

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

arizonahighways.com MAY 2003

INDIAN JEWELRY

Imaginative
New Traditions

18 COVER/PORTFOLIO Innovative New Silversmiths

Navajo and Hopi jewelry artists are bursting with renewed creativity and output of their fine handiwork.

14 BIRDS At War With Woodpeckers

A weary homeowner confronts noisy, bothersome antagonists, and later finds the hammering hellions are raising a family.

34 HISTORY Remembering a Frontier Showman

"Arizona Charlie" was a rascal with wild schemes, an entrepreneur and a peer of "Buffalo Bill" Cody and Zane Grey.

38 TRAVEL Driving the Trail of Dreams

Turkey Creek Road leads you to scenic, rugged places in the Bradshaw Mountains where dreams of gold and silver went boom and bust.

6 RECREATION Black River Fishing and Feasting

It's tough to get there, but an eastern Arizona outing offers a treat for gourmet anglers.

[THIS PAGE] Shadows fall over Coal Mine Canyon on the Navajo Indian Reservation, as the day's last light illuminates only the pinnacles of the canyon's rocky spires. RALPH LEE HOPKINS [FRONT COVER] Happy Frejo, a Pawnee Seminole Indian, models Native American jewelry provided by the Heard Museum Shop. Her necklaces were made by artists Mary Lovato (Santo Domingo) and Debbie Silversmith (Navajo). Earrings are by Myron Panteah (Zuni). See story, page 18. [ABOVE RIGHT] Silver and stone inlay bracelets (left) are by Verma Nequatewa and Ramona Poleyma (both Hopi). Brushed silver and stone bracelets (right) are by Shawn Bluejacket (Shawnee). Gary Reeves (Navajo) created the multistoned concho belt. The rings on the right were designed by Bluejacket and the one on the left is by Silversmith. Mae Mallahan Thompson (Navajo) designed the clothing worn by Frejo. RICK ODELL [BACK COVER] A resplendent bouquet of saguaro cactus flowers graces the banks of Turkey Creek in the Bradshaw Mountains. CHUCK LAWSEN



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55 GENE PERRET'S WIT STOP

Friend of Arizona and funnyman Bob Hope, for whom our author used to write jokes, turns 100 this month.

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Stately 900-year-old ruins and a nearby spring-fed well yield a faint picture of Sinagua Indian life.

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Snap your fingers in Sedona along with top jazz bands; bid on Indian arts and crafts in Ganado; tour Jerome's historic private homes and public buildings; and relive the O.K. Corral legends in Tombstone.

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When a visitor takes an Arizona cactus back to San Francisco, a low-key but pleasant relationship blooms.

50 BACK ROAD ADVENTURE Overland Road Historic Trail

It's hard to imagine the rough 19th-century travel conditions along the Overland Road Historic Trail south of Williams, but today you can hike it and drive next to it.

56 HIKE OF THE MONTH Towel Creek

Hike for 5.5 miles one-way on this Coconino National Forest route north of Phoenix to find a cluster of Sinagua Indian ruins.



POINTS OF INTEREST FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

Fiction or Nonfiction? That is the Question

This question requires a truly Solomon-like decision. Take your cutlass, cut the magazine in two; one with fiction, one without. By the way, send me either one. I like *Arizona Highways*. Be sure to print all the complaints. Makes for a great laugh while enjoying the stories and pictures of a great state.

VOSCO LEE RASH, Nampa, ID

The poor old editor feels about as old as Solomon but certainly not as wise. Thanks to all those who weighed in on the fiction question. Here is a sampling of the letters:

As a longtime subscriber, my vote is for no fiction. On the other hand, I don't mind if you run one from time to time. There will always be some articles I like better than others, and if some subscribers like the fiction stories, I can understand that.

KEN HESSEL, Albuquerque, NM

Here is a vote for continuing with the fiction. It makes for a well-rounded magazine and provides some action to go with the spectacular photographs.

KATHY STARK, Duluth, MN

We live on a small sum, and I don't like fiction. If I thought that fiction would be in more issues, I would take my money and go out and buy Western books with only true history. I love history.

BARB PIPER, Camp Verde

I love your short stories on Arizona history—fiction, true or somewhere in between.

S.B. BLOSSFELD, Green Valley

For those who love history, we have a series of Wild West books that are really great reading. See our Web site at arizonahighways.com.

We vote yes to using fiction from time to time. My first loves were Zane Grey books and *Arizona Highways* pictures. I am a native "Okie," but I have enjoyed 47 vacations in Arizona.

ALLEN A. WATSON, Edmond, OK

I have to agree with Richard Manion of Waveland, MS ("Letters," December '02), who didn't want to see any more distractions in what we purists feel should be a magazine dedicated to the highways, byways and dirt roads of Arizona. By making room for fiction, you're taking space from a prospective article

and pictures that would be what most of us intended that our subscription money be spent for.

JOHN STROM, Victorville, CA

I have enjoyed the fiction that you run occasionally, but I wouldn't want it to appear in every issue.

SHIRLEY SCHARDINE, Springville, UT

Since you asked, I must agree that it's a shame to waste such a beautiful magazine on fiction. If I want to read Westerns, I can pick up a Louis L'Amour paperback.

RUTH L. HEISEY, Dayton, OH

I love the fiction stories in the issues. Please keep them coming.

JODY ADAMS, Mesa

Fiction should be included sometime. I liked "The Life and Death of Sally Brand" (July and August '02). Diversity is good.

DON GUNTHER, Tucson

Poor Old Editor: How do you do it? Manage such a great magazine and get all those negative letters.

Bring on more fiction stories of the caliber of "The Life and Death of Sally Brand." I could hardly wait for the second installment.

MICHAEL BRUHN, St. George, UT

Why not have fiction stories about Arizona? They are fun to read.

LUCILLE WICHERN, Phoenix

Good fiction that is well researched to fit the locale is very interesting. It can tend to be as educational and enlightening as nonfiction.

JOHN WOLFE, Oakland, MD

December Issue

A few months ago, after a three-day trip to Arizona, I told a friend of mine who lives in Flagstaff that there wasn't enough variety in the landscape to tempt me to move to Arizona. Let me be the first to say I was wrong. Your beautiful "A Land For All" portfolio (December '02) took my breath away. What a wonderful and unique way to showcase your state's stunning, varied panoramas. I can't wait to come back and stand in awe before each and every one.

JULIE WOODARD, Indianapolis, IN

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

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E-MAIL "LETTERS TO THE EDITOR":
editor@arizonahighways.com

Regular Mail:
Editor
2039 W. Lewis Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85009

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KEVIN KIBSEY

Cinderella Cactus Gets Just One Night of Beauty

When spring comes to Tohono Chul Park in Tucson, the colors come as well. The creosote blossoms yellow; the fairy duster sports pink and red. Wildflowers go crazy in purple and gold. Amid all this flash, who would bother to look at the small, ground-hugging, skinny-limbed, gray-toned cereus cactus?

Appearances can be so deceiving. One night a year, sometime from the end of May through the early weeks of August, the cereus (*Peniocereus gregii*) takes the throne. The cactus bursts into blossom with such power that the perfume flows across the garden and out to the streets. The cereus shows the world why she holds the title of Reina de la Noche, or Queen of the Night. And, in homage, Tohono Chul Park remains open until midnight on blooming night, allowing visitors access to the more than 250 cereus cacti in the gardens.

Cereus-blooming lovers and those who would like the experience must wait for an announcement in the local media that the night has arrived. They can e-mail the park, robinevans@tohonochulpark.org, requesting to be contacted when the Queen decides to dress for dinner.

Information: (520) 742-6455.

Cacti with Limbs of Steel

Rick Phanton thought they might laugh when they saw his cacti.

They didn't laugh. They smiled. Then, they bought.

Phanton creates desert plants from steel rods, washers, nuts, bolts, screws and nails. As he explains, "I go into a hardware store, and it's a plant factory to me."

While his plants replicate their natural brethren in size and shape, they also have a whimsical quality about them. White washers crown the saguaro and

metal fence stays form an ocotillo. Phanton has a full-time job

building exhibitions of artificial rocks, mountains and caves for museums. Now he has seen what a little collection of nuts and bolts can do. He can make 'em smile.

"That's what makes me happy," he says, "I'm going to be starting on flowers next."

Information: Metallo Plants, (520) 790-6239.



RIK PHANTON

One Good Horse

The world of racing has Man o' War, literature has *Black Beauty* and Arizona

has Koko, The Wonder Horse. Koko carried Arizona-born singing cowboy Rex Allen through the 1950s and the years of Hollywood movies, television and countless rodeo appearances. Folks loved Allen to the tune of 1,000 fan letters a day. But he had to share top billing with that chocolate brown horse with the white mane and tail.

"You get mail from a little boy," recalled Allen in a 1994 interview with *Arizona Highways* magazine. "He says, 'I really like your movies. Please send me a picture of Koko.'"

Koko went to his heavenly

reward via Willcox, Allen's hometown. He was buried there in Railroad Avenue Park near the

railroad depot. Rex Allen died in 1999. His ashes were scattered in the same park, cowboy and horse together again.

To pay your last respects, or your first, check out Koko's place along historic Railroad Avenue, across from the Rex Allen Arizona Cowboy Museum.

Information: (520) 384-4583.



REX ALLEN ARIZONA COWBOY MUSEUM

THIS MONTH IN ARIZONA

1881
Phoenix, with a population of approximately 2,500, holds its first election.

1882
A fire in a saloon destroys the business section of Tombstone.

1887
The Tombstone Epitaph erroneously reports that a volcano erupted in the Dragoon Mountains following a severe earthquake, which did occur.

1892
Stagecoach lines are finalized between Flagstaff and the Grand Canyon.

1898
The price of a shave is at an all-time high of 25 cents.

1902
President Theodore Roosevelt makes his first trip to Arizona, and describes the Grand Canyon as "awful."

1911
Former President Theodore Roosevelt dedicates Theodore Roosevelt Dam, the largest masonry dam in the world.



JANA SOCHA

Arizona produce and homemade baked goods. Artisans and art lovers also stop for a view of local crafts. But the ranch, the creation of a Tucson couple in the 1990s, also includes the Amado Territory

Exit Amado for a Food Stop

Need a short stop on your Saturday shopping trip to Nogales? Turn left at Exit 48 off Interstate 19 and follow the waving hands and flags of the boys directing you into the Amado Territory Ranch and the Amado Farmers' Market. You may be in for a surprise.

Residents and visitors alike go there to stock up on fresh

Ranch Inn, the Amado Cafe, and Kristofer's, a gourmet deli overseen by a white-hatted chef. The corn outside may be fresh-picked from Sonoita, but the crab cakes inside began their trip in Alaska.

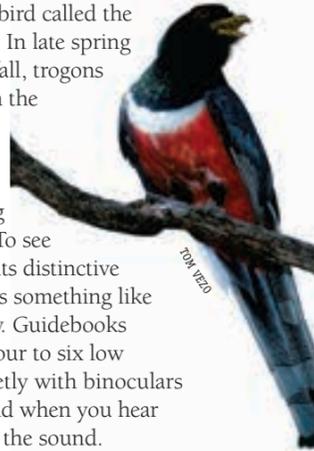
Make your own trip to the Amado Farmers' Market on the second and fourth Saturday of the month. The deli, cafe and inn welcome visitors throughout the week.

Information: toll-free (888) 398-8684.

Tailing the Elegant Trogon

In small campgrounds along Cave Creek Canyon near Portal, in southeastern Arizona's Chiricahua Mountains, you might glimpse a rare bird called the elegant trogon. In late spring through early fall, trogons swoop through the sycamore and cottonwood trees in the canyons calling to each other. To see one, listen for its distinctive call that sounds something like that of a turkey. Guidebooks describe it as four to six low croaks. Sit quietly with binoculars at the ready, and when you hear the call, follow the sound.

The green, parrotlike bird's most distinctive feature is its brilliant scarlet breast. Above the blaze of scarlet, a broad white band separates the scarlet from the green body and the black head. The long tail is white with faint copper-colored stripes. Trogons elsewhere, such as in Texas, have a brown tail. The Arizona bird, initially called the copper-tailed trogon, appears in up-to-date guides as the elegant trogon.



TOP: WED



Faces From a Faraway Land

They look out from the walls of the Arizona Historical Society in Tucson, the faces of China. Many of the photographic portraits from the early 1900s have no names attached, just faces that somehow made it across half a world, from China to Arizona. They came as railroad workers and stayed to farm and then to own the corner grocery stores. Oh, the stories they could tell.

The small collection of photographs and artifacts has told part of its stories in an exhibit titled "Carrillo's Chinese Gardens—the Chinese of Tucson" at the Arizona Historical Society.

More of their photographs can be found in the Buehman Collection in the society's library. They beguile,

these faces of China. One wonders if these were the pictures they planned to send home. Information: (520) 628-5774.



ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TUCSON

A Phoenix Frybread Fix

In the past, unless you had relatives or good friends who were Indian, you had to wait until the annual Arizona State Fair to get your "frybread fix."

Cecelia Miller recognized the popularity of that Indian specialty and opened The Frybread House. Now she's turning dough into cold cash.

Located just minutes from downtown Phoenix, at 4140 N. 7th Ave., the restaurant serves lunch and dinner featuring the deep-fried bread. Indian tacos and green or red chili stew are some of the favorite toppings. The versatile bread also can be served warm and drizzled with honey or powdered sugar for dessert.

Cecelia, a member of the Tohono O'odham Nation, runs the business with her husband, Joedd. In October 1992 they opened their first modest four-table restaurant. Although they have expanded the dining area, her son thinks they've already outgrown the location.

Lunchtime brings in a mixed crowd of high-rise office workers and a few Indian patrons who long for food that tastes like home.

Information: (602) 351-2345.



BETH ANDERSON

Question of the Month

Ranching in Arizona usually means cattle, but what other ranching industry was established in the state during the late 1800s?

A From its home on the desert range, the gangly ostrich provided plumage for European fashions. Arizona ostrich ranchers now market eggs, leather and meat.

CONTRIBUTORS

BOBBIE BOOKHOUT
CARRIE M. MINER
MARY PRATT
PATTY TALAHONGVA
KATHLEEN WALKER



LINDA LONGMIRE

Apache Wedding Blessing

Now you will feel no rain

For each of you will be the shelter to the other.

Now you will feel no cold

For each of you will be the warmth to the other.

Now there is no more loneliness

For each of you will be the companion to the other.

Now you are two bodies

But there is only one life before you.

Go now to your dwelling place

To enter into the days of your togetherness

And may your days be good and long upon the Earth.

LIFE IN ARIZONA 1 9 2 1



FEMERIA ALBA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE MAKINGS OF A POSSE

An old-time posse rode out of the towns and ranches of 1921 Arizona and headed south. They wanted to join the posses forming to capture the murderers of Frank Pearson, postmaster and storekeeper in Ruby, and his wife, Myrtle. The convicted killers had escaped while being transferred by car to the state penitentiary in Florence.

A photograph (above) taken in Nogales shows the men, the only two without hats, following their recapture near the Santa Rita Mountains in southern Arizona. This time they completed that trip to Florence, Placido Silvas (right) to serve a life sentence and Manuel Martinez (left) to be hanged, although he proclaimed his innocence to the end. Silvas, a trustee working at a prison farm, later quietly escaped and was never recaptured.

A Store for Nuts

The mouth waters. Pecan logs, chocolate-covered pecan toffee, hot and spicy pecans — they fill the counters of The Pecan Store in Sahuarita, 20 minutes south of Tucson. For those who prefer to create their own treats, bags of unshelled and shelled pecans fill the bins.

Nut lovers eat and bake with these pecans, assured of their just-off-the-tree freshness. The store sits in the middle of a massive pecan orchard, 4,400 acres with 106,000 trees. Here the nuts have truly taken over and nobody seems to mind.

Information: toll-free, (800) 327-3226.



BETH ANDERSON

Indoor-Outdoor Prison

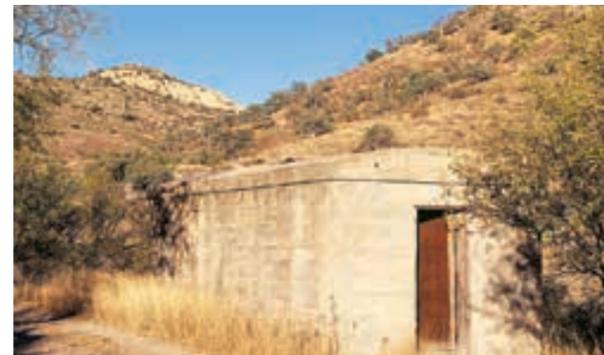
Sensitivity didn't rate high on the priority list of any Arizona mining town in the 1930s. Ruby, Arizona, proved no exception. The town near the Mexican border had long attracted the tough men who worked the lead, copper, silver and zinc mines of the area. Then, in 1935, someone suggested a jail might be in order to handle those who needed handling in the area's population of 1,000. But Ruby didn't get in a rush

over the issue, and the jail — one concrete room — wasn't built until a few years later.

