an atmospheric cure.

Two years later, in June 1896, El Paso crowds were electrified by the presence of the famous faith healer Teresa Urrea, who had been exiled from Mexico by Porfirio Diaz for allegedly inspiring resistance among the Yaquis and other

indigenous groups.

The new century ushered in a wave of futuristic medical apparatuses almost as mysterious as Teresita's treatments. In 1906, Trans-Pecos health trekkers could combat respiratory and other ailments with a newfangled contraption called the inhalatorium. Will Pruett established a small resort called Tent City in the Davis Mountains, where patients could breathe medicated vapors as they sat or stood in the phone-booth-shaped, metal and glass inhalatorium. Fort Davis historian Barry Scobee collected the account of one health-seeker who claimed he was cured of tuberculosis by inhaling "fumes of salt, gum camphor and carbolic acid, which were placed together in a pan of water" in the inhalatorium.

When Scobee and an amigo visited the remains of Tent City in the mid-1930s, they found the ruins of a large adobe building, several cabins and the inhalatorium. Returning a week later to gather the strange curio for public display in town, they found it gone. Years later, Scobee learned that rancher Herbert Kokernot had taken the relic and used it to help plug up "a dry well, or hole, near the big house ... to keep cows from falling into it."

Will Pruett found it too difficult to keep Tent City going, despite the Southern Pacific Railroad's efforts to draw health seekers to the Trans-Pecos country. The railroad's early-1900s, 24-page booklet entitled *A Matter of Health - West Texas and its Relation to Pulmonary Complaints* lauds "the dry invigorating atmosphere of the great Texas plateau."

Another remote, life-restoring resort, Kingston Hot Springs, opened around 1936 on the Rio Grande near Ruidosa. Annie Kingston bought the land with the springs back in 1896, partly to help her brother, who had



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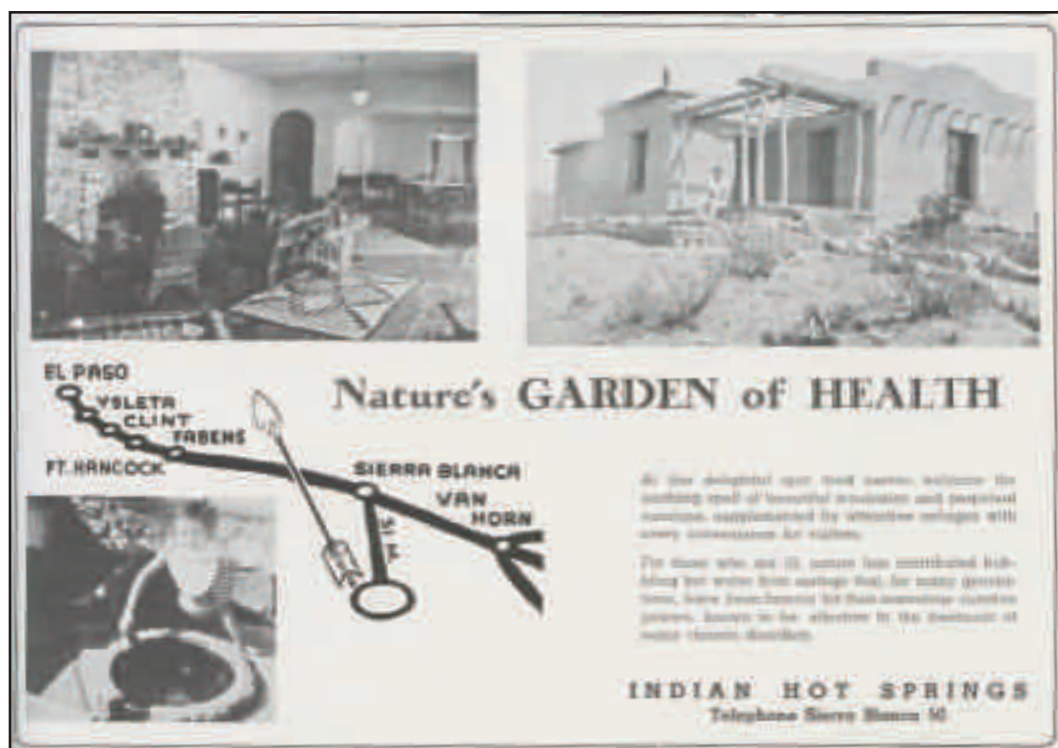


