

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **RANGE Wins Prestigious Literary Honors**

“The M Bar,” RANGE magazine’s critically acclaimed sequel to “Call of the Cow Country,” received two coveted Will Rogers Gold Medallion Awards on Oct. 24, 2015, in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Will Rogers Medallion named the 120-page hardbound book as “Best in the Western Biography/Memoir” category. RANGE also received a Gold Medallion for Production and Printing Values for the same book.

The biography follows the further adventures and exploits of Harry Webb, a tall, dark cowboy who looked like he stepped out of central casting during the glory days of silent movies—which he did.

“It is unadulterated delight to be mentioned alongside Will Rogers,” says RANGE editor/publisher C.J. Hadley, who edited the award-winner. “He was funny. He had many talents. He loved the West. And I know that he would have enjoyed Harry.”

Charles Williams, executive director of the Will Rogers Medallion Award Committee, served as master of ceremonies at the event held at the Cattleman’s restaurant in Fort Worth.

“Each year, outstanding books that exemplify excellent content, high production values, and demonstrate the cowboy heritage embodied by Will Rogers, are nominated for the awards,” says Williams. “These books represent the very best in Western literature produced during the previous year and expand the finest traditions and values of the American cowboy.”

Harry Webb was all that and more. A prolific storyteller, he wrote more than a hundred true stories for western magazines about cowboy life—which he called “good, bad, and plain hell.” Many accounts recall in expressive detail his life as a bronc rider with the international phenomenon, Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show. Webb also did rope tricks in Vaudeville, broke horses for soldiers fighting in World War I, played fiddle for dances, and trapped rabid predators for the United States government, and homesteaded his own ranch.

In Nevada’s high desert, he accomplished what he had always dreamed of—building a cattle and sheep ranch. When he was forced to leave his beloved ranch due to his wife’s illness, he began to write about the humor, pathos, dangerous and sometimes-lunatic happenings that made up his life. Friend of the famous and foolish, he wrote it all down.

Webb’s literary recognitions include “The Gold Spur for Western Literature” awarded in 1972 for a story he wrote about leaving his home in Colorado for the cowboy country of Wyoming when he was barely 15 years old.

His book, “Nuthin’,” was selected by Disney Studios for a movie that would star Ron Howard, at a time the teenage star was at the height of his popularity. The film fell between the success of the “Andy Griffith Show” and the beginning of the megahit, “Happy Days.”

In 1983, Webb was honored with a Wrangler “for a lifetime’s contribution to the western heritage” by the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City. That same year he was asked to appear in Cody, Wyo., for a celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Buffalo Bill’s first show. Webb was the last surviving bronc rider from the show of 1910.

“The M Bar” is a showcase for paintings by the late J.N. Swanson and Vel Miller. Swanson’s paintings are in major international collections, and an original oil hung in Ronald Reagan’s White House. Swanson donated several of his favorite pieces to use as limited edition prints to benefit the Range Conservation Foundation.

The book’s illustrations are the work of RANGE art director, John Bardwell, who is an award-winning graphic artist, painter, and theatrical producer.

Produced by Range Conservation Foundation and RANGE magazine, “The M Bar” is a walk through Webb’s action-filled world—paying tribute along the way to a unique American culture and its traditions.

Most of Webb’s stories are compiled in two books, “The M Bar” (2014) and “Call of the Cow Country” (2012), both published by the Range Conservation Foundation and edited by RANGE magazine publisher Caroline Joy “CJ” Hadley. Webb and Hadley were close allies the last seven years of his life and shared a love of the American West. Many of Harry’s intriguing handwritten letters to CJ are included in “The M Bar.”

“When I met Harry, we were instant friends,” she says. “I like old men, particularly wise old men who ride horses. They don’t mess around with what’s politically correct. What you see is what you get. What you hear is what they think. What they show is how they feel.”

The books by Harry Webb are an amazing tribute to America’s past. The stories are told in the language of the day, they are historically accurate and authentic and cover love, hate, jealousy, generosity, greed, murder, theft, insobriety, tenacity, foolishness, and many other peculiar human traits. They are entertaining and educational because Harry’s a great writer, but it’s also raw and real.

Works ranging from fiction to humor and film make up the 14 different award categories for a Will Rogers Medallion Awards. “The M Bar” was nominated in the Biography and Memoir Category, which also includes “Western Women Who Dared to be Different,” by Gail Woerner, and “The Horse Lover: A Cowboy’s Quest to Save the Wild Mustang,” by H. Alan Day. For information on the awards ceremony, visit [www.willrogersmedallionaward.org](http://www.willrogersmedallionaward.org).

