

C E N I Z O

JOURNAL



FIRST QUARTER 2017

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Dr. Leo and Ted Windecker inspected work on a half fuselage made of composites during construction of their Eagle. They are right rear with Ted in the yellow shirt. Two halves of the fuselage were molded separately and then glued together like a model airplane. Photo courtesy of Ted Windecker

One of the latest technologies used in the sixth-generation “stealth” military aircraft these days is the use of “composites” in their construction, an idea born in a hangar here in West Texas more than half a century ago.

Leo Windecker created the single-engine, four-place Windecker Eagle in the hangar that now houses the air museum at the Midland airport, using a fiberglass-epoxy material similar to plastic.

The new material reflected much less of the aircraft surface to radar, helping make it virtually invisible to its enemies. It also is lighter than aluminum and twice as strong.

Only nine Windecker Eagles were built of the new material before a recession in aviation halted progress. But one original Eagle was restored and returned to flight about a year ago.

The first flight was in 1967 and, two years later, the Eagle received the first certification as a composite aircraft and the first certification under FAA’s then-brand new Part 23 for “normal, utility, acrobatic and commuter” aircraft.

Early in its career, the new “plastic airplane” set five trans-Atlantic speed records, including 194.31 miles per hour from Paris, France, to New York that topped that of the popular Beech Bonanza by 13 mph.

And the Bonanza was one of the fastest general aviation aircraft of its day.

Dr. Leo Windecker, a dentist at Lake Jackson near Houston, was a beginning pilot in the 1950s, who marveled at the sometimes-flimsy construction of some light private aircraft of the time, and wondered if there might be a better material than aluminum for airplane construction.

Riding with him on his first demonstration flight in Cessna’s newest entry, the 172, was son Ted, who later participated in the design and construction of the first FAA-certificated composite airplane.



Windecker Eagle tail number N4198G has been restored and first flew about a year ago. It will be used in constructing a new iteration of the composite aircraft in China. Photo courtesy of Ted Windecker

“All the way back [home] he kept saying these airplanes were so flimsy, so cheaply made compared to the Oldsmobile we were driving, yet they were so expensive,” Ted Windecker told the *Cenizo Journal*. “So he started brainstorming, started experimenting.”

A military medic in the South Pacific in World War II, many of Leo Windecker’s patients worked for the

‘Composite’ Aircraft Born in Midland

by Jim Street



Dr. Leo and Fairfax Windecker posed in the 1960s. Photo courtesy of Ted Windecker

Texas Division of Dow Chemical Company in Lake Jackson, where glass fibers mixed with epoxy had been developed.

He began experimenting with fiberglass composite materials with the idea of making airplanes “stronger and safer,” and came up with a material he called Fibaloy. Today, Dow owns 17 of Windecker’s 22 patents.

Windecker was awarded a Dow research grant and, together, they proposed an airplane “invisible to radar” to the John F. Kennedy administration. But the administration showed little interest at the time.

They tried again nearly ten years later and, with the urging of Congressman George Mahon of Texas, the U.S. Air Force agreed to test it at Holloman Air Force Base, NM. The airplane fuselage disappeared to radar but metal structures like the engine and landing gear still stood out.

So that airplane was modified and became the YE-5, and testing continued for many years thereafter.

Today, composites are present in everything from light private aircraft to the giant B-2 Spirit bomber. In the general aviation fleet (all flying except the military and commercial airlines), the best selling light airplane today is the

all-composite Cirrus SR22.

The composite material eliminates the rivets and seams in aluminum aircraft skin, which can cause drag and slow the airplane down.

But military aviation saw the greatest benefits. Today’s fighter aircraft, like the Lockheed Martin F-22 and F-35, are supersonic attack and air superiority aircraft with a radar cross section “not much larger than a bumblebee.”

Lockheed Martin had acquired some of Windecker’s patents for composite construction, which found its way into their product lines.

Composites are “a great way to refine the manufacturing process,” Lockheed spokesman Ken Ross said. “As the technology advances, it plays a big role in providing better equipment for the men and women who fly these aircraft in harm’s way.”

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Cenizo

First Quarter 2017

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Cenizo Journal

Volume 9 Number 1

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Cenizo Notes

by Carolyn Brown Zniewski, publisher and Danielle Gallo, editor



I like to think of the *Cenizo* as a family. So many different people with a wide variety of views have contributed to our special magazine. One thing I think we all have in common is a great love for the Big Bend.

We have been publishing for eight years. April, 2017 will be the start of our ninth year. Jim Glendinning's *Voices of Big Bend* has been in every issue. In a way it is the backbone of our magazine. Certainly the voices of the folks who live here are the foundation of Big Bend. We may be limited in number but we are mighty in our ability to work together in the production of an amazing and diverse culture.

The crew, writers and artists here at the *Cenizo* are multi-talented and their work for the *Cenizo* is only one of several things each of us does. Just in the last few months Wendy Lynn married and moved to nearby El Paso. Lucky for us, the Internet keeps her in touch, and so she will continue to be the Graphics Designer while living much closer to an airport. Rani, with the *Cenizo* two years, is the newest staff member, Maya lives the farthest away, Lou works full time at Sul Ross, Danielle is finishing up her degree and I have my grandson visiting so I make dinner almost every night.

Winter is a good time to curl up and read, or do as I am doing and write vignettes of your life events. Do enjoy this issue; we have a great selection of work.



The big wheel turns, and a new year begins. As we celebrate yet another successful revolution around the sun, I can't help but notice so many new things here in the Big Bend. Oil and gas exploration are booming, and suddenly the rumble of trucks and pumps are no longer off in the distance, but in our backyard. An influx of newcomers is dotting the landscape with new houses, and the long, quiet roads with new cars and trucks. I scarcely recognize the Terlingua that used to be my home, with its boom of businesses and new residents. We have a coffee roaster, a brewery, and cell service—all things that were nonexistent when I moved here.

It's easy to look askance when a familiar landscape shifts, especially as we get older and changes seem to come in an instant. It's easy to cry, "interloper!" when a stranger fails to wave or takes our favorite booth at Alicia's. But really, as the old guard continually changes over to the new, we gain so much—a stronger appreciation of what makes us unique, the broader perspective of a more diverse community, fresh ideas for how to improve our quality of life and strengthen the bonds that hold us together, for starters.

This issue of *Cenizo* features some highlights of our past, like the invention of a revolutionary airplane and an ancient Christmas tradition, Cowboy poetry and old tales of our Mystery Lights. As I read them, I thought about all the people who are discovering these things for the first time, and I'm grateful to be able to see them through their eyes. I hope you enjoy them too.

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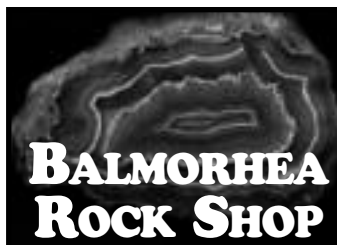
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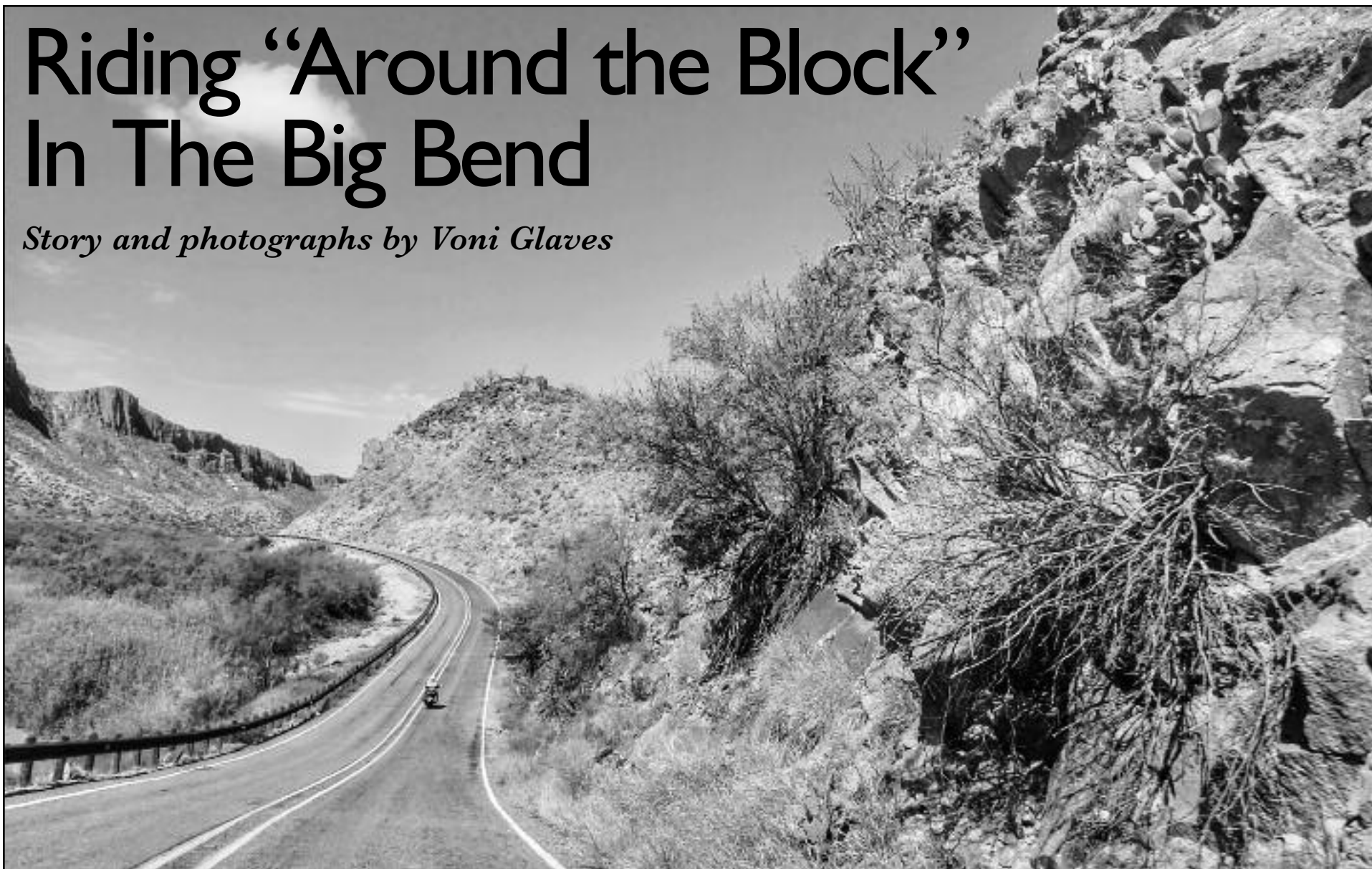
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Riding “Around the Block” In The Big Bend

Story and photographs by Voni Graves



El Camino del Rio, also known as the River Road, from Lajitas to Presidio has been featured as one of the Top 10 Motorcycle Roads in the United States by *National Geographic*

Motorcycle riders come to the Big Bend from everywhere: from Houston and Lubbock and Dallas. They even come from Ohio and as far as New Jersey, Minnesota or Alaska to ride their motorcycles in the Big Bend. They may be found at the Porch in Terlingua, or at Panther Junction in Big Bend National Park, but mostly they will be found riding the great motorcycle roads. Some come to ride the paved roads and some come to ride the challenging dirt roads in the National Park or Big Bend Ranch State Park.