Photo courtesy of the author

From Picturesque Southwest: Travelers' Guide to Southwestern Attractions, 1937, published in El Paso.

come back from the Klondike with a case of rheumatism that required four years of hot spring treatments to cure. After developing the site commercially in the 1930s with adobe cottages and a bathhouse, the family operated the border resort for half a century.

"Gases in the springs are continually ascending to the surface and keep the water in constant agitation," wrote Presidio County historian John Ernest Gregg in a 1934 issue of *Voice of the Mexican Border*. "The water is strongly impregnated with salt, soda, and magnesia, and the temperature is about one hundred and ten degrees. These waters are highly medicinal ..."

Artist Donald Judd bought the property in 1990 and closed the springs to the public. Under different ownership today, the waters are again available for therapeutic bathing under the name Chinati Hot Springs.

Upriver from Chinati, another borderland spa, Indian Hot Springs, awaits a potential reopening. In times past the potent waters tuned up the innards and toned up the hides of Apaches, boxing champions, New York fashion models, famous musicians, eccentric oil tycoons, poets and other folks from far north and south of the

Rio Bravo/Rio Grande.

"The old signs and trails leading into the springs," wrote Captain Jeff Maltby in an 1884 report commissioned by curious cattle ranchers, "indicated that the Indians held the virtues of these springs as the people of old Biblical times held the Pool of Siloam."

Commercial development at Indian Hot Springs started as early as 1907, and in 1929 an El Paso corporation built a 22-room stone hotel, cabins and a bathhouse for soaking in the nine hot springs and one cool spring. Two physicians and a number of nurses set up at the resort to render the balneotherapy to health-seekers making the adventurous trek

down remote mountain trails.

By the 1950s, the resort had closed, and the land was bought by a West Texas family by the name of Babb. "I'd heard of the springs," Jewel Babb remarked years later, "but I didn't believe it..." After living in the remote hotel for a time and observing the mysterious procession of pilgrim bathers who obtained relief for a variety of ailments, she did indeed believe. As Pat Little dog explains in the book *Border Healing Woman*, Babb learned how to treat people with the waters, muds and mosses and evolved a remarkable healing technique that drew on Appalachian folk medicine while establishing "a unique

border tradition that relied on both Anglo and Mexican values." Supplementing the springs' medicines with massage and a treatment she called mind healing, Babb reported incredible cures or substantial improvements in cases of polio, tuberculosis, phlebitis and many other serious ailments.

Though she gained a wide reputation as a skilled aide to sojourners in pursuit of restoration, Babb could not make the resort a profitable enterprise, due in part to its isolation and primitive road and in part to her compassion toward those unable to pay. At the end of the 1950s the bank in Del Rio took over Indian Hot Springs, and Jewel Babb moved off into the desert where health-minded pilgrims continued to seek her out.

An equally singular figure bought the springs in 1966. A self-professed "billionaire health crank," Dallasite H.L. Hunt filled in the dull moments of his life as a wildcat oilman by preaching the benefits of apricots, pecans, aloe vera and Indian Hot Springs, while promoting his peculiar brand of right-wing politics. Hunt restored the hotel and enlisted the aid of Jewel Babb to teach him about the springs and to administer foot massage for a recurring pain in his groin. He learned that the Chief Spring, one of the hotter springs, could reputedly restore a man's fading sexual powers. And he

learned that the Squaw Spring was used primarily for female complaints and complexions. The two "Bleaching Springs" at the spa were said to be capable of removing freckles.