“M Bar” picked up another award on October 2 during the Nevada Press Association convention, which recognized journalistic excellence. The book was recognized with a third place award in the Special Projects category. The judge commented: “I like the way the pages are laid out with the handwritten letters, antique photos, sketches and paintings. Nice variety.”

This is the second consecutive year RANGE was recognized with Will Rogers Gold Medallions. In 2014 RANGE was the recipient of two Gold Medallions for another publication, “Brushstrokes & Balladeers,” a tribute to painters and poets of the American West—the book’s third and fourth literary honors. The first award was in the Cowboy/Western Poetry category for best poetry book of the year. The second recognized “Outstanding Merit/Excellence in Printing and Publication” for the same book. The 144-page hardbound book was also previously honored with the prestigious Wrangler Award from the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

“Reflections of the West: Cowboy painters and poets,” a sequel to “Brushstrokes & Balladeers,” is shown below, in “Classic Hardbacks from RANGE.”

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“The M Bar” by Harry Webb, ISBN 978-0-9647456-4-3. Hardcover, 120 pages, \$39 U.S.A. C.J. Hadley, editor. Range Conservation Foundation and RANGE magazine, P.O. Box 639, Carson City, NV 89702, telephone 1-775-884-2200; 1-800-RANGE-4-U.

NOTES ABOUT HARRY: In 1912, Harry Webb became a movie star and horse trainer for the silent picture industry, working for the Lubin Film Company of Philadelphia. (The company would later move to California.) Most of the dudes who worked in Westerns couldn’t even ride. Harry said, “I know no more about moviemaking than a hog did about a white shirt,” but he and Smoky Warner were “the only two who could tell a cow from a haystack.”

Harry Webb trained horses to do what he wanted for “The Battle of Shiloh” in 1912. The film cost more than a million dollars. “We made some silly pictures. I should have been writing

scenarios instead of playing cowboy.” Webb would protest when moviemakers would use hidden wires to trip horses.

Included in the book is a photo of Buffalo Bill Cody, taken by Burke circa 1892. An extraordinary showman, Cody gathered cowboys and Indians from all across America to appear in his Wild West Show for 30 years. The shows were called “extravaganzas” and “circus-like” and many tried to copy him. He was in Cody, Wyo., in 1909 when he saw Harry Webb’s horse get tangled in some barbed wire and buck through a drugstore window. When Harry came out, bloody but still in the saddle, “the colonel” asked him to ride in his show. Harry wouldn’t go unless the colonel also signed his saddle pard “Gaspipe” Mullison, so they both got contracts to start riding broncs at Madison Square Garden in New York for the show of 1910.

#### EDITOR’S NOTES & BACKGROUND:

The Range Conservation Foundation is a nonprofit educational foundation promoting and encouraging responsible stewardship for the care and protection of America’s rangelands as a multiple-use resource. It sponsors educational features in RANGE magazine plus special reports on issues affecting the people who work the land. For information on RANGE, visit [www.rangemagazine.com](http://www.rangemagazine.com)

C.J. Hadley is publisher and editor of “The M Bar,” “Call of the Cow Country,” and also publisher and editor of award-winning RANGE, which has received three consecutive Freedom of the Press awards. She has produced 25 years of quarterly magazine issues and 12 hardback books on ranchers and ranching in the American West. She was managing editor for Car & Driver and publisher/editor of Nevada Magazine before launching RANGE.

During her tenure at RANGE, C.J. received the Paladin Award from the Paragon Foundation for her “fight for justice and recognition on behalf of ranchers and farmers.” And, the 50,000-member American Agri-Women (AAW) organization recognized Hadley with its Veritas Award, which is presented to one who has “given witness to the pursuit of truth.” AAW said the tribute was for “writing and speaking the truth in the media with intellect, integrity, tenacity and heart on behalf of people who live and work on the land.”

Hardbound books published by RANGE (some rare or out of print) include:

“The Romance & Reality of Ranching”

“Grit, Guts & Glory: Portrait of the West”

“Spirit: Cowboys, Horses, Earth & Sky”

“Cowboys & Country: Life in America’s Outback”

“This Land of the Free: The Pride & Purpose of the American West”

“Grit: Fighting for Western Land, Life & Liberty”

“The Red Meat Survivors”

“Call of the Cow Country” by Harry Webb

“Go West: The Risk & The Reward,” with introduction by Rod Miller

“Brushstrokes & Balladeers: Painters and poets of the American West”

“The M Bar” by Harry Webb (the sequel to “Call of the Cow Country”)

“Reflections of the West: Cowboy painters and poets” (the sequel to “Brushstrokes & Balladeers”)

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