From the vantage point of our home west of Highway 118 between Alpine and Study Butte, we often take visitors around the block, a ride from home to Alpine, then to Marfa, on to Presidio and Terlingua, and finally back to our modern adobe. This 232-

mile loop provides some of the best roads and attractions the Big Bend has to offer.

For convenience, the description of this ride begins at the fuel pumps at the intersection of TX 118 and FM 170 in Study Butte, and heads north. Fuel is only available in the towns, which are up to 80 miles apart. Gas early and often is our motto. The 70 mph highway begins with some twists and turns and elevation changes before climbing to Luna's Vista a few miles north of Study Butte. From this vantage point a rider can see for miles into Big Bend Valley and to the mountains beyond. The O2 Ranch begins 26 miles north of Study Butte. Lucky riders may see, on the east side of the highway, a herd of as many as 40 Scimitar Horned Oryx, an antelope species native to North Africa but now extinct in the wild, though not in the Big Bend.

Often there are Pronghorn, a still-fragile species, on the west side.

Riders proceed past Elephant Mountain and its namesake wildlife refuge about 50 miles north of Study Butte. From here to the north the highway becomes hilly and curvy all the way to Alpine. A U.S. Border Patrol checkpoint is located about 12 miles south of Alpine. Riders will be asked their citizenship, and might be sniffed by a drug-dog before being allowed to go on their way.

Small enough to be welcoming, Alpine, The Last Frontier, has an incredible museum at Sul Ross University, gas and a wide variety of great places to eat. Brewster County prides itself on having no traffic lights, though Alpine has a couple of flashing red stop signs.

US highway 67/90 leads west. Between Paisano Peak and Twin Peaks

riders pass dazzling road cuts while crossing Paisano Pass, actually riding through a volcanic caldera! Note the “Left Lane for Passing Only” signs. They mean it. The Marfa Lights Viewing Station is located on the south side of the road about nine miles east of Marfa, a place of mystery even in daylight. Where US 67 turns south in Marfa riders should take a four-block detour north to see the 1886 Presidio County Courthouse and the El Paisano Hotel, both Texas Historic Landmarks and on the National Register of Historic Places. Of special interest is the fact that the hotel was the home of the cast and crew during the filming of the movie *Giant* in 1955, just before the death of its co-star James Dean.

US 67 to Presidio is not the most exciting motorcycle road, but it does have many points of interest. Leaving



Rounding a corner, a rest area with three teepees appears just before the steep climb up "Big Hill"

Marfa, riders may look right to observe famed artist Donald Judd's "15 Untitled Works in Concrete." To the unappreciative eye these bold works of art might resemble an unfinished storm water project. Rarely are south-bound vehicles required to stop at the Border Patrol Station on this highway. Further south, Cibolo Creek Ranch, a luxury resort, lies off to the west. We often take time to stop at the historical marker to enjoy the vast prairie. Of more interest to passersby might be the sighting of Alpacas, or a handful of the Texas Camel Corp, if they are not out touring and teaching with Doug Baum. Forty miles south of Marfa, riders will slow for the historic silver mining town of Shafter. While not quite a ghost town, Shafter is but a shadow of its former self.

Presidio is our frequent stop for lunch or a snack. There are several good places to eat. Riders so inclined and carrying a passport may take a detour across the border to Ojinaga, Chihuahua, Mexico. Presidio is also where US 67 meets Texas FM 170, El Camino Del Rio, the River Road. The 50-mile stretch from Presidio to Lajitas has been labeled by *National Geographic* as among the top-ten motorcycle roads in the United States. This ride will show you why.

Just a couple of miles from Presidio is Fort Leaton State Historic Site. The

location of Fort Leaton was historically significant as early as the 1600s, and the current incarnation of the fort dates to the mid-1800s. It now serves as the western visitor center for Big Bend Ranch State Park. It is worth the time to stop and look around and buy a Park Pass. About 16 miles from Presidio is the settlement of Redford. This once-vibrant farming community fell on hard times when the informal crossings to and from Mexico were disallowed in 2002 following the attacks of September 11, 2001. With access to most of its farm workers denied, farming in this valley has dwindled to near nothing.

From Redford eastward, motorcycling fun really begins. The road is full of twists and turns, uphill and downhill, and vast vistas as the road parallels the Rio Grande. From several vantage points riders may see canoes or rafts full of people enjoying this portion of a wild and scenic river. Twenty miles east of Redford the road climbs steeply to the top of Big Hill, Santana Mesa, the steepest paved road in Texas. From the parking area at the top of the hill hikers may follow a short but well-worn path to overlook the Rio Grande. This is the location of the final river scenes from the 1985 movie *Fandango*. This coming-of-age saga of five recent college graduates is considered the first starring role for Kevin

Costner. At this high river overlook people can still see the word "Dom" inscribed in the rock.



Nearing Presidio, some of the sharpest curves give backdrop to our motorcycles

Just downhill from Big Hill is a Texas Highway rest area comprised of three large concrete teepees. It is a welcome stop right next to the Rio Grande. A few miles further on, riders will pass what was the historic *Contrabando* movie set. Since being

allowed by the state to fall into disrepair, most of the buildings have been demolished, but the outhouse has a gorgeous view!

The resort of Lajitas is located just a few miles east of Contrabando. What is now the pro shop for the Blackjack Crossing golf course was, until recently, the location of a general store which is the oldest continuously operated mercantile establishment west of the Mississippi River. It was also the home of Clay Henry, the world-famous, beer drinking goat. The current store and more-sober goat are now located at the east edge of Lajitas, on the north side of the road. From Lajitas it is a short 12 miles to the Terlingua Ghosttown, where riders often congregate on the Porch at the Terlingua Trading Company and Starlight Theater. Other gathering places are the High Sierra Bar and Grill at the Eldorado Hotel, and La Kiva, a not-to-miss semi-subterranean eating and drinking establishment dating back to the 1970s.

And then we are back at the gas pumps at Study Butte. Riders who observed but didn't stop at the many temptations along the way may have

time to enjoy Boquillas Canyon, the Basin, and the Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive to Santa Elena Canyon in the National Park, or a ride up to the McDonald Observatory north of Fort Davis, but for many the "ride around the block" is enough for one day.

Cathedral Mountain
(Brewster County, Texas)

It rises from the bleak landscape
like bony hands
wringing in hard prayer.

The elements worship there,
cracking open their hymnals
of rock, mouthing in silence

their verses of ice and fire.
Of rock is the belfry, of rock
the dark bells soundlessly ringing

in absolute stillness, tugged
by the howling blind sexton
of the wind.

by Larry D. Thomas

The Desert's Best

The desert's best at break of dawn
as light's begun to rift
the tenacious curtain of darkness,
before the sun can scramble over
the cliff at the horizon's ledge,
on its way to the peak of the day.

The desert's best at the crown of noon
when shadows disappear,
(except beneath one's feet)
and the sun's control
makes sure you'll know
the difference between warmth and heat.

The desert's best at twilight—
all color shades to grays and such,
as though nothing solid stays:
things only seem to be real, despite
their being close enough to touch,
as night soaks up what was once the day's.

The desert's best at midnight
after the night has come alive
owls hush deceptive cries:
over here—no over there,
their voices come from everywhere—
then all contrive—to let silence fill the air.

by Nelson Sager

Folkways

by *Maya Brown Zniwski*. Illustration by *Avram Dumitrescu*.

ROSE AND ROSEHIP, THE QUEEN OF FLOWERS

We all know what they look like; there are ten thousand kinds. They are renowned and timeless for their scent and beauty in every form of art and literature. Roses are loved from when we were very young for their soft petals and glorious colors. Of course, we also learn about their thorns, and when the bloom is gone there are the bright red-orange rosehips.

As a little one I loved the rose garden of our local priest. There were rows and rows of every variety of ancient roses, every color, size and shape of bloom, from the finest tiny tea rose to blooms larger than a dinner plate. I remember traipsing through them and only occasionally getting my hair caught in a thorn; I made beds out of the petals, floating away on rose clouds to my fairyland built of flowers. The scent and color of roses lift our souls, but they also have medicinal uses.

When you are using roses for food and medicine you want the oldest variety you can find, not a hybrid. I use Apothecary's Rose, but the others are Wild Rose, Dog Rose, Brier Rose, Prairie Wild Rose, Arkansas Rose, Meadow Rose, Pasture Rose, French Rose, Cabbage Rose (the one with the luscious huge blooms we've all enjoyed) and the Texas Yellow Rose. There are many, many more. Rose medicine is one thing that I would recommend for everyone, but especially for women.

Your grandma probably made rose syrup, candied roses, rose salve, rose tinctures, rose honey and rose cakes. For a wonderful, fast and easy desert try a Moroccan-inspired rose cake. Slice a pound cake (pre-made is fine!) and drizzle on rosewater, add grated cardamom pods and let the cake soak for an hour or so. Serve with candied rose petals (recipe below). You can also chop one or two tablespoons of rose petals and add them to a basic white cake recipe, substituting rose water for the vanilla extract.

Candied roses are fun to make and are edible for about eight weeks, but they do lose their color after about two weeks. Use one of the kinds of roses mentioned above that have not been sprayed. I CANNOT



TELL YOU HOW IMPORTANT THAT IS! With a paint brush, apply egg whites to both sides of the rose petals, then delicately spoon on white sugar and allow to dry on a sheet of waxed paper. When the egg white has dried shake off the excess sugar. Store them in an airtight container.

I regularly make rose tincture for heart-break and heartache. Using rose petals, rose hips, and leaves, steep them in brandy for three to four weeks. Take a teaspoon twice a day. A beautiful gift is a rose salve or balm. Stuff a small mason jar with freshly dried rose petals, fill with any light tasting and textured oil you like (any edible oil will work: almond, coconut or olive), infuse (soak) rose petals in the oil for about four to six weeks. Or you can infuse the oil with roses in the top of a double boiler over simmering water for four hours. Strain out rose petals, reserving the oil, and add enough beeswax to create a salve or balm. You can also use the rose-infused oil as it is. Rose salve is a yummy all-around lotion but is especially good on wounds that are hot and inflamed, or where one has pain.