Indian Hot Springs and other Rio Grande resorts never boomed like spas in more accessible spots of the American landscape, and a grander plan for an early mineral water health resort at Candelaria failed even to develop beyond the publicity stage.

Trans-Pecos residents were likely glad for that. A part of the territory's rejuvenating atmosphere is the relative amount of elbow room one finds West of the Pecos. It's understandable that folks wouldn't want things to get too crowded.

I figure the brother-in-law of Van Horn rancher A.G. Goynes must have seen it that way, too.



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Photo Essay

Celebrating beautiful West Texas scenery and student talent, Sul Ross State University has a new photography club called The Eyes of Nature. Only two years old, the club, under the sponsorship of faculty member Dr. Barney

Nelson, has already produced postcards, note cards and a 2011 calendar with months and days in both English and Spanish. The calendar is available for purchase at the University Center on campus.

The calendar includes an inspira-

tional back cover, written by current club president and English major, Veronica "Ronnie" Molina, encouraging the reader to "appreciate the land we live on and the creatures that surround us." Brief summaries of monthly student activities, written by English

graduate student Trey Darby, give glimpses into Sul Ross campus life.

Sul Ross offers numerous courses connected to photography paired with writing, digital desktop publishing and digital enhancement.



by Rachel Barrett

I got involved in photography through 4-H six years ago and quickly discovered how much I love to photograph floral subjects. I took this picture one bright, sunny summer day in my back yard in Pecos. I've always liked subjects with lots of detail and contrast in them, and the vivid sunflower against the sharp afternoon sky just shouted for a picture. My trusty little Kodak EasyShare C743 digital camera was just right for the job. Although the original photograph was taken in color, every little detail of cloud, seed and petal seems magnified in black and white.



by Miguel Angel Grageda

I saw a coyote chasing a cotton tail one morning after a snowy night. It didn't care much about me being around; it just looked at me, turned around and kept watching its possible prey. In the end, the lucky rabbit ran away, and I got this picture, one of my favorite ones. I used a Canon Power Shot S2IS, with f/4 and 1/125, ISO 200.



by Jana Ercilla

I'm not sure how, or when for that matter, I got interested in photography. It's just such a great pleasure to give others pleasure from something I like to do. It's a win-win situation. The picture was honestly inspired by nature itself. To me, that should be enough of a reason. It's already beautiful; it just needs to be preserved for others to see.



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Sometimes I Leave the Mountain

John doesn't have a drum
to march to any beat. He sits
most mornings out front of
the Stone Village Market,
arranging a few fresh flowers
he's purchased, along
with a can of Campbell's soup
and listens to a small battered
radio, but mainly to voices
I will never know.

At first I wanted to go over
and leave a dollar on the table,
but he has change each day
for flowers and soup, enough
to sustain some sanity
at the heart of his derangement.

So I sit with my bacon croissant
and Costa Rican coffee, reading
the morning news about
rape in the Congo, a father's
abuse and a war without end
and think to myself,
John, stay put!

George Bristol

Politics

Water water
everywhere

Where have
you gone

Gone the way
Of man

Long dried
on the bone

No clean
air or water

All living has
died

The earth
is quiet

Just rot and
rust And

dust blowing
in the wind

We talked our
selves to death.

K.B. Whitley

The Old Draw Out West of Town

West Texas summer heat and
I was looking for some shade
down by the draw
that cuts through the brown earth pockmarked with white caliche rocks.

I found the old wooden windmill, sitting on the edge of the draw
faded barn red color.

Even from the road I could see the ridges in the thick old boards nailed
with sure hard blows by Daddy's rough callused hands

It sat out there all these years just waiting through cold blizzards
for the springtime and fresh green mesquite bushes – with pods of seeds
bending the branches low waiting for West Texas summer heat that
shimmers on the edge of the draw and pulls yellow headed sunflowers
from beneath the brown earth.

It sat there with spokes criss-crossing memories of black tarpaper houses
and sandstorms – memories of Mama and Daddy and Mary and Berta
and me.