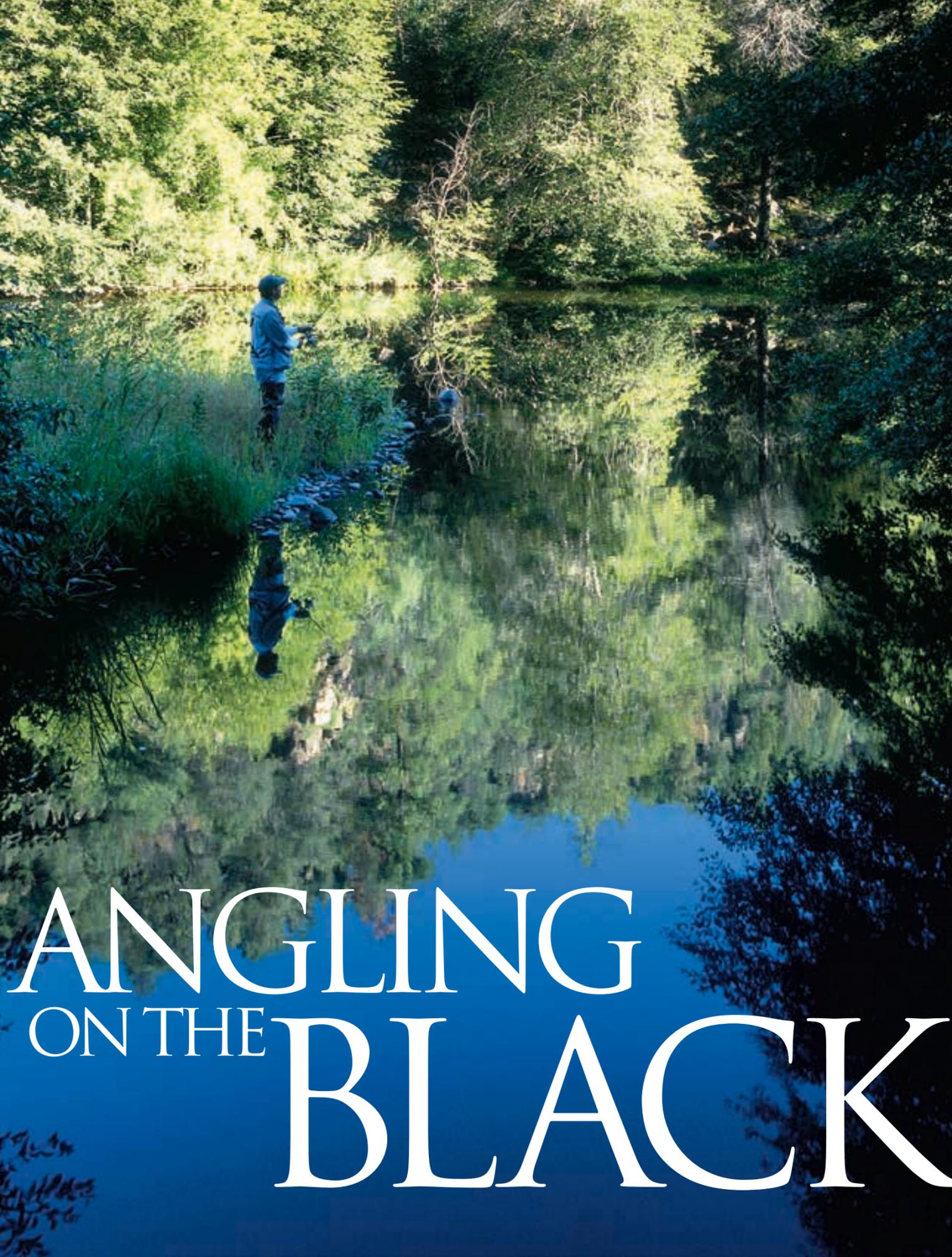
The town without a jail had developed its own way of dealing with civic problems like drunks. Quoted in one Tucson newspaper, a deputy sheriff explained, "We tie them to trees and let 'em go the

next morning."

Too late now to ask those miscreants if they preferred their mornings-after confined behind bars or lashed to a mesquite.



DAVE BLY



ANGLING ON THE BLACK RIVER

Hike a Little, Fish a Lot and Eat Like Lucky Gourmets Text by DAVE ESKEs Photographs by DON B. STEVENSON

As I stood knee-deep in the frigid waters of the Black River, the sudden tug on the line evoked surprise more than expectation. A snag, no doubt. Like Santiago, the jinxed fisherman in Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, I had set out that morning hoping to succeed, yet braced for failure. I subscribed to the flawed notion that if you don't expect anything, you won't be disappointed.

It was my second trip to the Black, which starts in the Mount Baldy region of eastern Arizona near the town of Alpine and snakes westward for what Arizona outdoor writer Bob Hirsch called "One Hundred Sixty Miles of Lonely." Lonely it may be, desolate it is not, abounding with bears, mountain lions, elk, deer, wild turkeys, pronghorn antelopes and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. Its restless waters, which bisect the White Mountain Apache and San Carlos Apache reservations, teem with trout, bass and catfish.

Or so I thought. On my first trip to the Black—in the autumn—my companions and I accomplished the near impossible, landing one luckless trout in three days of fishing. Embarrassing, to say the least, given the river's reputation for larger-than-life catches. A cursory analysis of our failure suggested it was attributable to the weather . . . the time of year . . . the bait . . . truculent fish. As it turned out, the real culprit was our ignorance of the river.

To remedy that, I invited veteran Black River anglers Woody Wilson and Merle Bird to join a second attempt in May. Woody set the conditions in an e-mail. "The deal is: I cook and everyone else pitches in to clean up." Now, as my line moved out and away, bending the rod (and dispelling the snag theory), it seemed a small price to pay. I set the hook with a jerk of the rod and reeled in a plump smallmouth bass. There would be fillets tonight.

I recalled that Woody liked to cook years ago, when we wrote for the same Phoenix newspaper. While other guys took their dates to restaurants, he often treated his to gourmet meals made from scratch. The West

[OPPOSITE PAGE] From its source in the Mount Baldy Wilderness, the Black River meanders through the White Mountain Apache and San Carlos Apache reservations. Clear and cold, the river shelters trout and smallmouth bass in its languid pools.

[TOP] If the river's remote and wild beauty isn't enough of a reward, a stringer of plump smallmouth bass will certainly add to any angler's appreciation.

[ABOVE] Campfire cookery fuels camaraderie and mouth-watering anticipation at day's end.

Virginia native came by it naturally, having been taught by his father, a talented camp chef. "If you can't eat well," his dad liked to say, "it's not worth going." So, when our restructured fishing party arrived at the mining town of Globe en route to the Black, we filled up a cart at the supermarket.

The ensuing 75 miles across the San Carlos Apache Reservation differed from the first trip. The windswept stretches of Antelope and Ash flats seemed browner this time, while the lonely corrals and water holes were nearly bereft of cattle. It was the drought. Even after ascending 3,000 feet onto the Natanes Plateau, the junipers and pines appeared sepia-tinged. An hour later, after rocking and groaning over rutted roads, the trees grew denser and the temperatures cooled. We were nearing the campsite.

Like most campsites in the region, this one offered no amenities—no water, hookups, grills or toilets. The mere presence of a dilapidated picnic table marked us as privileged characters, but not privileged enough to avoid packing out what we packed in, there

[BELOW] Woody Wilson admires the results of his morning's efforts.

[RIGHT] When it comes to a smallmouth bass's favorite foods, nothing ranks higher than a tasty crawfish.

[FAR RIGHT] At a mile-high elevation on the San Carlos reservation, the crystal-clear Black River sparkles in the sun.

being no garbage pickup along the Black.

Although we carried a cell phone for emergencies, the likelihood of patching it through in such a remote area was doubtful at best. Our chief advantage lay in having journeyed in four-wheel-drive vehicles, a necessary precaution in country where rain and snow can immobilize conventional transportation.

None of these "drawbacks" came to mind, however, as I peered over the edge of the canyon wall. There, hundreds of feet below, the Black wound tranquilly through an Eden of pine, sycamore and oak trees.

That night we ate steak, baked potatoes, broccoli and salad, then sat around the firepit, drinks in hand, swapping stories about former newspaper days. Photographer Don Stevenson had worked for a competing publication back then. Merle, an accounting firm



partner, had provided financial services to the paper where Woody and I worked. Of course, the tales were funnier in retrospect than the situations that inspired them, given the passage of time. Even better, we looked good in the telling. Overhead, the ponderosa pines darkened as Emmylou Harris' voice wafted from a boom box. At 6,000 feet elevation, the campsite grew cold long before the stories.

The next morning, stiff and groggy from a night of sliding off my air mattress, I filled my metal canteen cup with hot coffee and promptly burned my lips. I resolved to get a Japanese folding mattress—the type used on futons—and donate the air mattress to a needy



felon. After a hurried breakfast of sausage and scrambled eggs, we hoisted the food coolers into a tree to protect them from the bears that roam the countryside. Then Woody led the way down the steep canyon trail and across a parched meadow to the jumping-off point on the river.

According to Merle, the Black was running about 60 percent of what it had been on his last visit. Nevertheless, it was running strong. "When you fish the Black," Woody said, "you have to get in it. You have to ford it and walk both banks looking for deep holes and rocks and riffles where bass might be." To that end, we carried sneakers and wading boots down to the river and put them on before starting out. We left our hiking boots by a log in order to have dry footwear for the climb back up the switchbacks.

With Woody setting a brisk pace, we trudged upstream along a shaded, often

primitive trail. The trail crossed the river at several points, ratcheting up the exertion level. The challenge of keeping our balance amid slippery rocks and rushing water brought to mind the ill-fated trapeze artists, the Flying Wallendas. Once, we ran into a handful of cattle led by a large bull with a baleful stare, calling for a discreet detour. Our destination was a deep hole that Woody and Merle had fished on other occasions.

Farther upriver stood the Black River pumping station, where, on the first trip, our party had sighted an adolescent bear flipping rocks in search of crawfish. He could not have been more than 30 yards away but seemed oblivious to our presence. Later, we learned that he was an orphan—a very hungry one, obviously.

After hiking 2 miles or so, we stopped in the shallows to gather crawfish, a dietary staple of Black River smallmouth bass. Catching

them makes good sport in itself. On the first trip to the Black, we had lured them out from under rocks with lunch meat tied to strings. Once they locked onto the meat, we lifted them into jars. Woody eschewed this dilettante's approach, preferring to turn a rock over slowly and, very deliberately, move his hand toward the immobile crawfish. At the precise moment, he grabbed it. This technique involved bending over for extended periods, which invited muscle fatigue. Tai Chi it was not. Even the slightest slip stirred up muddy clouds of water that obscured everything but the colorful language.

When we had filled two or three plastic sandwich bags with crawfish and water, it was time to fish. Woody and Merle drew strikes right away. They sensed from long experience where the bass lurked. Woody leaned forward, reading the situation



[LEFT] The Black River's remoteness rewards the dedicated fly fisherman with a surpassing scenic beauty.

[ABOVE] Our intrepid fishermen aren't the only ones to enjoy the river's fishing opportunities. Here, they hurry past a sign warning of the area's healthy black bear population.

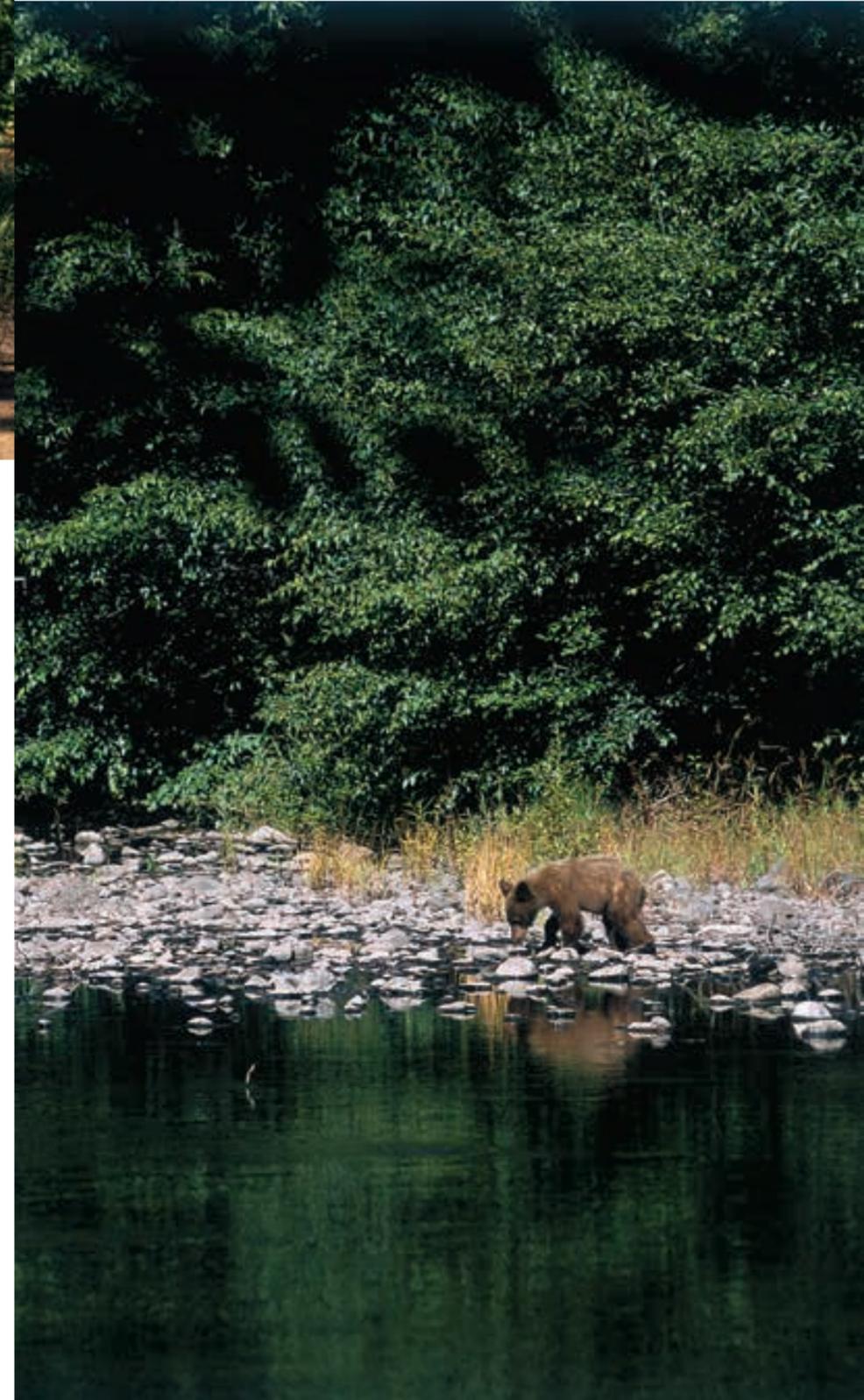
[RIGHT] An adolescent black bear searches for crawfish under rocks at the river's edge.

and listening—in a way, becoming part of the river.

Then, as though it were predestined, his line straightened, pulling the rod downward, and a bass broke the surface. After a while, I began to get strikes, too, although predestination had nothing to do with it. Call it luck. For the moment, at least, I felt a part of the brotherhood. I could hear fillets sizzling in the iron skillet.

As the afternoon wore on, we moved upriver a bit. But the golden time had passed, and the fish did not bite as often. Still, it was a pleasure just to feel the water coursing around my knees and to know that I had made the cut. Lunch, consisting of two tortillas folded around lunch meat and cheese, never tasted so good.

Later, Woody sat on a slanting river boulder and filleted the fish. At 3 o'clock, we headed back—night comes early in the canyon. "A friend and I were having so much fun once," Woody recalled, "that we didn't start back until 5 o'clock. It got dark on the



trail, and we had to use a flashlight to get out.”

The return trip reminded us that we had used a great deal of energy walking upriver. The 2.5 miles of primitive wilderness path, with overturned logs, vines that trip and whiplike branches, equaled at least 4 miles of cleared trail. Moreover, water supplies and concentration were running short, greatly increasing the “stumble factor.” That said, nature had her compensations. We were pleasantly surprised, for example, by a javelina, a big gray fellow with a bushy tail who nonchalantly ambled past us and up the canyon wall.

Farther on, we spotted a wild turkey, then a couple of mallard ducks winging downriver. What was it like, I wondered, when famed Arizona mountain men Bill Williams and James Pattie trapped beavers along the Black in the early 19th century? A savage paradise, by most accounts, offering riches, unfettered freedom and death. Today, the

[BELOW] A Black River water-pumping station offers fairly convenient access to the river as long as one realizes the 386 steps down means 386 very weary steps back up.

[RIGHT] An angler surveys the Black River from the lofty edge of its canyon.

[FAR RIGHT] A dam at the water-pumping station creates deep, lazy pools, perfect for quiet contemplation and a haven for the river's smallmouths.

mountain men set their traps only in history books while the beavers, reduced to a handful, furtively carry on in the upper reaches of the Black.

After getting back to the jumping-off point, we doffed our clothing and skinny-dipped in the river. It was the fitting end to a strenuous day and the payoff for having stuck with it. Then it was back up to camp and a dinner of bass fillets fried in bread crumbs and flour, with salad and corn on the cob.

Conversation around the firepit took a topical turn this time, ranging from Merle's new passion for fly-fishing to conjecture



about why rattlers had not been spotted down by the river.

After a while, Don, who had to lug around 40 extra pounds of camera equipment, turned in, and I soon followed. As I drifted off to sleep, Merle and Woody were still talking by the fire.

We would fish again tomorrow at a serene, translucent stretch of river no more than a hundred yards downstream from our starting point. We would enjoy another evening at camp, highlighted by the fashionably late appearance of a skunk that quickened pulse rates as it wobbled amiably about, sniffing for goodies. But as far as I was concerned, anything after today would be an anticlimax. Today was redemption. Even a skunk could not spoil that. **AH**

Dave Eskes' purported success as an angler is less "reel" than imagined. He lives in Phoenix.

This was Don Stevenson's first trip to the lower Black River. Each morning, he had a difficult time deciding which to pick up: his cameras or his fishing rods. He lives in Tempe.



LOCATION: Approximately 160 miles northwest of Phoenix on the San Carlos Apache Reservation.

GETTING THERE: From Phoenix, take U.S. Route 60 east to Globe, then U.S. Route 70 to Indian Route 8, a paved road just past the Peridot turnoff. Follow 8 north and west as it becomes Indian Route 1000, to Point of Pines, a cluster of cabins on the Natanes Plateau. From there, take graded

Indian Route 2000 north or 1500 northwest to your chosen area, which can be reached by primitive side roads. **TRAVEL ADVISORY:** Use a high-clearance, preferably four-wheel-drive vehicle with a full tank of gas on entering the reservation. Avoid visiting the Black River during inclement weather. Purchase *The Black River: A Fishing and Camping Guide* or the *Arizona Atlas & Gazetteer* from a map store or sporting goods outlet. They contain topographical

maps of the Black River region, including primitive roads and campsites that do not appear in other publications. **FEES:** Each person must purchase a daily reservation fishing permit. Fees may be paid at the San Carlos Apache Recreation and Wildlife Office in Peridot, located north of U.S. Route 70 on State Route 170. **WEATHER:** Optimum conditions extend from May to mid-October, with temperatures ranging from a high of

87° to a low of 38°. Winter brings rain and freezing weather, often turning roads into quagmires. **WARNING:** Keep an eye out for rattlesnakes and bears. Make sure food is kept out of reach and away from sleeping quarters. Carry plenty of water and stay on identifiable trails. If possible, take an extra vehicle battery. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** San Carlos Apache Recreation and Wildlife office, (938) 475-2343.