Rose hips can be harvested after the blooms have faded. Whole rose hips make a fine tea. Packed with vitamin C, it is excellent as a hot tea in cold weather, though much like lemon you will want to sweeten it. It is perfect as an iced tea in the summer or can be added to lemonade to make pink lemonade. Recent studies have shown that a tea made from powdered rose hips reduces the pain and stiffness of osteoarthritis. You will want to sweeten it with honey. Take a cup three times a day.

So love your roses and remember, they make our hearts sing.

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Mystery Lights of Big Bend

By C.W. (Bill) Smith

Being denizens of the Big Bend, we are fascinated by the beauty and grandeur of our purple mountains' majesty, our rolling prairies of grass and wildflowers and the mañana way of life. We love our gentle spring times (except when the wind blows at hurricane force), we love our wonderful summers (except when the thermometer explodes) and we absolutely adore our mild winters (no argument there). We also like a good mystery, and the Big Bend is full of them.

The Marfa Lights are a prime example of nature at its most mysterious in West Texas. Reported in the media down through the years, it is even purported that Native Americans saw the lights hundreds of years ago. I can't vouch for that, but I can speak with some authority about this subject. I have been out to the Marfa Lights viewing area on Highway 90 just east of Marfa on many occasions, starting with my college years at Sul Ross. I have seen them regularly over the past 25 years that I have worked on Sundays in Marfa.

We usually get to the viewing area long before daylight and have seen the shimmering lights, bobbing and weaving and racing across the prairie. Sometimes white, sometimes red or blue, they never fail to fascinate. No one has come up with a satisfactory explanation for them. Elton Miles, in his book *Tales of the Big Bend*, (Texas A&M University Press: 1987) talks about the Marfa Lights and gives some of the folk explanations, including the story of the ghost of a rancher, tortured to death by Mexican banditos, searching for his family. Or the ghost of escaped German prisoners-of-war being guided to freedom by the spirit of

Hitler, marking the way with the lights.

My personal observation is that they occur in an area where we frequently see mirages at sunrise. I am no physicist or astronomer, but I suspect that those atmospheric conditions that produce the mirages have a part in pro-

ducing the Marfa Lights, maybe by reflecting car or building lights just over the horizon. Who knows?

So what are ghost lights? Explanations range from the ridiculous...ghosts and headless train conductors...to the quasi-scientific...swamp gas, static electricity, foxfire, cosmic worm holes and glow-in-the-dark, bioluminescent birds. One should include the lunatic fringe that suspects paranormal activity, demonic infestation and little green men. Although I think we can safely discount swamp gas in

West Texas, still, ghost lights remain open to conjecture.

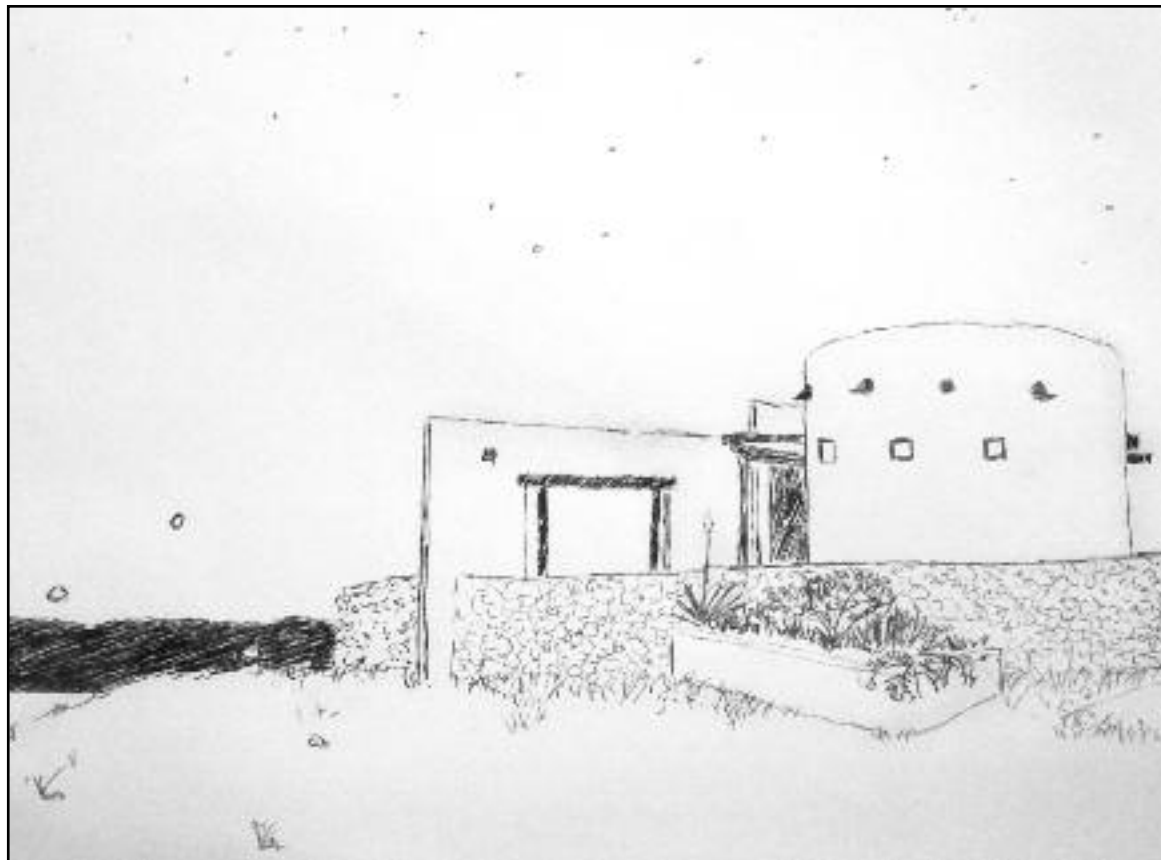
Full scientific expeditions have failed to come to a definitive conclusion, but not for the lack of trying. The Marfa Lights have been seriously investigated over the years by some very reliable,

road and skip on to the east. That, of course, is an example of a well-documented phenomenon called ball lightning. Similar to and often confused with ball lightning is St. Elmo's Fire, which is a small blue or violet pulsating orb of plasma emitted from a pointed metal object. It makes a hissing or crackling noise as it moves about. My own grandmother, Gertrude Odell Oatman, witnessed such a display as she washed dishes in her home in Balmorhea in the 1930s. She heard a loud pop and saw a small orb of blue light jump out of the fuse box above her kitchen sink. It dropped down and skittered around on the metal cabinet top for a few seconds, then it emitted a loud "phfft!" and winked out. It gave her such a scare that she went to bed with a sick headache.

Many Big Bend cowboys can attest to the spooky action of St. Elmo's Fire as it danced on the horns of cattle herds during violent electrical storms and slithered across the prairie like a green fog. Author/interviewer Patrick Dearen, in *The Last of the Old-Time Cowboys*, (Republic of Texas Press: 1998) gives many examples of strange encounters with electricity during thunderstorms on the trail.

And, even poor little Sanderson, the ignored step-sister of the Big Bend, has some tales to tell. The late Bill Goldwire, lifelong resident of Sanderson and Terrell County, collected ghost stories about Sanderson and the surrounding area. Like all tales of this genre, his little book is highly entertaining and highly inventive. But there is one story that even he missed.

Not too long ago I ran across a ghost



light story in the *El Paso Daily Herald* for February 13, 1899, in, of all places, the railroad column.

February of 1899 was much like the February of 2014 in the canyons of the lower Pecos, bitterly cold and disagreeable. On this particular Saturday in February a reporter for the *Daily Herald* wandered down to the GH&SA train yards in search of a good story. Herald reporters often found news at the train yards, and it was a good bet that one would turn up on that day.

The weather being so bitter, with howling winds and frostbite-inducing cold, he found the railroad men huddled around a pot belly stove at the yard office, swapping yarns and hoping not to have to go outside. On this particular day they seemed to be ganging up on one old engineer with constant barbs and jokes, merciless at times. Just like railroad men will do. They were "hoorahing" him about a story he often told and which he firmly defended as the truth, no matter how hard the teasing from his buddies. The old man seemed to be taking it in stride. That made the reporter curious. "If you

want a good story," one worker said to the reporter, "talk to this man, he'll tell you something rich!" Mercifully, the reporter decided to wait until the room cleared when the men went back to their duties and the old engineer stayed behind.

He approached the old gentleman asking, "Hey, what was all this ribbing about? They seemed to be having a pretty good time at your expense." The old fellow, who had years of experience running the old steam engines as a freight engineer between Del Rio and Sanderson on the GH&SA, leaned forward and said, "They are all good friends of mine so I let them enjoy themselves at my expense. I would not by even one word of contradiction mar their pleasure." All the merriment was caused by his story of an event that occurred not long after the railroad opened in 1883. He asked the reporter to have an open mind and to forget the wisecracks and jokes of his friends. Truth be told, he offered, it was not just this night that he saw the events, but many times through the years, but he didn't want his friends to think he had

completely lost his mind.

He began his narrative, "We left Sanderson at 9:45, just twenty minutes late, and went against a stiff southeast wind and soon lost sight of Sanderson in the darkness. I was on the right hand side of the engine. We were traveling along at a lively clip with my thoughts centered on my family which I had just left. All at once I beheld the danger signal swinging to and fro 500 yards in front of me." In this case, the danger signal was a red lantern being swung back and forth to warn oncoming trains to stop, a standard signaling device on the railroad at that time.

"I reversed my engine and stopped. As the engine came to a standstill the lights disappeared. I was almost dumbfounded for a time, but I again applied the steam without saying a word to my fireman.

"As I pulled away from that point the lights again appeared about 100 yards west of the track and traveled along with the engine for about a mile. Sometimes a red light would appear and then the white and green light would show up.

"On several occasions when I passed that point the lights would be visible possibly a mile from the track and the white light would be indicating the 'go ahead' signal.

"You may think this untrue," he told the reporter, "but if you would take the trouble to go over the line with me sometime I will convince you of the truth of what I have just related." Unfortunately, the *Herald* reporter did not take up the old gentleman's offer.

If anyone else saw the ghost signal, they kept mum about it. There was no need to cause undue remarks and unnecessary teasing about their sanity or their drinking habits.