It sat there – no longer accessible by car.

I watched the old wooden windmill in my rear view mirror as I drove

down the highway and almost missed a dirt road leading up to a scraggly
elm tree – more ruts than road really – with tufts of grass growing up
high that brushed the bottom of the car till I turned a corner and found
a metal windmill beside the elm and a horse corral and two fine dogs.

I sat beneath the tree and listened to the groaning of the windmill in the
West Texas wind and ate my lunch. And knew that I was home again –
maybe for the first time.

Carol Archer

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continued from page 4

Chinati and, along with associate director Rob Weiner, led a small, resourceful team of committed people, who would bring the Chinati Foundation from a financially destitute organization to the flourishing center of contemporary art that it is today. That team included locals Ramon Nuñez, who has now been foreman at Chinati for over 20 years and Guadalupe Catano, who, along with Esteban Alvarez, was Chinati's caretaker for many years in the late 80s and 90s.

"Chinati was not known to many people back then," says Stockebrand. "If you tell people you're in the middle of the desert somewhere in West Texas, and there's a sprawling collection, they don't understand what that means. It changed over time," she adds. "People came, press came, and it became better known."

Stockebrand also reflects on her own evolving experience of the town. "I certainly remember that after seven years of living here, I still thought, 'Oh, God, how much longer?' That thought doesn't occur anymore," she says. "Now you have a town where younger people want to live and even raise their children. There's real potential for the future here if it's handled carefully and people don't try to develop too much too quickly." This fall, Stockebrand, who mounted the first exhibition on

Judd's architectural work in 1989, handed over her directorship to art historian and Judd expert Thomas Kellein. As the final accomplishment of her 16-year tenure, Stockebrand has published a gorgeous comprehensive catalog with Yale University Press, the first to come from the foundation.

The Lannan Foundation opened its doors to its first residents in 1999, and, soon after, other cultural institutions came to Marfa. In 2003, Virginia Lebermann and Fairfax Dorn founded Ballroom Marfa as a center for the public exploration of contemporary art and culture. Ballroom has hosted art exhibits, films and musical performances. There also came the Marfa Book Company and, more recently, Marfa Public Radio.

"Chinati started bringing people in, and the town just grew," says Halpern. Thompson recalls that by the late 90s and early 2000s, "the word had gotten out to the art communities throughout the country, and the artists were coming out and working, and people were opening galleries."

The relationship between the various communities living side by side in Marfa isn't always a simple or easy one. "Sometimes, it has to be said, it's separate but equal," says Halpern. "But West Texans make it work. Everyone treats each other with respect, and we all coexist out here." Thompson concurs: "Very few of the old guard from the ranch-

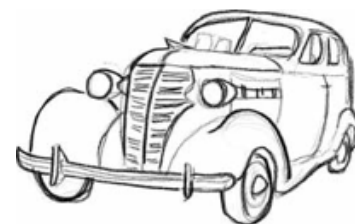
ing community come out to art events, but that's okay. There's room for all of us."

While there's certainly a lot happening in Marfa that doesn't have to do with Donald Judd, it's hard to imagine how things would look if he hadn't come here in the early 70s. His arrival invited, perhaps unintentionally, the varied cultural life that has arisen since.

"Just think," says Stockebrand, "what the town would be like if he hadn't restored and preserved all these buildings and the fort, too."

As for why people continue to move to Marfa, Thompson says, "it comes down to very simple things. People are attracted by the landscape and the purity of the air," she says. "The big sky and the peace and quiet. They all mention the friendly people, too." Halpern agrees that, "Marfa is just a great place to live," adding that, "we've watched it grow out the window on Highland Avenue. It's incredible."

Quite a lot of that growth can be attributed to the Donald Judd and the Chinati Foundations. "Now there's a vibrant culture here in Marfa," says Halpern. "Chinati is the yin to ranching's yang."