POCK POCK POCK

WOODPECKER'S THUNDER AND WAR GIVES WAY TO HEAVENLY SILENCE

Flustered homeowner discovers her adversaries in a 'family way'

text by Carrie M. Miner

I REMEMBER HAVING A CHILDHOOD AFFECTION for the comic antics of Woody Woodpecker. His unique rat-a-tat-tat laugh, screwball thinking and mischievous playfulness tickled my funny bone. But then I grew up and shied away from the colorful cartoon characters of my youth. That is, until the living incarnation of Woody Woodpecker appeared in the back yard of my first home.

When I moved in, I took precautions to prevent encounters with indigenous Southwestern pests, including scorpions, black widow spiders and rattlesnakes. How could I have known to prepare for an aerial raid?

Early one spring morning, I awoke to loud hammering, so I pulled the pillow over my head in a vain attempt to drown out the sound. Frustrated, I finally put on a robe and ventured outside to discover what was making such a racket. To my surprise, the hammering abruptly stopped and a bird flew away from the house in a streak of black and white. It perched on a nearby palm tree and watched as I went to the side of the house to inspect its drilling work. But as soon as I went back inside, the woodpecker returned to continue

[OPPOSITE PAGE] The mountain-dwelling red-naped sapsucker provides nutrients to its young and other forest animals by drilling food "wells" into tree trunks. TOM VEZO

[LEFT] The Gila woodpecker, which grows to 8 to 10 inches long, nests in cavities in cacti. PAUL AND JOYCE BERQUIST





[LEFT] During fall months, acorn woodpeckers bore holes in trees in which to store acorns. TOM VEZO
[BELOW] The largest woodpecker in Arizona, the jay-size male gilded flicker wears a red mustache. The flicker may frequently be found on the ground catching ants to feed to its young. CRAIG K. LORENZ



its handicraft. Steadily, the hole grew to about 4 inches in diameter until the woodpecker moved on and started another one, alternately flitting back and forth to drill at both holes.

Woodpeckers, flickers and sapsuckers are all members of the *Picidae* family, and in addition to their persistent drumming, they can be identified by their sharp, pointed beaks, short legs and stiff tail feathers.

Twenty-two species of woodpeckers drill and hammer in the United States. Among the dozen Arizona species, the acorn woodpecker, Gila woodpecker, ladder-backed woodpecker and red-shafted flicker are the most common. The red-naped sapsucker and the three-toed woodpecker, because of their threatened habitats, rate special attention as “watchlisted” species by the Arizona Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Plan, a coalition of government agencies and conservation groups dedicated to protecting declining bird species.

Most woodpeckers feed primarily on insects, but they supplement their diet with nuts, berries, fruits, invertebrates and seeds. This adaptable bird utilizes its sharp-clawed toes, two forward- and two backward-facing, to cling to the sides of trees, utility poles and wood siding. For added balance, it uses its stiff tail feathers as a brace. Bristly feathers around the nostrils filter out wood dust during their chiseling, strong neck muscles provide added force during drilling, and spongy tissue between the beak and skull absorbs the shock.

In their search for insects, woodpeckers will often tap on the surface and then listen for any morsels moving around within the tree. However, they don't always use their skill of pounding away at 100 strokes a minute in the pursuit of food, as I had discovered. In the spring, they often peck to designate their territory and attract potential mates. Flocks of woodpeckers reportedly have decimated orange and pecan groves as well as man-made wooden structures. But it's not always wood that gets their attention, especially when they're out to make a racket. Woodpeckers have been known to drum on stucco, trash-can lids, evaporative coolers and other resonant objects.

Like other frustrated homeowners who worry about damage by a determined pecker, I decided to take further action. With a borrowed ladder, I gingerly climbed up the side of the house to the eaves, hoping to divert the woodpecker by covering up its holes with the tops of family-size soup cans. As the ornery bird watched from its stakeout on the palm tree, I reached overhead and hammered the tin circles over the openings, all the while trying to conquer my fear of

heights. I finished with a quick paint job and put everything away, certain that the woodpecker would go peck its holes somewhere else.

No such luck. The next morning, I woke to the continual rat-a-tat-tat of my arch-nemesis. This time the bird focused its attention on the evaporative cooler. I ran outside in my nightshirt, wielding a golf club and screaming at the top of my lungs. No doubt about it. I needed professional help.

I called the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson and explained my problem. The operator suggested I try a plastic owl as a scare tactic, so I went shopping. When I returned, the pecker monster was having a heyday on the other side of the house. Once again, I pulled out the ladder and wondered how I'd come to be crawling on the roof. After a small struggle, I managed to secure my plastic predator near the cooler.

Now we'll see who has the last laugh, I thought.

The next morning, I woke to a quiet dawn and sighed in relief. My mistake. Later that day, the unrelenting percussionist was back at it — announcing to the world that it had no intention of being scared away from its territory. Wondering if the owl had been dislodged, I went up again and discovered that the mighty owl had suffered serious pecking damage to its head.

I did my homework, resolute about defeating my enemy. I discovered that my adversary was a Gila woodpecker, one of the noisiest woodpeckers found in southern Arizona.

Gila woodpeckers, especially notorious for their drumming and damage, usually inhabit the saguaro stands of the Sonoran Desert. Even though most woodpeckers survive almost entirely on insects, desert-dwelling woodpeckers have to be generalists. So the Gila woodpecker eats cactus fruit, mistletoe berries and many other items, including the sugar water from hummingbird feeders, which they and flickers raid by hanging upside down and using their long, bristly tongues to steal the sweet stuff.

Even though they occasionally pester homeowners, Gila woodpeckers play a crucial ecological role in their desert habitat. They drill out cavities in the

lofty saguaros for nesting. However, they only occupy a nest site for a season or two and then move on, abandoning the hole to a succession of other birds, including elf owls, kestrels, flycatchers, and purple martins, all of which depend on those abandoned saguaro condos.

The woodpecker's eager drumming has been related to thunder and war in many cultures worldwide. The family name *Picidae* comes from the Greek myth of the woodland god Picus, who refused advances from the sorceress Circe. For his folly, she turned him into the world's first woodpecker.

The Pueblo Indians tell of the flicker's close touch with fire, which turned its tail red. And it was Woodpecker Boy who opened the hole in the sky so that the Zuni people could emerge into the current world. The Hopi Tribe uses woodpecker feathers to represent the dawning of the ceremonial year, and the Navajo utilize their plumage in ceremonial masks to symbolize the sun and storms.

Because the woodpecker's tapping reminds us of thunder, we often associate the birds with storms, but they also are considered a bird of war. Most woodpeckers sport black and white feathers with a touch of red on the head, tail or feathers, but the flashy award goes to the red-shafted flicker, which has an abundance of red on its tail and wings. As such, the Zuni favor it, using

the colorful feathers to symbolize bloody war battles. But, even knowing that woodpeckers are protected by federal law and

[BELOW] A conspicuous and noisy bird, the Gila woodpecker sometimes occupies the same nest for more than one season — if it can manage to avoid the attention of owls, kestrels, snakes or large lizards, its common predators. MARTY CORDANO



favored by the gods, I was committed to win this war.

I hunkered down and began to fortify my house against attack. I rubbed linseed oil in the wood, covered the cooler with my mattress pad, hung chicken wire from the rafters and tied orange windsocks and strings of aluminum from the eaves. Nothing worked.

By this time, my woodpecker delighted in drawing me from one side of the house to the other. Only now my attempts were limited to half-hearted thumping on the windows or screaming from the back door. Because my feathered foe always retreated to the same palm tree in the neighbor's yard, I began to plot a midnight excursion with a chainsaw.

And then one day, when I'd given up hope, I awoke to silence. Curious, I went outside and began to search for my opponent. The woodpecker was neither perched on my house nor hanging out at his palm hideout. As I circled around to the front, I saw it fly into a fresh hole cut in a saguaro across the street. I walked over to take a closer look and was surprised to see not one woodpecker, but two. It appeared my opponent had shifted his pursuits.

In my tactical sessions, I learned that after woodpeckers pair up for mating, they take turns excavating a nest. The female lays between three to six white, unmarked

eggs at the bottom of the hole. Both birds take turns incubating them, but the more aggressive male usually guards the eggs at night, when most predators are on the prowl. After 12 to 14 days, the eggs hatch, and the young will spend the next three to four weeks nesting before heading out on their own. In Arizona's warm climate, the Gila woodpecker and some others nest as early as February and will raise two to three broods a year.

I returned home to dismantle my defenses, but just when I began savoring my victory, I was startled by that trademark laugh. Surprised, I peeked into the family room where my sons were enraptured by a new generation of Woody Woodpecker cartoons. And suddenly, the horrible realization struck me that my own Woody would be back next season.

Only this time, I knew he wouldn't be all alone. ■■■

Carrie Miner of Glendale has always enjoyed the aerial displays of Nature's carpenters, but she wishes the woodpeckers in her neighborhood would confine their activities to the trees down the street.

NATIVE AMERICAN SILVERSMITHING

IMAGINATIONS ON FIRE

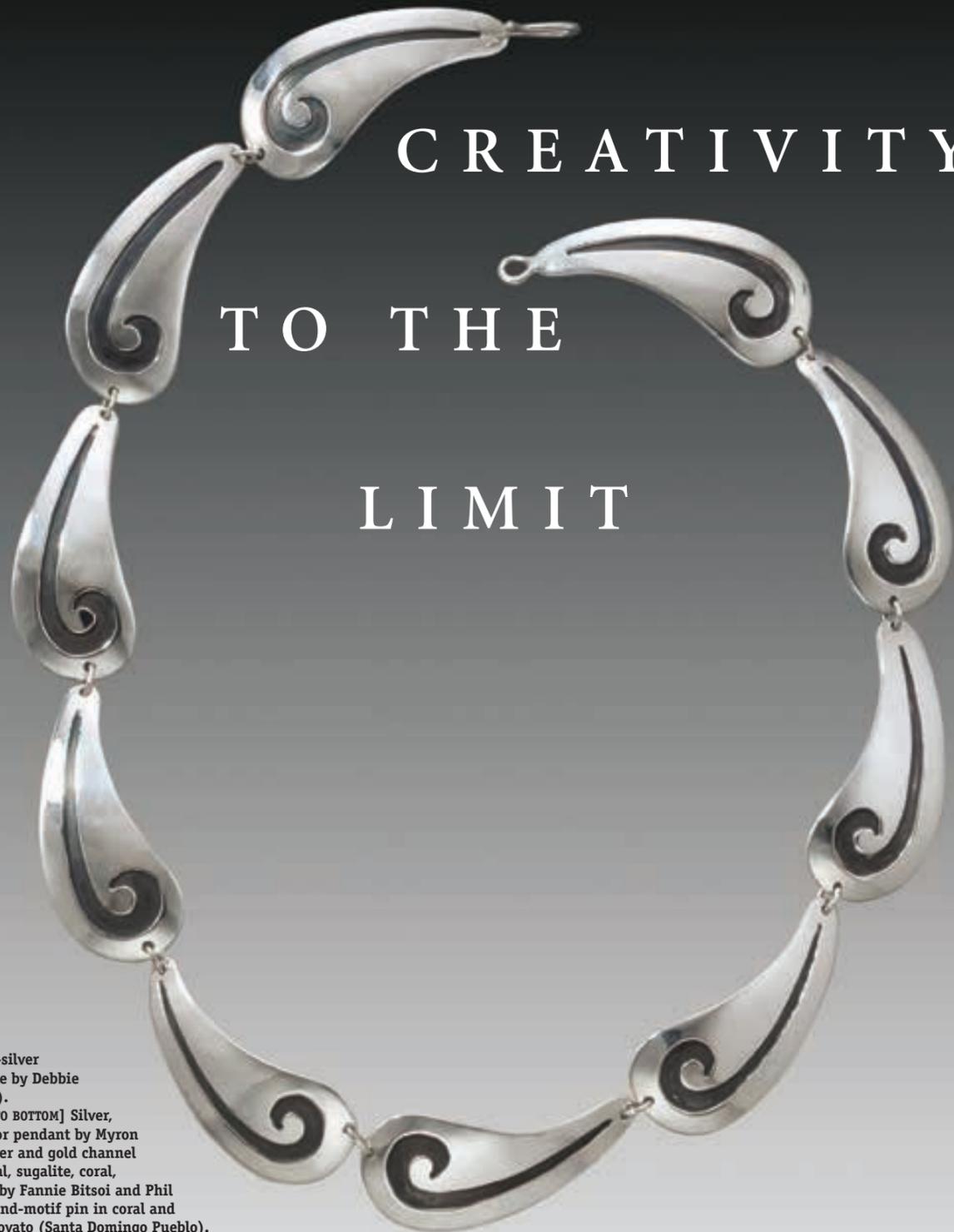
TEXT BY LEO W. BANKS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICK ODELL



Techniques passed down from generations of Native American silversmiths are used to craft contemporary jewelry designs as well as traditional pieces, like this Navajo bracelet in sterling silver and turquoise. In recent decades, the use of new gemstones and multistone inlays has led to high-quality Indian jewelry that is innovative and much in demand.

PUSHING CREATIVITY TO THE LIMIT



[THIS PAGE] Sterling-silver water-motif necklace by Debbie Silversmith (Navajo). [OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM] Silver, gold and agate pin or pendant by Myron Panteah (Zuni); silver and gold channel inlay bracelet of opal, sugalite, coral, turquoise and onyx by Fannie Bitsoi and Phil Russell (Navajo); hand-motif pin in coral and turquoise by Mary Lovato (Santa Domingo Pueblo).



In Native American jewelry, nothing matters more than what happens at the point of creation—those moments and hours the artist spends hunched over a workbench, dripping sweat, maybe some blood and a few tears, to produce something beautiful.

That hasn't changed since the Spanish conquistadores brought silversmithing to the Southwest in the 16th century. But the jewelry itself has changed, the most profound transition coming in the last 30 years.

"We're seeing a great number of new gemstones being used, and a lot more contemporary jewelry," says Bruce McGee, director of retail sales at the Heard Museum Shop and Bookstore in Phoenix. "By that I mean pieces you wouldn't recognize as Native American if you were seeing them for the first time. But they compare with any jewelry anywhere in the world in terms of quality."

Navajo silversmiths, traditionally known for stamped silver, often without stones, now do multistone inlay work similar to that long practiced by the Zuni people of New Mexico.

In addition to turquoise and coral, the old standbys, Navajos today add zip to their pieces with stones such as opals, sugalite, amber and lapis from Afghanistan.

Hopi smiths have also branched out from their traditional and still-popular technique called overlay, in which two pieces of silver are combined—the top one cut out and the bottom one oxidized, giving the piece a dimensional look.

Classic Hopi work rarely involves stones, and the designs—water waves, cloud patterns and lightning—mimic those found on pots and baskets. But today's innovative Hopi artists adorn their silverwork with amazingly intricate designs, some fine enough to depict entire scenes, such as tiny kachinas dancing in villages with clouds overhead. Stonework is more common now, too, as is the use of gold.

In short, the imaginations of Arizona's best Navajo and Hopi silversmiths are on fire, the surge of innovation driven primarily by customer demand.

A hundred years ago, Indian smiths made jewelry for other Indians. Today, they sell almost exclusively to non-Indians.

Some of the most celebrated artists now live off their reservations, in Flagstaff or Holbrook, or farther away in the Phoenix valley, putting them in closer contact with the shops and galleries that carry their work. This allows them to better tune in to the desires of buyers and ferret out new ideas.

But with cellular phones and the Internet, paved roads and pickup trucks, even a

young smith working out of a tumbleweed shack in some remote corner of the Navajo Indian Reservation can stay linked to customers if so inclined. Some don't want to be found, preferring to live the old way—only crafting and selling a piece when they need money, then returning to the silence of the reservation, untouched by the noise of modern life.

As for today's jewelry buyers, they're better educated than those in the early- and mid-1970s, when Indian jewelry enjoyed unprecedented popularity.

"That boom spawned a lot of new silversmiths and new techniques, and a lot of bad jewelry," explains Jeff Ogg, owner of Ogg's Hogan in Prescott. "Now we have smarter buyers, and there's not nearly as much junk out there."

Another change since the 1970s: Because it's a byproduct of copper mining, good domestic turquoise has become scarce. The big producers from years ago—the copper mines at Bisbee and at Clifton-Morenci, for example—have either shut down or now operate at greatly reduced capacities. Only one Arizona mine, the Sleeping Beauty Mine in Miami, still produces turquoise.

"But that's only one look, clear blue," says Chet Jones, owner of the Pueblo Trading Post in Zuni, New Mexico. "If you want a character stone, something that's blue-green, ultradark Bisbee blue, or say a Morenci stone with a pyrite fleck in it, forget it. In this country, it's gone."

Many silversmiths know someone with a private stash of turquoise. An artist searching for a particular look will often drive hundreds of miles to meet with an underground stone salesman, and price is negotiable. But a pound of good Morenci that might have cost \$100 in 1975 can run \$800 and higher today.

The artist knows he has something special when he holds the turquoise in his hands. It's not only the look that excites him but also the sound the stones make when he rubs them together.

Most turquoise is too soft to drill or reshape for use in jewelry unless it is first stabilized, says Jones, considered one of the Southwest's leading experts on stones of all kinds. "But if the stones are really dense and don't have any voids, they'll transmit a solid clicking sound," he says. "That means they're hard and will have a real polished glint right off the saw."

As these private stashes play out—and they're going fast—craftsmen will have to adjust, as some already have, by switching to, say, turquoise from China. Coral is even scarcer and more expensive—it may cost

well over \$1,000 per pound, depending on the richness of the color.

But switching stones isn't a simple matter. If a Navajo smith has always used a particular kind of turquoise, it becomes part of him—by habit, by spirit and, if his father used it, by blood as well. As much as things have changed in Indian silversmithing, tradition still exerts a mighty tug.