Maybe we should give the final word to Mr. Fritz Kahl, who has seen the Marfa Lights and seriously investigated them since his days as a flight instructor at the Marfa Air Base during World War II. Mr. Kahl was quoted as saying, "I still say the best way to see the lights is with a six pack of beer and a good looking woman." If you like beer and women, that is probably good advice for any Big Bend endeavor.

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JEFF HEINATZ

Jeff Heinatz, health inspector, has served the tri-county region for 31 years, and is still working. The other Jeff Heinatz, wildlife photographer, has taken a myriad of unique wildlife shots over the same period and still always carries his camera at his side.

Heinatz was born in January 1961 in San Marcos, TX to Maidia Moore Heinatz and Larry Heinatz, who worked as a dairy inspector for the Texas Department of Health. An older brother, Clifton, died suddenly of a brain aneurism, aged 44.

Growing up in San Angelo (where the family moved to) was agreeable. Heinatz liked school and still retains friends from second grade. At San Angelo Lake View High School he worked two jobs and developed an interest in agriculture, in particular showing lambs. He graduated in 1979.

At Angelo State College, he also worked two jobs and studied physical education and biology. Crucially, he took a course in news photography to complete the degree requirements. Graduating in 1985, he landed a job as Health Inspector almost immediately in Odessa, TX with the Ector County Health Department.

In 1985, Heinatz married Dru Kelly of Big Spring, TX, whom he met at college. A son, Jarrod, who today works in real estate in Austin, was born in 1990. A daughter, Jesseca, was born three years later. She works as a registered nurse at Shannon Hospital in San Angelo. Dru is teaching for the 28th year at Alpine High School.

Heinatz and his wife moved to Alpine in 1987 to be the health inspector for a 36-county region stretching from El Paso city limits to Mason and Brady, TX. His main responsibility has always been restaurant inspection. He drives huge distances. Fortunately he loves driving, and his temperament is suited to a job that can cause stress.



JEFF HEINATZ
Alpine

He has the authority to fine and close down non-compliant restaurants but seldom has to.

Heinatz has honed his skills as photographer over the years. He has a natural aptitude to sense where wildlife can be sighted, and photographed. If he does not see them (a bobcat in brushy terrain or a coyote in the open) he is prepared to wait for up to two hours. He hides his face with a mask and his hands with gloves.

He moves calmly and quietly. Agitated, loud movements scare animals. He has a device he blows to imitate prey animal calls, thereby bringing the predator within viewing distance. He gets plenty of pictures in state parks and BBNP (where, on the Lost Mine Trail in the 1990s, he saw seven bears). Recently he photographed a bear “posing for him,” as he calls it, with a paw on a tree stump.

A visit to Heinatz’s office reveals wildlife pictures from floor to ceiling.



SARAH BOURBON
Terlingua

He has never gone in much for exhibitions of his work, but plans to compile one or two photography books when he retires in two years. It seems obvious he will never retire from taking photographs.

SARAH BOURBON

Sarah Whitson was born in 1946 in Denton, TX, the only child of Caroline and John Whitson, who, with his father and brothers, ran the family firm, Whitson Food Products. From sixth to ninth grades she attended the private Selwyn School, in Denton.

In her sophomore year she transferred to Denton High School. She discovered drama and quickly realized that she had no talent for acting, but enjoyed the tech stuff. She joined the school newspaper, was given a column she called “Round the Bend,” and had found her college major.

In 1955 the family took a vacation to Big Bend, having read about the



ROBERTO LUJAN
Presidio

area. They stayed at Indian Lodge in Davis Mountains State Park and later drove the River Road, an early taste of the area that later would captivate her.

She attended North Texas State University, now the University of North Texas, where she studied journalism and relished dorm living. She graduated in 1969 with a major in journalism and a minor in theater. She then embarked on a series of writing jobs, which included the Associated Press in Dallas and the newspaper of the Army & Air Force Exchange Service.

In 1975 she was hired by the three-year-old *Texas Monthly*. Four years later she was managing editor. She found she was good at “getting the magazine out the door to the printers.” She met several people who would become major writers, and is very proud of having been at *Texas Monthly* at the start. One assignment was a Far Flung Adventures raft trip through Mariscal

and Boquillas canyons with Jim Bones and Robert Graves that she describes as “the best four days of my life.”

By 1984 Whitson was ready for a new life. She resigned from *Texas Monthly* and headed back to Terlingua. Far Flung Adventures, to her joy, offered her a job managing the office. In 1986 she met geologist Bill Bourbon and they married two years later in the Barker House in Big Bend National Park.

In 1988 she took a job with the Big Bend Natural History Association, overseeing book sales in and managing the seminar program. After 16 years she was ready to retire and ready for a new venture.

She resuscitated Whitson Food Products as Whitson Chile Products and, using a recipe still in the family, started selling the original Whitson’s Moist Seasoning. She obtained vital grants from the Texas Agriculture Department and sold the product around Texas. Later she added spicy sweet pickles, candied jalapenos, a serrano salsa, and more. Two containers of the pickles and jalapenos recently shipped to Norway, indicating the continuing popularity of the products.

With Bill she started Bourbon Properties, buying and selling land and renting homes. In addition to her entrepreneurial drive, she started the Terlingua Chamber of Commerce, helped start the first clinic in South County, Primary Care Services, and joined the board of Last Minute, Low Budget Productions, the community theater group.

Today Sarah Bourbon spends less time on her product business and more time hiking, biking, and tending her garden.

ROBERTO LUJAN

Roberto Lujan pours me a glass of pomegranate juice in the kitchen of his house in Presidio. Outside, a ploughed field of rich soil gives way to the Rio Grande.

He was born in the Lockhart Clinic in Alpine in April 1956, the middle child of five born to Sabina Sandate Lujan and Eugenio Almodova Lujan. His grandfather came from San Carlos, Chihuahua and worked as an *arriero*, driving mule trains. His father worked for many years at SRSU as a transportation driver.

School segregation in Alpine at that time ended in eighth grade, and Lujan graduated from Alpine High School in 1974. His counselor said he would make a good gardener. Instead, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was sent to Germany. In an army bus in East Berlin with fellow soldiers, he endured hostile gestures from local men and felt American for the first time.

As a Hispanic of Apache Humano heritage who experienced segregation and racism, Lujan realized that education was the way for-

ward. He continued his education at Sul Ross. He was always attracted to art and completed his BA in Fine Arts (1980) with a minor in teaching (K-12.) In 1994 he also gained a Masters of Education at SRSU.

He became a social worker but found the system heavily bureaucratic. However, he got to visit the border area and found it very different, culturally rich and satisfying. Lujan left the Department of Human Resources in 1990 and went briefly to Corpus Christi, where he took several jobs. After a chance meeting in Presidio with the Superintendent of the Presidio ISD, he landed his first teaching job – in Presidio. His students played marbles and wore boots. Lujan felt he was coming back to a place of origin.

After three years, he was qualified to teach core subjects in the high school. He also met and later married Julia West, also a teacher, who today shares his home near the Rio Grande. Teaching became a passion for him. He started soccer in Presidio and got his students into the Texas History Day program.

It was at Sul Ross that Lujan become aware of his Native American roots. Getting involved in the arts and feeling part of nature fed the feeling. “We are in occupied territory,” he says. He considers Border Patrol check points the same as the presidios built in earlier centuries. The land is sacred to him and the Pipeline, which he vehemently opposes, intrudes on this sacred land. With his Hispanic and Native American heritage, he does not feel alone but empowered. At Alpine High School’s 50th Reunion he was the only male Hispanic.

Now retired, Lujan is embarking on a new project in the studio he is building in Shafter. He intends to exercise his creative side, which was fostered at Sul Ross but led to little. He describes this new venture with vigor, talking about 100 art projects – a new challenge. He will also develop his pomegranate juice, the only person locally in this business.

Corrections:

Bob Miles, Fourth Quarter 2016

The Sproul family, Miles’ father’s side of the family, settled in the Davis Mountains in 1886.

Miles started school in Alpine in 1951.

Miles’ mother’s name was Pauline and his son’s name is Robert.

Miles’ most recent article in Cenizo Journal was “Presidio Area Spanish Missions,” as well as two poems, “Old Gods” and “Back to the Blanket,” in the same issue (4th Quarter 2015)

My apologies for the errors. Jim Glendinning

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Photo Essay

Light Moves Upon Us: Tonya Tiday



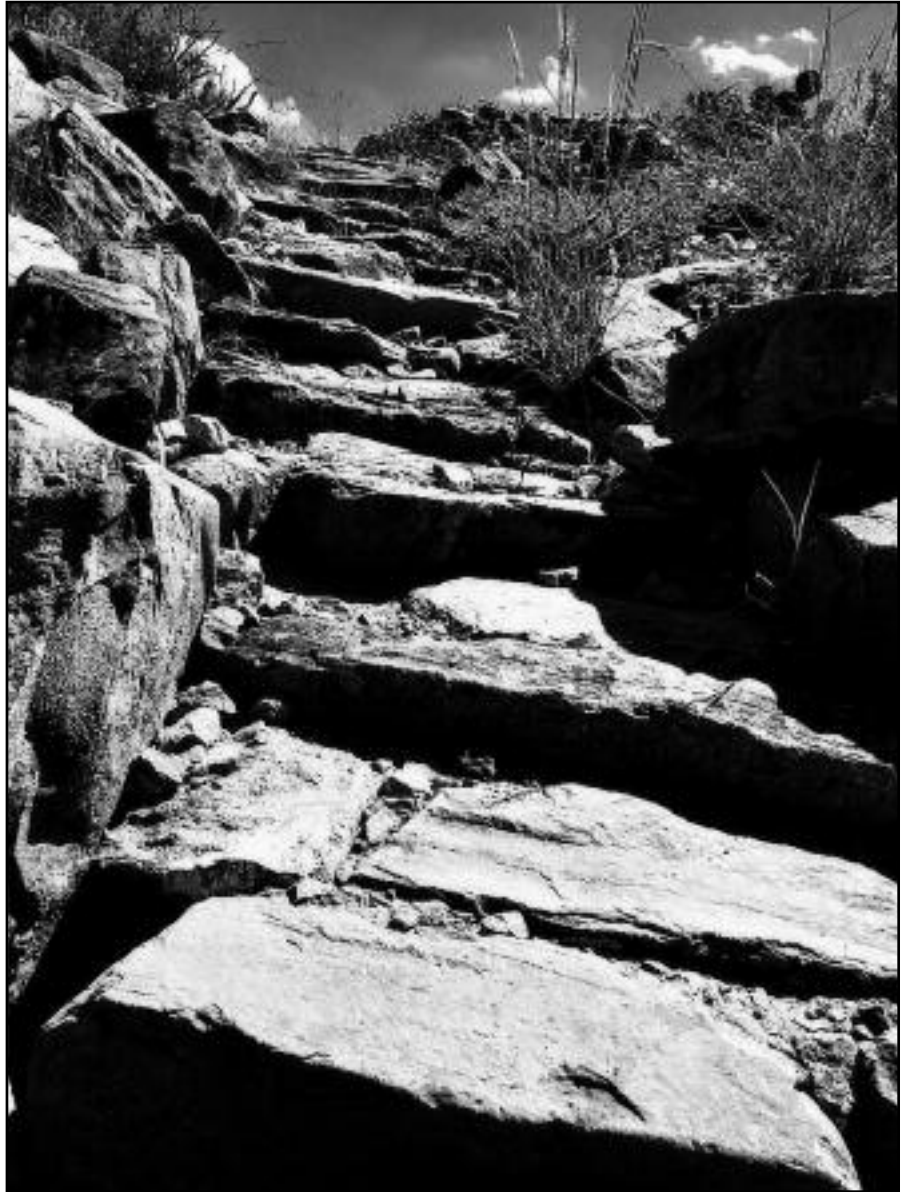
I lean back and exhale. Look out from the top of the summit into the vast distance, drawing in the last bit of warmth provided by the resting sun. Rays of movement over the skin, face, and my emotions buried deep in the safe place. Slowly releasing the breath as the sun moves behind and beyond. Where did the sweet time go of childhood wonder and music so rich with soul?