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Iowa Corn in Terlingua

*story and art by
Mark Kneeskern*

Sweet corn. That's the first thing that I miss about Iowa and the Midwest in general. Sweet corn on the cob, boiled briefly, lightly buttered and salted, with a grind of pepper, is one of the essential elements of my life.

Iowa corn fields. Green everywhere. Trees and rivers and dark, rich topsoil 2 feet deep. Many of the people are like that too ... down to earth. They are hard working and honest. They know how to pickle just about anything.

People's mindset about Iowa is strange. When I tell people where I'm from, it seems they start talking more slowly for my benefit and explaining simple things very carefully. "This is a cell phone ... you can talk to people far away."

I met my friend Shaggy when we were working as painters in an art factory in Des Moines. He's from small-town Iowa like me. So we hit it off immediately and became fast friends.

Then Shaggy moved to Big Bend and began working on a trail crew in the park. He told me I should visit him. When I finally made the trip, Shaggy gave

me directions and told me that as I drove up the Basin road I would pass through a Dr. Seussville of upside-down trees, punk cactus, stony desert obelisks, a huge rock house and Easter Island figures down into what felt like the crater of a volcano. I thought he must have learned how to exaggerate in Texas.

Iowans don't tell tall tales. They just don't know how. When they describe the time they drank 20 shots of whiskey, ran naked through the grocery store, then fell into a hole 50 feet deep and woke up on top of the town water tower, it happened exactly like that.

When I arrived, I found a true bigger-than-life-sized model of Shaggy's description. Hiking those mountains in the heat of May was my induction into the desert. I saw lizards everywhere, swung from an old dead tree, looked at infinity from a vantage point on the South Rim, saw a bear, hung out with a trail crew at the Boot Cabin.

I was in a kind of shock as Shaggy showed me the strange sights and took me to Terlingua for a drink at the Starlight Theatre. We

slept in sleeping bags out in the open that night, near some old desert movie cemetery. I never dreamt I would actually move here and lead a mule train up into that fantasy world of the Chisos Mountains, get stung by scorpions and have parties in a ghost town.

I'm part of two worlds. I'll never be a true desert rat. My blood curdles in that summer oven. Then again, I'm not made for the Iowa winters either. How many layers of clothing can you wear and still be able to walk?

Big Bend has changed me in some very important ways and introduced me to a whole new culture and mode of living. I've learned to be efficient with water and almost everything else.

The Midwest also keeps teaching me things. Part of my summer is spent back in my old Iowa stomping grounds, and it still feels like a haven. The desert is my wonderful winter abode. Turns out, home is essentially anywhere I lay my head. When it all boils down though, two important things remain in both the desert and the Midwest — friends and turkey vultures.



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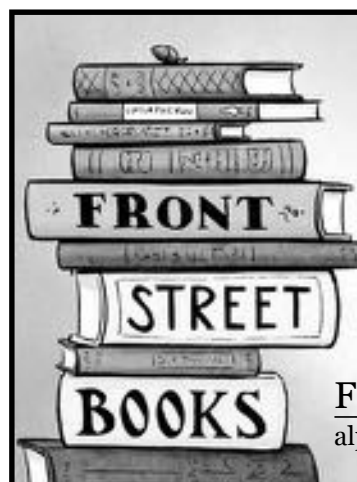
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Artist's sketch of Fort Peña Colorado.

FORT PEÑA COLORADO

by Bob Miles

For a time, this military post stood alone on the vanishing frontier of the Big Bend region.

With the closing of Fort Davis in 1891, the former sub-post of Camp or Cantonment Peña Colorado became a fort. Although the Indians had effectively been driven from the area and placed on reservations, the problem of outlaws and rustlers remained, and it was largely left to the few soldiers at Peña Colorado to patrol and guard a vast region between the railroad and the Rio Grande.

In August of 1879, a temporary camp was set up on land leased by the government near a spring beneath the colorful rock formation known as the Rainbow Cliffs a few miles from what would become Marathon. Flooding soon caused the camp to be moved a short distance to a drier location.