Ask any artist today, Navajo or Hopi, how he got started, and the answer rarely changes—silversmithing was in the family.

Ruben Monroe Saufkie Sr., a young Hopi smith from Second Mesa, comes from a long line of artists. His grandfather, Paul Saufkie, helped pioneer the overlay technique in the 1940s. "I basically do what I do because of him," says Ruben.

Vernon Haskie, a Navajo, remembers

seeing his father, Leonard, pound silver with a hammer. "What're you doing, Dad?" the 6-year-old asked.

"Don't bother me," his father replied. "I'm making money."

The youngster reacted with wonder, unaware that someone could make money pounding metal. With that idea in his head, Vernon took a Tonka truck he'd gotten for Christmas and pounded it flat with a hammer. His mother asked what he was doing.

"I'm making money," little Vernon answered.

In Leonard Haskie's day, silversmithing was a means of survival in a reservation economy where jobs were scarce, and it's still true. The pace of the market and the pace of reservation life still don't mix.

"As soon as someone gets popular, shops

and galleries demand more of their work," says Steve Beiser of Puchteca, an Indian arts shop in downtown Flagstaff. "But native artists don't work that way. They're more connected to the pace of nature than the pace of our neurotic American lifestyle."

The tension often creates a collision of ideals.

The Heard Museum's Bruce McGee wears a watchband that illustrates the point. Crafted by Navajos Phil and Fannie Russell of Chinle, the band has onyx on the side and Australian opals inlaid in gold down the center. The striking piece drew the attention of a major watchmaking company in New York, whose representatives asked the couple to produce 500 of them.

"The Russells said no, although they probably would've made a ton of money,"

explains McGee. "They never duplicate on watches and feel that having 500 out there cheapens their work."

Indian artists have always walked two worlds, never more so than now.

Conversations with 34-year-old Haskie reveal his modern side. He suggests learning more about him by "googling" him on the Internet, a contemporary term for using the Google search engine.

But in the next breath, as Haskie explains how he deals with a large crush of orders, he goes back to the traditional Indian tendency of referring to inanimate objects as living organisms. "If a piece wants to be made right away," he explains, "I'll make it right away."

Haskie works at home in the deepest corner of the Navajo reservation, in Lukachukai,

a northeast Arizona community of 3,500 at the base of the Chuska Mountains.

He and his wife grew up there and wanted to stay, and by the time he graduated from the University of New Mexico in 1996, Haskie had found the self-confidence to work out of Lukachukai.

"I figured I'm an educated Indian now. I can work out here and everything will be all right," he says.

It has worked out, thanks to savvy promotion, the Internet and a travel schedule that frequently takes him to shows from Los Angeles to Palm Beach.

Hopi Ruben Saufkie also loves his home in the village of Shungopavi, where he serves on the board of Second Mesa Day School.

Saufkie's silversmithing style began as classic overlay. But like his friend and occasional co-worker, Victor Lee Masayesva, an innovative silversmith from Bacavi, he has begun combining it with tufa-casting, a process in which melted silver is poured into a mold.

Saufkie sells most of his pieces at two shops, Tsakurshovi and Hopi Fine Arts, both within hollering distance of the single-wide trailer where he works and lives with his wife and four children. He is not burdened by thoughts of a wealthier life elsewhere because, in his view, nothing is richer than being able to live "with my people and my culture."

"I'm doing well, I'm still hungry and still real young," says Saufkie, 35. "I see silversmithing as a gift given to me by the Creator, and I'm grateful to be able to do it."

But even traditionalists realize that the surest way to get noticed in a highly competitive business is to do something new, and do it well.

Edison Cummings of Mesa has done that with a cutting-edge style, consisting of simple, clean, finely crafted pieces, such as his upward-curving gold bracelet inlaid with a single small coral stone. Admirers say his work is more reminiscent of European jewelry than Indian. But he is Navajo.

Alvin Yellowhorse, another Navajo innovator, has made his reputation carving pieces with petroglyph designs matching those found on cliffs near his reservation home in Lupton. He fills the carving lines with sterling silver, highlighting bear claws, snakes and other figures.

Yellowhorse, 34, also carves scenes into his pieces. He makes a bracelet depicting the night sky over Monument Valley, coupled with a traditional Zuni sun face, a series of bright stones inlaid above it like the feathers of a war bonnet.

"Alvin has taken an established inlay style

and customized it to be so expressive and unique," says Susan Garland of Garland's Indian Jewelry in Sedona. "His pieces don't look native, but they're so colorful you just go, 'Wow!' Both Alvin and Edison Cummings are doing things no other native artists are doing."

Hopi Farron Joseyesva fits that category as well. He works in traditional overlay, but provides a unique twist with astronomical designs, like planets, stars and soaring comets.

Joe Day sells Joseyesva's pieces at Tsakurshovi and has trouble keeping them stocked. "The Japanese love him," says Day. "He's a great silversmith, and his stuff is way out there."

Hopi Roy Talahaftewa tried to impart that kind of energy to students at his silversmithing school on Second Mesa, called *So-oh's Tunatya*—in English, "grandmother's dream."

He taught tufa-casting, stone mounting and other techniques to Saufkie, to 34-year-old Gerald Honwytewa, another talented Second Mesa smith, and others, in an effort to encourage experimentation.

Talahaftewa, an award-winning silversmith, returned to the Hopi Indian Reservation in 1994, after years of working in the Phoenix area. He followed a familiar path: art school, apprenticing, then setting out to make it on his own.

"It's a hard life with a new family, traveling all the time, entering big shows, trying to get into fine galleries," says Talahaftewa, 47, of Keams Canyon. "It's a ton of work, and a lot of the young smiths up here don't have the confidence to do it."

He started his nonprofit school to change that and to give beginning Hopis a chance to provide for their families. So-oh's Tunatya operated for more than a year, then closed for lack of funds in January 2002. Talahaftewa struggled to keep it open, holding occasional raffles and spending some of his own money to cover expenses, and is currently looking for a grant to help pay for a building lease.

The experience has shown Talahaftewa that on one point, little has changed from when he started out: Undiscovered talent abounds on the Hopi mesas, and on the Navajo reservation.

"These young smiths just need someone to push them along to develop their own style and learn something about promotion," says Talahaftewa. "If they do that, buyers will find them, as long as the craftsmanship is there."

And as long as beauty happens at the point of creation.



[CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE] Australian opal and sugalite with 18-karat gold discs by Cheryll Yestewa (Hopi); tortoise in 18-karat gold with turquoise beads by Larry Golsh (Mission-Palo); gold bead necklace with coral by Debbie Silversmith (Navajo); moonstone necklace in 18-karat gold by Shawn Bluejacket (Shawnee).

[OPPOSITE PAGE] Perry Shorty melts silver coins to craft traditional Navajo jewelry of sterling silver and natural turquoise.

[THIS PAGE] Shorty's work includes a Naja drop pendant on a beaded necklace. The top bracelet has a four-petal blossom motif; the lower bracelet shows off untreated turquoise.



NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIST

PERRY SHORTY

The movie business is famous for stories about young video clerks who go on to become celebrated directors and screenwriters. Now silversmithing has a similar tale to tell.

When in his early 20s, Navajo silversmith Perry Shorty worked the counter at Thunderbird Supply Co. in Gallup, New Mexico, selling silver and stones to mostly Indian craftsmen. Over four years, he peppered his customers with questions and wrangled advice that proved instrumental in launching his own career.

Today, the 38-year-old Pentecostal preacher produces some of the most sought-after jewelry in Indian country. "People line up at his booth at the Indian Market in Santa Fe," says Steve Pickle, retail manager at the museum store at Flagstaff's Museum

of Northern Arizona. "His work is gone as soon as he makes it."

Shorty's technique mimics that of turn-of-the-century Navajo silversmiths. He melts old coins and pours the liquid into a tufa mold shaped like an ingot bar. While still hot, he removes the silver strip and places it on an anvil, pounding it with a hammer until it is forged to the desired thickness.

To Shorty, a bracelet made from mass-produced silver, the modern method, feels hollow and flat.

"Customers say my bracelets feel right on their wrists, and I think that's because of all the hammering, sanding and filing I do," he says. "And I like the way light bounces off coin silver."

Shorty works with as few tools as possible and prefers natural, untreated turquoise. His

coins have to meet his exacting specifications, too—he melts only Charles Barber-designed coins, in circulation between 1890 and 1915.

"I used to make buttons with them and they sort of grew on me," says Shorty.

Friends in Los Angeles hunt down Barber coins for him and send them to Tuba City, on the northeast corner of the Navajo reservation. He lives there with his wife, Carol, and three children.

"When I was at Thunderbird, I didn't set out to be the smith I am today," he says. "I just wanted to make old jewelry. I like doing it. But I don't work as hard as I used to."

He also serves as pastor at Potter's House Pentecostal Church. He preaches to the faithful three times a week. His style? "Fire and brimstone," says Shorty, smiling.





[LEFT] A bola tie slide and bracelet by Hopi silversmith Jason Takala, shown relaxing in his shop, are decorated with a 14-karat gold man-in-the-maze design overlaid on a sterling-silver background.

[BELOW] His seed-pot design, 3 inches in diameter, was hand-cut from a sheet of silver and overlaid on a silver pot.



NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIST
JASON TAKALA

Hopi silversmith Jason Takala attended high school in Woodstock, Vermont, but the walls of his dorm room were bare. To spice things up, he painted a mural depicting a landscape cut by a waterfall. Then he attached a frame around it.

When school officials saw the work, they were floored by its beauty and promptly added art classes to Takala's schedule. With the exception of a few crude efforts, this was his first attempt at painting.

"The picture was in my head already," Takala says. "All I did was use the paintbrush."

That humble way of thinking arises often

in conversation with Takala. He portrays himself as almost a passive participant in the creation of his popular pieces.

"I take my direction from the silver," says the 47-year-old Holbrook resident and father of five. "In a sense, it talks to me."

Takala studied design in Phoenix for five years under the famous French jeweler Pierre Touraine. The master constantly urged his protege to "let the jewelry represent itself."

Takala was born in the village of Shungopavi, on the Hopi reservation. When he wanted to get married, he learned he had

no birth certificate. He got one, and a marriage license, at the same time. He was 23.

In the mid-1980s, after 10 years of trying to find his way as an artist in Phoenix, he moved to Old Oraibi on the Hopi reservation, where his wife, Margie, had grown up.

"After that I really started creating," he says. "Everything is so calm there, your mind goes to a different level. It all came to me then."

Takala is known for his man-in-the-maze design, which represents man emerging from the center of the Earth and migrating to the four directions. He is particularly popular among Japanese buyers, who come

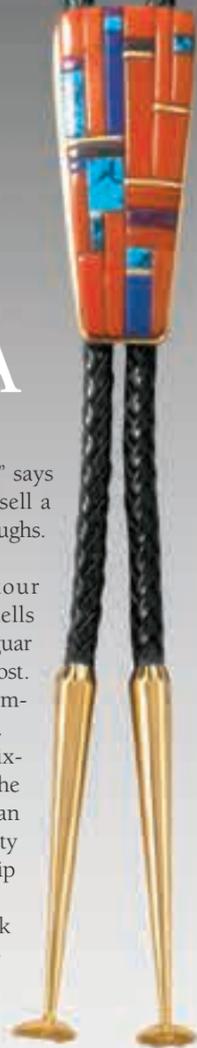
to his house to watch him work, sometimes with magnifying glasses. Only then do his skeptical visitors believe that his intricate cutting is really done by hand.

"The Internet has made Jason's jewelry popular with Japanese movie stars," says Bruce McGee's brother, Ron McGee, of McGee's Indian Art Gallery in Keams Canyon. "He's quite the fad with them."

Because the Japanese have no "L" sound in their language, they pronounce Takala with an "R." In their dictionary, *takara* means "precious," or "treasured thing." How fitting.

[OPPOSITE PAGE] Hopi silversmith Verma Nequatewa creates contemporary jewelry using techniques she learned from her uncle.

[THIS PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT] Nequatewa's work includes silver-cast earrings with channel inlay of coral and turquoise; gold bracelet inlaid with lapis, turquoise and coral; silver-cast bracelet reflecting traditional design with a heavy custom bezel holding the turquoise stone; gold bola tie slide with lapis, turquoise, sugalite and coral.



NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIST

VERMA NEQUATEWA

Verma Nequatewa is in a rare class—a female gold and silversmith. She learned from her uncle, Charles Loloma, the legendary Hopi smith who died in 1991. She started working with him in his studio, near the village of Hotevilla, when she was 16.

“He never talked about me being a woman, so I didn’t think about it,” says the 54-year-old Nequatewa. “He told me Hopis are born artists, and I was just proud to be able to do something that’s good art.”

She crafts her jewelry in a contemporary style, using colorful lapis, coral and turquoise stones set in designs of gold and silver. Her work departs from traditional Hopi overlay, which joins two sheets of silver and rarely involves gold or stones.

Innovation was part of Loloma’s instruction. He also taught her to relish the excitement of creation.

“I like to find an interesting stone and

design around it,” says Nequatewa. “The stones give me ideas, then I don’t want sleep. I want to make more.”

Bill Foust, of the Foust Gallery in Scottsdale, describes her art as a refinement of Loloma’s.

“Verma’s pieces are smaller and more wearable,” Foust says. “Her design sense appeals more to the feminine side. When people unfamiliar with her work see it for the first time, they’re blown away.”

Her studio sits on the edge of Third Mesa. The view from her windows is all light and rock and emptiness, a hard beauty. As she works, she sometimes listens to tapes of country great Waylon Jennings or the Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli.

Nequatewa treats silversmithing with the utmost professionalism. She is a good businesswoman, not quite the bashful artist of years ago.

“When I was young I went to shows with

my uncle, but I was so shy,” says Nequatewa. “But then you sell a piece, it opens you up.” She laughs. “Now I don’t stop talking.”

She sometimes hosts tour groups at her studio. She tells them to watch for the red Jaguar parked outside. No one gets lost. Red Jaguars aren’t exactly common on the Hopi reservation.

Nequatewa also owns a six-passenger private plane that she and husband Bob Rhodes, an administrator at the University of Phoenix, park on a paved strip at nearby Polacca.

Flying to shows lets her look down on the beauty everywhere. It is her hallmark. Every piece she makes is inscribed with the Hopi word *sonwai*, which means “beautiful.”



[ABOVE] Navajo Victor Beck shows off his son, Victor Jr., and his jewelry. The ring, earrings and bracelet (right) and necklace (far right) showcase Beck's work with 14-karat yellow gold decorated with turquoise and coral.



NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIST VICTOR BECK

Victor Beck found his special calling through a dream. He'd worked as a legal aide counselor, a bank teller, a car repo man and a wholesaler of Indian jewelry.

Then one night in 1972, while staying with his parents in Pinon, the Navajo community where he grew up, he dreamed that all the jewelry he was selling from his truck was lost. His father, feeling a foreboding, advised his son to see a medicine man for a Blessingway ceremony, a ritual to restore life's balance.

Everything in Beck's life changed after that. He found the right path. Today, the 61-year-old father of two grown daughters and a 2-year-old boy, is one of Arizona's most respected silversmiths.

"It took years for me to realize how important that dream was," says Beck. "But it was my destiny."

His jewelry style is contemporary—simple, elegant, innovative. One of his signature pieces is a raised ring with a stone inlaid on the side.

"Victor's work is very refined," says Andrea Robinson, a buyer at the Heard Museum Shop and Bookstore in Phoenix. "Everything he does is perfect. Never a rough edge or misplaced stone."

In 1994, Beck traveled to Italy in search

of the best coral he could find. His description of the trip sounds like something from a Robert Ludlum novel.

He stepped off the train holding a note with a man's name on it. This led to a small-town police station. No one spoke English.

"They didn't know what I was talking about until I said Grand Canyon," says Beck, of Phoenix, whose late brother was the renowned painter Clifford Beck. "They went, 'Aha, yes! Arizona!'"

A cop took him to a large warehouse. After knocking, a door panel slid open and two eyes appeared on the other side. Once inside, Beck bought \$23,000 worth of coral, fresh out of the sea.

"I watched ladies sitting at long tables, cutting and drilling the coral," he says. "I wanted to see how it was done."

Beck's distinctions include making a rosary for Pope Paul VI, which included stones signifying the Navajos' four sacred mountains, and he has represented Pinon on the Navajo Tribal Council.

He returns home often to visit relatives and attend sweat lodge. Every four years he goes to a Blessingway ceremony. "It rejuvenates me," says Beck, of the ritual. "You can't just receive and receive. You have to say thanks for the good things that happen. That's why I pray over every piece of jewelry I make."



NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIST

THOMAS CURTIS

When you meet Thomas Curtis, he pulls up outside the general store near his home in remote Dilkon, on the Navajo reservation north of Winslow, and pokes his head out of his truck.

"You found me," says the 61-year-old silversmith, a mischievous grin spreading across his face.

No easy task. It took messages taped to the chapter house door, messages stuffed into his post office box in Indian Wells, messages tacked to community bulletin boards. He has no phone and will call back when he gets within a mile or two of one, whenever that is.

Curtis is an old-fashioned Navajo who lives close to the way he has always lived, loving the things he has always loved — riding his horses and crafting jewelry.

His home is full of memorabilia from his days as a champion bull rider, broncbuster and roper. The box where he keeps his silversmithing ribbons is overflowing. They number almost 300.

"Riding horses and making jewelry, I

don't do these things for fun," says Curtis. "They're my tradition; they're survival. They're life to me."

He learned to be a smith as a boy watching his grandfather work, and Curtis' daughter, 39-year-old Jennifer Curtis-Skeets, learned by watching him. Jennifer won a blue ribbon in the first contest she entered, in 1994.

"I'm not surprised Jennifer has become so accomplished, because she learned from a master," says Jeff Ogg, owner of Ogg's Hogan, an Indian art and clothing shop in downtown Prescott. "Thomas does the traditional silverwork I really admire. Deep stamping is his trademark. Not fancy, but very high quality."

Curtis and Jennifer live a mile apart and work out of their homes. They rely on each other. Curtis left Phoenix Indian School after third grade, so Jennifer helps him with his business paperwork. She in turn gets an up-close look at her father's formidable trading skills.