The passing of the light moves over us as our seasons of life take shape. The Young and Old pass and at times, cross. Wonderment. Questioning. Wishing. Dreaming. Letting Go of what was.

Then the young child that dances freely, giggling at shadows. Now the young couple that say I Do and hold each other tightly. The Gentleman of years gone by that ponders and questions the yesterdays.

I draw in my breath and see the images of life. The sun sets. And rest comes next.





Storytelling the Cowboy Way

Story and photograph by Rani Birchfield



Whenever I mention ‘cowboy poetry,’ oftentimes the response is a groan, or a joke about people talking with their mouths full (of chew). Yet one of the biggest cowboy poetry events in the American west, at least in terms of quality and number of performers, is right here in our front yard.

Spoken word and the passing on of stories could be as old as language itself. Although there’s a lack of empirical evidence, it’s not a stretch to imagine gruntings and pointings of cave people evolving to communicate the

difference between woolly mammoths and squirrels, as they have different risk factors.

Fast-forward to Earth today as a modern day Tower of Babel with over 6,000 languages, each with their nuances and dialects within them. In our modern world, does the art of storytelling get lost amongst all the technology, hashtags and trying to fit meaning into 140 characters or less?

In the late 19th century the cowboy became the symbol for the West, the myths of heroics and adventure contrasting with the reality of a life of hard

labor, economic hardship and poor living conditions. The Vaqueros amused themselves in the evenings by singing and telling tales. These stories weren’t written down; they were passed verbally around a campfire. The accounts were often put to music with specific meter and rhyme – when something rhymes and flows, it’s easier to remember.

In 1985 a group of Folklorists who wanted to preserve the heritage of cowboy poetry started a gathering in Elko, Nevada. They rounded up people who knew a lot of the old poems

and brought them to Elko to catalog the poetry. Attended by less than 1,000 people the first year, the Elko Gathering gained a following and turned into an annual event, and in the year 2000, the U.S. Senate renamed it the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

The Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering rode in on the momentum of the Elko event. It is still held at Sul Ross State University where it started in 1987; the gathering is now filled to capacity each year. Don Cadden is the president of the operating committee

for the Gathering, which is a non-profit organization. "We pride ourselves on keeping it authentic," Cadden said. "We make it welcoming and comfortable for the storyteller – the storyteller is the focus. The poets have to be working cowboys and ranchers to be able to perform as a storyteller – a CD and a bio are required for submission." The term 'working cowboy' is more inclusive than it sounds and applies to more than just roping cattle and starting horses. *

"Ross Knox is a poet in the broader category – he's a mule packer extraordinaire," said Cadden. Originally from Oregon, Knox is one of the "elders" of the Elko Poetry Gathering. He had a reputation for knowing hundreds of old poems, so the organizers brought him into the fold of the first Elko event. ("Knox is also known locally because he has cowboied Out Here quite a bit," Cadden said.)

Knox was a typical working cowboy who moved around with the work and ended up settling in Arizona. An opportunity arose at the Grand Canyon National Park as a private contractor providing a particular service to the park. The job came with a

house about 100 yards from the edge of the Grand Canyon and a barn full of mules. Seven days a week Knox – or one of his part-time employees, if he took a rare day off – packed these mules full of supplies and headed down into the heart of the Grand Canyon to a place called Phantom Ranch.

Now, Phantom Ranch isn't a ranch like West Texans think of a ranch. It's just some rustic cabins built in 1922, a small general store and a canteen. The only ways to get there are by river raft, hiking, or by mule. (Phantom Ranch is its own 1% club, as less than one percent of Grand Canyon visitors make it down to the ranch.)

Employees stay at the ranch for days at a time and require food; the general store needs supplies; and the mail needs to run back and forth. The park doesn't allow burning or burying of trash, so everything that's brought down has to come back up, albeit perhaps in a different form. The maximum number of mules allowed is seven and the average trip there and back is eight or nine hours, if all goes well. This is done 365 days a year, no matter if it's hot as Hades or snowing balls. Note: This is not the tourist trail

to Phantom Ranch – the "working" route is different from the visitor route and is much more dangerous. The steep trail is narrow, with drop-offs to one side of hundreds of feet. The mules walk on the outside edge of the trail so as not to drag their pack on the inside wall. The switchbacks are hairpin-tight, and the mules have to dance around back and forth in place on their feet to accommodate the turns.

Knox did this job for 17 years in all types of conditions and had to be rescued by helicopter three times due to injury. Cadden and his wife, Pam Cook, traveled out to the Grand Canyon one time to visit Knox and make the supply trek with him. Cadden said he could only describe it as terrifying. "It was a harrowing experience. You couldn't have paid me enough to do that job, but Knox loved it."

Sources of the poetry are as varied as the poems themselves. Green Berets, paratroopers, Marines, publishers of award-winning novels and writers of songs recorded by Kenny Rogers, The Oak Ridge Boys and Dianna Ross are just a few examples of poets. Bruce Kiskaddon, whom many

consider to be the cowboy poet laureate of America, left the cowboy life behind and went to Hollywood to get into film work in the 1920s. He supported himself by being a bellhop in an elevator, which some considered a tragedy. However, tale tells it that Kiskaddon carried a pencil behind his ear and wrote down memories throughout the time of wearing a "monkey suit." It's been said that some of the greatest cowboy poetry came out of that elevator.

Ranches are oftentimes a blending of generations. For those of us who come from more urban areas without long ties to rural life, sometimes the struggles and viewpoints of the people in the hinterlands are unknown to us. Cowboy poetry opens a window to a culture lost in the obscurity of ranch folk and country people. The stories expose outsiders to a perspective which is largely rural and conservative, sharing the loneliness and hardships on the trails of the past as well as more modern struggles against government (or

continued on page 20

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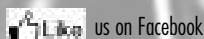
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continued from page 19

private industry) land grabs for mining and pipelines.

More than just melancholy, cowboy poetry is a form of stand-up and can be quite humorous, with its puns and its self-effacing attitude. Jimmy Counts is a Fort Davis local who didn't turn up his nose at the mention of the subject. Counts grew up on a ranch and spent his whole life doing "cowboy stuff," he said. "I've always enjoyed poetry, even wrote some when I was younger. I never kept anything, but now I've self-published a little book. Mine are kinda different than the poetry at an event – usually short, kinda silly, but always have something to do with something that happened to me, like getting thrown off a horse or hooked by a cow. I get such a kick out of writing them – I get tickled when they start coming to me; I don't sit down to write one – I'll be driving down the road and it'll wash over me. I get a giggle cuz they're just fun. I started out doing them for drunks in a bar so they're short – you're going to lose their attention soon so the poem better be short and sweet," Counts explained.

Montana, Wyoming, Nevada, Idaho, New Mexico, California, parts of Arizona and, of course, West Texas, are still breeding grounds for cowboy poetry. Although events have started popping up in the East, these are more "festival-type" events, according to Cadden. What turns it into a festival is commercialism and inauthenticity. Cadden and his board of volunteers want to keep the spirit of sitting around a campfire with a cowboy or ranch hand, listening to stories in an intimate setting without the distractions of vendor booths and the worries of

how much money to raise. This intimate and authentic touch makes it personal and is one of the main reasons for its success. "It's not a festival – it's a gathering. I'd rather see it die than turn into a festival," Cadden said.

Although we have no way of knowing what stories were told around campfires thousands of years ago, we in the Big Bend region do have a way to visit the cowboy life. We can listen in the comfort of an auditorium to the poet, yes. Or, if we're really adventurous, we can get up at the crack of dawn and head over to the dead-of-winter grass in Poet's Grove to attend the Chuckwagon Breakfast.** (People in rural towns back in the day heard about trail drives coming through and would come to the chuck wagon to eat – perhaps these were the first food trucks.) We can stand outside at the mercy of whatever weather's in town and watch the sun pop over the hill as we sip cowboy coffee. We can mingle with cowboys and stories to the smell of sausage gravy and baking biscuits. For a moment we can experience a life beyond ourselves, beyond the fracture of technology, and perhaps that expansion may make us fuller and more tolerant.

* "Starting horses" is a term for a movement that started about 30 years ago, according to Cadden. The old way was "breaking horses," which meant literally breaking the will and the spirit of the horse. The new way makes the horses want to work with you – it makes them a willing partner. Joel Nelson, whose poetry is included in another section of this issue, is famous for his patience while working with horses.

** The Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering sponsors a breakfast for five dollars on both days of the event - February 24 and 25, 2017.