Fort Peña Colorado (Red Rock)

Established in 1879 as a means of preventing Indian raids into Mexico. Raided by Apaches in 1881. Abandoned in 1893 after Western Texas had been permanently cleared of Indians.

Erected by the State of Texas, 1936

The post was first manned by Companies C and F of the 25th Infantry and soldiers from Companies B and H of the 10th Cavalry. Quarters remained quite crude, as they were thrown together by troopers who were inexperienced builders. The soldiers' duties consisted mainly of providing escorts along the road between Fort Clark and Fort Davis, scouting the rugged region and

pursuing bandits, as well as routine garrison duties. The statement on the 1936 marker regarding Apaches attacking Fort Peña Colorado is incorrect.

Even after the Southern Pacific Railroad reached Marathon in 1882, living facilities remained poor. An 1885 quartermaster's report stated the roofs of the officers' and men's quarters "... are of brush and dirt covered with canvas and all leak. They are all ill-constructed and most involve continual expense to keep in habitable order ... Some of the buildings are not worth further labor in repairs."

After July of 1884, the post was mostly occupied by units of the 10th Cavalry. Among those serving with the black troops of

continued on page 27

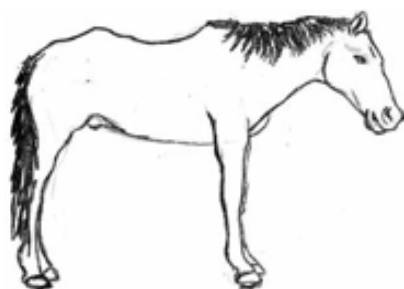
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the 10th Cavalry was Lt. Henry O. Flipper, the first black graduate of West Point Military Academy. Next, in 1885, the 10th Cavalry moved to Arizona to chase Geronimo and other Apaches still raiding, and the Third Cavalry manned the post, followed by a temporary detachment of the 18th Infantry. The post was closed in 1893.

Today only a few of the buildings remain on private land, utilized by the Combs family on their Post Ranch. One former officer quarters served as the home of ranch manager Blas Payne, the grandson of one of the Seminole-Negro Scouts who saw duty at Peña Colorado. These scouts were descendants of slaves who had taken refuge among and intermarried with the Seminole Indians of the Florida region. After many of the Seminoles were removed to Indian Territory, some drifted to Texas and into Mexico. The military enlisted some of them to serve as scouts.

In 1935, Guy S. Combs, Nora Combs McGehee and Lila Combs Matthews donated five acres of land near the spring to Brewster County for a park in honor of Mr. and Mrs. D.S.

Combs, who had acquired the land in 1904. The Post, as the park is known, is a popular picnic spot and swimming hole. New interpretive signs have been installed that explain the geology and history of the site in more detail than the old historical marker.