At Santa Fe Indian Market in 1987, he won "Best of Class" for a silver vase. A man

approached after the show, desperate to own the award-winning item.

The two wrangled, then settled on a trade. Curtis would hand over the vase if the man handed over his pickup truck, plus \$2,500. The 1966 flatbed Ford has been Curtis' prized possession ever since.

Jennifer says her dad also inspires her to be a better smith.

"I enter competitions to know where I stand with my dad, not with other artists," she says.

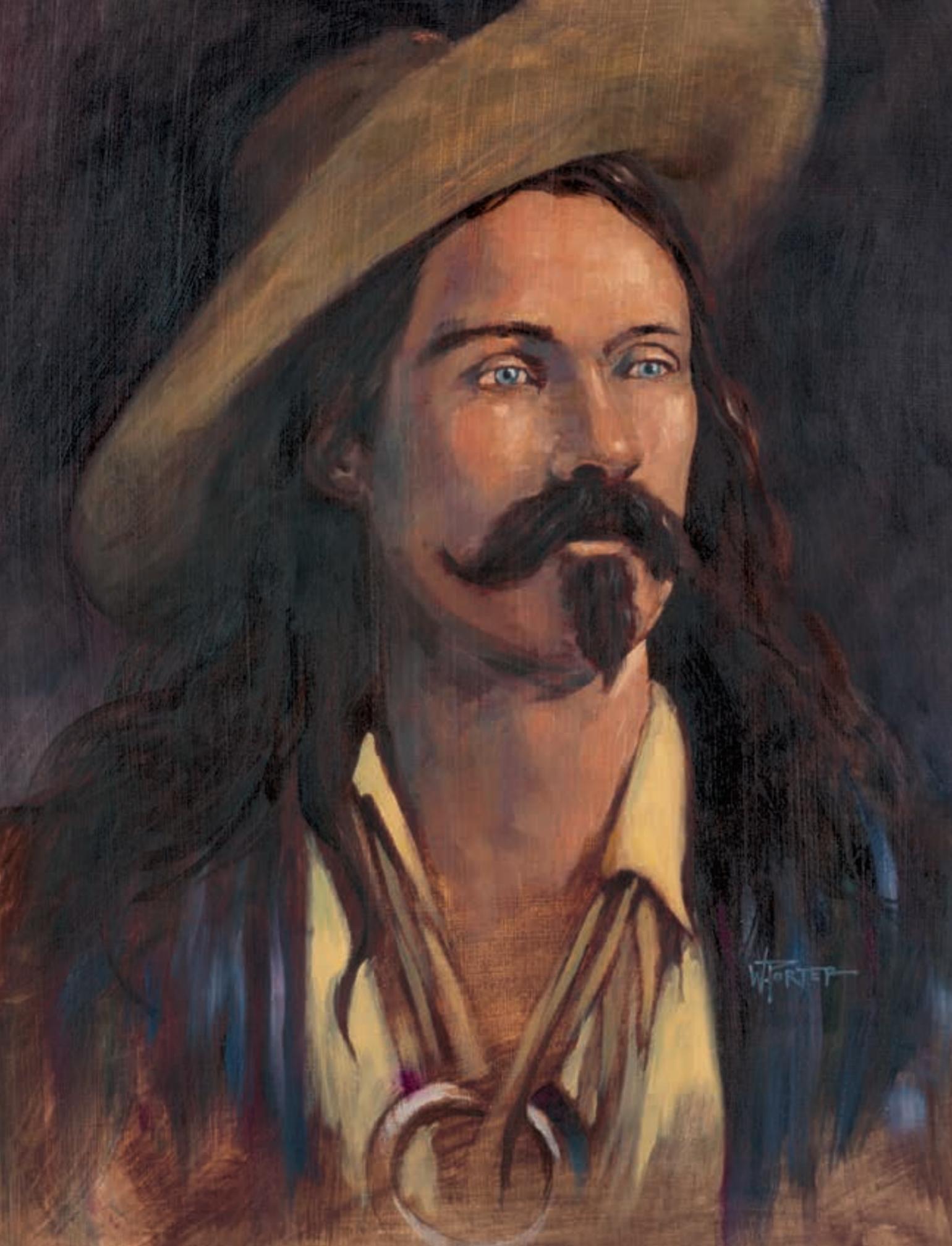
"I compete with him. He's my standard. But I don't think I'll ever be better than he is." **AH**

Leo W. Banks of Tucson has been writing stories about the Navajo and Hopi Indians for more than 20 years. He considered it a privilege to meet and interview the finest silver craftsmen in Arizona. Banks also wrote "Arizona Charlie" in this issue.

Rick Odell of Phoenix turned professional at the age of 12 in Kansas City. Using a Polaroid camera, he photographed a metal trash can lid suspended by a wire. Passing it off as a picture of a flying saucer, he sold the photo for five bucks to a kid in the neighborhood. He vows never to do that again.



[LEFT AND FAR LEFT] Stampwork in heavy-gauge silver trademarks the work of Navajo silversmith Thomas Curtis, who taught the craft to his daughter, Jennifer Curtis-Skeets (both above). Most present-day silversmiths lack the patience and tedious detail required to produce Curtis-type designs, and consider the effort cost-ineffective.



abraham Henson Meadows could be described in a hundred ways, every one of them true. He was a Wild West showman, marksman, entrepreneur, a would-be king of a cannibal island, an occasionally crooked gambler and a rapsallion whose greatest fear was that he might pass this realm unnoticed. It seemed that every significant episode of his life—and even of his death, which occurred just prior to a rare snowstorm in Yuma—was orchestrated to make sure that he would be remembered.

He adopted the colorful nickname of “Arizona Charlie,” wore a big diamond ring and sported a flowing Gen. George Custer haircut that was just this side of ridiculous. But he managed to pull it off.

Despite his garish appearance, Meadows lived the life he portrayed in performances around the world, including appearances with William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody’s famous troupe.

He was born in a covered wagon under an oak tree during a snowstorm in Visalia, California, March 10, 1860. By age 10, at the insistence of his Confederate-sympathizing father, John, a preacher and rancher who hated Abraham Lincoln, the boy’s name was changed to Charlie.

By 1877, John Meadows wanted more space for his big family, which eventually numbered 12 children. He found it in wild Diamond Valley, near present-day Payson. The men cleared land, planted corn and built two log cabins.

At dawn on July 15, 1882, John learned just how untamed Arizona Territory was when renegade Apaches visited. After waking up to dogs barking in the timber, John and his oldest son, Henry, went to investigate. John stood about 80 yards from the cabins when Apache gunfire dropped him in his tracks.

Henry was hit, too, and so was John Jr., another son. When the Meadows women came outside, John Jr. yelled, “My God, get inside or we’ll all be killed!” With the children hiding under the bed, the family held off the Apaches. Finally the intruders rounded up the livestock they wanted and departed.

John Meadows Sr. was the first person buried in what became Payson’s Pioneer Cemetery. Henry died of his wounds months later, while the bullet John Jr. carried in his leg for 20 years eventually festered, and required the leg be amputated.

Only two days before the raid, Charlie had signed on to help the U.S. Cavalry chase the renegades. He’d been reluctant to go, but his father had assured him the family would be okay.

“He regretted the decision the rest of his life,” said Jean Beach King of Granada Hills, California, who wrote a biography of Meadows published in 1989. “I know it left him with a hatred for Apaches.”

After the tragedy, Charlie, then 22, began hiring out at ranches throughout Tonto Basin. He also entered the first rodeos held in the Territory and was

hard to miss—6 feet 6 inches tall, handsome, friendly—as he rode into the arena on his white horse, Snowstorm. And he wasn’t shy about his talent.

In April 1888, a Prescott newspaper published the following blurb:

“Charlie Meadows of Payson, this territory, challenges any man in the world to an all-around cowboy contest for \$500 or \$1,000 a side. He also wagers either of the above amounts with any man on the steer-tying contest, either three or five steers to be tied. Expert cow-punchers make a note of this.”

The boast drew the attention of former Indian scout Tom Horn, who took up Meadows’ challenge. The two men met in several roping and tying competitions that filled Arizona arenas, for the first time drawing

arizona charlie

King of the Wild West
Text by Leo W. Banks
Illustrations by Walter Porter

female spectators eager for a glimpse of the flashy cowboy from the Tonto Basin. Even though Charlie was uncanny at attracting women, he wasn’t particularly adept at keeping them, including two wives.

Although Horn won on occasion, Charlie’s panache made him a darling of newspapers, even some in the East, one of which printed a poem about him:

*To the West! To The West! To the Land of the Free,
Where Tall Charlie Meadows is Having a Spree,
And the Mexican Bronco is Arching His Back,
To the Shooting Iron’s Frequent
and Petulant Crack*

When Charlie squared off against Horn in Phoenix in 1889, William Cody sat in the audience. He was so impressed he offered both cowboys top spots in a Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show. Horn huffed that he was not a drugstore cowboy and declined.

But Charlie jumped at the chance, agreeing to meet Cody at his Wyoming ranch to discuss details. When he arrived, Cody wasn’t there. He had forgotten the appointment and gone to Chicago.

Charlie’s disappointment was huge, but the incident helped convince him that he wanted to be like Cody. He grew his hair long and began writing letters to circuses and Wild West shows looking for work.

Through much of the 1890s, he traveled the world, meeting famous people and racking up adventures.

In Australia, one of the troupe’s horses was injured in a fake attack on a stagecoach and had to be dragged from the arena by the saddle horn as the crowd roared its approval, believing it part of the act.

“It would have been a different story,” Charlie wrote later, “had the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty

... he was in the South Sandwich Islands and exercising his horse on the deck of the traveling ship when the horse jumped, landing Charlie in the ocean.

to Animals known he was really dead.”

According to King, Charlie's biographer and grandniece, he was in the South Sandwich Islands and exercising his horse on the deck of the traveling ship when the horse jumped, landing Charlie in the ocean. His fellow cowboys drew their show ropes and lassoed him and his horse back to safety.

At Buffalo Bill's invitation, Charlie traveled to England in 1892 to perform with Cody's show for several weeks. At a reception welcoming Charlie to Europe, Cody suggested the name "Arizona Charlie" and it stuck.

But Charlie wanted to form his own show and did, hiring longhaired Maricopa Indians to play "savages" and acquiring a real Tombstone stagecoach to re-enact holdups. "Arizona Charlie's Historical Wild West" opened to a gallery of 2,500 in Phoenix on March 25, 1893.

When the show left on tour, *The Arizona Republican* commented that his cowboys were among the finest ever assembled, "... able to lasso anything from a Missouri mosquito to an elephant from the wilds of the Congo."

Charlie's temperament guaranteed the troupe wouldn't stay together long. Amid bickering by the cast a few months later, he stormed away.

Whether acting in an arena, or simply living his life, Charlie never strayed far from great drama. When Arizona's Territorial Legislature offered a \$5,000 reward for capturing an outlaw named Apache Kid, Charlie put together a posse of cowboys to go after him.

The Kid stayed missing, but Charlie never figured he'd lost if the publicity was good. And he was a master at getting it.

A double-horseback wedding, with Charlie's sister, Maggie, as one of the brides, took place in the Tonto Basin in 1890. At its conclusion, Charlie handed a lariat to each of the grooms and said they could keep as wedding gifts every head of his wild cattle they could find and brand before sundown.

"The chase was begun at once," reported the *Arizona Journal-Miner*. "The young women, who are expert riders, carrying the branding irons and assisting in tying down the cattle." Charlie lost 36 head of stock that day.

In 1897, he joined the Klondike gold stampede, a great migration through harsh Alaskan terrain. En route he met Jack London, a 21-year-old aspiring writer, who listened as Charlie spun stories of his association with Rudyard Kipling, another writer Charlie had met years before in India. London chronicled Charlie's gold rush experience in his great book, *The Call of the Wild*.

Charlie also knew Zane Grey, who lived near

Payson, and earned a passage of description in the writer's 1928 book, *Stairs of Sand*.

In Dawson City, Yukon Territory, Charlie built the Palace Grand Theater, using lumber from two paddle-wheel steamboats he'd purchased. The venue opened in July 1899 and was known as the most opulent such

establishment north of San Francisco. It is now a part of the Dawson Historic Complex National Historic Site of Canada.

The Palace lasted only as long as Dawson's gold. When that dried up, Charlie, who thought nothing impossible, considered floating his huge building down the Yukon River and across the sound to Nome, where the latest gold strike was unfolding. But he concluded the building probably would break up during passage, and he sold it in 1901.

By then Charlie was working on his strangest endeavor—a plot to invade Tiburon Island in Mexico's Sea of Cortes, and establish his own empire there.

What drove him, apart from egomania, was the idea of recovering Montezuma's treasure, an estimated 19 million gold pesos, which he believed was buried on the island. Charlie also wanted to vanquish the inhabitants of the island, the Seri Indians, alleged to be cannibals.

According to King, stories from Tiburon claimed that white men had disappeared on the island and were presumed killed and eaten by Seris. But that trifle only made Charlie more eager. "I am a man who is not afraid of the devil with his horns sharpened," he declared.

Publicity described Charlie's "war preparations," including construction of a small battleship. Throngs of men—among them the sheriffs of Cochise and Gila counties in Arizona—came forward to join the so-called King of Tiburon.

Charlie asked his friend, President Theodore Roosevelt, to come along. The invitation was an engraved plate with a real Apache scalp attached.

"You should have seen the face on the bug-eyed reporter from the *Los Angeles Times* when I told him I had personally lifted the 'receipt for a good Apache' in Pleasant Valley in 1884," Charlie boasted.

Needless to say, Roosevelt declined to accept and warned Charlie against proceeding. The expedition fizzled after Mexico's president refused to let Sonora's governor sell Tiburon to Charlie.

For the last 30 years of his life, Charlie lived in Yuma, hunting, fishing, mining for gold and running a ranch. Because he was born in a snowstorm, he also believed he'd die in one, and he figured living in the desert would delay that eventuality.

In Yuma, as everywhere, he worked at standing out. He sometimes rode his horse through the swinging doors of the Ruby Saloon and herded stock with his 1929 Model A Ford. He also published a muck-raking newspaper, *The Valley Hornet*, which, as he once cracked, forced him to stay out of dark alleys on publication day.

In 1892, knowing that his wife, Marion Mae, was



pregnant, Meadows traveled to England to perform with Cody's troupe. Marion Mae threatened to leave him if he went, and he did just that.

She never informed him of her whereabouts, or that a healthy baby girl, Marion, had been born. The daughter grew up believing Charlie was dead, a lie her mother told, and finally tracked him down after reading a newspaper article about his brother, John Jr.

Charlie's contact with his daughter angered his second wife, Ida Mae, whom he'd married prior to departing for Dawson. That tension, plus Charlie's growing cussedness in later years, caused Ida Mae to leave him.

But Charlie came to know his daughter and renewed friendly relations with her mother. In fact, Marion Mae, who had married twice more and had two additional children after she and Charlie had split, was planning to move to Yuma and live with Charlie again when she got word of his death.

On December 9, 1932, refusing to see a doctor, the 72-year-old took a pocketknife to his painful varicose veins and bled to death from his cockeyed attempt at self-surgery. He is remembered today primarily for the two Arizona Charlie's Hotel and Casinos in Las Vegas, named for him. One of them has a facade like

the old Palace Grand of Dawson City.

But the King of the Cowboys, as he was known, demands recognition from Arizonans, too. As one Yuma old-timer told Charlie's grandniece, "I... still remember how attractive he was when he rode. He sat so erect and looked like royalty." In a way, Charlie was royalty, cowboy royalty, one of the Territory's first celebrities.

The night of his burial, it snowed in Yuma, one of the few times in recorded history, bearing out his long-time prediction and providing a fitting end for a man who himself was a force of nature. ■

ADDITIONAL READING: "Arizona Charlie's" contemporaries come to life in the pages of *They Left Their Mark* and *Days of Destiny*, part of the 11-volume Wild West Collection published by *Arizona Highways* Books. To order (\$7.95 each plus shipping and handling), call toll-free (800) 543-5432 or go online to arizonahighways.com.

Tucson-based Leo W. Banks thinks "Arizona Charlie" was every bit as colorful as "Buffalo Bill" Cody.

Walter Porter of Tucson recently illustrated a book dealing with circumnavigation through the Southern Ocean, near the South Sandwich Islands, where Charlie was rescued.

DREAM LAND OF GOLD AND SILVER

Turkey Creek Road
winds through
Bradshaw Mountains
where old-time miners
boomed and busted



n O SIGNPOSTS LEND a hand on the rough four-wheel-drive road down to Turkey Creek and the area's gold- and silver-mining past. The road takes off from the west corner of the ramshackle bar in the tiny community of Cleator.

Few travelers are aware of Turkey Creek Road, known to locals as Thunderbolt Mine Road and Forest Service Road 101. Most are heading to Crown King, a mining town turned tourist attraction on top of the Bradshaw Mountains.

Four-wheelers leaving "downtown" Cleator find that Turkey Creek Road does a snakelike weave between occupied cabins and mining ruins, with confusing side roads tempting them to stray. Visitors should stick to the most traveled section of road or they may end up in

TEXT BY BOB THOMAS PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES LAWSEN





someone's front yard or looking down an abandoned mine shaft.

After about a half-mile of twists and turns, the road begins its descent toward Turkey Creek and, farther down, the tiny settlement of Bumble Bee, 13 miles away on the old Black Canyon stage road. At Bumble Bee, you can loop back to Cleator by driving up the old Black Canyon road to its junction with the road to Crown King, or head south to get on Interstate 10.

Lower Turkey Creek begins at the old concrete bridge on the Crown King road. Most travelers barely notice the bridge because they are looking across at the massive dump and

full of out-of-work men living off the land and looking for enough gold nuggets to buy bacon and beans and maybe some .22 shells for the rifle.

"My uncle, Don Van Tilborg, was one of them. During the Depression, he got tuberculosis and the doctor told him he just had a few months to live," Van Tilborg said. "Uncle Don said he might as well have some fun before he died, so he took off for the mountains to prospect. After three years out there, he decided he wasn't going to die, so he came back home and went to work."