For more information: texascowboy.com

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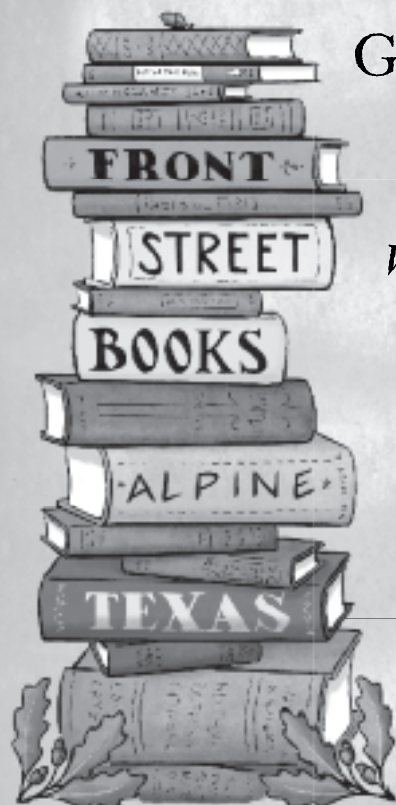


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I should step down to lift this point
Turning it delicately—feeling its smoothness
Beneath my fingertips
I would marvel at its perfection
At the way some ancient one
Had tempered and crafted such beauty
And how it came to lie there
All these centuries—covered—uncovered
Re-hidden—re-exposed
Until it came to me
To happen by this place
On this day made now more perfect.
And I would ponder such things
As coincidence and circles and synchronicity,
And I would pocket this treasure near my heart,
And riding on I would recall
Having seen such treasure as this elsewhere
But not this one—not this one.
And for one brief moment I would stiffen with fear
At how one quick glance in another direction
Could have lost this to me forever,
And I would touch my shirt over my heart
Just to make sure.

by Joel Nelson

Breakfast With Pete

First light breaks on a drizzly day, the kind that chills you to the bone
I can make out smoke from the chimney ahead, so old Pedro must be home
As I bounce along the rutted road, the pickup's snug and warm
At my age days like this a'horseback, have sorta lost their charm

Warmth glows through the windows, and I know the coffee's hot
Then a chill runs down my spine, and my belly starts to knot
Dangling from the porch, like some head upon a stake
Is the cold, wriggling carcass of a skinned out rattlesnake

Pete will grind and sprinkle it on his food, like some curranderro said
Hell, if that's what it takes to make you well, I'd just as soon be dead
I shudder as I pass ol'cascabel, holler buenos dias as I go in
Pedro looks up from cooking tortillas, with an impish little grin

I pour a cup of coffee, spoon warm frijoles in a bowl
Pete throws on hot tortillas, that will warm your very soul
We talk about the country, the horses and the cattle
And Pete says he fixed that broken latigo on my saddle

He talks about a letter from his daughter n Mexico
She's going to have a baby and just starting to show
I pour us another cup, and we enjoy our meager meal
But I suppose to most folks it wouldn't have much appeal

The splatters on the roof sound a little stronger now
Sure makes a feller smile that runs a bunch of cows
Between our Tex-Mex conversation, and the early morning sounds
I pause to pity the folks having their latte-tatte, at the Starbucks back in town

by Don Cadden

Local Marathon Artist Featured in One-Woman Show

by Debbie Wahrmond



One cannot help but be inspired when meeting Diane Bailey, in person or through her art. Professionally trained in New York City, initially in oil painting, Diane currently ‘plays’ with assemblages and constructions to achieve, as she says, “A different twist, a tongue-in-cheek, something a little absurd; a touch of humor.” If this risks categorization as “weird,” that is okay with her, even as she prepares for her one-woman show in Alpine, Texas. Diane conjures a desert mirage when she creates glass-fronted “shadow boxes” from found objects in her desert backyard. Reminiscent of American sculptor Joseph Cornell, her art evokes a brilliant imaginary reflection of place. She scoops up items much like one of her favorite quotes from artist Romare Bearden, who said, “The artist has to be something like a whale, swimming with his mouth open, absorbing everything.”

A voracious reader, Diane draws on a deep well of artists and authors. Tossing Chinese coins and gleaning tidbits from “I Ching” as she reads, Diane ponders the out-

come of the three coins she tossed this day, that led her to a passage of “The Creative.” The position of the coins, whether top or bottom, map to a semi-complex formula to a page number. When asked if this is a key to her art, Diane says, “I just try to watch and feel. It is not inspiring but it is encouraging.” She adds, “Finding a window into oneself” is the goal.

Born in 1947 in Schenectady, New York, Diane was an only child whose parents separated when she was in the second grade. This resulted in her mother and Diane moving to the grandparents’ dairy farm outside of Ballston Spa, NY. Her mother took a train to Albany, NY to work every day, leaving Diane with plenty of time on her hands. “They would keep me out of their hair and endlessly occupied by giving me pencils, crayons, clothes pins, tubes of glue, scissors and fabric to make ‘clothes pin people,’” she says. “I enjoyed making things, and escaping into my own world when I am making creations is a pleasure that has never abandoned me.”

Diane says her formal education started when she was 16 in Saratoga Lake, NY. “When I was a junior in high school, I saw an ad for painting lessons at a small coffee house,” she says. That is when she met her lifelong friend and mentor, painter and teacher Harold Keller. He offered weekly lessons at Caff  Lena’s in Saratoga Springs, NY and accepted Diane as a student, waiving the regular fees. Caff  Lena became the oldest continuously-running coffee house in the United States. Featuring folk singers Bob Dylan and Dave Von Rock among others, it was a haven for many and became a crucible for Diane as a budding artist. Keller has been very influential in Diane’s life and art, and his work can be found online at www.haroldkellerartist.net.

The year was 1964, and Diane

could not help but be influenced by the Beat Generation, a group of American writers who were alienated by what they saw as the conventionality and materialism of the 1950s in the post-World War II era. The following year, 1965, Keller suggested Diane apply to Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. It was a unique school established in 1859 by Peter Cooper, who made his school free to the working classes and also opened the school to women as well as men. She says, “You did not submit a portfolio to the art school, but instead, went to New York City for two days of tests in their auditorium.” She describes being given “lumps of Plasticine, drawing and design problems, and questionnaires.” Diane did well: “Having to perform spontaneously was not hard for me....it is probably one of my strengths.” She was pleased when she was accepted as a night student. “This was heaven, for a country girl to be in Manhattan,” she says, and she became a “quasi-beatnik,” since as a student she had free passes to all the museums and took advantage of the Whitney, Metropolitan and all the others the city had to offer. Unfortunately, she had a hard time financially and had to drop out. She continued making art, following Keller’s advice: “If you really plan on being a painter, get used to standing in a closet and stomping your feet.”

Diane transferred as a college senior to an accredited college, the Windham College in Putney, VT, and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1975. She says, “Artists draw on an infinite number of sources for inspiration.” Although she sketches from plants, animals and landscapes, “It is the ideas and abstractions that interest me more.” Although she did not stop painting, she was not showing as actively toward the end of the 80s. “I had a few annual shows in my studio in Bellows Falls, VT, and I began to work on a line of more commercial products, traveled, and moved about

more.” She attended a very small school, Mark Hopkins College (now defunct) in Brattleboro, VT, and had an art teacher who had studied at the Sorbonne in Paris. She says, “John Irving was my literature teacher (author of *World According to Garp*),” and since the school had only 25 students who worked through ‘independent study,’ “It was a very free and loose

titled, “Art for Art’s Sake.” She had started a series of three-dimensional pieces but put her art on hold when she moved to Marathon, TX in 1997. That year, Diane had turned 50 and she and her husband, Angelo Putignano, decided to follow a friend to Marathon to purchase an old adobe for “a whopping \$5000! There were still a few shingles on the roof frame,

operated a pizza shop in Saxton’s River, VT. He learned to build and Diane says she “Learned to patch and paint and design on a LARGE scale.” They eventually sold the house and built another one, also in Marathon. Diane says, “This part of Texas cast an irresistible spell with its protective basin of mountains that felt like they were snuggling you in with their surrounding ridges and endless sky. The light danced in totally unpredictable circles all across the top of the ridges.”

It seemed fortuitous that in October, 2014, Diane was invited to submit work to Catchlight Gallery in Alpine, and she felt honored for the opportunity to join. The gallery, established in 2004 to illuminate the work of Big Bend artists, is a co-operative of 14 artists and seems to be a good fit for Diane. After 20 years of living in Marathon, Diane still finds inspiration “In the broken glass that seemed to lend itself perfectly to the porcupine quills I had been using for my collages and boxes.” When Diane speaks of her art, one can almost imagine her rowing a canoe down a calm, bucolic river, through the wrinkles of time, her chiseled features perfectly profiled as her eyes search for forgotten objects, catching in the light to be absorbed much like a whale would swallow shiny fish.

As Diane plans and prepares for her one woman show at the Catchlight Gallery, the show will coincide with her 70th birthday. From artist Romare Bearden, “You put down one color and it calls for an answer. You have to look at it like a melody.”

“Life has me a firm believer that all things happen for a purpose,” says Diane, and as her lifework takes another turn, one can hear the beat plays on.

Diane Bailey’s one-woman show will be held at the Catchlight Gallery in March and April 2017, 117 W. Holland Ave in Alpine. www.catchlightartgallery.com for more information.



school. I had an apartment, a studio, and time and freedom to paint as long and hard as I pleased.”

In the summer of 1991, Diane was profiled in Woodstock Common magazine by Michael Peters, in an article

which was still intact, and four solid walls.” Renovation became the new creative outlet...along with starting and operating a small restaurant (Angelo’s and Diane’s on main street). Angelo was a barber by trade and had



Big Bend Eats

By Carolyn Brown Zniwski. Illustration by Avram Dumitrescu.

Chocolate, *Theobroma cacao*, the very best product of the Americas, is in my opinion second only to water as the most perfect food on this green earth. The oldest chocolate found was the remains of fermentation discovered in the bottom of a pottery jug excavated in a South American archeological dig, dating to 4,500 BCE. The Latin name for chocolate does mean “food for the gods.” The Inca reserved it for priests, kings, high-ranking officials and people to be sacrificed. Archeologists surmise it was to make the victim feel better about dying.

Turning the chocolate seeds into the delicious treat we enjoy is an involved process. First the seeds are fermented for several days in a mash of the seed pod pulp and water. Next, the liquid is squeezed out of the seeds, which are then dried in a process first developed by a Dutchman. This powder is very bitter, and so an alkalizing agent is added. This Dutch processing allowed chocolate to be more than a beverage. Now we have hundreds of chocolate bars, chocolate candy, cakes, cookies, and the perennial favorite, brownies. It is still “food for the gods” and we use it for all kinds of celebrations, as well as eat it just because. I was one of the many folks who celebrated the announcement by nutritionists that chocolate was good for you.

Before I wrote this column I asked around to see what were peoples’ favorite ways to eat chocolate. That has lead me to give you the following selection of recipes. I hope you enjoy making them. My taste buds are already humming.

Easy Peasy Chocolate Cake (gluten free)

3 eggs
Chocolate bars totaling 5.8 oz.