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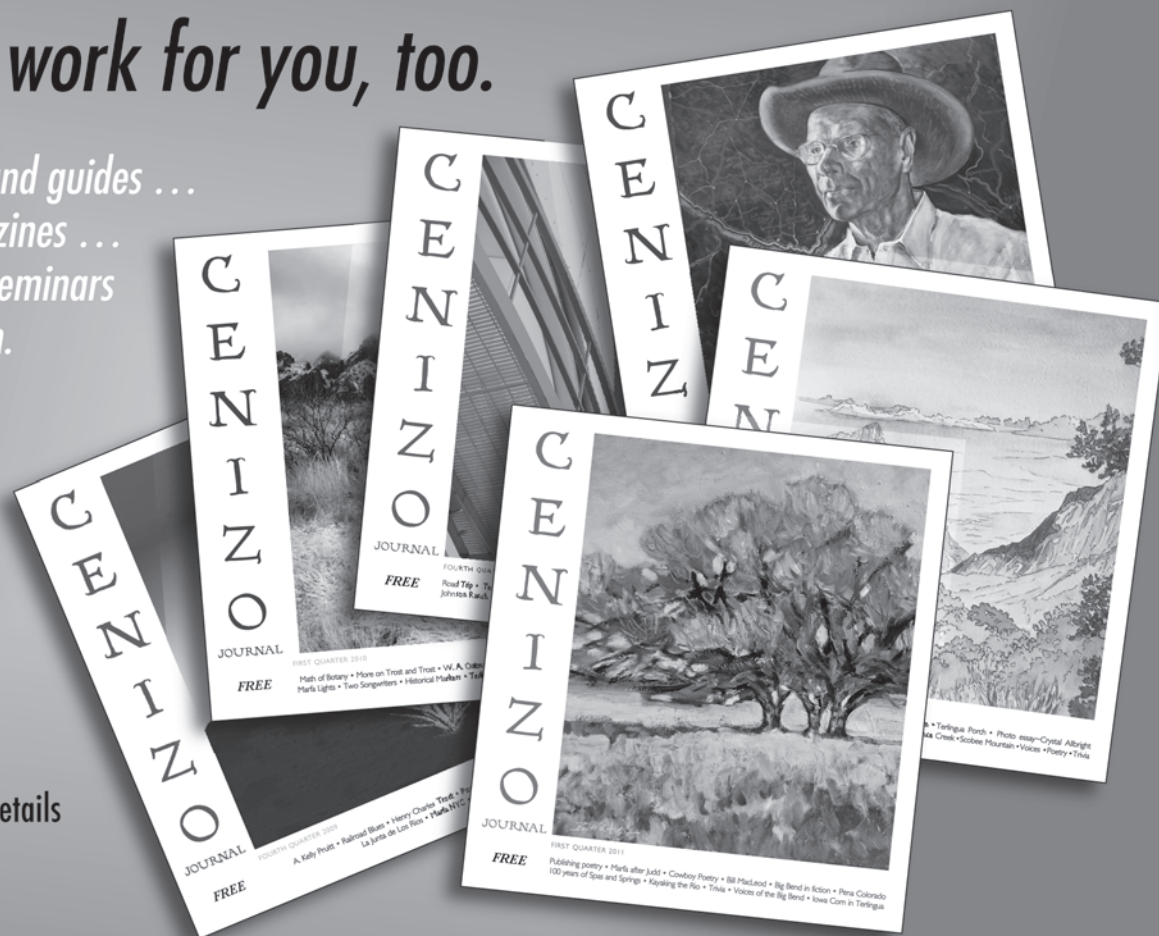
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Trans-Pecos Trivia

by Charles Angell

- 1) Rackstraw Downes, a part-time resident of Presidio County, has painted large, realistic landscapes of the area such as the Presidio Horse Racing Track and Rio Grande Water Flow Monitor. What country was he born in?
a) Australia c) England
b) Luxembourg d) New Zealand
- 2) Marathon artist Mary Baxter has what athletic animal as her logo and on her gallery sign?
a) Flying Burro c) Pronghorn Antelope
b) Darter Snail d) Leaping Jackrabbit
- 3) Rock and roll band the Eagles have several album covers designed by Valentine resident Boyd Elder, featuring painted cow skulls. What Texas city did Boyd attend high school?
a) El Paso b) Van Horn
c) Terlingua d) Austin
- 4) Recently deceased local artist A. Kelly Pruitt once sent a bronze statue of a cowboy hanging on to the tail of a bucking bull to which president of the United States?
a) George Bush Sr. c) Lyndon Johnson
b) Richard Nixon d) George W. Bush
- 5) The man who brought art to Marfa, Donald Judd, purchased property in and around Marfa and the Chinati Mountains. Where did he ask to have his grave located?
a) Marfa Cemetery
b) Las Casas, Chinati Mountains
c) Arlington Cemetery
d) Casa Perez, Pinto Canyon Road

Bonus: Which above mentioned artist also created a work inspired by the Gowanus bridge in New York City?

Answers: 1-c, 2-d, 3-a, 4-c, 5-b, Bonus: Bonus: Rackstraw Downes



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