[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 38 AND 39] In this view from Silver Cord Mine, evening shadows blanket a nearly dry Turkey Creek in the Bradshaw Mountains, south of Cleator, where miners struggled in the 1800s and early 1900s to dig out the gold and silver that lured so many into the rugged hills. [ABOVE] A strawberry hedgehog cactus imparts a vivid color accent to a slope in the Bradshaws.

with indifferent success until he started up Black Canyon and then Turkey Creek.

Although credited for publicizing the find and giving his name to the mountain range, Bradshaw was not the first person to prospect Turkey Creek. Prior to his arrival, Mexican miners had placer diggings thereabouts before Yavapai Indians drove them away.

Hearing of the Mexicans' finds, Bradshaw and a few dozen American miners headed to the site. They found some gold in their pans, but not enough to get rich on, and soon most left the area for richer grounds. Bradshaw took to drink and committed suicide the next year in La Paz, a Colorado River steamboat landing.

Bradshaw's brother Isaac, or Ike, led another party of miners into Turkey Creek in 1868. They found gold, too, but it was not the mother lode everyone sought. That modest find, along with the ever-present

Indian threat and the difficulty of transporting supplies across the extremely rugged terrain, discouraged mining. But every now and then someone would hit a rich placer deposit, and the hills would again ring with the shouts of expectant prospectors.

Bouncing along Turkey Creek Road below Cleator in Van Tilborg's four-wheel-drive vehicle, we looked down on a landscape of tortured canyons that bled off each side of the road. Each time we turned, a new view presented itself—cliffs, rocky slopes so steep they resembled cliffs, narrow side canyons and countless dry arroyos. Prickly pear, cholla and saguaro cacti dotted the country, and high up, on the mountain horizon, stood a scattering of ponderosa pines.

"On the left is Townsend Butte," said Van Tilborg. "It's named for a pioneer Indian fighter who had a homestead there. He was so good at killing Indians that the City of Prescott, in 1871, awarded him a brand-new rifle and a thousand rounds of ammunition. But he got into one too many Indian fights." A couple of years later he was mortally wounded while trailing Indians who had raided his ranch.

We caught our first glimpse of Turkey Creek at its confluence with Poland Creek

about 2.5 miles below Cleator. Both were running high with snowmelt, Poland Creek with slightly more water. It was the first of 10 water crossings on the road.

"Up Poland Creek is the old French Lilly

Mine," said Van Tilborg, who was born in Crown King and whose relatives back to his great-grandfather worked mines and ran cattle ranches in the Bradshaws.

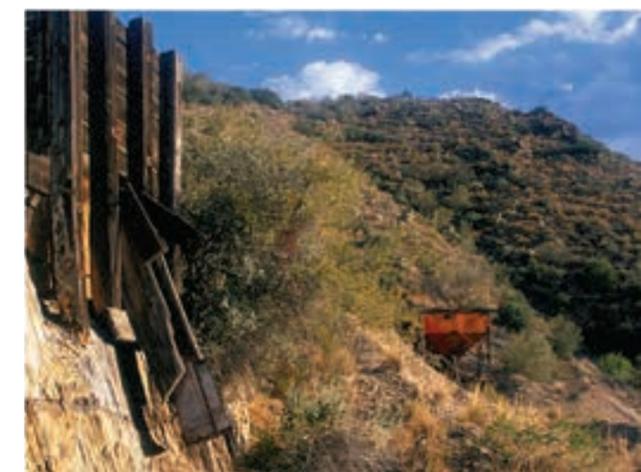
"Up there," Van Tilborg said, pointing

HIKERS WILL FIND THESE TRAILS AS RUGGED FOR WALKING AS THE ROAD IS FOR DRIVING.

mill foundations of the great Golden Turkey Mine, which produced more than \$3 million in gold and silver between 1933 and 1942.

"There were a lot of people looking for gold in the old days, as you can see by the number of wrecked buildings," said Grant "Butch" Van Tilborg, a Prescott National Forest employee at the time of our adventure. "They say that during the Great Depression, the hills were

Turkey Creek's long history of boom and bust gold mining ranges back more than 140 years. William Bradshaw, the star-crossed forty-niner who gave the area its name, first prospected here in 1863. Bradshaw, a member of the Paulino Weaver-Abraham Peeples party that found a bonanza at Rich Hill near the ghost towns of Stanton, Weaver and Octave, prospected the Bradshaws' edges



[TOP] Hikers and four-wheel-drive explorers have the pleasure of following Turkey Creek through a wet desert canyon during periods of rain or snowmelt, which usually occurs in winter and spring. [ABOVE LEFT] A precarious, rock-strewn entrance greets visitors at the abandoned Howard Silver Mine near Turkey Creek.

[ABOVE RIGHT] Enduring memorials to long-dissipated dreams of riches, these mining structures cling to the hillside at Silver Cord Mine.



west at some tangled peaks, “was the Silver Christmas Mine. There’s an old road that goes to the Silver Christmas and another that once led to the town of Middelton. Middelton’s a ghost town, or rather it was. There’s hardly anything left there. Used to be the site of the railroad construction camp when they were cutting through the right-of-way and laying track up to Crown King.

“The Thunderbolt Mine and Mill was the main ore producer in the area and the longest lasting. It was also the biggest employer. The Silver Cord Mine, that’s its tailings dump on the left, was pretty rich too,” he said.

While the early miners panned for gold in the creek, it was the hard-rock miners who found the richest lodes in the hills. Nearly all the abandoned mines, their gold and silver ores exhausted, cling to the sides of steep mountains far above the creek.

“My mom’s grandfather was a cowman, and one day while he was up somewhere above Turkey Creek, he happened upon an old arrastra [a mule-powered ore crusher] with the pole still embedded in the center stone. Nearby were some pretty rocks, so he picked up one and took it home. Later, someone told him it was filled with horn

silver. But then he was a rancher, not a miner, and did not go back to the site.

“Later, my dad went up there looking for the arrastra, but he never found it, and great-grandfather Kaufman never could remember exactly where it was,” Van Tilborg chuckled. “There’s a whole lot of mountain up there.”

As we followed the creek, we ran through clusters of cottonwoods, mesquite thickets, willows, small grassy flats and high chaparral. The stream, like most Arizona watercourses, has occasional flash floods. At one place, a line of cottonwood trees had been snapped off about a dozen feet above the ground, mute testimony to the power of the floods.

Numerous little grassy flats beside the creek offered ideal spots for pitching a tent. In the warm summer months, families flock here to camp out over the weekend and enjoy the cool water.

“There’s usually a good flow of water during the winter and spring,” said Van Tilborg. “In the summer, the creek tends to dry up except for some deep pools. There’s one pool down here that I used to take my kids to for swimming and fishing. It had small sunfish and bass in it. The only way I can figure the fish got there is when we had

those wet years in the 1980s, they must have swum all the way upstream from Lake Pleasant. But then a few years ago, we had those bad droughts, and all the pools dried up and the fish died. So you never know.”

During winter and spring, Turkey Creek attracts droves of recreational gold panners. Amateurs work the streambed and banks with gold pans, sluices and dredges under a placer claim agreement with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

We happened upon a pair of recreational gold sluicers from Phoenix. They looked like they could have just stepped out of an 1880s lithograph. One had a long white beard and wore a flannel shirt, with his pants tucked into rubber boots. The other, fit-looking with stubbled cheeks, wore similar dress. He said he got tired of cities and sold all his possessions and moved to Arizona.

They belong to the Roadrunners Prospectors Club, which has 268 mining claims in Arizona. “This one is a placer claim of 40 acres. We spend our time out in the boondocks prospecting for gold,” one of the miners said. “Been doing it for five years now.”

Asked if their mining was productive, he

[LEFT] Saguaro cacti dot the hillside over the road leading to Howard Copper Mine, near Turkey Creek.

[ABOVE] Adventurous travelers to Silver Cord Mine get a gilded reward at day’s end on a journey through the Bradshaws.

smiled and said, “Well, you’re not going to get rich, but it’s fun.”

The area also attracts four-wheelers and hikers, said Van Tilborg. The road offers quite a few challenges for any four-wheeler. Creek crossings can be an obstacle. High water can stall out a motor and underwater boulders or holes can trap a vehicle. We had to probe one crossing with a long stick to see how deep the water was.

The Forest Service occasionally grades the road, but maintenance stops at the Prescott National Forest boundary 6 miles from Cleator. The road was pretty rough in the forest, but it was really rugged and rocky the last 6 or 7 miles on BLM land. Neither of these agencies allow off-roading, so stay on the paths already blazed.

“There’s a number of hiking trails off Turkey Creek,” Van Tilborg said. “The Bill Arp Springs and Mine trail, which takes you from the Howard Silver Mine and the R and H Mine and connects with the Twin Peaks Trail all the way up to the Twin Peaks [elevation 6,881 feet] and eventually

out to Horsethief Basin.

“The Castle Creek Trail goes from Castle Creek Cabin on the west side of

Turkey Creek on up to the Kentuck Spring Campground road in Horsethief Basin. Plus there are any number of little trails and paths leading from one mine workings to another.” Hikers will find these trails as rugged for walking as the road is for driving.

“Kentuck” was the nickname of William Bell, a Civil War veteran from Kentucky who was buried near his cabin there.

The hiking trails, because of the steep climbs, lack of drinking water and escalating elevations, offer a tough challenge.

As we continued down the road, we passed many ruins of mines and the remains of stone cabins, some of which were mine workings that had been shored up with rock walls. Along the stream, countless mounds of sand and gravel mark the location of old placer mining sites. Nature and the passing years have disguised the piles with brush and trees.

Each little side canyon we passed had running water from recent storms, which added to Turkey Creek’s flow and depth, making every creek crossing a little bit deeper as we slowly four-wheeled our way

down toward Bumble Bee. Finally, about 3 miles short of our destination, we decided to turn around rather than risk flooding out in the swift, muddy water.

“Maybe we could get through all right, and maybe we couldn’t,” said Van Tilborg. “But I don’t want to chance it. Wading around in the cold water trying to push a stalled vehicle is not my idea of fun.”

As we retraced our route back to Cleator, Van Tilborg said, “You know, with all the earthmoving and work that went into mining this area, it’s still one of the prettiest places to visit in the whole Bradshaws.” **AH**

Bob Thomas of Phoenix says he plans to go back to Turkey Creek for a camping trip — and to look around for a gold nugget or two.

Charles Lawsen of Glendale enjoys photographing beautiful desert views of mountains populated by saguaro cacti, and poking around abandoned mines.



LOCATION: About 70 miles north of Phoenix.

TRAVEL ADVISORY: The rugged 13-mile-long Turkey Creek Road in the Bradshaw Mountains requires a four-wheel-drive vehicle. Submerged boulders and deep stream crossings that can drown an engine are always a danger. Bring sufficient food and water and tools, especially winches or “come-a-long” cable pullers, tow straps and shovels.

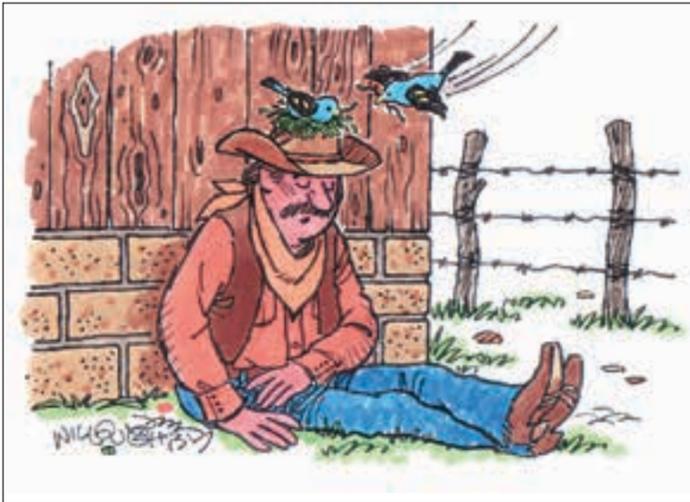
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Prescott National Forest, Bradshaw Ranger District; (928) 443-8000.



"You've made me what I am today. Now let's hear your side of the story." *

WILLOUGHBY'S WEST

by JIM WILLOUGHBY



EARLY-DAY ARIZONA
"WHY are you scratching your head, little boy?" asked the kindly lady. "Cause I'm the only one who knows where it itches," replied the lad. COCONINO SUN, DECEMBER 19, 1924

Sautern from Chablis." TEDDY CARNEY Boca Raton, FL

A little boy returned from school every day with a star on his test papers. One day a zero was on top of his sheet. His mom

the universe, which is infinite and goes on forever.

My 8-year-old niece, Morgan, turned to her younger brother, Andrew, and explained, "Then the universe must be called Grandpa."

WALT WEIDER Vienna, MO

IDENTIFYING MOM

I am an Arizona police officer and one day responded to an accident involving two vehicles. I was getting information from one of the parties, who happened to be a mother with a 4- or 5-year-old boy. He wanted to help and, as he stared at me, interjected several times, "That's my mom." When I finally asked him how he knew it was his mom, he wore a look of deep thought on his face for a moment and replied, "Because I've had her for a really long time."

ROCKY FORTHOFER Mesa

TO SUBMIT HUMOR Send your jokes and humorous Arizona anecdotes to Humor, Arizona Highways, 2039 W. Lewis Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85009 or e-mail us at editor@arizonahighways.com. We'll pay \$50 for each item used. Please include your name, address and telephone number with each submission.

Reader's Corner Our topic this month is ghost towns. Ghost towns are big tourist attractions. Shoot, if I wanted to spend my vacation looking at something covered in dust, I would just as well stay home. Send us your ghost town jokes, and we'll pay \$50 for each one we publish.

LOVE IS BLIND

A Tucson acquaintance and lifelong bachelor always had his own thoughts on the subject of marriage, calling it an institution in which a man loses his bachelor's degree and the woman gets her master's.

So naturally, when word came of his recent nuptials, I was floored. He had finally caved in and tied the knot.

After the newlyweds' first quarrel, the wife said to her husband, "I was a fool when I married you." To which the husband replied, "Yes, dear, but I was in love and didn't notice it."

MICHAEL LOEFFLER Milford, OH

asked for an explanation. He said, "The teacher was all out of stars, so she gave me a moon."

STEPHEN L. CROSS Le Roy, NY

Question: What do you get when you dine under an Arizona starry sky? Answer: An astronomical gastronomical delight.

GUY BELLERANTI Oro Valley

I failed my astronomy class. Apparently, Ursa Minor is not the key of Beethoven's Fifth.

TOMMY CANNON Glendale

Question: What did the policeman star say to the speeding comet? Answer: Stop or I'll shoot!

TAMARA TOROK Chicago, IL

I pointed out the Big Dipper and Little Dipper to my niece and nephew one evening.

I explained how a group of stars makes up a galaxy and that all the stars and planets together make up

The Night Sky

We asked for night sky jokes from our readers. Here is a sample of what they sent.

This was in a letter written to me by my father, W.H. Schutte, who at the time worked as the manager of a food service in Tucson:

"We sit out and watch the stars at night . . . wish I knew more about astronomy. I don't know

* From the Witworks® humor book Marriage is Forever . . . Some Days Longer by Gene Perret. To order, call toll-free (800) 543-5432. \$6.95 (plus shipping & handling).

Unusual Perspective

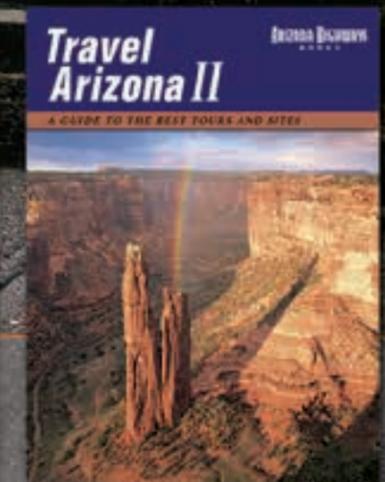
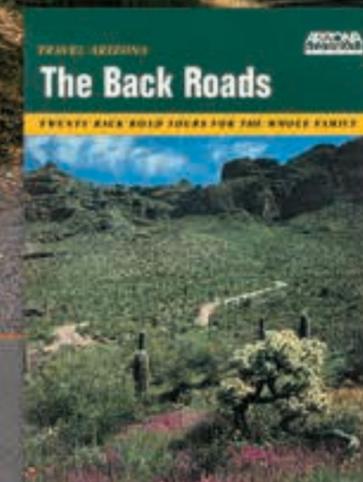
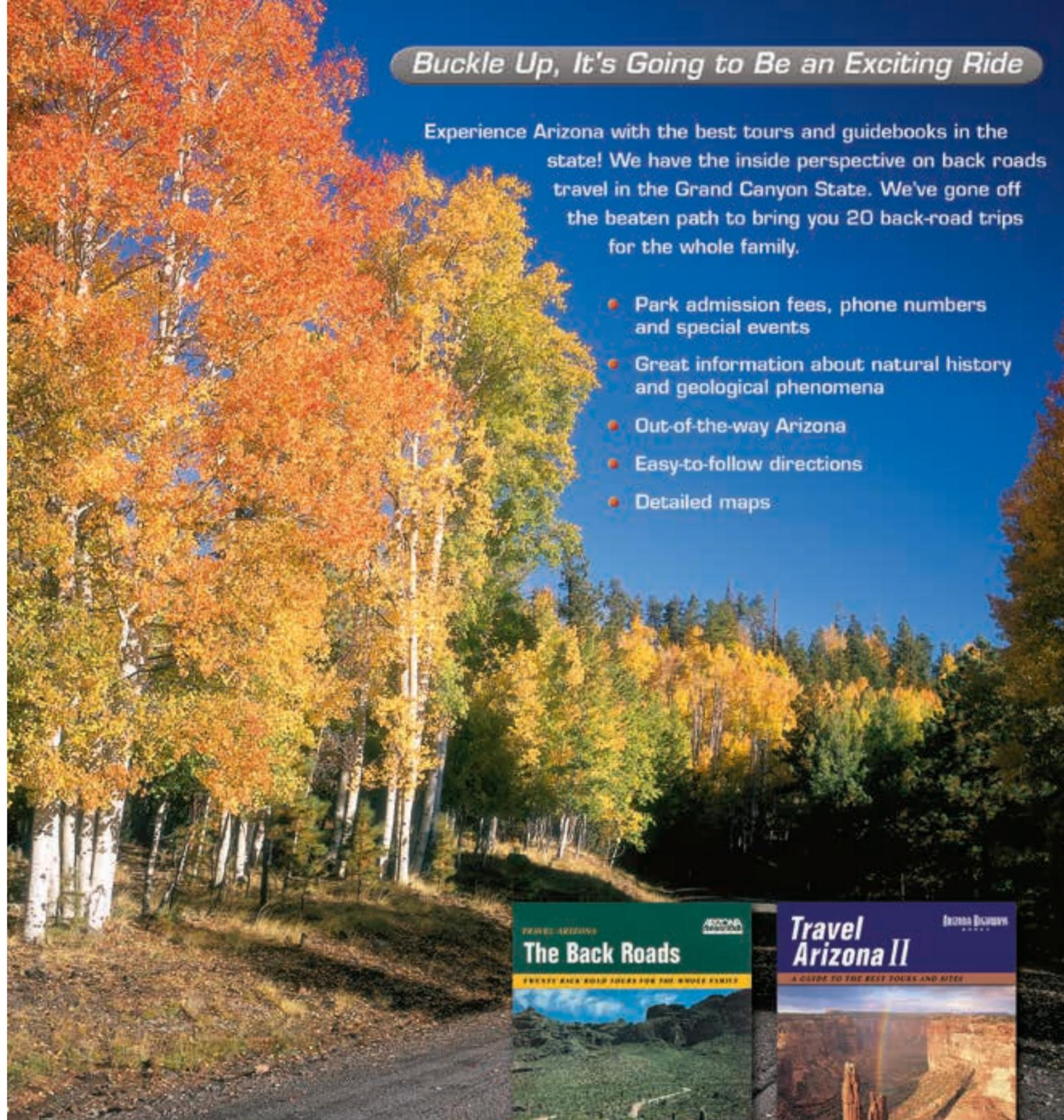
By Linda Perret

Squaw Peak in the Phoenix Mountains Preserve draws hundreds of hikers each day. That's a lot of Odor-Eaters.