Preheat oven to 350°. Line a small (6") cake pan with parchment paper. Melt the chocolate over hot water.

While it is cooling separate the eggs. Beat the egg whites until stiff. Stir the yolks into the chocolate. Fold the whites into the chocolate mixture in 3 parts. Pour the batter into the cake pan. Bake 40 minutes (+ or -). Let cool about 5 minutes, remove from pan and cool on cake rack. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. This makes 4 – 6 servings. I use a mix of both milk chocolate and dark; you can use any chocolate bar you like. I haven’t done so as yet because this is a new recipe for me, but I thought next time I’d use a bar with ginger in the chocolate.

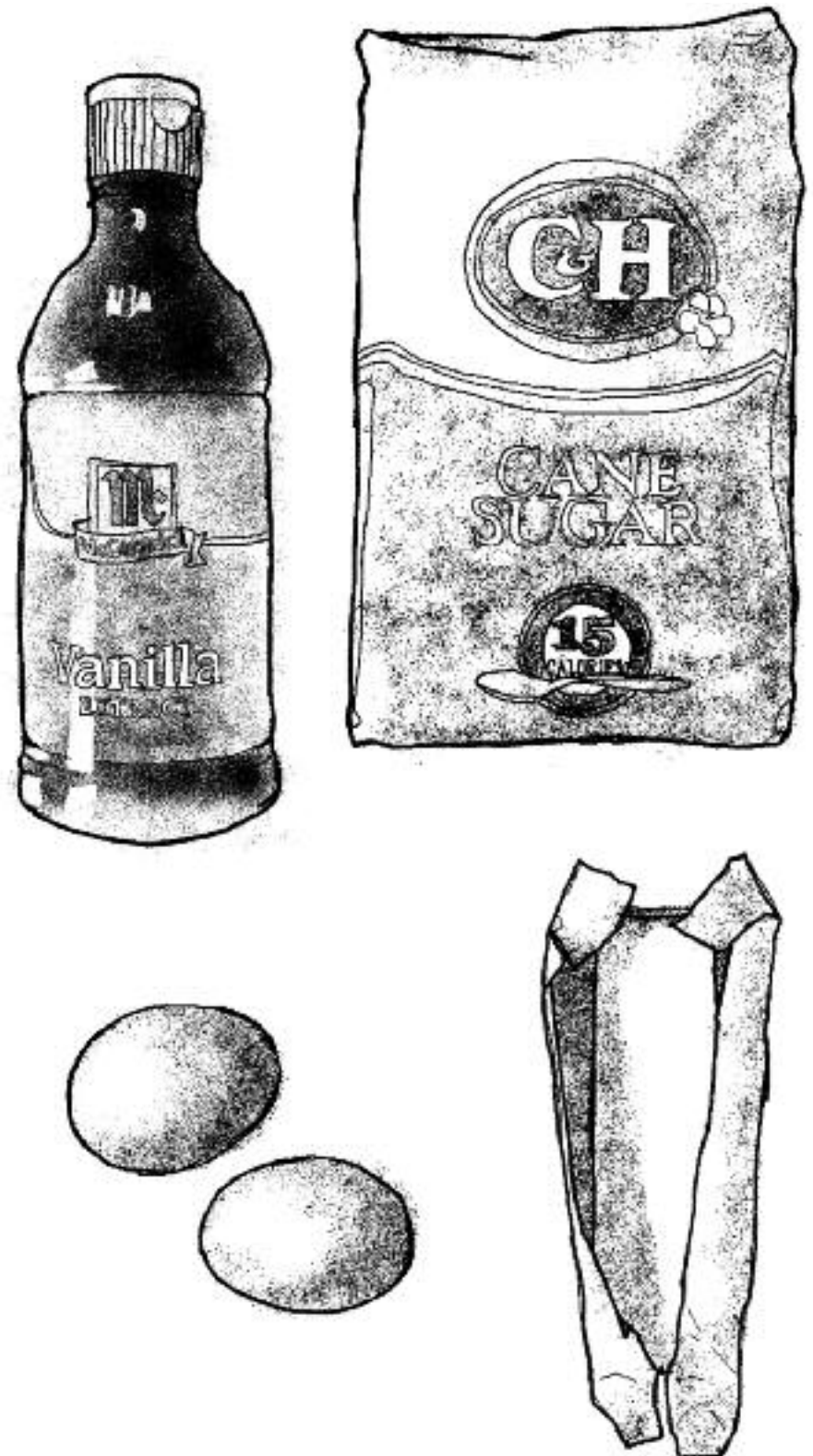
My mother didn’t like to bake. She would make every family member a cake on their birthday and that was it, except for these brownies. Anytime she was called upon to bake cookies, cakes, cupcakes or any other treat, she made these brownies. I think they are the very best. Leave them plain or frost them with a butter cream frosting.

Becky’s Brownies

½ cup butter
6 Tbls cocoa
1 cup sugar
½ cup flour
¼ tsp salt
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla

Preheat oven to 350°. Melt butter over low heat. Stir cocoa into butter. Mix sugar, flour and salt together in a separate mixing bowl. Add eggs and vanilla and mix well. Pour butter/cocoa into batter and mix well. Pour batter into a buttered 8"x8" baking pan. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes. Do not over-bake. They are done when a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Try to let them cool before you eat them. These are the best brownies ever. Mom got away with only baking brownies because of how delicious these are.

Make brownie sundaes. Put a nice-



sized brownie in a bowl, add a scoop of your favorite vanilla, chocolate or strawberry ice cream and top with hot fudge sauce.

Hot Fudge Sauce

Combine 1 cup sugar, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cocoa and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk in a saucepan. Heat over medium heat, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Bring to a full boil and boil exactly 1 minute.

Stir in 1 tsp vanilla.

This gets thick when poured over ice cream. Leftover sauce can be stored in the refrigerator and reheated for future use. Oh So Good!

Papa's Favorite Cake Or Sauerkraut Cake

My grandmother was a big fan of sauerkraut. She said a daily serving kept your body in good tune and she

always had a dish of it before bedtime. The smell of sauerkraut still reminds me of my nana. She worried about my grandfather. Papa hated sauerkraut and would not eat a bite. He did have a sweet tooth though, and a love of chocolate. He even put chocolate sauce on his fresh strawberries. Nana was a practical woman, so she would make him his favorite chocolate cake about once a week. He never knew about the sauerkraut in it. It's been several years since I made this cake but I noticed the sauerkraut in Porter's vegetable aisle last week and that reminded me of the recipe.

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup soft butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 3 Tbls cocoa
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cinnamon
- pinch of salt
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup apple juice or water
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup well-drained sauerkraut

Preheat oven to 350°. Cream butter and sugar. Add egg, stirring until well blended. Stir in half of the flour, add the juice then remaining flour. Stir in the sauerkraut. Pour into to a buttered and floured 8" baking pan. Bake at 350° about 30 minutes. It is done when a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Frost with chocolate frosting.

Cocoa Piedra Frosting

Our graphic designer, Wendy, gave me this vegan chocolate frosting recipe and it seems perfect for the sauerkraut cake. Cut the recipe in half for a single layer.

- 2 ripe avocados
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cocoa
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Big Bend honey
- 2 Tbls coconut oil
- 1 tsp vanilla
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

Blend everything together in a food processor until smooth.

Crazy Cake

This cake is crazy because everything is mixed and baked right in the same pan. Quick, easy and delicious, and with a minimum of cleanup, this cake is one of our favorites.

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour
- 3 Tbls cocoa powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp white vinegar
- 6 Tbls vegetable oil
- 1 cup cold water

Put the dry ingredients in an 8" square or 9" round pan and mix them a bit with a fork. Make three wells in the dry ingredients. Pour vinegar in one, oil in one and vanilla in one. Pour the cold water over all and stir with the fork until the batter is mixed. Pop it right in the 350° oven and bake for 30 – 35 minutes. Be sure your oven is preheated. I first made this cake when I was in high school well over 50 years ago. It has stood the test of time.

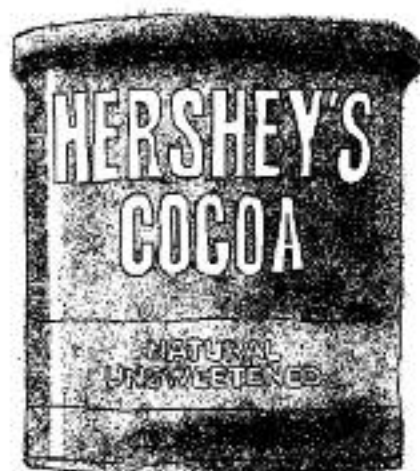
Favorite Chocolate Chip Cookies

When I was in college the mother of a friend of mine would mail these cookies to me because she knew how much I loved them.

- 1 cup soft butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 1 Tbls water
- 2 eggs
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour
- 1 tsp soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 cups oatmeal
- 1 cup chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350°. Cream butter and sugar. Beat in vanilla, water and eggs. Add flour, soda and salt. Stir in oatmeal and chips. Drop by tablespoon on parchment-paper-covered or well-greased cookie sheet. Bake 8-10 minutes. Take them out while they seem a little under done as they will finish baking as they cool on the baking sheet. These store well in an airtight container.

This should cover your chocolate needs and keep your heart and kitchen warm this winter season.



Las Posadas - The Search for Shelter

by Jayne Gallo

The cold is numbing as the procession winds through the dark streets of Marathon, Texas. Flashlights give spotty glimpses of occasional road hazards, which disrupt neither the journey nor the prayers offered by the pilgrims of all ages who gather for each of nine nights in December, to continue a religious and cultural tradition embraced both by Catholics and many Protestant denominations.

They are participating in Las Posadas, a reenactment of the journey of Mary and Joseph over 2,000 years ago as they sought shelter upon their arrival in Bethlehem. Their travels, mandated by the decree of the King of Judea so that a census could be conducted, took them to the crowded streets where they repeatedly were refused lodging, despite Mary's advanced pregnancy. Las Posadas commemorates their difficulties and the lack of hospitality they experienced as they sought a place for Mary to give birth to Jesus.

Today's pilgrims in Marathon follow in the footsteps of Don Crescencio and Doña Domitila Sanchez, a deeply-religious Catholic family who brought the tradition of Las Posadas with them when they arrived in town from Mexico in 1968. After their passing in the 1990s, their daughter Chelo Estrada and her late husband Leo continued to gather family, friends and parishioners of St. Mary Catholic Mission to honor both her parents and their family's religious heritage.