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ARIZONA HIGHWAYS BOOKS

by REBECCA MONG / photographs by DAVID H. SMITH

MONTEZUMA CASTLE and a Nearby Spring-fed WELL Yield Clues to 900-year-old SINAGUA INDIAN Life and Culture

[BELOW] Beaver Creek follows a winding southwesterly course past Montezuma Castle National Monument to the Verde River.

"MOM, IT'S GOOD WE DON'T LIVE WAY UP there," said the boy. "I'd never get my skateboard up to my room."

The 35 or so people who did live in the soaring cliff dwelling some 900 years ago had to use ladders made of poles lashed together with yucca or agave fibers to reach the doorways of their five-story, 20-room pueblo.

One of the Southwest's best-preserved ruins, Montezuma Castle looms 90 miles north of Phoenix and just 2 paved miles off Interstate 17. Tucked in a deep recess beneath a sheltering overhang, it looks down 100 feet onto Beaver Creek and the viewing path.

Near the banks of this stream in the hilly Verde Valley, Sinagua Indian villagers grew corn, beans, squash and cotton. The men used creosote resin for securing arrow points to wooden shafts to make spears for hunting, and they carved turkey callers out of animal bones. They collected salt from near present-day Camp

Verde and traded for pottery, copper bells and macaws from as far away as Mexico. The women wove cotton into cloth and ground mesquite beans for dinner. The children played, perhaps with the tiny stone "dolls" archaeologists would later discover. At dusk, the families climbed to their rooms to sleep, never dreaming that white men would someday describe their pueblo as so grand it must have been built by Montezuma, ruler of the great Aztec empire in Mexico.

Despite Montezuma Castle's misleading name, neither the emperor nor his people ever heard of the place. The Sinagua Indians occupied the limestone and mortar "castle" during the 12th and 13th centuries, and Montezuma wasn't born until the 15th century. By then, the Sinagua had moved on, perhaps because of overcrowding, farmed-out land or strife, probably joining up with the Hopis and other pueblo peoples.

Nevertheless, the emperor's namesake, a

national monument since 1906, offers a royal treat to 850,000 visitors a year. Unfortunately, some of them don't drive 11 miles farther up the road to see Montezuma Well, also part of the monument. The scenic "well," a sinkhole surrounded by acacia and juniper trees and fed by a spring, irrigated those ancient crops and today shelters an abundance of wildlife. But not fish. Although the well looks like the perfect fishing hole, no potential fillets swim there, ever.

"The unique thing for visitors is that Montezuma Castle is in such good shape, is so old and is so real," National Park Service Ranger Robert Del Carlo told me one summer day. "There's been some stabilization done, but 90 percent of it is original, what the Sinagua built." It's best to see the exhibits in the visitors center before taking the tour, he advised. "That way you get an idea of who the Sinagua were and how they lived."

New exhibits, installed in November 2002, explain the Sinaguan civilization within the context of world history, emphasizing the Indians' efficient use of local natural resources.

Visitors haven't been allowed into the castle's fragile rooms since 1951. Instead, they view the pueblo from below, walking a level, self-guided, one-third-mile trail. Lush trees, most notably towering Arizona sycamores with their distinctive mottled-white trunks and maplelike leaves, provide welcome shade.

When a visitor asked why the Sinagua built this dwelling so high up, Del Carlo said it was just "an opportunistic choice." The huge overhang was there, and they took advantage of it for protection from summer heat and, because it faces south, to catch the warmest of the sun's winter rays. A gradually inclining ridge partway up the cliff inspired Del Carlo's theory that the Sinagua walked up along that, then climbed ladders to the rooms, which measure about 10 feet by 10 feet — overall, about the square-footage of a modern-day three-bedroom house. Del Carlo said there are handprints and smoke stains on interior walls, along with ax marks on the wooden beams.

Visitors come from all over, some more than once. "I was here before," said camera-toting

Rob't Hart, a civil servant in Holland. "I have a picture of the castle hanging in my study, and I wanted my boys to see it." His wife, Xandra, gazed up the pueblo and kept an eye on 8-year-old twins, David and Marnix, who had abandoned castle-viewing for the antics of a plump rock squirrel.

Down the trail, the scant remnants of "Castle A" — probably destroyed by fire — hug the base of the cliff. Larger than its sister pueblo, Castle A rose six stories and had 45 rooms.

Savvy tourists go on from here to Montezuma Well, where contemporaries of the castle-dwellers lived. Here 92-year-old Jack Beckman, a volunteer for 30 years, tells visitors stories not found in guidebooks. Some time back, he said, a medicine man told him that 8,000 years ago

[ABOVE] The limestone ruins of Montezuma Castle have intrigued visitors since Spanish explorer Antonio de Espejo's chronicler, Diego Perez de Luxan, first noted them in his journal in 1583.





[ABOVE] Arizona sycamore trees, found in riparian areas of Arizona and New Mexico, shade the one-third-mile trail from which visitors may view the ancient pueblo.

there was a pueblo at the bottom of the well, and that it was a place of “emergence.” Today, Beckman added, “Apaches, Hopis, Navajos and Pimas come to the well to obtain some of its ‘sacred water,’” presumably to be used in ceremonials.

The 368-foot-wide, 55-foot-deep circular well formed 11,000 years ago when the roof of an underground cavern collapsed. Clear spring water that remains at 76 degrees year-round feeds the well, but the water’s concentration of carbon dioxide (due to percolation

through the limestone) measures hundreds of times that of a normal water environment. No fish can tolerate the water, but algae love it, and so do leeches, turtles, water scorpions and tiny shrimplike amphipods. Muskrats like it there, too, along with foxes, snakes and Canada geese, teals and mallards.

Visitors view the well from along a paved one-third-mile trail. Stone steps lead down to a waterside oasis away from the sinkhole. Steps also take visitors down to the well, past a

smoke-blackened cave ruin and the “swallet,” a crack where the water flows 150 feet through the rock wall to the other side. There, ancient farmers channeled the water into irrigation canals.

After climbing back up from the swallet, visitors sometimes relax on shaded rocks to watch for animals — and catch their breath. “Listen . . . and watch the steps,” advised one middle-aged rock-sitter. “You’ll hear them coming back up before you see them.” And sure enough, moments before the tops of their heads appeared, we heard the huffing and puffing of out-of-shape climbers.

A two-for-the-price-of-one attraction, the well and the castle offer an intriguing glimpse of the people who lived in this high desert long before the first white settlers arrived. And long before Montezuma’s day, too. The emperor of the Aztecs never knew what he missed. ■■



LOCATION: 90 miles north of Phoenix.
GETTING THERE: From Phoenix, take Interstate 17 north to Exit 289; follow signs 2 paved miles farther to monument. The well is 11 paved miles farther north on I-17; take Exit 293 and follow signs.
HOURS: 8 A.M.-5 P.M. daily; closes 7 P.M. Memorial Day to Labor Day. National monuments are open all holidays.

FEES: \$3, adults; free, 16 and under. No additional admission at the well.

ATTRACTIONS: At the castle, a visitors center with exhibits, bookstore, brochures, rest rooms; a shady creekside picnic area with tables. At or near the well, a staffed information building, rest rooms, a grassy, tree-shaded picnic ground with visible canals.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: (928) 567-3322.

OTHER INDIAN RUINS NEAR

TUZIGOOT NATIONAL MONUMENT

About the same age as Montezuma Castle, imposing Tuzigoot crowns a ridge and housed 225 people; it once had two to three stories, but today only the ground story remains. There are two paved quarter-mile trails, a small museum and bookstore. Located immediately north of Clarkdale. Take Interstate 17 Exit 287 and drive west on State Route 260 to Cottonwood. In town take Main Street north toward Clarkdale and follow signs. Summer hours, 8 A.M.-7 P.M.; winter, 8 A.M.-5 P.M. Closed on Christmas Day. Admission: \$3, adults; free, 16 and under. (928) 634-5564.

PALATKI RUIN/HONANKI RUIN

Best known for its well-preserved pictographs, some of which are 6,000 or more years old, Palatki encompasses two pueblos. One trail

leads to the ruins, the other to the rock art. There are a small visitors center, bookstore and rest rooms. Located about 10 miles northeast of Cottonwood, then about 8 miles north of State Route 89A. On 89A, about one-half mile north of Milepost 364, turn left onto Forest Service Road 525, Red Canyon Road, and proceed to Palatki. To reach Honanki, bear left from FR 525 at its intersection with Forest Service Road 795. A high-clearance vehicle is recommended for this section of rough road. Neither site is recommended for younger than third-graders. Open daily, 9:30 A.M.-3:30 P.M. Admission is free, but a \$5 Red Rock Pass is required when parking on the national forest land in Red Rock Country. Pass may be purchased at the visitors center. (928) 282-3854 or Red Rock Ranger District, (928) 282-4119.

MONTEZUMA CASTLE



[ABOVE] Coconino National Forest protects the Sinagua Indian ruin Palatki, a Hopi word meaning “red house.”

KID CACTUS, His Spiky Friend From Arizona, Is DOING WELL, Thank You



WHEN I RETURNED TO SAN FRANCISCO FROM Arizona, I decided to put something on display in the apartment to remind me of the trip, which had been upbeat and educational. I had the usual souvenirs—a cup depicting saguaros silhouetted against a sunset, a small stuffed javelina keychain, and napkins from Big Nose Kate’s Saloon in Tombstone. But I needed something more broadly symbolic and recognizable. It occurred to me that a cactus

was the perfect choice.

The cacti of Arizona had captivated my attention—and not just the saguaros, which tend to dominate the landscape with exhibitionistic chutzpah—but countless other varieties of every shape and size. Some cacti loom above the desert floor as dramatically as skyscrapers in the city, while others sport shapes reminiscent of barrels or hydrants. There are bushy, shrubby ones, cacti with tangled stems like green coral formations, others looking like kin to artichokes or with paddle-shaped joints. Many cacti appear tricked up with

flowers as eye-catching as Fifth Avenue Easter bonnets.

So I bought myself a small potted cactus, making the choice impulsively rather than getting into an appraisal that would involve complicated and intricate comparisons. I brought the cactus home and put it near a window, where it would get whatever sunshine San Francisco’s weather sees fit to dole out.

To give the cactus a more intimate role in its new home, I decided to name it. You might think it’s going too far to name a plant, but ever since it was discovered that plants can exhibit emotions, I have waffled in this matter. Considering that frontiersmen gave their rifles names—“Old Betsy,” for example—it didn’t seem so strange to name my plant.

I wanted a name evocative of the West,

specifically of Arizona history, and the first one that came to mind was Ringo. When I was a kid, Ringo was one of those perfect Western-sounding names. John Wayne was the Ringo Kid in *Stagecoach*.

But the name has never been the same since the Beatles came along. I remembered once reading a description of Ringo Starr as looking like “an anteater on barbiturates,” and I didn’t want to have to think of that line every time I looked at my cactus. So Ringo was out. I finally came up with Kid Cactus, which I thought had the right ring.

A cactus, I had assumed, would be self-reliant like the archetypal Western loner, so when I bought the plant, I hadn’t been prepared for the complicated briefing I got on its care and feeding. This included a list of instructions about watering, light, soil, fertilizer, temperature, diseases and pests—and how to get along with your cactus. But I didn’t let it intimidate me.

Indeed, I did want a relationship with my cactus, albeit a low-key one. I wouldn’t go so far as to play Brahms for my plant, like some people do. What I wanted from Kid Cactus was just a touch of Southwest ambience, a reminder of Arizona, where the scenery at its best is as compelling as what you’ll see in the Louvre.

I should probably mention that there’s not a single other plant in my apartment. Kid Cactus is strictly a solo act. I grew up in the backwoods of northern Idaho among thickly forested mountains, and when I came to the city it always seemed redundant to me when people filled their living quarters with ornamental greenery. For me, Kid Cactus stands as a stylistic exception, a symbolic acknowledgment of Arizona’s seductive appeal.

Kid Cactus—*Ferocactus diguetii*—has been here a good while now, and I couldn’t be more pleased with his measure of self-reliance. He doesn’t require food (maybe a bit of fertilizer every three months), litter, shots, toys or custodial attention. An occasional nip of H₂O and a little sunshine now and then keep him in tip-top shape. We coexist smoothly, he and I, and while I’m in no danger of becoming a horticulturist, I do enjoy the presence of this exotic and stalwart life form. Moreover, a glimpse of Kid Cactus invariably brings back pleasant memories of all his spiky kin in Arizona, a state where the cactus gets a lot of respect. ■■

Circuitous Scenic Route Parallels OVERLAND ROAD HISTORIC TRAIL South of Williams

WALKING IN PIONEERS' FOOTSTEPS ALWAYS appeals to my love for history, so, when photographer Bernadette Heath told me about 23 miles of the Overland Road Historic Trail in the Kaibab National Forest, now open to foot, horseback or mountain bike traffic, I started packing. We decided to stay with friends who live in the area, then scout the route the next day. From our map, we'd discovered the trail's northern section swung close to Williams (as the eagle flies, about 55 miles due north of Prescott) and could be "sampled" by driving parallel to it on Forest Service roads and exploring at several trailheads.

My reading indicated the ruthlessly rocky 85-mile original route — the first "white-man" path

from Prescott to Flagstaff — had probably broken more wagon wheels than any other frontier road. A Forest Service report calls it "... the worst travel conditions anywhere for 19th-century animal-drawn wagons and stagecoaches."

Some speculate that the original path may have followed a Hopi Indian trading route. In any case, Overland Trail's modern history began in 1863 when the U.S. Army laid out and built the route to connect Prescott and its short-lived gold rush with main routes across the state. Few Anglos had tackled the terrain of central Arizona territory, so rugged and hostile with Indians that even Spanish explorers had avoided it for centuries. Getting to Prescott from Flagstaff meant braving marauding Indians, lava rock and high, steep canyons. To a country in dire need of gold to finance the Civil War, though, defying the odds suddenly seemed worth the risk.

The Overland Trail slowly disappeared after 1882 with the arrival of the railroad and the discovery of less treacherous trails.

We began in Williams, an easy 30-mile drive west from Flagstaff on Interstate 40. Following 4th Street as it becomes County Road 73 south out of Williams for about 7 miles, we turned left on Forest Service Road 113 (which becomes Forest Service Road 139, then Forest Service Road 13).

All the trailheads along the Overland Trail — including Dead Horse Tank, where we first abandoned our car to hike the trail, just .9 mile east of County Road 73 — had interpretive signs and easily followed line-of-sight rock cairns and brass-topped guideposts. An original stretch of the pioneer road lies just across the road from the Dead Horse Tank parking lot. Elk bugled as we strolled a delightful forest path

and spotted the "tank," or small watering pond, about a mile east on the far side of a large, rocky meadow. Those 19th-century



[ABOVE] Along the Overland Road Historic Trail in northern Arizona's Kaibab National Forest, grasslands provide rich grazing for sheep, as well as buffalo, deer, pronghorn antelope and other livestock. **[LEFT]** Dead Horse Tank mirrors ponderosa pine trees and a cloudless sky. **[OPPOSITE PAGE]** Soft light filtering through pine boughs enlivens marsh grasses and lily pads, while muting reflections at LO Spring.





[OPPOSITE PAGE] From Sycamore Vista, a spiky carpet of ponderosa pine trees appears to cover the Earth below. **[ABOVE]** An old barn slowly decays near Dow Spring along the Overland Trail. **[RIGHT]** Seemingly anchored to the ground by a stone chimney, a whitewashed house marks the junction of Forest Service roads 141 and 131.

soldiers must have reveled in this pleasant prairie view.

Forest Service personnel also recommended we see Pomeroy Tanks, a favorite pioneer watering hole, so we returned to the car and continued driving east 6.5 miles on FR 139 to Forest Service Road 109. We turned right, going south onto FR 109, a road bumpy enough to churn milk into butter. No matter.

A 10-minute walk on the Pomeroy Tanks Trail brought us to a rocky but idyllic spot in the forest just above two pools of paradise. Hide-and-seek sunshine silhouetted flattened grass below us where elk or deer had bedded down between two ponds sheltered by aspen and pine trees. One cliff that bordered a tank looked like it had exploded from the ground and had frozen in mid-rupture.