Most likely, Las Posadas originated as a means for European missionaries to teach the native people stories about the birth of Jesus, and were patterned after medieval Bible plays which provided instruction in scripture and theology to those unable to read. Introduced in Mexico in the 16th century, the tradition spread throughout what is now Central America and the Southwestern United States. Today it continues in places as diverse as Albuquerque, New Mexico, San Antonio, Texas, Salt Lake City, Utah, and the Raleigh/Wake Forest area of

North Carolina - and wherever there are communities of Hispanics who hold fast to the religious practices passed down through the generations.

Las Posadas is a Novenio, a nine-day period of prayer. Beginning on December 16th, the ritual takes place each night. The pilgrims gather at a predetermined house. Prayers are dedicated to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph to prepare for the journey. The group, often including entire families, follows those representing Joseph and Mary to another house.

In days past Mary and Joseph were often portrayed by a young boy and girl, who would sometimes ride on a donkey offered by a local resident for the Novenio. In Marathon now, they are depicted in a small manger-like tableau on a portable base which is carried by various people, one at a time. During the procession lit candles may be carried, and the Rosary is prayed - a series of five sets of prayers. Each set is known as a decade and consists of an Our Father followed by 10 Hail Marys.

That is the Catholic prayer which recounts the announcement of the Angel Gabriel to Mary that she was chosen to be the mother of Jesus, the Son of God, as well as the response of Mary's cousin Elizabeth who was the mother of John the Baptist. (See Luke 1: 26 - 45) Songs are also sung between each decade of the Rosary as the people walk. Then they arrive at their destination:

"En el nombre del cielo os pido posada, pues no puede andar mi esposa amada."

"In the name of heaven I ask you for shelter, for my beloved wife can go no farther."

These words are sung from outside by those representing Mary and Joseph as they arrive at the "posada," the place where they are hoping to rest from their travels from Nazareth. Those inside the dwelling deny access as they sing:

"Ya se pueden ir y no molestar porque si me enfado los voy a apalear."

"You may go now and don't bother us anymore because if I get angry I will



Jonathan Paredes carries the tableau representing Joseph and Mary seeking refuge through the streets of Marathon during the first of nine days' processions.

beat you."

After several stanzas of dialogue are sung, those in the house finally agree to give Mary and Joseph a place to rest.

"Entren, peregrinos, no los conocia."

"Enter, pilgrims, I didn't recognize you."

Everyone is then admitted and the final verse is sung:

"Esta noche es de alegria de gusto y de regocijo porque hospedaremos aqui a la Madre de Dios Hijo."

"Tonight is for joy, for pleasure and rejoicing for tonight we will give lodging to the Mother of God the Son."

Joyful concluding prayers are recited and songs sung to celebrate the couple's arrival to the posada, the resting place. The family receiving them prepares a delicious meal of traditional foods for all to enjoy, as adults and children alike enjoy eating and visiting with each other.

The next night the pilgrims assemble at the house where Mary and Joseph have rested. The procession, prayers and hymns are repeated as everyone travels to the next house, and the request for shelter and denials are made again. On the ninth and final night, Christmas Eve, the destination may be at church. In Marathon, it typically has been at Chelo Estrada's home, where the Holy Family will rest until next year, when Las Posadas will again portray Mary and Joseph seek-

ing lodging in Bethlehem.

In many locations the tradition of Las Posadas has been consistent for a long period of time. In others, it has been revived after a period of inaction. In Alpine, Texas, Alma Betancourt of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church organized Las Posadas in 2015 and again in 2016. The San Antonio River Walk has been the site for Las Posadas since 1966. St. Augustine, Florida has celebrated it for over 400 years. And, the celebration also occurs in the Philippines.

The Catholic Diocese of El Paso, which includes the Big Bend region, in December 2016 hosted a Migrant Posada with events at nine different parish churches in the El Paso area. The focus was on the plight of today's immigrants who, like Mary and Joseph, find themselves in need of acceptance and welcome.

Las Posadas is a tradition which recreates an historical, profound event in the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem. It reminds us that so many are in need of hospitality and welcome today, as Mary and Joseph were over 2,000 years ago. We can reject those in need, or open our hearts to be generous in spirit. In Las Posadas, we are called to be people who share a Christmas message of hospitality, every day of the year.

The stealth and modern avionics of the sixth-generation fighters today gives them the advantage of being able to spot and shoot down an enemy before the bad guys even know they are there, in a technology known as "beyond visual range."

Windecker gave up his dental practice to work on his airplane project in the early 1960s and the Midland Development League recruited him to the burgeoning Permian Basin, where he set up shop in a climate-controlled hangar at Midland International Air and Space Port, the building that now houses the American Airpower Heritage Museum.

"Dad's project was funded by Dow at Lake Jackson-Freepport," Ted Windecker said. "First, they successfully flight tested a wing on an existing [Cessna 182] aircraft with full FAA observation." The project moved first to a research center in Hondo where Dow had an abandoned Air Force base. Ted's brothers Bob and Skip joined in, with all three becoming production engineers, and today they all work at Windecker Aviation in Austin, where Ted is the chief technology officer.

"I was the composite engineer who developed the composite aircraft and was manager in all the stealth things we did," Ted said. "We were there [Hondo] for about a year when we moved to Midland" in January, 1962, he said.

Leo Windecker graduated from University of Texas dental school in 1948 and Dow

decided it needed a dentist in Lake Jackson, a Dow company town.

He opened a dental office there and several of his patients told him about advanced research, Windecker said. They were the first to make fiberglass, first to develop epoxy resins, and some of Dow's work led to the creation of styrofoam.

"When he [Leo] was in dental school, an anatomy professor said the human bone is one of most efficient for strength and weight in the world with the strength in the cortical layer," Ted Windecker said. "Fiberglass with resin almost exactly duplicated that bone."

Dr. Windecker had opened his dental practice with his wife Fairfax, the second of three mates. She wanted to join him in the aircraft project "but Dad said she had to keep the dental practice open to provide money," Ted said.

"She said she wanted to join him and he asked what she would do," he said. "She said she would sweep the floors or anything to be part of the project and she went to the cabinet and brought the broom out. She was a dental specialist, was number one in her dental school class and here she was offering to sweep floors," he said. "So after a few months, we all packed up and moved."

Fairfax didn't sweep floors, though. She became a research assistant and Ted, then 13, inherited the broom.

Leo Windecker died in 2010 and Fairfax about 20 years earlier.

"He was a little ahead of his time – on the leading edges," former Midland Mayor Wes Perry said. Perry now is CEO

of EGL Resources. "The airport is our number-one asset," he said.

Midland was the base for the Army Air Forces Bombardier School during World War II, one of four used to train young bombardiers to use the then-new Norden bombsight.

"Businesses are why Midland is here," Perry said. "Leo was a brilliant guy. It's just a part of our history, an important part."

The Eagle got new life recently with the restoration of the seventh plane of the nine, tail number N4198G.

"In 2009 I acquired all rights to the Eagle," Ted Windecker said. "I found an investor in China [Wei Hang] who was interested [in restoring the Eagle] and we closed in November of 2013. He's been funding it ever since."

The new iteration, based on 98G, will be developed in China and likely will be even faster than the 159-knot (183 mph) 98G, he said. Wei plans to replace the 285-horsepower Continental IO-520 with a 310-horsepower Continental IO-550.

Wei's company is Chinese but it has named American engineer John Roncz to be chief designer of the new, revised Eagle.


Current plans are to produce the new airplane in both China and the US.

Composites join technologies like instrument flight, jet engines, supersonic flight and others as the airplane advances from the flimsy powered glider of the Wright Brothers. And that development was born just up the road in Midland, Texas.



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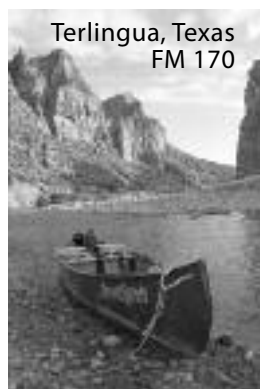
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TRANS PECOS TRIVIA

by Daisy Gallo-Trehus
 DINOSAUR TRIVIA

- 1) In 2011 a large horned dinosaur was discovered in Big Bend National Park. What locally-flavored name was it given?
 a) Elenaraptor c) Terlinguadon
 b) Bravoceratops d) Chisosaurus
- 2) The limestone Boquillas Formation preserves numerous sea creatures, including a Mosasaurus, which specimen is how long?
 a) 14 feet c) 30 feet
 b) 90 feet d) 6 feet
- 3) Recently Chinese paleontologists found a specimen of a relative of the Tyrannosaurus Rex perfectly preserved in amber. What part of the dinosaur was it?
 a) An eyeball c) An egg
 b) The nose d) A feathered tail
- 4) In the fossil-rich Aguja Formation in Big Bend National Park, formerly a vast, swampy area, how many species of dinosaurs have been discovered?
 a) 70 c) 25
 b) 15 d) 130
- 5) A more recent formation in the park, from 75 to 60 million years ago, which yields scores of varieties of plants and late-period dinosaurs, bears the name of a local animal. What is the formation called?
 a) The Paisano Formation c) The Chupacabra Formation
 b) The Javelina Formation d) The Tarantula Formation

Answers: 1-b 2-c 3-d 4-a 5-b

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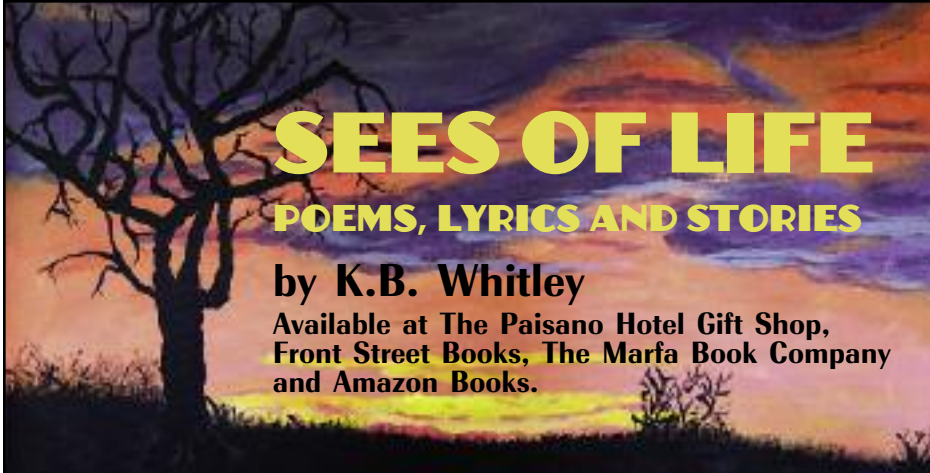
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