Heath and I skidded down a steep embankment to the water. For the next two hours, only our occasional quiet comments broke the stillness. I doubted this outdoor cathedral had changed much since 1863.

Seldom-visited Sycamore Canyon, which locals refer to as a mini-Grand Canyon, had been on my “must-see” list for some time. After walking back to the car, we returned to the intersection of FR 139/FR 109, we turned right, traveling east on FR 13. Within 2 miles it intersected with Forest Service Road 56, and we turned right again, this time heading south, following the signs to Sycamore Vista. A five-minute stroll brought us to the canyon’s edge.

A word of caution: There are no guardrails at this sheer drop-off—up to 600 feet—but there’s a fabulous view of the chasm with Sycamore Creek far below and miles of craggy cliffs and pine-covered slopes. The Overland Trail passed about 1.5 miles north of here, and we couldn’t help wondering if some unfortunate scout had ever wandered off course and fallen from the rim.

We opted for the least bumpy road to get to our last stop, Dow Spring, and that took us 3 miles back north on FR 56 to Forest Service



Road 141, where we turned right. The road soon emptied onto Garland Prairie, a vast, treeless grassland once dotted with hardscrabble homesteads and sheep ranches. It made a sharp right, and became one with Forest Service Road 131 within about a mile.

Staying on FR 131, we passed the Milepost 28 marker and turned right into the parking lot for Dow Spring. One look at the rock- and ravine-covered terrain and not even my vivid imagination could conjure a stagecoach dropping mail and passengers from Prescott at this post office. Only a mounded railroad bed and collapsed, rotted logs of a tiny house and barn remain to mark this once-busy way station.

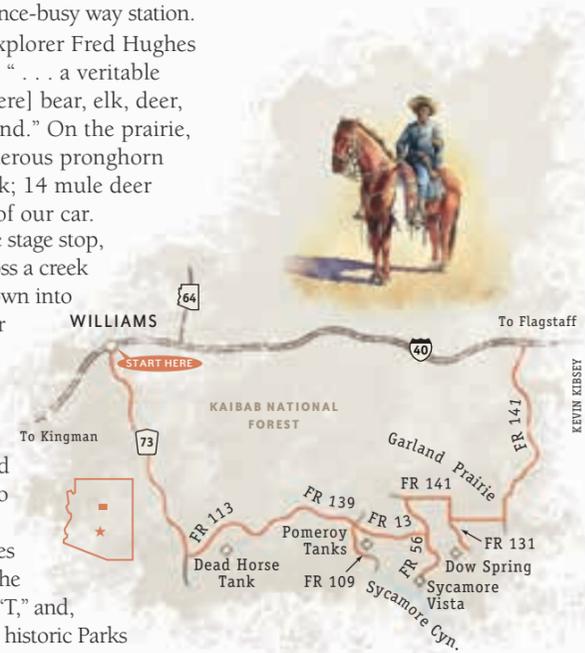
In 1863, when Army explorer Fred Hughes camped here, he reported “. . . a veritable hunter’s paradise . . . [where] bear, elk, deer, antelope and turkey abound.” On the prairie, we, too, had spotted numerous pronghorn antelope and a score of elk; 14 mule deer crossed the road in front of our car.

Down the hill, below the stage stop, we hiked the path east across a creek bed, up the hillside and down into a ravine, and found another watering hole, enchanting LO Spring, a series of lily-covered pools.

Back in the car, going north on FR 131, we turned right at the first corner onto FR 141, looped 9.6 miles back to I-40 (about 14 miles east of Williams), crossed the overpass, turned left at the “T,” and, a half mile later, pulled into historic Parks in the Pines General Store.

Hours of imagining life along Overland Trail and a need to reconnect with the 21st century called for a cup of coffee. On the other hand, I’d heard that remnants of 20th-century U.S. Route 66 lay just outside the store’s back door. Hmmm . . . now where’s my map? 🗺️

travel tips
WARNING: Back road travel can be hazardous if you are not prepared for the unexpected. Whether traveling in the desert or high country, be aware of weather and road conditions. Make sure you and your vehicle are in top shape. Carry plenty of water. Don’t travel alone, and let someone at home know where you’re going and when you plan to return. Odometer readings in the story may vary by vehicle. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Kaibab National Forest, Williams Ranger District, (928) 635-5600.





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Photograph two of Navajoland's premier locations — Monument Valley and Canyon de Chelly — with Navajo photographer LeRoy DeJolie.

September 21-27
Join photographer Jerry Sieve as we follow the "Footprints of the Anasazi" from Chaco Canyon and Ute Mountain Tribal Park to Arizona's own Canyon de Chelly.

LATIN JAZZ FESTIVAL

May 2-3; Sedona

Deeply rooted in black traditions, jazz reflects a musical melange with ties to West Africa, American folk songs and 19th-century European classical styles. The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, a group of white New Orleans musicians, produced the first jazz record in 1917. However, Latin jazz, also sometimes called Afro-Cuban jazz, didn't show up on the scene until the 1940s, when Dizzy Gillespie and Machito mixed jazz sounds with Latin percussion.

See the best national and international bands in the biz perform in concert at the **2nd Annual Sedona Jazz on the Rocks Hot Latin Jazzfest** held at the Sedona Cultural Park. Information: (928) 282-1985 or www.sedonajazz.com.

WYATT EARP

May 24-26; Tombstone

Wyatt Earp —lawman, gambler, miner and sports fanatic— was just one of many frontier justices patrolling the Wild West. But today he is best known for his role in the infamous gunfight at the O.K. Corral. That 30-second altercation and subsequent events transformed Wyatt into an icon of the American West — in some accounts as a hero and in others as an outlaw.

Discover just a few of the myths behind the man at the **25th Annual Wyatt Earp Days**. Event highlights include gunfight re-enactments, an 1880's fashion show, a parade, a chili cook-off and live entertainment. Information: (520) 457-3197.

GOING ONCE, GOING TWICE

May 10; Ganado

Purchased by John Lorenzo Hubbell in 1878, the Hubbell Trading Post is the oldest continuously operated trading post on the Navajo Indian Reservation. The Hubbell family traded goods with the Navajo and Hopi Indians for 89 years until the post was sold to the National Park Service in 1967. The 160-acre original homestead stands as a testimonial to one of the best-loved traders in the Southwest, and the trading post runs much as it has for nearly 100 years.

Bid on authentic Indian baskets, rugs, kachinas, pottery, jewelry and paintings at



the biannual **Native American Arts Auction** held at the Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site. Information: (928) 755-3475.

Tenor saxophonist **Gato Barbieri** performed at **Sedona Jazz on the Rocks 2002 Hot Latin Jazzfest**.

HISTORIC HOME TOUR

May 17-18; Jerome

In 1921, James S. "Rawhide Jimmy" Douglas, owner of the Little Daisy Mine in Jerome, built the Honeymoon Cottage, a French country-style home, for his son Lewis W. and his new bride. Today the Honeymoon Cottage is a private residence, but during the **38th Annual Paseo de Casas** you can walk through this and several other private homes and public buildings listed on the tour. Information: (928) 634-5477.

Other Events

Verde Valley Fair; April 30-May 4; Cottonwood; (928) 634-3290. Livestock show and sale, carnival, live entertainment, horticulture and arts and crafts.

Route 66 Fun Run; May 2-4; Seligman-Topock; (928) 753-5001. A road rally on the longest remaining stretch of historic U.S. Route 66.

Cinco de Mayo Parade and Celebration; May 5; Yuma; (928) 783-2423. Parade, folklorico dancers, art exhibits and ethnic food at Historic Main Street.

Fiesta de las Aves; May 10-11; Bisbee; (520) 432-5421. An International Migration Celebration of the region's migratory birds, with seminars and tours of southern Arizona and northern Sonora, Mexico.

Spring Arts and Crafts Festival; May 10-11; Prescott; (928) 445-2510. More than 160 artists and crafts people from the Southwest display work and offer demonstrations at Courthouse Plaza.

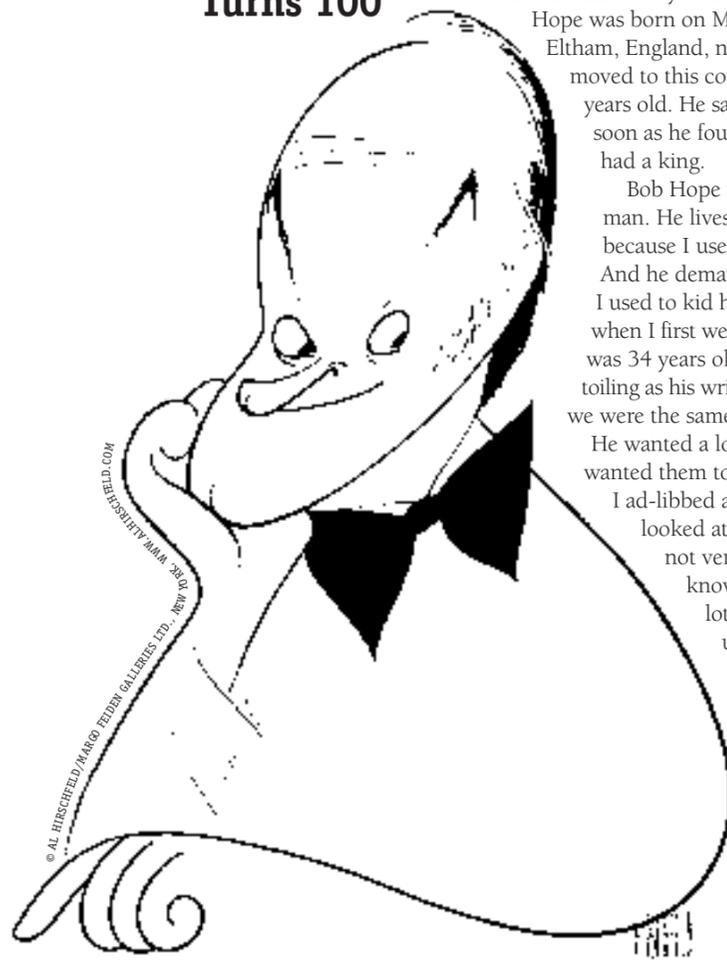
Waila Festival; May 17; Tucson; (520) 628-5774. Tohono O'odham Indian social dance performances, craft demonstrations and native food.

Rendezvous Days; May 23-25; Williams; (928) 635-1418. A mountain man re-enactment, black-powder shootout, parade, carnival and trading post.

Trappings of the American West; May 23-June 15; Flagstaff; (928) 779-2300. Paintings, photography, sculpture, jewelry and cowboy artifacts at the Coconino Center for the Arts.

Festival of Hispanic Arts and Crafts; May 24-25; Flagstaff; (928) 774-5213. Mexican arts and crafts, folklorico performances and historical exhibits.

The Legend and Laugh Master BOB HOPE Turns 100



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NORMALLY I OPEN THIS COLUMN WITH a salient fact about Arizona. This piece is an exception. Then, again, it's not. Arizona is part of America and this article pays tribute to a great American. This month marks the 100th anniversary of Bob Hope's birth.

Hope was born on May 29, 1903, but in Eltham, England, not America. He moved to this country when he was 3 years old. He says he left England as soon as he found out they already had a king.

Bob Hope is primarily a funny man. He lives for laughter. I know because I used to write his jokes. And he demanded plenty of them.

I used to kid him by telling him that when I first went to work for him, he was 34 years older than I was. After toiling as his writer for just a few years, we were the same age.

He wanted a lot of gags, and he wanted them to be surefire. One day I ad-libbed a line to him. He looked at me and said, "That's not very funny." I said, "I know, Bob, but it has a lot of meaning. If you use that line on stage, you'll get big applause." He stared at me with that famous sneer of his and said, "How long have you been writing philosophy?"

He wanted jokes — funny ones. Hope played Arizona many times. In 1974 he appeared following the Phoenix Symphony. He quipped, "Boy, following the Phoenix Symphony. That's quite a change from working with Crosby."

In 1986 Hope was inducted into the Phoenix Open Hall of Fame. He said of that honor, "This is my second biggest milestone in golf. The first was when I finally got my caddy to stop giggling."

Hope performed everywhere. He used to do a song in his concert about his travels. It shows how he could quickly age his writers. This number was a medley of songs about places in the United States. He'd pause

during the song and do jokes about different locations. There were 12 such pauses in the medley. We writers worked on it for several months, and the gags were working well — except for one place. Hope was never satisfied with the Boston gags. No matter what we wrote, that one spot never seemed to play well. So each night we'd get a call to do more Boston jokes. We got sick of Boston jokes.

One evening I told the other writers, "Let's knock ourselves out and really get some great lines for this number so we can get rid of it once and for all." The guys did.

I called Hope the next day and asked how the new lines worked. He said they were big, they played beautifully. "In fact," he said, "the Boston stuff worked so well, that now you guys have to come up with better gags for the other 11 spots."

Bob Hope was a funny comedian and a legendary showman, but behind the stage persona was a patriot, a philanthropist and a wonderfully human personality. To me, Bob Hope represents first an idol, then a mentor. Eventually, he became my boss and a good friend.

I worked with Bob Hope for almost 30 years and traveled around the world with him several times. When he was bringing a Christmas show to war-torn Beirut, he invited me to go along as his writer. I was happy to be included, but I asked him, "Bob, why me?" He said, "Because you write fast, you write funny and you're expendable." He was kidding . . . I think.

Hope journeyed to the trouble spots of the world for more than half a decade. Whenever fighting would break out anywhere on the globe, he would call me and say simply, "Pack."

He traveled to these places because he had friends there — the men and women in uniform. He brought songs, dances and jokes to these friends, but mostly he brought a touch of home. His message to the military serving overseas was, "We haven't forgotten you."

Hope ranks as one of our most beloved entertainers. People love the folks who make them laugh. I know when humorists get to the Pearly Gates, St. Peter might have to do some research on them, but not for long. The folks inside will yell, "Hey, let him in, Peter. He's a lot of laughs." **AH**



Note: Dates and activities could change. Before planning to attend events, phone for fees and to confirm days and times.

by TOM KUHN / photographs by BERNADETTE HEATH

SINAGUA INDIAN Ruins Await Hikers Along TOWEL CREEK Trail Near Camp Verde

A CLUSTER OF SOUTHERN Sinagua Indian ruins that once served as an outpost for prehistoric trade routes along the Verde River can be explored today along Towel Creek Trail, about 85 miles north of Phoenix, in the Coconino National Forest.

The 700- to 900-year-old ruins, reachable by a 5.5-mile one-way day hike on Forest Trail 67 from Forest Service Road 708 southeast of the town of Camp Verde, are among several sites spaced along the river between Phoenix and the Mogollon Rim.

There's another, shorter route to the Towel

2.5 miles to Towel Tank, where nearly year-round water provides a haven for Gambel's quail. The trail from the tank to the ruins descends 1,000 feet in 2 miles over tipsy rocks and loose gravel that kept me dancing for balance. I encountered only one other set of footprints on the May hike.

The hump of 5,831-foot Hackberry Mountain appears over your right shoulder and 5,546-foot Towel Peaks over your left. Towel Creek in springtime forms clear, cool pools, but local springs prove unreliable for drinking water, so carry what you need.

Two of the Towel ruins remain well-preserved beneath sandstone bluffs. The first one you'll spot forms a wall of mud-mortared rock across the mouth of a 60-foot cave that in summer shelters bats and stinks of guano. Another, slightly smaller, bat-free habitat just to the west features a chimney slot near the roofline.

Rubble from structures that may have stored food is found in other caves. From the ruins, looking southwest, a former ranch building nicknamed the "Salt Shack" for the salt licks once stored there now serves as a hiker's storm shelter.

Rancher Clifford Finch of Camp Verde, who maintains a headquarters near Needle

Rock, says hikers stand a chance of seeing cougars, coyotes and mule deer. Towel Creek Trail, rated moderate, proves generally easy to follow. In places where it's vague, hikers have erected rock cairns.

After the hike, head for Cottonwood. Where the town stands was probably a stop for Sinaguans passing northward along Towel Creek, and it is the site of the major ancient settlement of Tuzigoot, now a national monument.



For families, novices and experts, *Arizona Hiking: Urban Trails, Easy Paths & Overnight Treks* features a trail mix ranging from urban-area preserves to the Grand Canyon. The book brims with how-to and where-to-go information on more than 70 hikes, plus 120 color photos. To order (\$16.95 plus shipping and handling), call (800) 543-5432. Or use arizonahighways.com.



KEVIN KIBSEY



[ABOVE] Sinagua Indian ruins near Towel Creek in central Arizona intrigue the hardy hikers who make the 5.5-mile trek in, but the Forest Service has urged people to look without touching the fragile site. **[OPPOSITE PAGE]** Monkey flowers and cottonwood trees thrive along Towel Creek.

ruins that involves fording the Verde River from the west. Spring high water and summer cloudbursts make this way a gamble, however.

Hiking in from FR 708 lets you keep your feet dry to the ruins—all

accessible by an easy climb from the main trail. Watch for a yellow fence gate along Verde River Road, about 500 yards south of Needle Rock, that marks the trailhead. A brown sign on the east side of the road, readable only from the opposite direction, offers another clue. There's a wire livestock gate for riders.

Cross the wash, follow the old jeep road for



LOCATION: About 85 miles north of Phoenix.

GETTING THERE: From Interstate 17, take the General Crook Trail, State Route 260, into Camp Verde. Follow SR 260

across the Verde for 7 miles, then turn south on the graveled FR 708 for 8.5 miles to Needle Rock. Parking is limited to a clearing east of the road just past Needle Rock. Don't block the ranch road on the west side.

GROUND POSITIONING SYSTEM [GPS]

UTM COORDINATES: Verde Road trailhead, 436864mE, 3809957mN; Towel Tank, 435022mE, 3807699mN; first ruin, 5430721mE, 3807907mN.

TRAVEL ADVISORY: Leave all historical and archaeological artifacts in place. October through May is the best time to hike this trail. Carry water and a walking stick; wear sturdy footwear.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Red Rock Ranger District, (928) 282-4119.

